

History of the Lawton Fire Department

This is the history of the Lawton Volunteer Fire Department and how the volunteers of this organization have molded and strengthened the community. The information includes excerpts from the minutes of the Lawton Village Council (beginning in 1858 which was the incorporation of the village), the Lawton Fire Board (beginning in 1993) and the Lawton Fire Department membership minutes.

December 4, 1858:

James L. Parker and James Courtney were the first Fire Wardens of the Village of Lawton and were named and elected.

April 17, 1860:

Lawton, Michigan N.B. McKinney, Clerk

Approved and ordered to take effect immediately:

“Be it ordained and established by the board of trustees that the Fire Warden shall at least twice in each year (about the first of May and the first of November) cause a thorough examination of buildings in the village and see that the chimneys are safe against fire, and that the stoves and pipes thereto attached are secured in the best manner to prevent fires. At fires, he shall require and compel citizens to obey all orders. He shall abate and remove anything from which any immediate course of fire may be apprehended and shall report to the clerk for prosecution the names of all persons who shall neglect or refuse to put these stoves, pipes or fireplaces in such condition as the warden may deem necessary for safety of property against fires. And each and every person for neglecting or refusing shall be liable to a fine not less than one dollar not more than five dollars, to be recovered as other fines.”

April 13, 1861:

A motion was made and carried that the sum of ten dollars be raised for the purpose of constructing a suitable a reservoir for the use of this village in cases of fires.

March 19, 1866:

On motion of H.V. Harwick, that we raise by the sum of 100 dollars for the purpose of constructing two reservoirs for water and procuring ladders and hooks for fire purposes.

December 5, 1866:

H.S. Douglas received \$1.12 - for services as ½ Fire Warden.

May 15, 1867:

Moved and carried that a committee of three be appointed to ascertain the cost of hooks, ropes, and so forth for the purpose of establishing a hook and ladder company in the village.

June 5, 1867:

The committee on hooks and ladders reported that it was their option it would require an appropriate of \$50 to supply the necessary implements.

June 19, 1867:

The committee on hooks and ladders implements were on motion, instructed to contract with the lowest responsible bidders for furnishing the necessary hooks, ladders and so forth. R.W. Finley, Village Clerk

February 3, 1868:

Motion made and carried that an account in favor of Kinney, Adams and Company amounting to twenty nine dollars for rope and fire hooks be allowed and an order drawn for that amount.

Motion made and carried; that the sum of two hundred dollars be appropriated towards the purchase of a suitable fire engine for the use of this village and that the president and clerk be authorized to draw two orders on the treasury. R.W. Finley, Clerk

March 5, 1868:

Moved and carried: that the fire hooks and rope be placed in keeping of the Fire Warden. W.J. Mc Kinney, Clerk.

September 13, 1868:

Bill of George W. Robinson for expenses incurred in looking for a fire engine for the village in January 1868, \$20.25. Moved and carried that the bill be received.

November 3, 1869:

The Marshall was instructed to examine the chimneys; stove pipes and so forth and see that they are made safe from fires.

April 10, 1872:

The Fire Marshall was Lucius Baker.

April 15, 1873:

The Fire Marshall was D. Johnson.

April 5, 1876:

Ballots taken for fire warden, five votes cast, all for A.L. Mc Ellery. A.L. Mc Ellery declared elected Marshal and Fire Warden for the ensuing year ending April 1st.

April 4, 1877:

Ballots taken for Fire Warden five votes cast all for A.L. Mc Ellery. On motion A.L. Mc Ellery declared Fire Warden.

April 10, 1878:

Ballots cast for Fire Warden all for A.L. Mc Ellery.

October 3, 1894:

On Motion the committee on fire was ordered to notify the Fire Warden to investigate the condition of the stoves, pipes and chimneys in all business buildings on Main Street in said village and report to the council.

December 5, 1894:

Motion made and carried that the Marshall should have charge of the fire engine at fires.

The Marshal reports that the chimney in the Bakery building occupied by H. Kohler on the east side of Main Street should be torn down and new one built from the lower story, also that the roof over the Bakery Oven should be raised enough so that it would be safe.

April 3, 1895:

On motion C.H. Showers was appointed Marshall and Fire Warden.

The following were appointed to the Fire Committee: Mc Keyes, Reynolds, and Smith.

January 6, 1896:

On motion, Trustee Hoyt and the Fire Warden were instructed to examine the fire engine and make what ever repairs were found necessary.

February 8, 1897:

Committee was continued with instructions to prepare estimate of cost of an extension to the town hall sufficient for a lockup and engine house. Said extension is to be of brick. The committee was also to endeavor to secure the consent of the Township Board for the building of said extension.

July 13, 1898:

Resolved, by the President and trustees of the Village of Lawton, County of Van Buren, State of Michigan, at a meeting thereof held at the council rooms in said village on the 13th day of July 1898. That said village do purchase, construct, erect and maintain a system of water works, for the introduction of water into said village, supplying the village and inhabitants thereof with the same, and for the extinguishment of fires; and purchase such grounds, real estate and apparatus, rights and privileges as may be necessary and proper for the securing, construction, erection and maintenance of such system of water works in ordance with the purpose mentioned in Act. No. 3, Chapter XI of the session. Resolution unanimously adopted.

August 3, 1898:

On motion deputy marshal was allowed .50 cents a week to keep fire engine in working order.

July 10, 1901:

On motion the Fire Committee was instructed to furnish Night Marshal Voyers with key to the Engine house and for him to notify said committee of any defect of apparatus.

December 10, 1901:

The Fire Committee was instructed to organize a fire department

October 2, 1907:

The Fire Committee was instructed to erect proper chimney on the jail.

November 6, 1907:

The council voted to buy 1000 feet of fire hose of the National Construction Company at 40 cents per foot.

March 12, 1908

On motion: the resignation of Chas H. Showers, as Chief of the Volunteer Fire Department, was accepted.

July 17, 1908:

Motion made by Trustee Lambert that Trustee Mc Keyes to act with Mr. Packer, and buy a hose cart for the village.

January 3, 1908,

Appointed the following as officers of the Fire Department:

C. H. Showers; Chief,

Fred Gibson; First Assistant,

F. H. Mc Keyes; Second Assistant,

L.A. Packer; Foreman Hook and Ladder,

Charles Giddings; Foreman Hose Department.

Officers were confirmed.

February 13, 1908:

All sprinkling is positively prohibited when there is a fire or an alarm of fire and all water must be shut off from fountains

March 12, 1908:

The council accepted the resignation of Charles H. Showers as chief of the fire department.

April 4, 1917:

Carried. moved and supported the appointment of Jay Markle as Fire Chief be confirmed. The motion was carried.

Moved by Rowe, supported by Young, that payment of men at fires be left to the Fire Chief and that said Chief be authorized to publish notice in regard to teams used in drawing fire apparatus. Carried moved and supported.

December 1, 1920:

President C.A. Fuhrman instructed the clerk to have the chemical fire truck fixed with the necessary apparatus of crossbar and straps to enable it to be attached to any automobile.

March 16, 1922:

A motion was made by Mrs. Gibson that the village pay Leon Maxwell 5 dollars for services rendered at the fire on the Waite farm. Motion carried.

August 2, 1922:

Mr. Packer and the agent from LaFrance Motor Fire Equipment came before the council and brought up the question of purchasing a fire truck. A general discussion followed. Motion made by Mr. Langdon that the above subject in question, be laid on the table until the next regular meeting. Motion passed and carried.

