

WATSON FIRE PROTECTION DISTRICT, EFFINGHAM COUNTY, ILLINOIS

REPORT FOR COMPLIANCE WITH DECENNIAL COMMITTEES ON LOCAL

GOVERNMENT EFFICIENCY ACT

FILED

APR 09 2024

I. UNIT OF GOVERNMENT SUBMITTING THIS REPORT

WATSON FIRE PROTECTION DISTRICT

II. INFORMATION ABOUT OUR FIRE DEPARTMENT

Michelle Kaebler
COUNTY CLERK AND RECORDER
EFFINGHAM COUNTY, ILLINOIS

- A. We are located in Effingham County, one of 10 fire protection districts within our county.
- B. Our Fire Protection District has approximately 1549 houses within it. Our District has about 75 square miles which it covers.
- C. We have three (3) trustees on the Board of Trustees for the Watson Fire Protection District.
- D. Our fire department consists of twenty (20) firefighters.
- E. Our annual budget for 2023 is \$543,300.00.
- F. Our Fire Protection District's equalized assessed valuation (EAV) for 2023 tax distributions is \$74,110,484.00

III. INFORMATION ABOUT OUR COMMITTEE

A. COMMITTEE MEMBERS:

Fire Protection District Trustee: Eric Webb
Fire Protection District Trustee: Steven L. Rudolphi
Fire Protection District Trustee: D. Alan Davis
Fire Protection District Resident: Travis Buhnerkempe
Fire Protection District Resident: Rob Arnold
Fire Protection District Resident: Donnye Davis
Watson Department Fire Chief: Eric Loy

B. DATES THAT OUR COMMITTEE MET: (50 ILSC 70/20)

First (organizational) meeting (must occur prior to June 10,2023)	March 13, 2023
Second meeting	April 10, 2023
Third meeting	May 10, 2023
Fourth meeting	Nov. 13, 2023
Fifth meeting	March 11, 2024
Sixth meeting	April 8,2024

IV. PROGRAMS OFFERED BY OUR FIRE PROTECTION DISTRICT

A. Our district offers the following services and program:

1. Respond to building, vehicle, grass/brush/field fires
2. Respond to activated fire and carbon monoxide alarms.
3. Respond to motor vehicle accident, providing extrication services if necessary.
4. Respond to EMS calls, providing First Responder Level care, non -transport service.
5. Respond to miscellaneous calls for service from the public/residents.
6. Provide mutual aid assistance to co-members of MABAS Division 54.

B. Other services/programs we could possibly provide:

1. None at this time with the current staff. We have considered assisting with smoke alarm installation and fire safety programs in our local schools when staffing is better.

V. SERVICE/INTERGOVERNMENTAL AGREEMENTS

A. Mutual Aid Box Alarm System-Illinois Member: As a member, the district is part of a multi-state mutual aid group, which can provide mutual aid assistance across all disciplines of the fire service and EMS. This could be in the form of manpower, equipment, special response teams and ect. Regionally, we are a member of MABAS Division 54, which consists of fire departments and EMS agencies from:

- a. Altamont
- b. Beecher City/Tri-County
- c. Dieterich
- d. Edgewood/Bi-County
- e. Effingham
- f. Montrose
- g. Shumway
- h. Teutopolis
- i. Brownstown
- j. Crooked Creek
- k. Farina

- l. Olney
- m. Ramsey
- n. St. Elmo
- o. St. Peter
- p. Sigel
- q. Stewardson
- r. Strasburg
- s. Vandalia
- t. Wade (Newton)
- u. Rural Med (EMS)
- v. Jasper County EMS
- w. Arrow EMS

- B. Our residents have benefited from these agreements by having a pre-planned, readily available, no cost, mutual aid solution made up of hundreds of departments or districts and thousands of personnel across multiple states.

VI. We have reviewed the following, non-exhaustive list of Laws, Policies, Fire Protection District Rules and Procedures, Fire Protection District Training Materials and other Documents

- X State laws applicable to Fire Protection Districts, including, but not limited to, the Fire Protection District Act (70 ILCS 705/0.01 et. Seq.)
- X Illinois Open Meetings Act (5 ILCS 120)
- X Policy on public comment
- X Designation of OMA officer (5ILCS120/1.05(a))
- X All Elected Officials have completed OMA Training (5ILCS120/1.05(b))
- X Schedule of All Fire Protection District Regular Meetings for Calendar or Fiscal Year (5 ILCS 120/2.03)
- X Illinois Freedom of Information Act (5 ILCS 140)
- X Designation of FOIA Officer (5 ILCS 140/3.5(b))
- X FOIA Officer Training (5 ILCS 140/3.5(b))
- X Computation and Retention of FIOA Requests (5 ILCS 140/3.5(a))
- X All of our Elected Officials have filed statement of economic interests (5 ILCS 420/4A-101; 5ILCS 420/4A-101.5)
- X Sexual harassment prevention training (775 ILCS 5/2-109(c))
- X Our Intergovernmental Agreements
- X Our budget and financial documents (available upon request)

VII. What Inefficiencies did we indentify. What are the next steps.

1. Needing more volunteer firefighters
2. Trying to recruit the fire district citizens to become firefighters
3. Need to update policies and procedures for the department
4. Need to update department By-Laws

VIII. What can we do better or more efficiently

1. We have restarted medical calls in 11/2023 post-covid
2. Continue to keep equipment well maintained and up to date.
3. Continue to keep all firefighters up to date on training and trustees as well.

IX. What are our departments strengths

1. Good condition of department vehicles, equipment and fire station.
2. Department has a good tax base and well managed district finances.

X. Our committee's recommendations regarding increase Accountability and Efficiency

We as a committee feel that Watson Fire Protection District is financially sound at this time. Our equipment is well kept and maintained and because of our ability to work with other area departments within MABAS 54 we have great coverage for our district. Since our district has its own boundaries to work within, we feel no need at this time to combine with any other agency to become more efficient. Especially since our agreement with MABAS 54 and all the departments works well together in time of needed cooperation. Also, each department works within its own tax base boundaries to support their area department and those living there. Therefore, this Efficiency Committee of the Watson Fire Protection District with its available resources feels that we are providing the most adequate and efficient service it can at this time.

Submitted by: _____

Eric L. Webb

Chairman, Decennial Efficiency Committee of Watson Fire Protection District

Date _____

4-8-2024

FILED

APR 09 2024

Michelle Kaelstrom
COUNTY CLERK AND RECORDER
EFFINGHAM COUNTY, ILLINOIS