

**Minutes of the Sparta Fire Board Meeting
January 22, 2026**

Present: Goodfellow (twp), Cumings (village), Chief Olney, Bergman (twp-chair) Anderson (twp), Peoples (village) & Deputy Chief Wood

Absent:), Van Patten (village)

Bergman called the meeting to order @7:00 pm.

Additions to Agenda: none

Approval of the Agenda:

Motion: Cumings to approve the agenda.

Second: Anderson

Motion Passed: 5-0

Public Comment: None

Approval of the Meeting Minutes December 18, 2025:

Motion: Made Anderson to approve December 18, 2025, minutes.

Second: Goodfellow

Motion Passed: 5-0

Finance Board Update:

Anderson stated that the finance board had met twice since the last board meeting. They reviewed and approved all department invoices for \$5418.45 with most of the invoices on auto pay. The department's operation budget is 67% for the first 10 months of the year with a fund balance of \$1,157,851. Income is currently at 68% of the budget including over \$48,628 of income from interest YTD.

Approval of the bills:

Motion: Anderson to approve bills through January 20, 2026.

Second: Cumings

Motion Passed: 5-0

Old Business:

Establish Sparta Area Fire Authority. The chief presented final state approval for the Articles of Incorporation to Establish Sparta Area Fire Authority. (attached)

Chief's Report: Chief Olney presented the **Chief's report**. (attached) There were a total of 1070 runs for 2025. The month of January had 47 calls. 2 fires and 4 accidents with no injuries. There were 4 hazardous conditions during the month. One of the fires was at the High School where linseed-soaked rags used by a painting contractor combusted. The fire was contained in several rows of the auditorium. The smoke alarm did go off, and 2 overhead sprinklers also was activated which suppressed the fire. Damage was contained to the auditorium with fire, smoke and water damage.

The Chief covered the board on the transition from NFIRS to NERIS. The new system National Emergency Report Incident System has been rolled across the country starting in 2025 and replaces the 70's system (NFIRS). The new system allows for more accurate reporting, new vehicle and fire information along with access to countrywide data. The Chief stated that the department has already started to input data into the new system.

The Chief stated that with assistance from Alpine Fire, the departments responded to a call that a dog was stuck in the river. The dog was rescued, Rover from the Rouge, the dog and its owner are doing fine. The Chief stated that a title change is required for the fire station property. The department lawyer is creating a quick claim deed so the property will be now titled to the Sparta Department/Sparta Area Fire Authority..

Appointment of Fire Authority Officers:

Motion by Anderson: to appoint Bergman as Chairperson of the Sparta Area Fire Authority.

Second: Cumings

Motion Passed: 5-0

Motion by Goodfellow: to appoint Peoples as Vice Chairperson of the Sparta Area Fire Authority.

Second: Anderson

Motion Passed: 5-0

Motion by Anderson: to appoint Goodfellow as Secretary of the Sparta Area Fire Authority.

Second: Peoples

Motion Passed: 5-0

Motion by Anderson: to appoint Cumings to as Treasure of the Sparta Area Fire Authority.

Second: Bergman

Motion Passed: 5-0

Loan Comment Letter from Choice One: The Chief presented the board with an Installment Purchase Agreement Loan Agreement from Choice One. Basic loan rate will be between 5.7 – 6.0 % depending on the date the funds are required. There will be no loan processing fee from Choice one. However, third party expenses, title work, appraisal etc. will be paid by Sparta Area Fire Authority.

Motion by Goodfellow: to sign and approve the loan comment letter.

Second: Cumings

Motion Passed: 5-0

USDA Grievance Procedure: The Chief present to the board the Sparta Area Fire Authority Grievance Procedure. Grievance Procedure section 504 is a requirement for the USDA grant.

Motion by Cumings: to sign and approve the Grievance Procedure with changes.

Second: Goodfellow

Motion Passed: 5-0

USDA Assurance Agreement: The Chief present to the board with the Assurance Agreement Form 400—4 for approval. Assurance Agreement is a USDA requirement under the Civil Rights Act.

Motion by Goodfellow: to sign and approve the Assurance Agreement with changes.

Second: Peoples

Motion Passed: 5-0

USDA Limited English Proficiency Policy Resolution: The Chief present to the board with the Sparta Area Fire Authority LEP Plan. Limited English Proficiency Plan. The USDA requires that the Fire Authority have a title VI non-discrimination plan and approved with a resolution.

