

250626_Fire Tax Board

- **Incomplete Transcript and Recording (recorder wasn't started at beginning of meeting)**

They're going to do this stuff online, Firefighter 1, Firefighter 2. If anybody's ever done Resource 1 for their Firefighter 1, that's how they're going to do it. Except this is going to be through OSU. But, that's the gist of it.

They'll get their ten college credit hours. OSU will handle the coursework. The departments will handle the training part.

They'll do five weekends per semester. Five weekends a second semester. That's that program in a nutshell.

What I need from each department is a good point of contact. Because nothing discourages anybody more than calling. And it's the wrong number.

It's a number that's somebody that was there that's no longer there. So, I'll leave you all my number. Or, you know, get a hold of me on Facebook.

Okay. Everybody got something to write with? I'll give you a number right now, right now. And no copying.

It's 918. Give them the correct number, not the 800 number. Okay, I'll waive the charges on the 800 number.

It's 918-913-8010. It's 918-913-8010. And what Joe Bennett didn't tell you all about was how much it's going to cost the students.

If you did, I don't recall. The first semester will cost the student \$539. Which, if anybody's ever taken college credits, \$539 is not bad for five college credit hours.

Now, break it down a little bit. \$315 of that is their Firefighter 1 certification test. So, that comes on to the fire departments.

If you all want to pay that, that's great. That's something we should do. Let's pay for their certification test.

Second semester, it's \$739. It's basically \$200 extra because they have to do their hazmat test. \$315 for Firefighter 2 and their hazmat certification is \$200.

So, while they're in the program, they're part of your departments. You do with them what you want to do. But, to me, they're high school students.

They need to study and they need to train. To me, that's what they need to do. I prefer them not to be answering pagers in the middle of the night and doing that stuff.

They need to get their studies and train and train right. So, that's it. That's my program in a nutshell.

The big schools we need to really push and get people out of is Haskell, Forum, Warner, Fort Gibson. Cherry pick out of Hilldale and whoever falls in Oklahoma. Can't really get into Muskogee because Muskogee can't really give us students.

They can't go to the big city department and do their sponsorship there yet. One quick question. Does OSU require that it's five consecutive weekends in a row? We will make the schedule.

We can do any five weekends we want. One gripe I had when I did my firefighter one was that sucker was on the chili cook off weekend. It will not happen on the chili cook off weekend.

It won't happen on homecoming. It should happen on homecoming because we're dealing with six, seven different schools. It might happen on homecoming.

A little back track on that. Can't save them all there, but we'll try the best. That's that in a nutshell.

We're trying to get for fall. If we don't get 12 for fall, we'll shoot for spring. We have to have 12 to get the thing started.

If there's any questions, shoot them at me. I've got to go to Oklahoma City for training on it. If I don't know the answer before I go there, I'll definitely get the answer when I go there.

Is there anything you'll have? One suggestion I have, I don't know if we have a full group here or not, is making a training shirt for them. A bright yellow or something. Like how you put one of your new training people in.

That would be my suggestion y'all could bring up at a different time or whatnot. I had a question. You talked about what the student was required to have to get an English program.

Oh yeah. Does that go with jail or is that on the department? They have to go to their counselor. They have to have a 3.0. Is that what you're asking? They have to have a 3.0 or a 19 ACT.

So they can't be falling behind in school because this is outside of school. This is not during school or anything else. This is all outside of school.

So we can't put extra stuff on them and have them go whoop and miss out on their studies. We don't want to be responsible for that. As a collective.

Y'all have any questions up at the top? Is this per school or per department? What's that now? Is this per school or per department? The 12? This is the whole collective. And at least 12 right? Yes. They can be third.

And so when we do the school weekends, we'll have people from y'all's departments help. Is there anything else y'all would like to know? If not, y'all can call and I'll get you the answer the best I can. And if I can't get the best I can, I'll definitely answer somebody else and get it.

Do you have something set up for a sign-up sheet slash application? Shoot me a text or something and I'll send you the link. And everything goes to the OSU site. So everything's signed up through them and then the counselors link up.

The fire departments don't have to handle any paperwork. Paperwork sucks. Juniors and seniors only.

The minimum age is 16. Yeah. So if they're accelerated and they're 13 years old or junior, they can't do it.

That's the OSU thing. 16. Homeschool.

Virtual. They are G to G. Anybody got anything else? Thank you. That's exciting.

Item number six. Scott with Muskogee Communications to speak about improving the communications for our council. Scott, I don't know what you've been told.

I think Richard's reached out to you. But one of the things that was brought up was moving the repeater at Haskell down south in the Boynton-Council Hill area. I wonder about that.

We don't use that thing very often. We're okay with moving it. That was one of the things.