Sept 6, 1922:

The representatives of the C. H. Stephayn and Sons Company, American LaFrance Fire Engine Company, Obenchain/Boyer Fire Engine Company were present and discussed relative merits of their fire trucks and advanced arguments why the village of Lawton should be equipped with proper fire protection. No action taken.

Sept 19, 1922:

A motion was made by Mr. Langdon that the proposition of purchasing a fire truck for the village of Lawton be laid on the table. Motion to do so was carried.

October 12, 1922:

A motion was made by Mr. Langdon that the proposition of purchasing a fire truck should be laid on the table. Motion carried.

April 4, 1923:

A communication from I.M. Smith and Son of Marcellus was read offering to furnish a fire truck body copied after the one used by the village of Marcellus for 200 dollars. The committee, to whom this matter has been referred at a previous meeting, stated that they had seen the Marcellus truck and believed that one like it would be sufficient for our needs. It would carry the present chemical equipment

and about 700 feet of hose. The committee had given I.M. Smith an order to build the truck body. It was moved that they buy. Motion carried.

June 6, 1923:

Bills were presented and paid as follows:

From Packer and Giddings for a fire truck chassis \$490.80

July 3, 1923:

Moved by Leonard, supported by Brody, that Mr. Shanahan be appointed a delegate to the Fireman's Convention at South Haven with permission to take another man with him. Motion carried.

March 29, 1929:

Fire Chief was Leon Hicks

March 10, 1930:

Wayne Abbott Fire Chief, and L. D. Cameron, Assistant Chief

August 5, 1930:

A letter of appreciation and a \$50 dollar check was received from Paul H. Smith, Supervisor of Paw Paw Township, The check was not intended to pay for the good work of the fire fighters of Lawton rendered, as that they could not be paid in money, but to take care of some extra expense. Motion by Buys, supported by Langdon, that chief Hicks return voucher with a letter of thanks from the village council.

September 3, 1930:

Motion by Buys, Supported by Langdon, that a charge of 50 dollar minimum for any call for fire department in rural districts to non subscribers. Motion carried.

March 25, 1931:

The fire Chief was Leon Hicks.

April 1, 1931:

Motion made by Buys, supported by Wales, that L.J. Hicks be authorized to look up prices on a chemical truck suitable for the village of Lawton and submit his findings to the next village board meeting. Motion carried.

Motion made by Buys, supported by Wales, that the president appoint a committee of two with Mr. Hicks to look up and act on fireman and compensation insurance. The president appointed Langdon, Coleman, and Hicks.

Motion made by Coleman, supported by Wales, that the village pay L.J. Hicks a salary of 100 dollars per year for his service as Fire Chief and that he be responsible to see that the fire fighting apparatus be kept in working order. Motion carried.

May 6, 1931:

It was the wish of Fire Chief Hicks that his name be dropped from the village payroll on action taken at the regular meeting to pay Hicks 100 dollars. A motion was made by Coleman and supported by Buys that the motion made at the regular meeting of April 1st be rescinded and put to a vote. Motion was carried.

July 8, 1931:

Motion made by Buys, supported by Coleman, that the clerk be authorized to draw an order to pay L.J. Hicks expense one day attending fireman's convention at Jackson. Motion carried.

October 7, 1931:

Motion was made and carried that a card of thanks be sent to the Paw Paw firemen for their assistance at Harry Steel fire.

November 1, 1931:

Moved by Wales supported by Buys that Reed Brown be paid 10 dollars for damages to new suit of clothes incurred at Steels Fire. Motion carried.

November 10, 1931:

Mr. Giesen and Mr. Brown representing the Ford Motor Co and Hagen Motor Sales explained in detail the qualities of the new ford truck which the company was putting out now. That is was far superior to the truck under the present fire fighting apparatus. The truck they were presenting was equipped with a pumper and other equipment and had been demonstrated to several of the board and chief hicks during the day.

Mr. Frank Bartlett of the Bartlett Firm was present also and explained the advantages of a heavier job with a better power plant which they were offering either equipped or naked as the village saw fit. The gentlemen submitted their figures and departed.

Chief Hicks representing the firemen expressed the sentiments of the fire department stating that they were not asking for elaborate equipment but for a job with sufficient power and a pumper which was really necessary.

The propositions of both jobs were discussed at some length which resulted in a motion by Coleman supported by Wales that the chair appoint a committee of two members of the board in connection with Chief Hicks to consult with the Bartlett Firm for the heavier job. This being the consensus of the board: the equipment not to exceed 2500 dollars. Motion carried. All voting yes. The chair appointed to the committee: Coleman and Wales.

December 2, 1932:

Mr. Frank Bartlett and Charles Hagen being present were asked to retire while the Committee on Fire Truck made their report.

After which Mr. Bartlett was called in to make his final plea which he did and retired. Mr. Hagen was called in for his final plea for the Ford apparatus and retired.

After the gentlemen had made their pleas and retired, the board discussed the matter thoroughly. The investigating committee recommended the purchase from Bartlett agency of fire truck as per specifications before the board at a price of \$2500 and the old model T Chemical truck, less water equipment. It was moved by Coleman, supported by Wales, that the recommendation be accepted. The committee was authorized to sign order for truck and equipment.

January 6, 1932:

Mr. McGraw representing Hewitt Gutta, Pocha, Rubber Corporation appeared before the council with a line of rubber hose quoting prices and showing 50 ft lengths of cotton rubber lined hose which has been in use for 20 years and it appeared to be good enough for 20 years more.

Firemen having prepared a bounteous oyster supper invited the council in, which was accepted. After loading up with oysters, crackers and sandwiches coffee and donuts, the council returned to finish up the meeting.

Motion by Wales, supported by Landon, that the village purchase 250 feet of 2 ½ inch cotton rubber lined hose at 1 dollar per foot and 50 ft sample at 80 cents a foot and 150 feet cotton rubber lined booster hose at 55 cents per ft. Motion carried.

March 22, 1932

The Fire Chief was Leon Hicks

August 3, 1932

Leland Spencer representing the Fire Department was heard in an appeal for rain coats for the fireman. It was moved by Buys, supported by Coleman, that President Stainton appoint a committee of three, to be authorized to make necessary purchase of rain coats for firemen. President Stainton appointed Beam, Conklin, and Beebe as the committee to make purchase of rain coats for firemen.

September 7, 1932

Moved by Buys, supported by Conklin that President Stainton appoint a committee of two, acting with him, to supervise the construction of a chimney in the power house and also building a small door within one of the large doors and providing a way to lock the fire house. Also purchase a stove if found necessary. Motion carried.

May 2, 1933:

The fire chief was Leon Hicks

Sept 5, 1933:

L.L. Hamman of the volunteer fire department was given the floor and reviewed the work done by the fire department.

Moved by Buys supported by Beam that the fire department be paid 10.00 ten dollars for every call responded to in the village. Motion Carried.

1934: Les Hamman was Fire Chief

April 6, 1934:

Mr. Lowry brought up the subject of a sprinkler system at the fire department and water works calling attention to the disastrous fire recently suffered by the Village of Decatur. Matter was referred to water committee for estimates as to cost of installation.

May 1, 1934:

Mr. Hicks also appeared before the Board and made suggestion that the village purchase 100 ft of fire hose each year, thereby replacing hose that is gradually wearing out.

June 7, 1934:

Mr. Hamman appeared before the board on behalf of the fire department with the request that the village board meet with the township boards of Antwerp and Porter and discuss the matter of purchasing a pump for the small fire truck. Mr. Hamman pointed out the fact that the cost of chemicals represents a considerable expenditure each year, which could be eliminated with the use of a pump.

