

Elsie Area Fire Association
140 W Maple St
Elsie, MI 48831

Elsie Area Fire Association Board Minutes for Board Meeting on August 20, 2025

Members Present: Green, Zemla, Bowen

Fire Department Members Present: Rob Saul

Guests: see attached sheet

Called to order by Green at 6:03 pm

The board and guests stood for the pledge of allegiance to the flag.

Zemla made the motion to approve the agenda as presented. Bowen supported the motion and motion carried.

Zemla made the motion to approve the minutes from the July 16th meeting & the July 31st special meeting. Bowen supported the motion and motion carried.

Zemla made a motion to approve the Treasurers report with the following balances: \$145,773.72 in checking and \$55,034.63 in the money market. Bowen supported the motion and motion carried.

Zemla made a motion to approve the bills, checks & ACH debits, in the amount of \$1112.94 for July and \$3585.47 for August for a total of \$4,698.41. Bowen supported the motion and motion carried.

Zemla made a motion to approve the budget amendment of \$58.99 from Unallocated to Office Supplies. Bowen supported the motion and motion carried.

There was no Chief's report. Assistant Chief Saul stated there is hydrostatic bottle testing on August 26th. This will be an all-day event and Donnie will be there assisting. Captain Witt stated there was no update with the gear inventory.

Craig Hall did not have an Operational Readiness Report. Stated there were only the issues with Rescue 2. Everything else has been taken care of.

The Village of Elsie President, Jason Freeman and Village Manager, Destinee Bryce were there to discuss the Village's proposal for the Fire Station, the Village owned property. The lease agreement presented was for a 5 year lease at \$1200 a month for the first year with an increase of 5% or consumer price index, whichever is less, the fire department would pay for all utilities: water, trash, sewer, electricity. There will be a water meter placed on the fire station. It was asked if the department would be charged for water when filling their trucks from the hydrants and the Village representative's said there would be no cost, no way to monitor it. There would be a \$150 late charged assessed and the amount of rent not paid shall be subject to a service charge at the rate of 5% per month or the highest rate permitted by law. Zemla asked Freeman if he felt the 5% per month service charge for non-payment was a fair amount and Freeman stated it was a fair amount. Maintenance would be at the fire department expense. The Village will keep in good order and repair the roof and outer walls of the building. The section regarding Termination only spoke about the Village being able to terminate the lease. This is something that would need to be addressed. There was no formal land contract agreement to review due to the Village claiming the Village/Township Assessor making a mistake on the split that was done and that it was split incorrectly, the GIS was incorrect. The Village President stated the purchase price would be \$300,000 with \$50,000 down. It would be a 20 year land contract at a variable rate starting at 7%. Zemla stated that he contacted Clinton County and Clinton County stated that the county's GIS website had not been updated in 2025. The GIS report the Village was viewing was the original parcel and not a reflection of the current parcel after the split. Village President stated everything within the proposed lease agreement and the stated

land contract agreement was up for a discussion. The Fire Board commented that there would be no decision at this time due to Chapin Township Maynard not at the meeting.

Dr. Mark Holley, Village of Elsie/Duplain Township Assessor commented that the current GIS does not have anything to do with the split that was completed. The proposed split is 88 feet by 165 feet which would eliminate the land locked parcel. There are a new parcel number and new legal description.

Old Business

- 1 Grant Update: No update
- 2 Village of Elsie 2025-2026 & 2023-2024 Contribution – At the August Village of Elsie meeting it was approved to pay the 2025-2026 Contribution in the amount of \$17,457. The Village of Elsie stated they were not going to pay the missing contribution for the year 2023-2024.
- 3 Firefighters 501c3 – It was asked if the firefighters 501c3 has been re-instated at this time. Asst Chief Saul was not sure at this time. He will follow up and let the board know at the September meeting.
- 4 Other Old Business – None

New Business:

- 1 LexiPol Policies – Asst Chief Saul gave a brief explanation on LexiPol Policies, a program that Ashley Fire & Rescue is utilizing to create policies that stay up to date of state and federal laws. Saul will reach out to LexiPol to receive more information to present to the board at the September meeting.
- 2 No need for closed session
- 3 Other New Business: None

There was open discussion between the public, Fire Board and Village Representatives.

There was discussion regarding the schedule of support the Village of Elsie present to the Duplain Township representatives at their August meeting. It was showing that the total expenses paid by the Village for the Fire Association direct and allocated was \$109,188.14 from April, 2024 through today, August 12, 2025. The breakdown of the costs was \$5802.31 for Consumers Energy, \$35,991 for MML Insurance, \$11,211.20 for the Village's attorney, \$1000 for the appraisal completed on the Fire Station. There was allocated staff wages and payroll taxes also included expenses: \$40,313.93 for Bryce's time and \$14,871.70 for Grinell's time. The wages of the Village Manager were allocated based on estimate of time spent per week on Fire Association-related matters and the estimates were provided by the current Village Manager. Bryce commented that the Village Manager costs included her time responding to emails from the Fire Board Secretary/Treasurer and having the DWP open the doors to the Fire Station for scheduled testing by the Fire Department.

Village President Freeman stated that they needed to get the fair market value for the building. The State will sell all assets including the Fire Station, if the Village goes under. The Village is two steps away from bankruptcy. The Village is currently in a 5-year deficit plan and they need to get fair market value for the lease and land contract.

Kam Washburn gave the history as to why the Fire Association was created year ago. At that time the Village approached the Townships to create the Association and created the agreement. The Village was to provide the building and pay for the utilities to be able to have a seat on Association board.

It was commented that this is very disheartening for the firefighters. They are here to do a job and be available for the residents.

Asst Chief Saul suggested what if the department were to offer a \$1.00 a year for lease and the department would cover the expenses of the building. It was asked if the Village could present to the State of the cost saving that the Village would save by leasing the station to the Fire Department and the Fire Department would cover the costs

associated with the building. Destinee Bryce commented that she had already asked the State that question and she would let the Board know by Friday, August 22nd.

Teresa Ward commented that the two entities needed to stop arguing and work together on a solution that was best for everyone.

Zemla made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 7:28 pm. Bowen supported the motion and motion carried.

Next meeting: September 17, 2025 at 6:00 pm

Respectfully submitted,

Amy Bowen
Secretary/Treasurer