



St. Tammany Fire District 12

19375 Highway 36
Covington, LA 70433
Bus. (985) 892-5161
www.FD12.org

BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS SPECIAL PUBLIC HEARING/MEETING MINUTES ST. TAMMANY PARISH COUNCIL CHAMBERS AUGUST 18, 2016

PUBLIC HEARING CALL TO ORDER

6:00PM.

INVOCATION

The hearing opened with an invocation by Chairman Strain, followed by the *Pledge of Allegiance*.

ROLL CALL

Commissioners in attendance: Chairman Susan Strain, Vice-Chairman Steve Swanson, Secretary Sonny Schwing, Treasurer Ron Garrity and Commissioner Ken Kimberly.
A super-majority quorum was present.

Administrative Staff also in attendance: Fire Chief Stephen Krentel, Chief of Prevention Kris Hines, Chief of Training Dominick Bourgeois, District Chief Kevin Adams and Comptroller Sarah Modisett.

Invited Guest in attendance: Attorney Troy Ingram.

PUBLIC HEARING

Chairman Strain welcomed everyone to the Hearing and invited Fire Chief Stephen Krentel to the podium to make some remarks regarding the District's millages. Chief Krentel read his statement. (See attached copy of the remarks.)

Chief Krentel also stated that the cost to purchase a desperately-needed fire truck is at least \$450,000, which is not currently in the budget. Fire District 12 is rated a Class-3 Fire Department by the Property Insurance Association of Louisiana (PIAL). If the District does not continue with this current rating, homeowners can expect to pay at least 10% more for their insurance.

Secretary Schwing asked what comprised the PIAL rating system. Chief Krentel stated that it included:

- Manpower
- Water Source
- Distance Between Station and Emergency Destination
- Prevention
- Training

Chief Krentel also stated that the District is penalized for not having four people on a truck at any given time.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

Wayne Billiard stated that he lived near the District's Station 125 on Harrison Avenue. He could not think of any reason why the public should not support the District's request to roll its millages forward.

PUBLIC HEARING ADJOURNS

A motion was made by Secretary Schwing to adjourn the hearing. Commissioner Kimberly seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously. Public Hearing adjourned at 6:14PM.

PUBLIC MEETING CALL TO ORDER

6:14PM.

ROLL CALL:

Commissioners in attendance: Chairman Susan Strain, Vice-Chairman Steve Swanson, Secretary Sonny Schwing, Treasurer Ron Garrity and Commissioner Ken Kimberly.

A super-majority quorum was present.

Administrative Staff also in attendance: Fire Chief Stephen Krentel, Chief of Prevention Kris Hines, Chief of Training Dominick Bourgeois, District Chief Kevin Adams and Comptroller Sarah Modisett.

Invited Guest in attendance: Attorney Troy Ingram.

AGENDA

Chairman Strain stated that the Agenda needed to be amended to reflect that the Minutes being approved were from the July 28, 2016 Meeting, and not the July 21, 2016 Meeting. Commissioner Kimberly made a motion to amend the Agenda as corrected. Secretary Schwing seconded the motion. There were no public comments. The motion passed unanimously.

Chairman Strain asked the Commissioners if there were any revisions to the Minutes from the July 28, 2016 Meeting. There were none. Secretary Schwing made a motion to approve the Minutes as written. Vice-Chairman Swanson seconded the motion. There were no public comments. The motion passed unanimously.

NEW BUSINESS

Chairman Strain stated that a Resolution was needed to adjust the millage rates for 2016, and read the following from Resolution 2016-012:

Be it resolved, by the St. Tammany Fire Protection District No. 12 of the Parish of St. Tammany, Louisiana, in a public meeting held of August 18, 2016, which meeting was conducted in accordance with the Open Meetings Law and the additional requirements of Article VII, Section 23(C) of the Louisiana Constitution and R.S. 47:1705(B), that the following adjusted millage rates be and they are hereby levied upon the dollar of the assessed valuation of all property subject to ad valorem taxation within said Parish for the year 2016, for the purpose of raising revenue:

MILLAGE

Fire Protection Services - 9.730 mills

Be it further resolved that the Assessor of the Parish of St. Tammany, shall extend upon the assessment roll for the year 2016 the taxes herein levied, and the tax collector of said Parish shall collect and remit the same to said taxing authority in accordance with law.

