

**EFFICIENCY REPORT FOR THE  
CENTRAL STICKNEY FIRE PROTECTION DISTRICT**

**APPROVED BY THE CENTRAL STICKNEY FIRE PROTECTION DISTRICT'S  
COMMITTEE ON LOCAL GOVERNMENT EFFICIENCY ON AUGUST 8, 2024**



I. Introduction:

The Central Stickney Fire Protection District (“Fire District”) is located in southwestern unincorporated Cook County, adjacent to the City of Chicago. The Fire District’s jurisdictional boundaries encompass approximately four square miles in area, serving approximately 4,700 residents and a sizable industrial base. The Fire District was founded in 1966. The Fire District’s administrative offices are located at 4951 Lotus Ave, Stickney Township, Illinois 60638. The Fire District owns, operates, and maintains three fire apparatus, two ambulances, and three support vehicles which are stored at the same facility housing its administrative offices.

The Fire District operates under the auspices of the Illinois Fire Protection District Act. 70 ILCS 705/1, *et seq.* The Fire District is governed by an appointed three-member Board of Trustees. By statute, the Fire District’s Board of Trustees is authorized to acquire real estate, enter contracts, employ personnel, adopt ordinances and rules and regulations, and otherwise take all actions necessary to provide fire protection services, emergency medical services and hazardous materials responses to its constituents. 70 ILCS 705/6.

The Fire District’s annual budget for the 2024/2025 fiscal year is \$1,014,545. The anticipated revenue for the 2024/2025 fiscal year is \$1,062,000. The Fire District’s cash on hand at the conclusion of the 2024/2025 fiscal year is anticipated to be approximately \$1,119,717. The Fire District’s current equalized assessed valuation is \$130,293,514. Real estate property taxes are the primary source of revenue for the Fire District. Service fees (including ambulance charges) and Illinois replacement tax receipts are the other main sources of revenue.

The Fire Chief runs the Fire District’s day-to-day operations and is one of thirty-six part-time employees. The Fire District does not employ any full-time personnel. The Fire District’s administrative office is located at 4951 Lotus Ave, Central Stickney, Illinois 60638. The Fire

District has fully staffed regular office hours open to the public at least twenty hours per week. The Fire District's Fire Station is manned on a 24/7 basis with at least four firefighter/paramedics or firefighter/emergency technicians working each shift. The Fire District's Board of Trustees regular meetings are scheduled for the second Thursday each month at 6:30 p.m. The regular meetings are held at the Fire District's administrative offices and are conducted in conformance with the Open Meetings Act.

II. Information About The Decennial Committee:

A. Committee Members:

|                            |                   |
|----------------------------|-------------------|
| Fire District's Fire Chief | Brian McMahon     |
| Fire District Trustee      | Bruce Zelasko     |
| Fire District Trustee      | Fortino Carrillo  |
| Fire District Trustee      | Karl Frixen       |
| Fire District Resident     | Sue Stanearth     |
| Fire District Resident     | Patricia Mucerino |

The original Fire District Resident members of the Decennial Committee were appointed to their positions by a vote of the elected Fire District Board of Trustees on June 8, 2023. However, Patrick Hansen moved from the jurisdictional boundaries of the Fire District prior to the February 8, 2024 Decennial Committee meeting. The Board of Trustees voted to appoint Sue Stanearth to replace Mr. Hansen as member of the Decennial Committee at its regular meeting on February 8, 2024.

B. Dates of Decennial Committee Meetings

First (Organizational) Meeting      May 11, 2023

Second Meeting: February 8, 2024

Third Meeting: August 8, 2024

The Decennial Committee meetings were conducted in conformance with the provisions of the Open Meetings Act.

III. General Overview of Governing Statutes, Ordinances, Rules and Policies

The Fire District operates in compliance with the following statutes:

Illinois Fire Protection District Act. (70 ILCS 705/1)

Illinois Open Meetings Act (5 ILCS 120)

Illinois Freedom of Information Act (5 ILCS 140).

Illinois Truth in Taxation Act (30 ILCS 200/18-55)

Illinois Human Rights Act (775 ILCS 5/1-101)

Illinois Local Records Act (50 ILCS 205/1)

Illinois Public Funds Investment Act (30 ILCS 235/1)

Illinois Public Officials Prohibited Activity Act (50 ILCS 105/1)

All other applicable Illinois statutes

As part of good governance and implementing best practices in the management of day-to-day operations, the Fire District has adopted the following ordinances, policies, and procedures:

