



St. Tammany Parish Fire Protection District No. 11
Board of Commissioner's Meeting Minutes
37546 Pine Street Extension, Pearl River, Louisiana
Fire Chief Jack Dockery
May 12, 2026
7:00 pm – 7:57 pm

ROLL CALL

Russell Lindsey – Present
Ryan Dreux - Present
Eugene Swann – Present
Floyd Trascher – Present
Michele Blackwell – Present

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE **INVOCATION** **MINUTES**

Mrs. Blackwell calls the regularly scheduled meeting to order at 7:01 pm. Roll is called, Board members Russel Lindsey, Eugene Swann, Floyd Trascher and Michele Blackwell are present. (Ryan Dreux arrived after roll call). Mr. Floyd Trascher says the invocation and Mr. Russell Lindsey leads the pledge.

Mr. Trascher said he would like to move to open the agenda to move an item on the agenda up, the presentation by George Rosenbohm with Blue Cross Insurance. Mr. Lindsey seconds the motion. All in favor, motion carries. The Presentation for health insurance is moved up on the agenda.

NEW BUSINESS

INSURANCE RENEWAL, GEORGE ROSENBOHM – Chief Jack Dockery

Chief Dockery asked Mr. Rosenbohm to address the Board with the changes in the medical insurance coverage.

Mr. Rosenbohm explains rates are not coming down. Last years increase was a 9% increase and this year is about a 13% or 14% increase. One reason for this, for groups under 50 employees, they are either Community rated or they are Grandfathered. If you remember we did not have a good experience with the Grandfathered plan and the rates would have been higher. For groups under 50 employees, United Health Care, Aetna and Ingram has come in the market and started Small Group Self Funded programs. With the Affordable Care Act, there are no underwriting for groups under 50 employees because it is community rated. Everyone has the same rate by their age. These companies can come in with the Small Group Self Funding, they can take the experience on certain groups and if that experience is good, then they can reduce the rates below what the community rating is. Consequently, groups that are very healthy move away from fully insured plans to these small group self funded plans, thereby, leaving more claims to premium payments. That's why rates are going up. The State Legislature, last year, tried to do away with self funded groups under 50. That was through Blue Cross and that failed so things are status quo. That's how the rates are determined because of healthy groups moving to smaller plans and the claims to premium payments ratio.

I met with Chief Dockery and Chief Parish last week and one of the concerns with the rates are, if you remember what we did was, to get the rates down we moved to the Oschner Network Plan which is called the Blue Connect Plan. Everybody with us is covered by that plan right now which covers St. Tammany and Slidell Memorial. The concern is the doctors are pulling out of the Oschner network and leaving less doctors some of the doctors have pulled out of that network. The only one not on that plan is Chief Dockery. He pays the difference from the Blue Connect Network and the State network which is a HMO Point of Service Plan.

If you look at the first page I gave you, the first column is the rates that we came in with this year, the 2025 rates on Blue Connect. During the year we lost two senior members on the insurance. We lost basically \$3,100 worth of premiums for this year. What Chief Dockery and Chief Parish suggested to do is, move the funding for the firefighters from the Blue Connect Plan to the State Network Plan, which is a bigger network, so they can have their doctors they lost. If we do what they are requesting, it would save us \$2,000. They also asked for a National Network to be the buy up plan which covers all the states and the employee would pay the difference for the buy up plan.

Chief Parish said the second column renewal is the same plan as last year but, with the new cost. We do have some employees that are having problems with their doctors, especially specialties, since some have pulled out of Oschner. We wanted to look at the State Plan for them and look at the National plan. Today we have the Blue Connect Plan and would like make the State Plan as our base plan because it opens them up to more doctors in Louisiana. If anyone wants the option for the Nation wide program they can pay for the buy up. For example, Picayune has Oschner clinics, but they will fall outside of the network because it's outside of Louisiana. We would like to pay for the higher plan and stay competitive with the other fire departments. Insurance is such a huge thing for us. We have room in the budget to do the higher premium. If we replace the 3 people we lost this year, the new premium would be less because it would not be a rate for over 60 years old. The cost would be about the same as the rates we are paying now. We are also under budget for insurance right now. This also is much cheaper than staying with the old plan.