A motion was made by Secretary Schwing to adjust the 2016 millage rate as per Resolution 2016-012. Commissioner Kimberly seconded the motion. There was no public comment. The motion passed unanimously as follows:

- Garrity - YES**
- Swanson - YES**
- Schwing - YES**
- Kimberly - YES**
- Strain - YES**

Chairman Strain stated that a Resolution was needed to increase the millage rates for 2016, and read the following from Resolution 2016-013:

Be it resolved, by the St. Tammany Fire Protection District No. 12 of the Parish of St. Tammany, Louisiana, in a public meeting held of August 18, 2016, which meeting was conducted in accordance with the Open Meetings Law and the additional requirements of Article VII, Section 23(C) of the Louisiana Constitution and R.S. 47:1705(B), that the taxing district voted to increase the millage rate(s), but not in excess of the prior year's maximum rate(s), on all taxable property shown on the official assessment roll for the year 2016, and when collected, the revenues from said taxes shall be used only for the specific purposes for which said taxes have been levied. Said millage rate(s) are:

	<u>Adjusted Rate</u>	<u>2016 Levy</u>
Fire Protection Services	9.730 mills	9.950 mills

Be it further resolved that the Assessor of the Parish of St. Tammany, shall extend upon the assessment roll for the year 2016 the taxes herein levied, and the tax collector of said Parish shall collect and remit the same to said taxing authority in accordance with law.

A motion was made by Commissioner Kimberly to increase the 2016 millage rate as per Resolution 2016-013. Secretary Schwing seconded the motion. There was no public comment. The motion passed unanimously as follows:

- Garrity - YES**
- Swanson - YES**
- Schwing - YES**
- Kimberly - YES**
- Strain - YES**

Chairman Strain stated that a Resolution was needed to levy the millage rates for 2016, and read the following from Resolution 2016-014:

Be it resolved, that the following millage(s) are hereby levied on the 2016 tax roll on all property subject to taxation by St. Tammany Fire Protection District No. 12:

	<u>Millage</u>
Fire Protection Services	10.0 mills

Be it further resolved that the proper administrative officials of the Parish of St. Tammany, be and they are hereby empowered, authorized, and directed to spread said taxes, as hereinabove set forth, upon the assessment roll of said Parish for the year 2016, and to make the collection of the taxes imposed for and on behalf of the taxing authority, according to law, and that the taxes herein levied shall become a permanent lien and privilege on all property subject to taxation as herein set forth, and collection thereof shall be enforceable in the manner provided by law.

A motion was made by Secretary Schwing to levy the 2016 millage rate as per Resolution 2016-014. Commissioner Kimberly seconded the motion. There was no public comment. The motion passed unanimously as follows:

- Garrity - YES**
- Swanson - YES**
- Schwing - YES**
- Kimberly - YES**
- Strain - YES**

PUBLIC MEETING ADJOURNS

A motion was made by Secretary Schwing to adjourn the meeting. Treasurer Garrity seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously. Public Meeting adjourned at 6:27PM.

Minutes transcribed by Rebecca Dougherty

Approved:


Susan Strain, Chairman

9-15-16
Date



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Chief Krentel Remarks for Special BOC Meeting August 18th, 2016

We are here to request the Fire Board consider rolling the millage forward .44 (not .49 that the Assessor advertised) that the Assessor's Office recommends we roll back.

In simple terms, the voters have continued to put faith and trust in our organization by renewing our millages. We have enjoyed nearly an 80% yes vote on each election.

This is NOT a new tax. This is NOT circumventing the right to vote. Our voters have voted in 25 mills and we cannot go above that amount.

Fire District 12 protects a growing and rapidly changing community. From commercial, to residential, from large sprawling homesteads too densely populated areas.

We currently operate 5 manned stations within our boundaries and employ 75 personnel.

Our organization experiences many of the same financial hardships as every one of our constituents. We must constantly strive to do more with less. At some point, this is just not feasible or even possible.

As part of our everyday business practices, we evaluate and look for ways to save on each and every expense.

We put resources into preventive maintenance that is adding life to our equipment. We are able to push the replacement of front line apparatus back by doing this.

Co-Op Training is another area that we are saving.

The District participates in UniFire.

Of the monies that we collect from our Ad Valorem tax, we lose 3% right off the top for Louisiana State Pension Plans RS 11:82. Of which funds other plans, not the Fire Departments. Also, we must factor a 4-5% loss off the top for change order, uncollectable, etc. This equals a 7-8% less than what the voters have passed.

There are many obstacles and challenges we face in balancing our budget. We cannot spend more than we receive. There are several items that we have no control of: For example, LWCC rates Fire Departments at a Premium. We are considered an average rate about 35% higher than the average business. We are bound by law to provide an annual 2% longevity raise to our employees per LA RS 33:1992. Fire Fighters Retirement System, we are bound to pay based upon the market and climate of their investments, to name a few.

With all of these items factored in we have to deal with a market in health insurance, liability insurance, electricity along with other expense that we have no control over.

Of our budget, 78% is employee related costs. That leaves 22% to run all other operations.

Annually we experience about a 3.5% rise in expenses and have only been experiencing about a 1.5% rise in income. Moving forward over the next 4 years, and based upon email communications between the Assessor's Office and the department. They recommend that we should only budget the actual collections from the previous year and that we should expect little to no increase over the next few years.

Therefore, taking everything into account, it is my recommendation that we roll forward the .44 mils. Actually, it is my duty and obligation to advise you of this in order to remain fiscally responsible.