

Donald Wescott Fire Protection District, Jan. 21

Wescott remembers board chairman; election moves forward

By Allison Robenstein

The Donald Wescott Fire Protection District board and members of the audience took a moment before the regular board meeting started to remember Chairman William "Bo" McAllister, who passed away Jan. 4. The board approved several temporary job switches for board members and finalized election needs.

Treasurer Joyce Hartung arrived late.

Chairman McAllister

Tonight's meeting was the first since the passing of Chairman McAllister, so Secretary Mark Gunderman led the audience in a moment of silence to honor him. McAllister's service was held at Wescott's Station 2 on Jan. 10. His wife, who calls herself "Mrs. Bo," was in attendance at tonight's meeting and thanked everyone who made his service possible, telling the firefighters, "You are still family to us."

Resident Mary Gunderman said, "To have known Bo a little was a delight. To have known him well was a treasure. And now a loss beyond measure."

Election plans

Three board director positions are up for election during the May 5 polling place vote. Both Larry Schwarz' and Duane Garrett's positions are up for reelection, as is McAllister's empty seat. Self-nomination forms can be found at <http://wescottfire.org/board-of-directors-2/elections/> and must be returned by Friday, Feb. 28. McAllister ran the board meetings. Gunderman has been stepping in when needed, and tonight asked to be nominated to the chairman position. All board members agreed to the appointment, while also naming Schwarz as the secretary, the title recently held by Gunderman. These positions may change after the election is complete.

Chief's report

Assistant Chief Scott Ridings said the call volume for 2019 had increased 21% over the previous year, for a total of 961 calls for service. Their average response time, which is the time they leave the station to the time they arrive on scene, was six minutes, 17 seconds. They hope to get this down to an even six minutes. Ridings said the new station alerting system they hope to install this year will help with that average. Their average time from receiving the call to leaving the station is one minute, six seconds.

Chief Vinny Burns reported the following:

- Captains Sean Pearson and Shannon Balvanz will be promoted to battalion chiefs.
- Lieutenants Roger Lance and Wayne Krzemien will be promoted to captain positions.
- Matt Gibbs will be promoted to driver and Luke Jones will be testing for a driver position shortly.
- Burns read several letters from residents who had been helped by the Fire Department during recent calls for service.
- Firefighter Jon Urban presented a request to use reserved capital improvements funds to swap out fluorescent lighting with LED lighting. Ur-

ban said the cost would be \$5,400 to switch out the bay lighting at Station 1 and the bay and living quarters lighting from Station 2. He noted the turnout gear worn by the firefighters is susceptible to degradation caused by ultraviolet lighting. Lance worked with Urban on the project and had received one quote. "Since we deal with public funds," Gunderman asked the firefighters to get two more quotes. The board agreed to hear their presentation and make a decision on funding the project once all bids were received.

The meeting adjourned at 8:00 pm.

The next Donald Wescott fire district meeting is scheduled for Feb. 18 at Station 1, 15415 Gleneagle Dr. Meetings are usually on the third Tuesday of each month at 7 p.m. For information, call Executive Administrator Stacey Popovich at 488-8680 or see www.wescottfire.org.

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