Travel, Meals, and Lodging Reimbursement Policy

Sexual Harassment Policy

Investment Policy

Gift Ban Policy

## Central Stickney Fire Protection District Fire Department Standard Operating Guidelines

### IV. Programs Offered by The Fire District.

The Fire District provides fire prevention services, emergency medical services and hazardous materials response services to its residents. Those same services are provided to surrounding communities under mutual aid agreements. The Fire Department also provides public education to the students, faculty, and administrators at the local grammar school, the Charles J. Sahs School. The Fire District also conducts “active shooter” drills, fire drills, and tornado drills at the Charles J. Sahs School. The students at Charles J. Sahs School tour the Fire District’s facilities and receive information on fire safety annually during Fire Prevention Week. It also conducts an annual open house of its facilities open to the public. The Fire District also installs and adjusts child safety seats and provides free smoke alarms to its residents. The Fire District provides CPR and AED training, at no charge, to the Central Stickney Park District’s employees and residents at the Park District’s facilities. There is also increased and improved intergovernmental cooperation with the Central Stickney Sanitary District regarding the maintenance and repair of fire hydrants and providing water service generally.

### V. Intergovernmental Agreements, Intergovernmental Cooperation, and Shared Services

The Fire District is a party to numerous intergovernmental agreements and intergovernmental programs relating to fire safety, emergency medical services, and hazardous materials responses:

- MABAS (Mutual Aid Box Alarm System) Illinois
- MABAS DIVISION 21
- Villages of Bedford Park, Summit, Stickney, and Forest View for automatic mutual aid

- Oak Lawn Regional Emergency Communications Center
- CART (Combined Agency Response Team)
- NIMS (National Incident Management System)

As stated previously, the Fire District offers public education and fire prevention safety programs to the students, faculty, and administrators at the Charles J. Sahs School. The Fire District also cooperates with the Cook County Building Department in the permitting process to ensure that all new construction and improvements comply with the Fire District's fire safety regulations prior to the issuance of a building permit.

The Fire District has received numerous grants for the purchase of fire apparatus, ambulances, and equipment from the State of Illinois and the Federal Emergency Management Association. Those grants were subject to grant agreements.

#### VI Transparency

The Fire District complies with the provisions of the Open Meetings Act, the Freedom of Information Act, and the Local Records Act. The Fire District also maintains a website which provides information to the public. Copies of the Fire District's ordinances, resolutions, audits, financial statements, and other public documents are available at its administrative offices during regular business hours. The Fire District provides public notice via newspaper publication and holds a public hearing in conjunction with the adoption of its annual budget and appropriation ordinance.

#### VII Efficient Operations

Evidence of the high level of service provided by the Fire District to its residents is the approval of all four referendum questions presented to the voters over the last thirty years. Those referendums include:

- April 5, 1996 – Approving the issuance of \$411,000 in bonds to purchase fire equipment.
- April 5, 2005 - Approving a rate increase (to the maximum rate) for the annual tax levy for corporate purposes.
- April 4, 2017 – Approving the issuance of \$1.2 million in bonds to purchase a new fire ladder truck and ambulance.
- November 8, 2022 – Approving an increase in the limiting rate for the annual tax levy.
- The Fire District provides fully staffed firefighter/paramedic and/or firefighter/emergency technician on a 24/7 basis. The Fire District’s ability to do so with part-time employees on a limited budget demonstrates its operational efficiency. This is especially the case given that the Fire District was required to increase its level of compensation to recruit and retain qualified personnel in a tight labor market. The Fire District recently implemented a “bonus” plan to promote the recruitment of new hires by current members. The Fire District provides tuition reimbursement to its members for paramedic certification.
- Operational efficiency at the Fire District is also enhanced by outsourcing plan review to a private company for major construction projects. Under the Fire District’s ordinances, the building owner is required to reimburse the Fire District for plan review expenditures. The Fire District also outsources the annual inspection of commercial and industrial buildings. However, the Fire District recently provided the necessary training to its members to obtain the requisite certification to conduct so the annual inspections can now be performed in-house (at a cost savings). Major projects and plan review are still outsourced. The Fire District also outsources its ambulance billing, resulting in savings on administrative expenditures.
- The Fire District contacted three vendors to obtain proposals for outsourcing its firefighting and emergency medical response services due to staffing concerns. All three vendors submitted proposals which were cost prohibitive.
- Many of the improvements and repairs to the fire station are undertaken in-house and performed by members of the Fire District. This results in substantial savings compared to having the work performed by outside contractors.

#### VIII Recommendations for Increased Accountability and Efficiency

- Continued efforts at obtaining grants from the State of Illinois and the Federal Emergency Management Agency. The Fire District will increase its efforts in reaching out to federal

and State elected officials to secure grants and other sources of funding for fire prevention and emergency medical services.

- Continued efforts at enhancing intergovernmental cooperation to improve services and decrease its cost of operations.
- Continued efforts at recruiting and hiring qualified firefighter/paramedics and firefighter/emergency medical technicians.

Submitted by:   
Fire Chief, Decennial Efficiency Committee of Central Stickney Fire  
Protection District

Date: 8-8-29