It's not ours, but obviously nobody wanted to move it if we were using it. One of the things I would ask is would it affect our paging? No. Okay, that's what I think.

I don't think so. I don't know. That was kind of up to... I think we were going to leave that up to you to try to pick a spot.

Now, Ross couldn't be here tonight, but he feels like they could put it on a water tower there. I'm not 100% sure. But I know there are several different towers up there in that rural water district.

I wish he was here, but he ended up calling in on the way here and had an emergency. But he acted like they had multiple towers that they could mount to. I'm not even sure.

I'm not sure. I think it's a rural water district, but I don't know. Okay.

Right. Right. Yes.

Okay. Okay. I think our goal is to try to set it... I was thinking maybe north of Council Hill, so it would help Boynton out also.

And Jared and May can speak on this. I don't know. I'm not very... And maybe Mitch.

You're from Wainwright, right? If there's a water tower somewhere that we could hit or tie onto in that area. That's on a hill too, right? Okay. There are big stuff over there.

And the water man that takes care of that area, he says that Google is wanting to add 50 feet to that water tower. So now is not a good time to be trying to add something to it. Yeah.

It would be. Yeah. Yeah.

So here's the one thing about... Yeah. Right. What I would suggest, and it's up to everybody else too, but maybe, Scott, you get with Council Hill, Wainwright, and Boynton, and try to find the best place where it would benefit them both.

Are y'all having communication problems too? But I know Boynton is. And I'm sure Council Hill. Yeah.

I think what he's talking about, Scott, is like it takes them a little while to get to the station, so he's trying to radio in to tell the dispatcher that he's en route to the station, and they're not

hearing him. Yeah. I think we're all in agreement to move it, but we just need to... Well, I mean, is one going to be enough? Yeah.

That's the thing. Is one repeater going to be enough to cover all that down there, Scott? Or do we need to talk about two? All right. That's a good question.

It's a question for you. Where's the best place to put one? You want to take some time and look it over and get with Ross and Jerry there and try to see if, you know, if the one will do it. Okay.

And we might be able to do a little bit of testing. Yeah. I've got a trailer that I can go set up.

You know... Yeah. See how it goes. I know for a fact, and some training on the radios once you get that repeater set up, and I mean, because I think there's a misconception that your radio will automatically switch over and hit that repeater when it don't have a signal.

Well, it's not going to. Yeah, and that's what I think the misconception is, is that you actually have to be on that repeater's channel. Yeah.

Right. That's the way mine is programmed. It scans 492, and y'all set it up, and sometimes, yeah, you will miss something every once in a while.

Yeah. If they add the other 50 foot to it, this would be... Well, I mean, I hate to... Google, if it's already up there, Google should have to pay for moving it up the other 50 feet. You know, if it's up... You know, if they dragged their feet on it.

But... Maybe Google should buy us another truck. Yeah. That would be nice.

They get all kinds of money. But anyways, I think we take no action on this and get some more information. One other thing.

Now, and I was trying to explain Ross this. Whenever they're on that repeater and they're on that frequency, and they key up, it's going to hit the dispatch center like they're on 9A, right? Right. There is a patch.

Okay, because he was thinking that it would be... That all the other trucks that he would be talking to, if he's on the repeater and I'm not, and I'm coming to him, that I would have to be on the repeater to talk to him, and that's not true. Okay, that's what... See, and that's what the little confusion was, because I was trying to explain to him. I said, I don't... He's like, no, it's a standalone frequency.

Yes, but no. Because there is... And they can... I mean, they can step out there and test it. Okay.

The very last... Yeah. The last channel. Yeah, that's what I... That's what I did.

I tested it, and I knew, but... And if it doesn't work, that means it's broken. Okay. Okay.

It's like that on both sides. Okay. Anybody else got anything for Scott? I think we're... No action on this one? Figure out where we need to move it to.

Thanks, Scott. Thank you, Scott. Item number seven, information on the AT&T bill is available.

We didn't print it and put it in the packet. If anybody wants to see it, it's a big sucker. So... Moving on, item number eight, information only, the run report.

It's a 911 center. It's in there. It's in there.

Everybody get an eye on it. Things kind of slowed down, it looks like. Mm-hmm.

I can't believe you just said that. Yeah, I know. I didn't use the Q word, though.

Item number nine, discussion and possible action on improving the radio coverage for the southwest area. Take no action on that also. Moving on, item 10, discussion and possible action to sign a letter to the 911.

This is going back to the last meeting that we had where we talked about putting a letter out to the 911 center. It's in your packet. If you want to read it over real quick, then we'll vote on whether we want, if this is what you want.

Let's vote on it, and then we'll be done. You want to vote on it? Is that what you want to do? Yeah. Okay, we got a motion.

I got a question. Okay. Motion, I don't believe last month was made that each individual department was responsible for the 9-1-1 fees.