In view of the fact that the small truck is maintained for use in the townships, it was the consensus of opinion that these bodies should shoulder the burden of the expense. President Weurding instructed Mr. Hamman to set a date for this meeting and stated that the board would be glad to meet with the township boards and go over this matter.

1935: Les Hamman was Fire Chief

February 5, 1935:

President Weurding called attention to a complaint which he had received from the fire department in connection with the condition of the battery in the small fire truck. Mr. Burhans was instructed to carefully check batteries in fire trucks every day to make sure they are fully charged.

March 14, 1935:

Mr. Hamman brought up the matter of the fire hose which was damaged at the Meyri fire and moved that the clerk be instructed to purchase sufficient hose to replace same, subject to the recommendation of the fire chief. Motion carried.

June 4, 1935:

A letter was received from the Hewitt Rubber Co. offering to replace the two lengths of hose which was claimed defective at a special price of 50 cents per foot. This policy adjustment was offered in view of the fact that the three year guarantee period had expired. Moved by Hamman supported by Beam that the offer of the Hewitt Rubber Co. be accepted.

October 1, 1935

Councilman Hamman rendered a report in connection with securing someone to blow the fire whistle, which service has always been performed by the Telephone Company, whose office is being moved to Paw Paw. Matter referred to the Fire Dept. Committee.

June 2, 1936:

It was moved by Beam, supported by Weaver, that the Water and Fire Committee be authorized to purchase two new lug tires for the rear wheels of the rural fire truck. Motion carried.

August 4, 1936:

It was moved by Hamman, supported by Lowry, that the Village Clerk be instructed to request Porter and Antwerp Townships to purchase two new tires for front of rural fire truck and an additional 150 feet of $\frac{3}{4}$ inch hose to replace hose which has become defective. Motion carried.

January 4, 1937:

A complaint was read from fire chief L.J. Hicks in connection with the poor service rendered by the tri-county telephone company for their failure to blow the siren after two reports had been sent in at the time of the George Mc Keeby fire.

March 2, 1937:

Fire Chief, Leon Hicks, appeared before the council and requested that 500 feet of 2 inch fire hose be purchased to replace defective and worn out hose. He also suggested that a drying tower be built. After considerable discussion it was moved by councilman Hamman and supported by council man Lowry that a committee consisting of the Fire Chief, Village President, and Clerk be appointed to secure samples of fire hose and be empowered to purchase the necessary hose. Motion carried.

April 27, 1938:

Captain L.L. Hamman of the Lawton Fire Department rendered a complete report in connection with the manner in which rural calls have been answered in the

past. He also stated that the members of the fire department receive no remuneration for any calls made either in the village or the rural. The 10 dollars per call for calls with in the village is placed in the Fire Department fund which is used for purchasing new equipment. No charges have been made for answering calls in the rural.

Burl Unrath also rendered a report in connection with the installation of a water tank on the rural truck to replace the chemicals previously used. Thereby making a very substantial savings.

Supervisor R.G. Hollis, stated that while no funds were available at this time for fire protection, no doubt a special assessment could be levied in the future for fire protection.

Moved by H. Hayne supported by Stanley Hoyt, that the chair appoint a committee of three to investigate the matter of maintaining the rural fire truck effective as of March 1, 1938 and to render a report at the next regular council meeting. Motion carried.

President Beam appointed R.G. Hollis, H. Hayne and Les Hamman.

November 1, 1938:

Mr. C.F. Coyer representative of the Fabric Fire Hose Company appeared before the council and quoted prices of fire hose. Moved by John Wanink, supported by Nathan Hawkins, that the village purchase 500 feet of 2 ½ inch cruiser brand fire hose at 1.10 per foot less 7 cents per foot where couplings are furnished by the village. All voted aye.

March 7, 1939:

The matter of furnishing fire protection to Porter and Antwerp townships was discussed at considerable length. President Beam appointed Frances Lewis as a committee of one, to meet with supervisor Horace Hayne to determine the cost per call for Porter Township.

May 2, 1939:

Motion by Lewis that fire protection for Porter and Antwerp townships be at the rate of 20 dollars per call or the minimum of 150 dollars per year.

March 7, 1940:

A motion was made by Packer, supported by Gillette, that clerk write Michigan Municipal League for prices on red raincoats and aluminum helmets also to W.S. Dailey, Company. Council left it to Fire Chief to decide on choice of equipment to purchase. Motion carried.

April 1, 1940:

Motion was made by Lewis, supported by Welsh that the village appropriate not to exceed 150 dollars for the purpose of buying fire equipment for the estimated needs for the year 1940.

July 2, 1940:

Motion was made by Baldwin, supported by Lewis, that the village send check for 50 dollars to the city of Kalamazoo for fire call to Lawton.

August 6, 1940:

Motion by Welsh, supported by Baldwin, that the Fire Department be paid 100 dollars for fire calls for the year of 1939.

June 3, 1941;

Motion made by Lawton, supported by Weldin that the village pay the Fire Department 10 dollars per call to be used by the Fire Chief as he sees fit. Motion carried.

Motion by Lewis, supported by Reid that after June 15th the fire department shall be relieved of all responsibility for answering rural calls until such time As adequate equipment is acquired.

March 3, 1942:

Burl Unrath was the Fire Chief until he resigned then Lewis Cameron served as acting chief.

May 6, 1942:

President announced the appointment of Frank C. Gillette as Fire Chief succeeding Burl Unrath who resigned. On motion by Baldwin seconded by Lawton, appointment was approved.

March 11, 1943:

The Fire Chief was Frank C. Gillette

November 2, 1943

Mr. Gannon, Fire Chief of the city of Muskegon, who is now on leave of absence to work with the State Department of Public Instruction in setting up training schools for members of fire departments throughout the state, addressed the council explaining in detail how the training schools are conducted. He stated that such a school could be held in Lawton sometime next spring providing a 30 hour course of training at a cost of \$120 of which the Department of Public Instruction guarantees to rebate not less than 50 percent. It was moved by Stainton, recommended by Adams that the president clerk and fire chief be empowered to sign a contract for such school.

March 16, 1944:

The Lawton Fire Department, by its Chief Hazen Abbott, presented the following scale of pay for services at fire for consideration by the council. Village fires each member present: 1.50 per hour for first hour. 1.00 per hour for each hour after first hour. Each call representing at least one hour. Number of men limited to 12, unless in the judgment of the fire chief the extent of the fire justifies the use of more men.

Rural Fires: Each member present: 1.50 per hour for first hour, 1.00 per hour each hour after first hour. Limit of 8 members.

On motion by Adams, seconded by Stainton and carried this wage scale was approved and given immediate effect.

The president appointed Adams, Stainton, and Lawton, as a special committee to confer with the Fire Chief in regard to the possible purchase of new equipment and to receive and bring before the council any suggestions regarding more efficient operations of the fire department.

April 11, 1944:

Analysis of the Annual Cost of the Lawton Fire Department.

Our present equipment is composed of one fairly up to date truck and another which should be replaced within the next few years. Probably soon after the end of the war, plus such equipment as a supply of hose.

The largest item in determining annual cost is depreciation of the trucks. Fire Underwriters estimate the life of a fire truck to be 20 years. Therefore annual depreciation is 5%. The cost of a pumper truck, equipped, is estimated at \$5000 to \$6000. For a conservative basis take the lower figure (\$5000) at 5% is 250.00 per truck and \$500 for two trucks per year.