Mr. Swann asked what if an employee is out of town and gets into an accident, would they be covered? Mr. Rosenbohm said not on the Blue Connect Plan that we have right now. They would only be covered if it was an emergency or life threatening. But, on the State plan they would be covered in any State they travel. On the State Plan, this includes all Blue Cross HMO providers. It is not limited to Oschner doctors. Chief Parish said the Pediatricians are the best example I can give you. Most pediatricians have left Oschner.

Since the decision has to be in around the next Board meeting on June 9th, Mr. Trascher asked how does the Board feel about the renewal? Mr. Lindsey said he has no problem with it going to the new plan and thinks its something we should do and thinks that having decent health care would help hold on to employees. Mr. Trascher asked if there were any other discussions? With no discussion, Mr. Trascher makes a motion to authorize the renewal contract with the Blue Cross POS plan and make the Blue Cross Premier the buy up option, with the cost being the employees responsibility. Mr. Lindsey seconds the motion.

Chief Parish asked for Mr. Rosenbohm to give us a page to show the difference in the two plans for the employees and this will let them see the cost difference of the two plans.

Mr. Rosenbohm wanted to add two things, we do have Section 125, Cafeteria Plan, which allows the premium that the employees pay would be taken out before taxes. He also said he is available to come out and explain this to the employees. Chief Parish would appreciate if he would come and explain it to the employees. Mr. Rosenbohm continued, we also have a program, the Employee Benefit Program, that is a software for the employees that will tell him what the deduction would be if he wanted to go to the higher plan. The program is called Ease, which has a 24/7 access and they can check their co pays. He also explained an HSA program has a higher deductible health plan and does not have co-pays. Any money you put into that has to be spent on medical cost. It carries on to the next year so you don't loose it.

Mr. Trascher reads the Resolution 2026-011, but ask that the wording be corrected to reflect the change in plan to Blue Cross POS plan with the option of the the National plan (Blue Cross Premium Plan) as the buy up plan. Mrs. Blackwell does a roll call vote, all in favor, motion carries. We will move back to the regular schedule of the Agenda.

MINUTES

MINUTES FOR APPROVAL

Has everyone read the minutes of the meeting held on April 12, 2026? Mr. Trascher read the minutes and moves to adopt them with the video governing. Mr. Lindsey seconds the motion. All in favor, motion carries.

FINANCIAL REPORT – Chief Jack Dockery

For the month of April we are looking for a range of 33%. Everything looks to be under budget. Fuel came down a little and on the second page, we addressed Line Items 6486 and 6495, we will address that at some point this year, for the new Ambulance. Line Item 6422, Board of Commissioner's, come to find out, it was advertisement for the millage that was added to that line item which we don't really use that section and it will get back in line later in the year. Payroll looks fine, everything is under the 33%. The financials look good and there are no questions.

EMS

For EMS we brought in a total of \$16,407.12. Originally we had \$18,467.60, but we had some refunds. We still came out with \$16,407.12. We are at 34.81%, for EMS services as of April.

The new sheet in front of you is our Fire Recovery. This shows for April, and so far we submitted \$1,345.50, and we received \$643.50. This gives you the breakdown of last month and this year in total so far of what we submitted and what we have taken in from it.

Chief Dockery and Chief Parish explain that they had the yearly visit last Thursday by the Department of Health and Hospitals for the State Inspection and they inspect and re-certified us and everything came out great.

Mrs. Blackwell asked for any other questions. With none, we can move to the Chief's Report.

CHIEF'S REPORT

STRUCTURE FIRE	1
(Mutual Aid District 7)	
WOODS/GRASS FIRE	4
(1 Mutual Aid District 7)	
MOTOR VEHICLE CRASHES	2
EMS	47
PUBLIC SERVICE	9
DISPATCHED/CANCELLED	11
FALSE ALARMS	5
LAW ENFORCEMENT SUPPORT	4
SMOKE INVESTIGATIONS	2
 TOTAL	 85
 YEAR-TO-DATE CALLS	 341

OLD BUSINESS

DISCUSS MILLAGE RATES – Chief Jack Dockery

Mr. Floyd Trascher has the list of the millage rates as they are right now and we spoke at the last Board meeting and came to the general consensus to leave it the same as last year. This is the discussion phase and before we take any actions on it, we need to go to Public Comment. This year I budgeted \$2,457,000. We will be close to that and this year again we should bring in close to that. Right now, I feel it's the correct thing to do with the environment that we are in.

