

# Winnebago County Fire Protection District #1

115 West Howard St., P.O. Box 185  
DURAND, ILLINOIS 61024

Telephone - Emergency 815/248-2100 — Business 815/248-2696  
Fax 815/248-2458

April 2, 2024

Chairman Joseph Chiarelli  
Winnebago County Administration Building  
404 Elm Street  
Rockford, IL 61101

Dear Chairman Chiarelli-

Enclosed you will find the completed Efficiency Report for Compliance with Decennial Committees on Local Government Efficiency Act for the Winnebago County Fire Protection District #1. Per State Statute, we are required to file this report with your office. Should you have any questions, please feel free to contact me at (815) 248-2696 or via email at the District Office, [wcfpd1@mchsi.com](mailto:wcfpd1@mchsi.com).

Sincerely,



Claudie Kellicut  
Board President  
WCFPD #1



DURAND TOWNSHIP - HARRISON TOWNSHIP - LAONA TOWNSHIP - SHIRLAND TOWNSHIP  
(W. OF 3RD P.M.)



**WINNEBAGO COUNTY FIRE PROTECTION DISTRICT # 1  
EFFICIENCY REPORT FOR COMPLIANCE WITH DECENNIAL COMMITTEES ON  
LOCAL GOVERNMENT EFFICIENCY ACT**

Note: Any local government that levies a tax, other than a municipality or county must file this report. Our Fire Protection District formed its Committee on Local Government Efficiency on June 19, 2023, to study efficiencies and report recommendations regarding those efficiencies and increased accountability pursuant to 50 ILCS 70/1, *et seq.*

Information about our Fire Protection District

- We are located in northwestern Winnebago County within 4 townships: Durand, Laona, Shirland, and Harrison.
- We serve the communities of: Durand, Lake Summerset, Shirland, and Harrison.
- Our service area comprises approximately 100 square miles.
- The population of our Fire Protection District is approximately 5300 people (2010 Census).
- We protect approximately 2438 residences (2010 Census) from 3 stations.
  - Durand Fire Station-115 W. Howard St., Durand, IL (District Office)
  - Shirland Fire Station-13086 Mitchell St., Shirland, IL
  - Station #3-17255 Goodrich Rd., Durand, IL
- We have 1 full-time employee, 2 part-time employees, and 43 volunteers. (Durand Station = 27 / Shirland Station = 16)
- We are governed by an elected, non-partisan 3-member board of trustees who serve a term of 6 years (1 elected every 2 years).
- We contract a full-time (24/7) ambulance crew of 1 Paramedic and 1 EMT Basic with Metro Paramedic Services, Inc. at an annual cost of \$547,040.00.
- We have 2 levies which generate the revenue to operate our service—the General Fund and the Ambulance Fund.
  - The annual budget for the General Fund for 2024 is: \$2,414,899.15
  - The annual budget for the Ambulance Fund for 2024 is: \$906,624.22
- Our Fire Protection District's equalized assessed valuation for 2023 is \$147,224,413.

Information about Our Committee

- Committee Members:
  - Board President Claudie Kellicut
  - Board Secretary/Treasurer J. Michael Mulvain
  - Board Trustee David Kinney
  - Durand Fire Chief Kim Steward
  - Shirland Fire Chief Greg Morrow
  - District Resident Kurt Ditzler (also serves as a Deputy Chief for Durand)
  - District Resident Dennis McKee (also serves as a Deputy Chief for Shirland)

Dates that our Committee Met

- Organizational Meeting 6/19/2023  
(where committee was established)
- First Meeting: 8/21/2023
- Second Meeting: 9/18/2023
- Third Meeting: 10/16/2023

Services Offered by our Fire Protection District

- Our Fire Protection District offers the following services and programs:
  - 24-hour Emergency Advanced Life Support (ALS) ambulance service
    - We operate 2 ambulances that are licensed through the State of Illinois, Department of Public Health—1 ALS and 1 BLS (Basic Life Support)
  - Fire protection
  - Rescue (auto extrication, farm equipment/grain bin rescue, water and ice rescue and recovery, storm damage mitigation and recovery)
  - Community service and public education

Intergovernmental Agreements and Partnerships

- We partner with, or have Intergovernmental Agreements and informal agreements with the following Governmental Units or organizations:

	<b>ENTITY:</b>	<b>SERVICES RECEIVED / OFFERED</b>
1.	MABAS Illinois (Division 8)	Mutual Aid for small to large scale events where a member department's needs outstrip their resources
2.	RockCom Communications	Dispatch and communications support through Mercyhealth System
3.	Mercyhealth EMS System	Continuing education for medical personnel; Medical protocols; Resource hospital and EMS services; MD-1 emergency physician scene response/medical guidance; REACT helicopter scene response; electronic ambulance run report program
4.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Pecatonica Fire</li> <li>▪ Davis Fire</li> <li>▪ Rockton Fire</li> <li>▪ Win-Bur-Sew Fire</li> <li>▪ Brodhead Fire</li> <li>▪ Orfordville Fire</li> <li>▪ Tri-District Ambulance</li> </ul>	<p>We provide and receive Auto-aid/Mutual aid for small scale events where additional manpower or resources are needed through reciprocal agreements with neighboring fire departments and EMS service providers</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• We have an agreement with Brodhead Fire Department and Orfordville Fire Department to be their primary response department to incidents in the southern parts of their districts. We are much closer to these areas and our response time is much shorter, which saves valuable time in an emergency situation.</li> </ul>
5.	Metro Paramedic Services, Inc	24/7 Paramedic and EMT Basic housed at the Durand Station to staff our ALS ambulance with full-time trained personnel

- Our Fire District's efficiency has increased through partnerships and intergovernmental cooperation in the following ways:
  - Combining our dispatch to one District through RockCom as opposed two stations in 2021, saved over \$6,700 in the first year (May 1, 2020-April 30, 2021). This also improved the efficiency of dispatch as medical calls to Shirland always have an ambulance response from the Durand Station and structure fire calls for either station require an automatic response from both stations.
  - RockCom also gives our providers in the field direct access to:
    - our auto-aid/mutual aid departments who are also dispatched by RockCom; MD-1 emergency physicians in the field; REACT helicopter; our medical protocols; medical control for advice and orders for treatment of patients in the field; electronic EMS reporting software program
  - In 2020, we purchased a new ambulance with the aid of a State of Illinois contract bidding process. This allowed us to make a capital purchase under this contract and meet the statutory purchasing requirements as well as have the benefit of joint purchasing cost savings.
  - In 2019, we purchased new Self-Contained Breathing Apparatus (SCBA). We completed this purchase along with most of the other fire departments in the County based on a bid for a large quantity joint purchase. This allowed us to reap the benefit of a discount that was shared by all. This also ensured all of the departments were utilizing the same equipment for interoperability purposes.
  - Our EMS service is staffed by personnel through a contracted service, which provides qualified individuals to operate our ambulance without the need for the District to manage the personnel.

Cost savings through grants:

- We have been awarded thousands of dollars in equipment and money to use for the purchase of equipment through the use of grants over the years. Most recently:
  - 2020-Office of the State Fire Marshal-Small Equipment Grant. Award of \$26,000 towards the purchase of a new cardiac monitor (\$31,971.90)
  - 2005-FEMA / Department of Homeland Security-Commercial Equipment Direct Assistance Program (CEDAP) Grant-award of a Thermal Image Camera (TIC)-\$18,500
  - 2005-Assistance to Firefighters Grant Program-Department of Homeland Security. Award of \$62,206.00 to purchase new radios
  - 2003-US Fire Administration's Assistance to Firefighter's Grant Program-Award of \$116,000.00 towards the purchase of new SCBA (\$128,935.00)

- Winnebago County has been awarded approximately \$54 million in Federal funding under the American Rescue Plan for COVID relief efforts. Our District has submitted a budget request to Winnebago County for \$866,614.00 for equipment and capital needs under this program. We are awaiting word on the status of this request, along with the other fire districts in the County.