Our clerk, Francis Lewis has provided us with the maintenance expenses such as pay for firemen, gasoline, oil, etc., telephone and alarm system rental, insurance on trucks, compensation insurance, purchase of hose, misc. permanent equipment and supplies, repair to fire station and misc. expenses over a 5 year period. Thus a fairly just average can be determined. These figures average \$780 and adding the \$500 dollar truck depreciation makes a total of \$1280. This figure we believe to approximate the annual cost of the fire department.

Recommendations for improvement of the fire department:

Equipment to be provided at once:

Minor equipment:

1. 2 ½ inch gate valve, good quality
2. One thread brush.

Major equipment:

1. 4 tarpaulins
2. Purchase or construction of a hose dryer.
3. During the school of instruction the hose will be tested and at that time it will be determined whether additional hose must be purchased. Also other equipment

Gifford S. Adams
C.I. Stainton
N.O. Lawton

Motion was made by Adams, seconded by Lawton, that the purchases as recommended be authorized. The motion was carried.

Mr. Adams presented the following motion. I move that a sinking fund be established to be known as the fire truck sinking fund and that \$2500 be transferred from the general fund to this fund. That \$500 yearly be allocated to this from general taxes. The purpose of this fund is to have the money available when the opportune time comes for the purchase of a new fire truck. Motion Carried.

December 12, 1944:

Hazen Abbott Chief of the Fire Department was present and reported that the clutch on the Number 2 fire truck was worn out and unserviceable. After considerable discussion it was recommended that repair parts be purchased for the clutch if possible to obtain same. However it was agreed that Number 2 truck was under powered for the use to which it is often subjected. And the members of the fire committee were directed to ascertain whether another truck be obtained at this time. Motion passed.

January 2, 1945:

President Packer reported that his inquiries had revealed that no fire trucks are available at the present time as surplus war commodities.

April 3, 1945:

The fire chief was Hazen Abbott

May 7, 1946:

Fire committee presented to the board the seriousness of the fire protection facilities and that the village truck being used for both rural and village calls may cause an adjustment of insurance rates to a higher bracket. The committee recommended that the village and township purchase a new unit. Motion carried.

April 1946:

The fire chief was Hazen Abbott

April 1, 1947:

John Reid was appointed chief

February 3, 1948:

Clerk instructed to advise Fire Chief and Chief of Police that owing to several objections the fire alarm should not be sounded unless it is for a fire.

March 2, 1948:

It was moved by Unrath, seconded by Stofer that the fire department be authorized to use the council chambers for their meetings. Motion carried.

The clerk was asked to write the Fire Chief of Paw Paw, thanking him and his men for their assistance at fires on March 2nd and 3rd.

March 11, 1948:

John Reid was Fire Chief.

The Village Clerk was instructed to write Kalamazoo Fire Apparatus Company at Battle Creek requesting their latest estimate as to when we may expect the new Fire Pumper.

December 7, 1948:

Ernie Welsh was appointed fire chief for 1949.

March 1, 1949:

Moved by Unrath, seconded by Stofer, that the clerk be instructed to write American Fire Apparatus Co., Battle Creek Michigan, for quotation on 100 foot 1 ½ inch fire hose, also 100 feet 2 ½ inch fire hose as well as one dozen brush fire brooms. And further to request from this company a service instruction book for the new pumper purchased from them in March 1948.

July 5, 1949:

It was moved by Unrath, seconded by Stofer, that the council charge Porter Township the sum of \$500 for fire protection during the year 1949, plus any special calls not already included in contract. Motion carried.

December 6, 1949:

Harold Halstead is Fire Chief for the year 1950.

Cliff Atwater is Assistant Fire Chief for the year 1950.

September 8, 1950:

Supervisor C.W. Johnson, Porter Township, was presented by President Adams who discussed the contract regarding the fire protection of the north 2/3 of Porter Township. Harold Stofer made a motion that a new contract for \$600 be agreed upon for 1950 fire protection. Motion carried.

February 6, 1951:

Burl Unrath explained the Fire Department's plan for the repair of the town hall rebuilding.

May 2, 1951:

Fire committee was instructed to try and obtain the small fire siren from Eaton Manufacturing, the siren to be used on the Fire Department phone acting as an alarm when the phone rings.

November 6, 1951:

The Fire Dept. Committee was asked to look into the purchase of a new heating system for the fire hall as the old stove has been condemned by the state fire marshal.

February 5, 1952:

Lowman, reported that the two new fire boxes are ready to be installed.

April 1, 1952:

Bill Russ was appointed Fire Chief

December 2, 1952:

Motion by Lowman that the Fire Committee after checking prices has the authority to purchase 10 new fire coats and helmets.

November 3, 1953:

Contract and working agreement was entered into with Marius Wolff, Contractor for work on the new village building. Total cost for construction of the building not including mechanics is \$25,756.28.

April 6, 1954

A report was given by Conklin on the matter of the village purchasing a water wagon for the fire department. Antwerp Twp. had contributed \$750 and Porter \$850 towards this piece of equipment. The tank was purchased from a Niles Tank Co. for \$485. The cost for tank, pump and hose and other equipment would amount to \$1090. Several trucks have been considered on which to mount the tank. Move by Conklin, second by Stofer that the committee purchase a good used truck and equip it with necessary equipment for rural fire protection. Motion carried.

June 7, 1955:

The Fire Chief was Charles (Chuck) Kelly

Fire Chief Charles Kelly appeared before the council to find out what can be done about the inadequacy of the present fire sirens. He stated that at times it is impossible to hear the sirens in the east end of town. He suggested that a 2 ½ hp siren be placed in the east part of town in addition to those presently in use. Because of certain dead spots Chief Kelly believes that an additional siren in the east end of town would be a good solution to the problem. A large number of firemen live in that vicinity. Another suggestion was that the smaller siren which

is now on top of the Adams hardware building be moved somewhere the school house. The matter was referred to the Fire Committee to take what action they see fit.

July 5, 1955:

Fire chief Charles Kelly appeared before the board for several recommendations for improvement in water service in regard to fire protection. He mentioned the 2 inch main near Nielsen's, the one near the foundry, and the one from the foundry to White Oak street. Kelly would like to have all these 2 inch mains made into 4 inch. Since the pumper on the Chevrolet Fire Truck can pump a 2 inch main dry.

Chief Kelly also asked why nothing had been done regarding getting booster brakes for the GMC fire truck. The present hydraulic brakes are not adequate for the load that the truck carries. Due to a misunderstanding as to who was to purchase the booster brakes, nothing had been done on this matter. It was decided that Bill Russ will have the authority to purchase and install the necessary equipment.

Chief Kelly also mentioned the lack of water for fire protection on north Nursery Street. In case of a fire, north of the railroad on Nursery Street the fire department must run hose from the corner of Second and Nursery, north using one truck about ½ way along the line as a booster. In addition, arrangements must be made with the railroad to hold up trains or the lines must be broken to allow trains to pass. It was stated that this water extension is on the agenda for water extensions in the future.

The inadequacy of water service in other parts of town was also discussed. However, it was felt that if all the needs were taken care of properly, it would require a considerable amount of money and probably a bond issue.

The quotation was read from Lowman electric for taking the present small siren in the downtown area and placing on a pole near the corner of Third and Nursery streets. This siren will have electrical connection with present control boxes in the vicinity of Main Street. The matter was referred to the Fire Committee to take whatever action they see fit.

August 2, 1955:

The booster brake has been installed on the GMC fire truck. The siren is now on the pole near the school house awaiting electrical hookup by Michigan Gas and Electric Company.

Frank Gillette reported that the fire department was considering the sale of the ambulance. He mentioned that the village had several pieces of equipment on this vehicle and he asked that he be given a chance to purchase some of it.

