

Agenda:

Fire Board Meeting

December 03, 2020

Douglas Young

Fire Chief of Department

To the township officials of Gilford, Juniata and Fairgrove, the members of the Fairgrove Fire Department send our heartfelt thanks for your continued support. The last 11 months has changed the way the members of many fire departments normally function. I will speak on that further in this letter.

The fire department membership was changed back in the mid 70's to allow 20 members and 5 additional probational members. The 5 probational members would attend business meetings and participate in monthly training.

Currently we have a total of 22 on our department. A breakdown is 18 full time volunteers with 4 additional which are probational until they get their year of probation in and or pass the fire academy being held at the Caro Fire Department. Of the 4 probational members 2 have been through the academy and been on fire departments in this County and 1 is currently attending the fire academy.

We currently have three additional applicants which would like to join the Fairgrove Fire Department.

The Fairgrove Fire Department is owned by the Village of Fairgrove which covers not only the Village of Fairgrove but also provides fire coverage to sections in Fairgrove, Gilford and Juniata Townships through contracted services. The fire department covers approximately 64 square miles.

From January 2020 through December 01, 2020 the members of the fire department have responded to 71 emergency calls for help through the Tuscola County Central Dispatch. The calls ranged from structure fires to vegetation fires to extrication of individuals in motor vehicle accidents to setting up landing zones for an Air Ambulance to responding to wires down and transformers sparking, performing CPR on a friend or family member and assisting MMR and the Tuscola County Sheriff's Department.

The Fairgrove Fire Department continues to have an excellent working relationship with our surrounding fire departments through our continuous training, working together and meeting together. The Fire Department responded to 29 mutual aid requests from our neighboring departments and Fairgrove fire requested aid on 6 occasions.

At the January Tuscola County Firefighter Association, Sawyer Smith was voted the Tuscola County Firefighter of the Year. Sawyer received a recognition bar and award and his name added to the traveling plaque. This is two years in a row that a Fairgrove Fire Department member has received this recognition.

The Fairgrove fire department is an active member of the Tuscola County Fire Chiefs, the Tuscola County Fire Association, the State of Michigan Fire Association, the Tuscola County All Hazards Group and a member on the Local Emergency Planning Committee.

Through the Tuscola County Fire Chiefs, we are also members of Michigan Mutual Aid Box Alarm System or MABAS. This year we were called to send an Engine

Company to help back fill Fire Departments in Saginaw County due to the dam breaches and flooding in Midland, Saginaw and Bay Counties.

2020 has definitely mandated changes in not only our fire department but each fire department in our county.

Shortly before the State of Michigan placed restrictions on gatherings and temporally closing offices, we did have one fund raiser which was our Fish Fry. This is the only fund raiser we were able to do this year.

Through the Tuscola County Health Department, we implemented new protocols to our responses when responding to certain emergency calls. We had to curtail our business meetings and our trainings were either on line or done in an outdoor environment where we were at least 6 feet apart and wearing masks in the apparatus and in the fire hall.

Our department did many birthday parades with our surrounding departments and agencies which included Akron, Caro, Reese, Unionville fire departments, MMR, Akron-Fairgrove PD, ACW Ambulance, MSP, TCSD and DNR. What a thrill to see the huge smiles on the kids' faces as we drove by with lights and sirens. We also helped put smiles on the older adults when we were requested for their birthdays.

This year Akron and Fairgrove Fire Depts. along with A-F Police lead a parade detail of graduating students from Akron Elementary to the High School. After the graduation ceremony the parade then went to the Fairgrove park.

The members also plan to decorate R-11 to participate in the Fairgrove Christmas Lighted parade which is still happening this year.

We normally go into the A-F Elementary school during National Fire Prevention Week and speak to the children about fire safety. The pandemic placed a challenge on many of the fire departments as we are accustomed to going into the class rooms.

We could not go into the school so we spoke to the children outside under a tent.

The message this year was more specific to kitchen safety. We spoke to the Kindergarten and Second grade classes regarding fire safety in the home which included smoke detectors, knowing two ways out of each room and practicing their specific exit drills in the home at night and during the day time. We also left bags of fire prevention materials for the students to take home.

The Tuscola County Fire Departments have Poster Contest during the month of October but were confronted with possibly canceling this annual event. At the Fire Chiefs meeting it was decided to go ahead and have the poster contest. We had to change the date and final judging place as the Tech Center was not able to allow any gathering due to the pandemic. It was determined to have the final judging at the Caro Fire Department training room as it had been approved for training small groups after meeting certain criteria of the health department. It was decided we would proceed and have the first-place winners of each participating fire department come to the November Fire Chiefs Meeting and do the judging prior to the meeting. As this date came close some schools were not ready and the COVID-19 numbers were increasing so we decided to push this event into January.

Fairgrove did get their posters completed and judged. Our winners are

First Colton Donovan

Second Sophia Harmon

Third Blaine Edward Burke

Each winner will receive a trophy locally. The first-place winner for the County will receive a separate trophy.

This year the County Fire Departments received new pagers. These new pagers operate off the State System and not on the Internet system. We had a class on the new pagers and I needed to assign one person to be our contact and programmer through

Digi-Com. That firefighter is Nick Maguire.

Due to the pandemic the Fire Department Instructor Conference was canceled for 2020 but is scheduled in April of 2021. Myself and our two Captains and both training directors are scheduled to attend four days of classes. This takes place in Indianapolis, Indiana. This is the largest training conference which brings thousands of firefighters across the country and around the world. We will be taking various classes from 8:00am to 6:00 pm each day. Experts in each field will be instructing those classes. The knowledge we gain will be brought back to enhance training in our department.

Our department did our annual walkthrough at Star of the West three locations, Vassar Rd., Bradleyville Rd. and in the Village of Fairgrove. We also did a walkthrough at Cooperative Elevator on Shreeves Rd. and the Fairgrove Oil and Propane facility both located in Fairgrove.

New to our area is the Quality Roasting, LLC located at 135 S. Bradleyville Rd. in Gilford. We were given permission to include Caro and Akron fire departments as they may be called for assistance at this facility. Given that idea we will be having both departments included on our other walkthroughs in the future.

This year as in the past we handed out glow sticks and fire prevention magnets for Halloween. Our numbers were down this year by 100 participants.

We experienced a great lose this past September when Carl Childs passed away suddenly after a vehicle accident. Carl was a member of this department for 44 years but continued to do some administrative functions for the department by inputting

our fire runs into the State and Federal National Fire Reporting System. We will miss Carl greatly.

We are still looking into purchasing a fill system for SCBA air bottles. This will include a pump, two bottle containment, cascade bottles and inline CO detector. This will cost around \$46,000.00. We will look at grants. This cost figure was just over what Unionville fire paid for their fill system and a over the phone general cost from Breathing Air Systems.

We would like to give a huge thank you to our Tuscola County Emergency Director Steve Anderson who has kept all our emergency responders with masks, gloves, hand sanitizers, face shields and gowns to help keep us safe in this pandemic.

The members of the Fairgrove Fire Department are very appreciative of the support we receive each year from not only the residents in three townships we proudly serve and protect but all in Tuscola County. We will continue to train and educate our members in the fire science to better serve anyone in need of our service.

If you have any questions please contact me at 989-693-6030. If I can not answer please when you call, leave a number that you can be reached and a short message so I will have the information when I contact you back.

Please do our responders a great service and continue to wear a mask and wash your hands. Be fire safe and health safe.

Yours in The Fire Service,

Douglas Young

Chief of the Department

And All the Members of the Fairgrove Fire Department