It is in this letter. I believe the motion was to be made that the 9-1-1 tax board, or the county tax board does not pay that fee. I don't believe the motion was that each individual fire department was responsible to pay the 9-1-1 fees.

I might be wrong. Well, and I asked Richard this, too. That's why we drafted this.

I get what you're saying, but I don't think we can tell them they can't bill us. I mean, it'll be up to us if we pay that, if you dispute your bill. You hear what I'm saying, Josh? I mean, we can't tell the 9-1-1 center, no, you can't bill us.

If memory serves me correctly, I said that we should send it back to individual to the individual departments instead of them assuming the 9-1-1 board would pay the tax bill. That leaves the option that if we want the tax board to pay it, we can get the tax board voted to pay for it, but the bill should automatically go to the fire departments, not to this tax board. I'll be honest with you.

I hope there's not a bill, and there's three of us sitting in here right now that's on that board, but I don't know. I can't predict the future out of the 9-1-1 centers going to shape out this year. I know that we can't ask them to say that you can't bill us.

We can say that the 9-1-1, that the county fire tax board won't pay it anymore. Won't. It should go to the fire departments first.

I'm just saying. I just didn't remember. Richard said something.

I said something that that should go back to the departments. We got a motion. Do we have a second? He was the first one.

Okay. Am I supposed to be on here? I just cut it off. This is the one that you signed.

It's up here. Yeah. Jesus.

He did not. All right. We have a motion and a second.

Roll call, please. Boynton. Braggs.

Yeah. Brushy Mountain. Yes.

Fort Gibson. Yes. Gooseneck.

Yes. Haskell. Yes.

Mountain View. Yes. Muskogee.

Yes. Porum. Yes.

Wainwright. No. That's it.

Item carries. Before everybody leaves, would you come up here and sign if you choose to. If you choose to, you're still welcome.

And this won't prohibit us from bringing this back to- Absolutely not. In 2026 to say, okay. We did last year.

When we got the bill for each individual department, we came to the tax board. Can you pay this for us? And we did. And that's where I was going back to.

Yeah. Because me, I don't get all the tax money. Right.

Multiple. So, you know, it's easier for the tax board to pay that than it is- And that's not saying that it won't. But the bill should have been sent to the individual fire departments like it always had been, not just assume that the tax board was going to pay it because we did it one time.

And, too, you know, and this was kind of brought up in our meeting, too, the last 9-1-1 meeting I was at. I don't think some of the members of the 9-1-1 board know exactly how much funds we get in each department. You know, and I told them.

I said, well, it depends on what the tax revenue that year. It can be 10% of their budget annually. That \$4,400, what it was the year before, that's damn close to 10%, you know, and that's a lot.

And so don't think it wasn't, you know, on their mind anyways, you know, because it is. Can you tell me exactly what we voted on here, please? We voted on a signing this letter. Oh, a signing of a letter.

Thank you. Okay. Anybody else got any questions before we move on from item 10? Okay.

Item number 11, any new business? New business. Just so everybody knows that Monday, the commissioners passed another resolution or whatever they call them that, let's see, it says they established a review committee for all Muskogee County Volunteer Fire Departments to a three-member board that's going to approve your board of directors. For the Title 19 department.

Well, it doesn't say that. But you did ask them if it was the Title 19 and they said yes. They did verify it.

It does not say that in the resolution. It's in the meeting minutes and the meeting tape. Just so you guys know.

So that is the three-man committee, is that taking the replacement of the commissioners or does it go through the committee, they approve, and then it goes to the commissioners and they approve? Yes, sir. Okay, so how is that going to affect the Title 19 departments at this point? Is it going to take longer to get a new board member approved? Are they going to pick our board members? Are we still going to be able to do our process? They say yes, no, and then it goes to the commissioners and then yes, no. It'll just be whichever, however they want to do it.

Supposedly, it's going to be no changes. We just submit our board members. It will go to the committee.

They'll look at it. The next week, it goes to the county commissioners. And if the committee approved or recommended the ones that we submitted, then they'll approve it.

So it's another loop process. Probably. But who knows? Because it doesn't say.

There's no guidelines. All it says is they have established another committee like they did back a year ago. Just be aware of it.

So basically, this is going to take care of the departments that still have legal boards, is what you're saying? It sounds like they're going to dig in. They're finally going to do something about the departments that have illegal boards. What I would say is that it deals with Keefeton.

It was originally only for Keefeton. But because the attorney looked at it and says, you shouldn't single out just that department. So they stuck us all in there.

So they're just going to try to straighten up the ones with illegal boards, basically. Any other new business? Next meeting, July 24th. Item number 13.

Adjourned. Motion to adjourn? Second. Who motioned it and who seconded it? Oktaha and Fort Gibson.