February 7, 1956:

The fire chief was Earl Lawson

April 3, 1956:

The firemen would like to be paid on an annual basis rather than a per fire basis as in the past. The annual payment will be figured as an average of the last five years. Motion carried.

December 4, 1956:

Councilman Blocker stated that the fire department will accept an annual fee of \$500 in lieu of a per fire rate as in the past. It was moved that the fire department will be paid \$250 every six months. Motion carried.

February 5, 1957:

The fire department asked that the village consider the purchase of a new pump to be installed on the water wagon. The pump now on the water wagon would then be transferred to the jeep.

July 2, 1957:

There was some discussion regarding the creating of a fire district. It was moved by Barkenbus that the Fire Committee get a survey of the cost of fire protection to the two townships, Antwerp and Porter. And a joint meeting is to be held with these townships to inform them of the cost of fire protection. Motion carried.

March 4, 1958:

The Fire Committee reported that a settlement was reached with the Porter Township board whereby the township will pay \$1200 per year as their share of the cost for the fire department. The councilmen will meet at a later date with the Antwerp township board.

May 6, 1958:

Trustee Blocker reported on the fire department and advised that a new siren was being installed at the village hall. The fire protection contracts prepared by Attorney Sievers for Porter and Antwerp townships are ready for signing.

August 5, 1958:

Fire Chief was John Kole

Fire Chief John Kole advised that the fire department had worked for some time to purchase a generator costing \$389. The chief asked if the village would buy two flood lights and four cords at a cost of \$134.10. Motion carried.

June 19, 1959:

Committee of trustees, Wanink, Stoker, and Weurding appointed to study the needs for and secure the bids on new fire truck.

August 4, 1959:

Trustee Herman Wanink, chairman of the Fire Department Committee reported on bids for a new fire truck. The council authorized purchase from the Howe Fire Apparatus Company through Mr. M. Mahoney, representative. The new truck equipped with a 750 gallon capacity pump and 500 gallon water tank is to cost \$12,390. Deliver 60 to 70 days.

February 6, 1962:

The clerk was instructed to cover the new water storage tank with the necessary insurance. Two water storage tanks 12,000 gallon capacity, each now located in the water dept building, are being put up for sale. These tanks are in good condition and can be used for water storage for many more years.

March 1963:

The Fire Committee reported that the fire department is accepting bids for a new truck to replace the jeep and the Porter Township had agreed to a \$400 increase for fire protection and that they would make the payments in two per year payments.

July 1963:

Chairman Matthews reported that all equipment has now been transferred to the new truck although it is not completely finished. Work is progressing slowly.

August 1963:

Chairman Matthews reported that the new truck has not been entirely completed and that the turn signals need to be secured for the truck.

December 1963:

Al Matthews reported that the new Fire Chief was Melvin Leonard.

January 1964:

Chairman Matthews reported on fires for the past. Also it was reported that chief Irons had purchased through the civil defense, coats for the fire dept, also extinguishers and first aid kits. They have also secured locker cabinets which will be placed in the fire dept.

August 1964:

B. Drake reported on receiving 4 radio units for the fire department and one unit has been installed. The balance to be installed as soon as possible.

November 1964:

Chairman Drake reported on fires for the month, and raised the question of filling of water tanks for the fire trucks which is usually done at the public works barn. However the winter months the water is shut off because of freezing it was the opinion that a key should be available to get in to turn the water on when needed to fill tanks.

February 1965:

Chairman Drake advised the council that the radio system is now complete and in good working order.

May 1965:

B. Drake reported on the activity of the fire dept for the month he also advised that action is being taken on a new tank wagon for the fire department.

November 2, 1965:

Chairman Drake presented information on the fire phones which have been secured by M. Leonard. The system is for installation of fire phones in several homes of the firemen. Charge would amount to \$36.95 for 10 phones plus the three already in use per month. It was the opinion that 10 phones would be the least that should be installed for fire protection.

October 4, 1966:

It was reported that the 4 new Donsett Fire band truck radios and one base station which the council purchased for \$2,182 are installed and working fine. Considerable coverage is now available in the area with the new radios.

March 5, 1968:

The clerk reported that Chairman Weurding had called and stated that the fire siren at the Nursery Street corner is working perfectly now. New bearings have been installed however the siren will work manually operated but the automatic switch is causing some trouble. Mr. Lowman is working on that presently.

June 3, 1969:

The clerk advised that the Fire Department wishes permits to have a fire works display in the village of Lawton on July 4, 1969. Motion carried. Editors note: The Lawton Fire Department continued to sponsor the Fourth of July fireworks for many years with few exceptions.

October 7, 1969:

Unrath reported that the fire department had contacted him regarding the purchase of a new fire truck. This equipment would replace the 1947 Chevrolet. A motion was made by Unrath, supported by Garrett, that the fire department be given permission to purchase a new fire truck and that the clerk be authorized to sign the necessary papers for financing the same. Motion carried.

April 7, 1970:

Chairman Garrett advised that the chassis for the new fire truck has been received. The clerk was instructed to make the payment of \$5308 to RA Imus for the truck chassis.

July 7, 1970:

Chairman Garrett advised that the fire department is going to purchase some fire ball equipment for practice and instruction.

May 4, 1971:

Chairman Garrett reported that a water ball has been purchased by the fire department and the fire department is asking permission to use the end of the tennis courts to set up the water all assembly. Motion carried.

December 7, 1971:

Councilman Garrett reported that the fire department had selected their new officers: Chief Norm Specht Jr., Assistant Chief Don Price, Secretary Steve Stozicki, Treasurer Dwight I Brown, Truck Master (appointed by the chief) Earl Lawson. Motion carried.

May 5, 1972:

Norm Specht asked that the council expend the money for the overhead door for the fire department. The firemen are going to do all the work involved. He also asked that we furnish the paint for the interior of the fire hall. The waste in the furnace room piles up quite high and the chief pointed out that this is a real fire hazard. Could the village do something about this situation?

Hackenberg moved \$1200 be appropriated for the purchase of the overhead door for the fire hall. Motion carried.

November 6, 1973:

Fire Chief, Norm Specht was present to request a new warning system for the fire department. This plectron warning system will be installed at the Van Buren County Sheriff office and will allow immediate transfer of calls directly to the individual firemen. The request for 20 units and the one unit at the sheriff office will cost approximately \$2700. Councilman Unrath moved that the system be purchased. Motion carried.

November 20, 1973:

Fire Chief Norm Specht was present to inform the council that the plectron equip had been ordered, however an additional \$340 was needed. Motion carried.

April 2, 1974:

President Bohannon informed the Council that the firemen's room was in need of a new floor, and the firemen were interested in installing the floor themselves, if something could be worked which would allow them to earn extra money for other anticipated needs.

July 2, 1974:

The fire department requested \$1000.00 of federal revenue sharing funds to help in the purchase of fifteen additional plectron units. The department has twenty one units in operation.

August 6, 1974:

Councilman Unrath questioned the unusually large amount of gasoline used by the fire department. It was reported that the reason could be that the fire department has been hauling water to fill swimming pools. The fact that the village has not been paid for the water was questioned. Councilman Noble will check into the matter and report back to council.

September 3, 1974:

A report was made by Councilman Noble concerning the fire department filling swimming pools with village water for which the fire dept. received \$350.00. The two pools that were filled required a total of 35,000 gallons of water. One fire dept tank truck was used during one of the fillings. However, Noble stated that the truck was in radio contact at all times and within twelve minutes of the fire hall during this time. An estimated \$60.00 of gas was used in the operation. After discussion Councilman Sanderson, supported by Councilman Noble, moved that the fire dept. pay the village water and sewer dept. \$16.46 for the metered amount of water used, and the fire dept. fund \$60.00 for the gasoline consumed. All in favor, motion carried.