Review of Laws, District Policies, Rules, and Procedures, Fire District Training Materials, and other Documents

- We have reviewed the following, non-exhaustive list of laws, policies, training materials, and other documents applicable to the Fire District to evaluate our compliance and to determine if any of the foregoing should be amended.
  - ✓ State Statutes from *“Text of Laws Relating to Illinois Fire Protection Districts and State Fire Marshal (2022 Edition)”*
  - ✓ Illinois Open Meetings Act (5 ILCS 120)
  - ✓ Designation of Open Meetings Act (OMA) Officer (5 ILCS 120/1.05(a))
  - ✓ All of Elected Officials have completed OMA Training (5 ILCS 120/1.05(b))
  - ✓ Schedule of All Fire District Regular Meetings for Fiscal Year 2024 (5 ILCS 120/2.03)
  - ✓ Illinois Freedom of Information Act (5 ILCS 140)
  - ✓ Designation of FOIA officer (5 ILCS 140/3.5(a))
  - ✓ FOIA Officer Training (5 ILCS 140/3.5(b))
  - ✓ Computation and Retention of FOIA Requests (5 ILCS 140/3.5(a))
  - ✓ Posting Other Required FOIA Information (5 ILCS 140/4(a); 5 ILCS 140/4(b))
  - ✓ List of Types or Categories of FOIA Records under Fire Protection District’s Control (5 ILCS 140/5)
  - ✓ Periodic Meetings to Review Closed Meeting Minutes (5 ILCS 120/2.06(d))
  - ✓ All of our Elected and Appointed Officials who meet the requirements have filed statement of economic interests (5 ILCS 420/4A-101; 5 ILCS 420/4A-101.5)
  - ✓ Sexual harassment prevention training (775 ILCS 5/2-109(c))
  - ✓ Our Intergovernmental Agreements
  - ✓ Our Mutual Aid Agreements and/or Contracts
  - ✓ Our budget and financial documents
  - ✓ State Ethics Laws, including, but not limited to the State Officials and Employees Ethics Act (5 ILCS 430/1-1)

## What Have We Done Well?

- Contract to provide for a full-time Paramedic and EMT Basic at the station 24/7 to respond to EMS calls. This provided three significant benefits to our District residents:
  - Raised our level of service from Basic to Paramedic. Patients receive the highest level of care, which includes: advanced airways; medications; cardiac monitoring; and other advanced life-saving procedures and treatment in the field;
  - Full-time crew on duty at the Durand Station 24/7 to provide an immediate response to calls for service. This reduces our response time in critical situations where time is of the essence, allowing for better chances of survival and earlier treatment for those patients needing immediate medical care;
  - Provides for full-time trained employees without the need for us to manage the individual employees and their benefits.
- Joint purchasing and purchase of large items through State of Illinois purchase contract:
  - Turnout gear, SCBA, and our ambulance were purchased under joint purchasing programs or contract purchasing procedures. This provides us with standardized equipment to ensure interoperability with other departments and allows us to purchase these items at a cost savings to the District.
- Use of grants to make significant equipment purchases allows us to take advantage of additional cost savings to local tax payers.
- Active involvement in MABAS and our local fire chiefs organization, the Winnebago Fire Chiefs Association (WFCA) provides opportunities for our organization to stay informed of changes in laws, best practices, training, and cost savings opportunities alongside our area counterparts.

## Transparency to the Community (Tax Payers):

- Annual schedule of monthly meetings is posted for public notice;
- Annual tax levy is published and discussed in an open meeting as a posted agenda item;
- Agenda for each meeting is posted for public notice;
- Treasurer's report is prepared monthly;
- An audit by an outside accounting firm is conducted on an annual basis;
- The Fire Protection District offers residents many opportunities to provide feedback:
  - Monthly meetings are held the third Monday of the month and open to the public. Residents may provide public comment at every meeting.
  - The Fire Protection District's annual Budget and Appropriation Ordinance is available in tentative form at least 30 days prior to its adoption at an open meeting of the Board.

- The Fire District's annual property tax levy is approved at an open meeting of the District's Board in accordance with the Open Meetings Act. The Board follows all public notice and hearing requirements under the Truth in Taxation Law prior to adoption of this annual tax levy. **[The Fire Protection District's annual levy is also subject to the limitations of the Property Tax Extension Limitation Law.]**

What Inefficiencies Did We Identify/What Are our Next Steps?  
What Can We Do Better or More Efficiently?

- We did not find any "inefficiencies" in our operations.
- As we move forward, we should strive to take advantage of joint purchases and shared services where it is cost effective.
- We remain open to experiences shared by other departments to enact changes or practices that could make us more efficient and effective within our District.

Submitted by:   
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Claudie Kellicut-Chairman  
Decennial Efficiency Committee  
Winnebago County Fire Protection District #1

Date: November 30, 2023