Motion by Goodfellow: to sign and approve Resolution Adopting A Limited Proficiency Plan for Sparta Area Fire Authority.

Second: Cumings

Motion Passed: 5-0

Millage Renewal: The Chief, in discussion with the department attorney, a new millage is required and not just a renewal. The Sparta Fire Area Authority is now the requesting party for the millage not the village or the township. The existing millage (2) ¼ mill will expire the end of the 2026. The proposed new millage will be for (1) ½ mill for capital equipment and improvements for 6 years. The millage needs to ready by April to be on the primary election in August. The millage statement for the August elections will be ready by the February – March meeting.

Next Meeting Date: February 19th, 2026, at 7:00 PM at the fire station.

Next Finance Meeting Dates: February 3rd and February 17th at 4:00 PM at the fire station.

Public Comment: none

Adjournment:

Motion: Anderson to adjourn at 7:50 PM.

Second: Peoples

Motion Passed: 5-0

Minutes by Goodfellow 1-24-25.



Sparta Fire Department

36 Elmwood Street
Sparta, MI 49345
Telephone: 616-887-0900

Chiefs Report January 22, 2026

New Business:

1. Year-end:

1. We ended with 1070 calls for service for 2025
2. Annual report will be available in February

2. NFIRS transition to NERIS:

1. The National Fire Incident Report System (NFIRS) was started in the mid 70's, and the system has not seen many changes. A new system was designed, and it's called the National Emergency Report Incident System (NERIS) and has been rolling out across the country since mid-2025. On January 1, 2026, we transitioned into the new system. This allows for more accurate reporting of incidents that were not possible with NFIRS.
2. We can get more real-time data and see what other departments in the area or of our size are responding to
3. This system allows us to enter information more accurately:
 1. A vehicle fire in NFIRS was only a car fire
 2. NERIS will allow us to add information such as an EV or a hybrid type vehicle
4. With this transition, there will be some learning curves, and pulling data will take some time to learn and access

3. Monthly report (from December 15, 2025 thru January 18, 2026)

1. Fire calls (NFIRS 100 classifications)

1. 475 W. Spartan Drive (High School) – fire in the auditorium
2. 89 Pearl St – fire in the stove (out upon or arrival) – Auto aid from Kent City and Alpine
- 3.

2. Explosions calls (NFIRS 200 classifications)

3. Rescue calls, including accidents (NFIRS 3- classifications)

1. M37 and 13-mile – no injuries; however, one driver fled the scene on foot
2. Alpine Ave north of 12-mile – slide off in the ditch with no injuries
3. 9700 block of Fruit Ridge – slide off with no injuries
4. Sparta Ave and 17-mile – mutual aid to Kent City on an unknown accident: no injuries
- 5.

4. Hazardous Conditions (NFIRS 400 classifications)

1. 129 Gardner – gas leak
2. 9740 Laubach – carbon monoxide incident
3. Alpine Ave north of 12-mile – tree across the road
4. 203 Harper Dr – wire down

5. Service calls (NFIRS 500 classifications)
6. Good intent calls (NFIRS 600 classifications)
 1. 2 - cancelled call after being dispatched
 2. 35 Anderson – odor of smoke (nothing located)
7. False alarms (NFIRS 700 classifications)
 1. 235 E. Spartan Dr. (Appleview School)
 2. 65 S. Union – fire detector activation (bad detector)
 3. 240 Harper Dr – smoke detector activation from cooking
 4. 291 Clark – CO Alarm activation (false)
 5. 8770 N Division – CO alarm activation (false)
 - 6.
 - 7.
8. Severe Weather incident (NFIRS 800 classifications)
9. Special incidents (NFIRS 900 classifications)



STATE OF MICHIGAN
JOCELYN BENSON, SECRETARY OF STATE
DEPARTMENT OF STATE
LANSING

January 2, 2026

Sparta Area Fire Authority
Attn: Mark E. Nettleton
900 Monroe Ave NW
Grand Rapids, Mi 49503

RE: Articles of Incorporation to Establish Sparta Area Fire Authority

Dear Mark E. Nettleton:

This letter acknowledges receipt on December 26, 2025, a certified copy of the Articles of Incorporation establishing the Sparta Area Fire Authority for the Township of Sparta and the Village of Sparta, in accordance with the provisions of Act 57, Public Acts of 1988.

Sincerely,

Michigan Department of State
Office of the Great Seal
(517) 241-1832

JAN 12 2025