December 3, 1974:

Election of officers for 1975: Fire Chief, Don Price; Asst. Chief, William Cronenwett; Secretary, Sonny Belcher; Treasurer, Steve Stozicki; Fire Board Members, Earl Lawson and Lee Lindsey.

June 3, 1975:

The firemen's auxiliary represented by Mrs. Ladell Hackenberg, asked council permission to paint the fire hydrants in colors commemorating the nations bicentennial. Councilman Kimble, supported by Councilman Noble, moved to grant permission contingent on state approval. Motion unanimously carried.

July 1, 1975:

The following resolution was made by councilman noble, supported by Councilman Kimble: "Be it resolved that the Village Council and Lawton Fire Department thank the Gravel Lake Association for the donation of a resuscitator to the village fire dept."

August 5, 1975:

Fire Chief Don Price stated that the fire fund was being reimbursed for gasoline and the water dept. was being paid the metered rate for water used. In addition, price advised council that it was in the best interest of the fire equipment that the trucks be run.

December 16, 1975:

The following men were elected to office for the year 1976: Fire Chief, William Cronenwett; Asst. Chief, Gary Hazelton; Secretary, James Hitchcock; Treasurer, James Dietz; Fire Board Members: lee Lindsey and Donald Price.

July 20, 1976:

Fire Chief Cronenwett requested authorization to purchase equipment for protection of the firemen. Needed are two helmets, four coats, six pair of boots and ten face shields, to complete the outfitting of the men in the department, at a cost of approximately \$700. Motion carried.

August 3, 1976:

Jim Manning is named Second Assistant Chief.

June 21, 1977:

Bitely reported that the water and sewer committee had met and recommends to council that the fire department be permitted to continue filling swimming pools this summer and to cease operations with no more pool filling after this 1977 season. Standard water rates are to be paid by the firemen to the water receiving account and the fire fund gasoline account with any surplus to be deposited to the fire fund.

August 2, 1977:

Some members of the volunteer fire brigade who were present made remarks centered around the fire department not being allowed to fill swimming pools after this season. As a consequence to this decision by the council, the opinions of the firemen speaking were that the firemen will no longer do fire truck or electrical maintenance in the department. And the firemen have elected not to do the painting of the apparatus room floor. Lengthy discussions ensued.

December 6, 1977:

Following discussion Sanderson moved, supported by Bitely, to adopt the guide lines "Rules of Procedure" in order to maintain harmony and a proper flow of communication between the Lawton Fire Department and the Lawton village council and to establish appropriate channels of decision making. Motion unanimously carried.

January 3, 1978:

Officers for the year of 1978: Jim Manning; Fire Chief, Jim Dietz; First Assistant Chief, Lee Lindsey; Second Assistant Chief, Bill Cronenwett Jr.; Treasurer, Ken Price; Secretary, and Fire Board Members are Bill Maxwell and Marion Price.

February 28, 1978:

The following resolution was adopted:

Resolution

Be it resolved that the chief of the Lawton Fire Department to be authorized to use fire equipment on a volunteer basis to assist nearby fire departments on a mutual aid, step-up basis, during times of natural or man made disaster.

December 5, 1978:

Officers for the Fire Department for the year 1979 are:

Fire Chief; James Manning, First Assistant Chief; James Dietz, Second Assistant Chief ; Marion Price, Fire Board Members are James Dietz, Marion Price, Paul Sampsell

February 6, 1979:

Authorization was given for the Fire Department to purchase 4 wheel drive pickup truck from Dwyer-Vliek Chevrolet for the amount of \$8,230.19.

August 7, 1979:

Smith moved, supported by Bitely, to purchase, for the Fire Department, an Eagle K-51 high pressure breathing air compressor, and necessary attachments, from Air Power Company of Grand Rapids, for a total of \$5091.50 to be paid from Federal Revenue sharing "Civic Betterment" budgeted funds.

Smith moved, supported by Irons, to authorize the clerk to issue a check to Dwyer-Vliek Chevrolet, in the amount of 8202.59, from the fire fund, for a 1979 pick-up truck. Payment is to be made when the truck is picked up by the fire department personnel. Motion Carried.

September 4, 1979:

James Manning submitted his resignation as Fire Chief to be replaced by James Dietz. Marion Price was named First Assistant. No Second Assistant Chief at this time.

December, 1979:

Bids for outfitting the new fire truck were accepted in the amount of \$1902.00 from Dowagiac Steel Company.

April 1, 1980:

Earl Lawson was the high bidder in order to purchase the 1963 Ford Pickup Truck for \$2525.00.

December 2, 1980:

Re-elected officers for the Fire Department for the year 1981:

Fire Chief – James Dietz, 1st Assistant Chief – Marion Price, 2nd Assistant Fire Chief – Paul Sampsell,

August 4, 1981:

1st Assistant Fire Chief Price and 2nd Assistant Fire Chief Sampsell resigned from the fire department.

September 15, 1981:

Elected to fill position of 1st Assistant Chief – Doug Hamel, 2nd Assistant Chief – Dave Goddard

December 15, 1981:

Officers for the Fire Department for the year 1982:

Fire Chief; Don Price, First Assistant; Gary Hazelton, Second Assistant; Sonny Belcher, Secretary; Greg Sanderson, Treasurer; Dick Miller, Fire Board; Bob Lawson and Bill Cronenwett Sr.

January 8, 1982 (Lawton Fire Department Membership minutes):

Jaws of Live were given to the department by an anonymous donor. A team of members were set up to operate it. The department covered a large area including I-94 due to the fact that Lawton was the first department to obtain the Jaws.

January 19, 1982:

Fire chief Don Price submitted a breakdown on calls responded to by the Lawton Fire Department during 1981. Of the 57 Calls 31 were in Antwerp Township and 14 in Porter Township. Price reported that the fire loss for the Year would have been negligible except for the Dwight Brown home loss.

April 6, 1982:

Fire Committee chairman Hackenberg, voiced council appreciation to Bill Maxwell and Dave Goddard for donating over 100 hours of their time in repairing the D.N.R. Fire Department Tanker.

A bid of \$77, 360.00 was accepted from West Shore Services, Inc. for the purchase of a new fire truck.

January 4, 1983:

Authorization was given for the purchase of an emergency base radio station for use by the fire department. Price noted that the equipment would cost \$6000 when new but that an available used base radio can be purchased for \$2295 installed. Price reported that of the 13 fire departments in the county, eleven municipalities now have their own. Following discussion, the motion was carried.

March 7, 1983 (Lawton Fire Department Membership minutes):

Maximum truck speed for Truck #2 is 70 miles per hour. This is for all runs. If violated, driver will be put on suspension.

September 6, 1983:

A motion was made and carried to sell the 1958 GMC Fire truck to John's Truck and Equipment Sales in Rogersville, MO for \$3,603.

September 20, 1983:

The Fire Department purchased a 1963 Chevrolet tank and pumper truck from St. Joseph township for \$8,500. A portion of the money will come from the sale of equipment to be removed from the DNR army vehicle which will be returned to the state.

December 6, 1983:

For the coming year the officers of the Fire Department are:
Chief; Don Price, First Assistant Chief; Tom Osborne, Second Assistant Chief;
Bob Lawson, Treasurer; Dan Carlson, Secretary; Greg Sanderson, Fire Board;
Bill Cronenwett Sr. and Charles Standard

February 21, 1984:

The Fire Department entered into a Mutual Aid Contract in Van Buren County in case of natural or man-made disaster within the county for a term of 5 years.