Mr. Trascher said we discussed this at our last meeting and I think it's the consensus of the Board to leave it as it is also. With the environment, we don't want to ask for any millage increase or up any of our millage's at this time. We would like to get some of the major acquisitions and the repairs that we are working on behind us and after, we may be able to look at rolling back some of the millage's at that time.

PUBLIC COMMENT – PERTAINING TO MILLAGE RENEWAL

Mrs. Blackwell asked if there are any Public Comment? We are open for Public Comment. We have no Public Comment.

ADOPT MILLAGE RATES – Chief Jack Dockery

Mr. Trascher has Resolution 2026-012 and reads the Resolution into the record adopting the millage rates as follows:

<u>Acquisition & Maintenance 1069065</u>	<u>10.000</u> mills
<u>Acquisition & Maintenance 1069104</u>	<u>15.000</u> mills
<u>Acquisition & Maintenance 1069137</u>	<u>6.000</u> mills
<u>Acquisition & Maintenance 1069034</u>	<u>10.000</u> mills

Mr. Trascher makes a motion to adopt the Resolution 2026-012, Mr. Lindsey seconds the motion. Mrs. Blackwell calls a roll call vote. All in favor, motion carries.

NEW BUSINESS

INSURANCE RENEWAL, George Rosenbohm – Chief Jack Dockery

(Moved up on the Agenda)

REMOVE FROM SIGNATURE CARDS – Chief Jack Dockery

Mrs. Blackwell explains that we have a matter of housekeeping. Emile Lombard, Pamela Little, Michael Tassin and Don Thanars is still on the signature cards for the bank. Mr. Trascher reads Resolution number 2026-013, removing the above prior Board members from the signature cards at Whitney National Bank. Mr. Trascher makes a motion to adopt the resolution, Mr. Lindsey seconds the motion. A roll call vote is called, all in favor, motion carries.

DISCUSS COLLEGE APPOINTMENT TO THE CIVIL SERVICE BOARD – Michele Blackwell

I got a letter and email stating that Beatriz Acosta is due for reappointment or replacement for the college appointment. Do we want to renew or go to the list for a replacement? Her appointment expires on June 29th, but we have 90 days to appoint someone. Do we want to reappoint Ms. Acosta or get a new list to choose? Getting the list may take a while to receive from the universities. Mr. Trascher moves that if she is willing to serve, we reappoint Ms. Acosta. Mr. Lindsey asked if there were any issues? Captain Anderson said she missed a few meetings. It has to be three consecutive meetings missed but she missed 2 and made the 3rd a couple of times. Mrs. Blackwell asked if we knew if she was willing to serve and Mrs. Rinkus said she spoke to her and asked if she could come to our meeting and thought she would be here. We will send a letter to the universities for the list and see how long it takes. If you reappoint her, the term is for 3 years unless she defaults. The appointment has to be someone with a college degree that lives in the area. If she is not reappointed, she can still serve until the appointment is made. The board meets once each quarter unless additional meetings are needed.

Mr. Trascher withdraws the motion. We will wait for the list and then decide to appoint someone. We can wait until the next meeting to discuss.

PUBLIC COMMENT – Chairperson Michele Blackwell

Mrs. Blackwell ask, do we have any other Public Comments?

Mr. Swann asked where do we stand on the renovations of the station? Chief Dockery said he spoke with District 2 for their drawing of their new station and also spoke with a couple other Chief's and once they get their drawing in, I will present it to the Board so we can look at what fits in the footprints of our station. This is for a Grant for a new station. Keith Davidson, with VFIS, is going to write the application for the grant.

With no other comments, do we have a motion to adjourn? Mr. Lindsey makes a motion to adjourn. Mr. Trascher seconds. All in favor, motion carries.