March 6, 1984:

The Fire Department requested approval to purchase 20 pagers.

March 20, 1984:

The fire committee recommends that a new truck be ordered form Emergency One for \$61,212. The chassis of which will be purchased of J Tapper Inc. of Paw Paw.

December 4, 1984:

The following officers were elected for the year 1985:
Chief; Tom Osborne, First Assistant Chief; Bob Lawson, Second Assistant;
Carlos Mendoza, Secretary; Greg Sanderson, Treasurer; Dan Carlson, Fire board;
Bill Cronenwett Sr. and Charles Standard.

April 2, 1985:

Fire Chief Osborne reported that the ¼ ton Jeep has been turned back into the D.N.R.

April 16, 1985:

President Hackenberg commended the fire department for the “super job’ done in combating the devastating fire at Petrolane Gas Service on April 11, 1985.

December 3, 1985:

Officers for the Fire Department for the year 1986 are:
Chief; Tom Osborne, First Assistant Chief; Bob Lawson, Second Assistant Chief;
Carlos Mendoza, Secretary; Greg Sanderson, Treasurer; Dan Carlson, Fire Board;
Bill Cronenwett Sr. and Charles Standard

June 10, 1986:

Resident Carl Gidley asked why the fact that a fire truck damaged in a roll over was not made public. President Irons replied that there was no council action to cover up the accident and reported the suspension and probation periods meted out to the driver of the truck.

August 4, 1986:

Junior Firefighters – Jim Dietz made a motion that the department accept proposals (for junior firefighter bylaws) except 12, 2nd by Buster Turner, Bob Lawson made a motion that the department accept 6 members for Junior Fireman 2nd by Carlos Mendoza, Applications for Junior Fireman Doug Noble was read favorable and he was voted onto the department. Application on Denny Reynolds was read favorable and he was voted onto the Department.

August 12, 1986:

The Fire Department was given authorization to purchase several items including a 3000 gallon Dump Tank for \$1150.

November 11, 1986:

The Fire Department has been notified of the recall of the Jaws of Life by the Hale Fire Pump Co. The letter stated that the Hurst power shears, may shatter while in use. Following discussion Cornish moved, seconded by Hackenberg, to purchase new Jaw of Life for \$2030.

December 9, 1986:

Officers for the Fire Department for the year 1987 are:
Chief; Tom Osborne, First Assistant Chief; Bob Lawson, Second Assistant Chief; Kenny Bowditch, Secretary; Greg Sanderson, Treasurer Ken Waldon, Fire Board; Bill Cronenwett Sr. and Charles Standard

December 16, 1986:

Items discussed at the council meeting were the new Safety Building to house the Police and Fire Departments. Also discussed was the possible formation of an Antwerp and Porter Township Fire District.

April 14, 1987:

The Fire Department is considering a new chassis and 3,000 gallon tank as the two present tankers are 17 and 25 years old.

It was approved to authorize the Fire Department to seek bids for a 3,000 stainless steel tank.

December 8, 1987:

Officers for the Fire Department for the year 1988 are:
Chief; Tom Osborne, First Assistant Chief; Ken Bowditch, Second Assistant Chief; Jim Dietz, Secretary; Greg Sanderson, Treasurer; Ken Waldon, Fire Board; Bill Cronenwett Sr. and Charles Standard

March 8, 1988:

Armstrong reported that upon investigation it appears that a 911 number will be established in this area within a year.

April 12, 1988:

Fire Chief Osborne reported that a grant has been approved by the DNR for up to \$1000 worth of matching funding for dry hydrants. The department plans to install four hydrants at approximately \$600 each. Osborne also noted that Truck No. 5 has been sold for \$5,500. Osborne requested Council approval for the Fire Department to purchase an American Godiva portable pump at a cost of approximately \$5,500, including options. Motion carried.

May 10, 1988:

President Cornish and Fire Chief Osborne presented Earl Lawson a plaque in recognition of his forty years of Active Service, the longest of any Lawton Fire Department member.

Fire Chief Osborne reported that the tanker recently retired from service had been purchased by the Paint Rock Fire Department of Oneida, Tennessee for \$5,500.

July 12, 1988:

It was approved by the council that the Lawton Fire Department's filling of swimming pools, with a charge of ½ cent per gallon within the village limits and 1 cent per gallon outside the village limits, but within the Lawton Fire District.

September 13, 1988:

John Redmond and Dick Herick informed council of the availability of a Lawton Quick Response Team, along with teams for Paw Paw and Mattawan. The teams have incorporated under the name of Community Emergency Response Team.

December 13, 1988:

Officers for the Fire Department for the year 1989 are:
Chief; Tom Osborne, First Assistant Chief; Ken Bowditch, Second Assistant Chief; Dave Reeves, Secretary; Greg Sanderson, Treasurer; Ken Waldon, Fire Board; Bill Cronenwett Sr. and Sonny Belcher

Fire Chief Osborne requested the approval for purchase of video equipment to be used for training at a total cost not to exceed \$2300.

February 14, 1989:

Fire Chief Osborne received authorization to sell Number Four Tanker for an appropriate amount.

May 9, 1989:

Fire Chief Osborne reported the purchase of a 1989 Ford C-8000 as a fire pumper truck from Quality Apparatus at the price of \$138,000. Delivery is set for September 1989.

December 12, 1989:

Officers for the Fire Department for the year 1990 are:

Chief; Ken Bowditch, First Assistant Chief; Jim Dietz Sr., Second Assistant Chief; Dave Reeves, Secretary; Greg Sanderson, Treasurer; Ken Waldon, Fire Board; Bill Cronenwett Sr. and Sonny Belcher

May 8, 1990:

Fire Chief Bowditch presented recommendations from the fire board on the two bids received for a new fire siren system. Support from Sanderson, Moved by Snyder for the purchase of a siren system from West Shore Services Inc. for \$16,642.72.

May 22, 1990:

The disconnection of the present emergency fire phone which is answered by the Van Buren County Sheriff's Department was discussed. With the full operation of the county 911 emergency system available to local residents, Snyder moved, Sanderson seconded the disconnection of 624-3000 as of June 1, 1990 with notice to be published.

January 8, 1991:

Officers for the Fire Department for the year 1991 are:

Chief; Ken Bowditch, First Assistant Chief; Dave Reeves., Second Assistant Chief; Gene Mohny, Secretary; Tim Seppala, Treasurer; Ken Waldon

February 26, 1991:

Approved was the Fire Departments factory direct purchase of a cascade breathing air system from Poseidon Compressors for \$5,500 as expenditure for 1991/1992. The department will do their own installation of the system on the designated vehicle.

April 9, 1991:

A discussion was held regarding the status of the new fire siren. The Fire Board has requested immediate removal of the siren because of a breach of contract.

April 23, 1991:

West Shore Services addressed the Village Council regarding the status of the fire siren, requesting that they be given additional time to correct any problems with the siren. Council agreed to give them 3 additional weeks.

December 10, 1991:

Officers for the Fire Department for the year 1992 are:

Chief; Ken Bowditch, First Assistant Chief; Tom Osborne., Second Assistant Chief; Gene Mohny, Secretary; Tim Seppala, Treasurer; John Dietz, Fire Board; Dennis Reynolds, Bill Cronenwett Sr., Ken Bowditch

February 11, 1992:

The Village Council voted to ask for total removal of the new siren and request a refund of all costs incurred by the Village to date.

June 4, 1992:

The Village Council held lengthy discussion about the formation of the local Fire District and a proposed agreement between the Village of Lawton, and the townships of Antwerp.

August 11, 1992:

The Lawton Fire Department replaced the 8' by 8' storage barn with a 12' by 12' storage building to be constructed at the rear of the fire hall, adjacent to the parking lot. The labor is to be furnished by the Fire Department members.

August 25, 1992:

The fire siren committee held a meeting with West Shore Services and has requested the removal of the fire siren. In anticipation of the removal the siren has been disconnected and will no longer be used.

October 27, 1992:

A representative of the Fire Department reported that the members met last night and that all of the firemen present voted to recommend that the Council approve the draft of the Fire Department Agreement between the Village and Antwerp and Porter Townships.

The Council voted to approve and date the Agreement and authorized the president to sign the same on behalf of the Village.

February 9, 1993:

Trustee Ireland reported that the Fire District Board has met, elected officers, adopted by-laws and established a regular meeting date, the first Thursday of each month.

Contributions are based on:

- 40% on the 3 past years of fire runs in the service area
- 30% on population (based on census)
- 30% on taxable value of property in service area

Porter Township:

Dick Wilson - Chair
Richard Slevatz

Antwerp Township:

Bruce Cutting
Arlen M Winther

Lawton Village

Dave Cornish
Roger Weurding
Andrea Gailhouse - Clerk

The Following are excerpts from the minutes of the Lawton Fire Department Board of Commissioners, beginning in September 1993.

October 7, 1993:

Again there was much discussion about the schedule of charges for fire services. Several fire department members were present and all expressed concerns.

February 3, 1994:

Fee for service was opened for discussion, again with a great deal of input provided by members of the audience. A motion was made to no longer consider the concept of fees for service.

June 2, 1994:

Upon the resignation of Ken Bowditch as chief, Tom Osborne has assumed the position until the election of new officers in December.

August 4, 1994:

Motion was made by Slevatz and seconded by Winther authorizing Chief Osborne to spend up to the budgeted amount of \$500 for dry hydrants. The motion was unanimously carried.

February 9, 1995:

Resolution: The Lawton Fire Department in their expansion and renovation will be assuming the space formerly occupied by the Lawton Public Library.

The Lawton Fire Department Board of Commissioners whereby adopts this resolution to support the financial development of the Lawton Public Library's additional funding by appropriating an amount not to exceed \$75,000 in their fiscal year 1995/96 budget to the Lawton Public Library for building construction costs.

March 2, 1995:

A letter regarding the Fire Insurance Grading classification for the Village of Lawton, from ISO Commercial Risk Services, Inc. was presented. Chief Osborne provided an explanation of the information. This resulted in classification improvement from a 7 to a 6 after ISO's evaluation.

September 7, 1995:

Authorized was the purchase of two ice rescue suits from Safe-Way Rescue at a total cost of \$1,934.80, which will include free training.

December 7, 1995:

Officers for the Fire Department for the year 1996 are:
Chief; Tom Osborne Jr., First Assistant Chief; Douglas Noble Jr. ., Second Assistant Chief; Randy Bowers, Secretary; Timothy Seppala, Fire Board; Gary Secor, Eugene Mohney, Carlos Mendoza

January 4, 1996:

Approval was given for the payment of \$15,000 to Michigan First Response distributing Company for the purchase of a 1987 Type 3 Ford 156 inch square box to be used as an equipment van.

April 4, 1996:

Approval was given to Maxwell Associates for the addition and renovation to the Lawton Public Library, Lawton Fire Department and Village Hall. The phase two Fire Department renovations will cost \$295,075.00.

September 19, 1996:

A lease was secured from Phil Spencer for \$600 per month plus monthly gas utility bill to house fire department equipment during the building renovation.

December 5, 1996:

Officers for the Fire Department for the year 1997 are:
Chief; Doug Noble Jr., First Assistant Chief; Randy Bowers, Second Assistant Chief; Todd Kaiser, Secretary; Timothy Seppala, Fire Board; William Cronenwett Sr., Eugene Mohney, Carlos Mendoza

October, 1997 (Lawton Fire Department Membership minutes):

Tri City Feed. Mick Middaugh dedicated the new fire hall. We received plaques from the Paw Paw Fire Department, Lawton Police Department, Lawton Area Business Association, plus a plaque from the state.

December 4, 1997:

Officers for the Fire Department for the year 1998 are:
Chief; Doug Noble Jr., First Assistant Chief; Randy Bowers, Second Assistant Chief; Todd Kaiser, Secretary; Timothy Seppala, Fire Board; William Cronenwett Sr., Eugene Mohney, Carlos Mendoza

January 1, 1999:

Officers for the Fire Department for the year 1999 are:
Chief; Todd Kaiser, First Assistant Chief; Kevin Cook, Second Assistant Chief; Troy Lull, Secretary; Bobby Banks

September 2, 1999:

Approved was the purchase of fire apparatus tanker manufactured by U.S. Tanker from Moses Fire Equipment Company at a total cost of \$156,546.00 delivered.

January 6, 2000:

Officers for the Fire Department for the year 2000 are:
Chief; Todd Kaiser, First Assistant Chief; Kevin Cook, Second Assistant Chief;
Troy Lull, Secretary; Rick Try

Approved was the purchase of a 4' X 8' trailer from Byers Manufacturing at a cost of \$450 to be used for transport the snowmobile rescue sled donated to the department by the Snowstompers Snowmobile club.

December 7, 2000:

Officers for the Fire Department for the year 2001 are:
Chief; Troy A. Lull, First Assistant Chief; Todd A. Hackenberg, Second Assistant Chief; Michael P. Stuut, Secretary; Rick A. Try

April 5, 2001:

An amendment (#1) to the Lawton Fire board Agreement was adopted to include all of Porter Township in the Fire District service area.

December 6, 2001:

A new pumper truck has been purchased from Pierce Manufacturing Inc. for \$172,419.00 and will be delivered for \$1,420.

June 2, 2001:

Approved was the purchase of a K-90 thermal imaging camera from Alert Emergency Equipment Group for a total cost of \$16,000.00.

December 5, 2002:

Officers for the Fire Department for the year 2003 are:
Chief; Todd Hackenberg, First Assistant Chief; Dennis Reynolds, Second Assistant Chief; Tim Seppala, Secretary; Gabe Kooyers

January 8, 2004:

To replace trucks #1376, #1384, and #1321 a motion carried to purchase a 2004 Jeep Wrangler and equipment at a cost not to exceed \$22,000.

May 6, 2004:

Motion carried to purchase from Halt Fire Equipment Inc. a Class A Pumper/Rescue Truck for \$241,589. The department will add additional equipment at a cost of \$13,500.

January 1, 2005:

Officers for the Fire Department for the year 2005 are:
Chief; Dennis Reynolds, First Assistant Chief; Tim Seppala, Second Assistant Chief; Gary Secor, Secretary; Jason Kniss, Review Board; Tom Osborne, Mike Stuut, Dale Hackenberg

July 7, 2005:

An amendment (#2) to the Lawton Fire Board Agreement was adopted to include the Medical First Response Team as part of the Lawton Fire Department.

February 2, 2006:

Approval was given to purchase a 2006 GMC Sierra from John H. Tapper Inc. the total not to exceed \$28,000 for use by the Quick Response Team.

September 6, 2007:

A bid was accepted from Plumline Construction in the amount of \$16,500 for the construction of a storage building to be placed in the back of the fire station.