

THE FIRE LINE

SEMPER PIUS



Oswego Fire Protection District

July, 2015

Special Edition

CHIEF MICHAEL VESELING TAKES THE HELM AT OSWEGO FIRE



Fire Chief Michael Veseling was sworn in as the 8th Fire Chief of the Oswego Fire Protection District on June 29th, 2015. This year marks his 36th year in the fire service. This special event occurred at Oswego Fire Station #1 with family, co-workers and friends present. Chief Veseling worked for several fire departments spanning his 36 years of experience, starting his career with the Elk Grove Fire Department and soon moving on to the Carol Stream Fire Department before ultimately landing at the Naperville Fire Department where he served on the job for 27 years. Chief Veseling came to the Oswego Fire Protection District as the Deputy Chief of Operations in 2012 and worked closely with Chief Rick Neitzer until Chief Neitzer's retirement. Chief Veseling takes the helm of a district that covers more than 63 square miles, has more than 55,000 residents, runs approximately 5,000 calls a year, has four staffed stations, more than 28 pieces of equipment (engines, ambulances, support vehicles, etc), 54 fulltime operational firefighters, 4 staff officers, 2 civilian staff personnel and 26 part time firefighters.

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JOSH FLANDERS NAMED DEPUTY CHIEF



In addition to Fire Chief Veseling being sworn in on June 29th, Josh Flanders was sworn in as Deputy Chief. D/C Flanders had been serving in the capacity as the Assistant Chief of administration previously, and was also joined by family, friends and co-workers at the swearing in ceremony.

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CHIEF VESELING CONTINUED



Chief Veseling is poised to lead the department for many years to come where his vision of the department over the next several years includes a multi-faceted approach. The Chief is looking to anticipate what the future holds for our district and make the necessary changes to meet the needs at hand. This includes, but is not limited to, officer development. He believes that we have a solid

foundation, but must work toward improving our skills and knowledge at all levels of our officer corps. The new training facility will help to do just that. When talking about his vision, the Chief also mentions training on the fire and EMS sides. By blending both hands-on training along with cognitive learning, the Chief believes we'll have the key to not just meeting, but exceeding the standard of service that we provide and the community expects. Chief Veseling looks to improve all aspects of the way we communicate. This includes communication from staff to the crews, administration to crews, administration to the union, and most importantly, our lines of communication from the district to the people we serve.

Our fleet of vehicles and equipment is in good shape but is aging, and the Chief believes that by putting together a comprehensive replacement plan we can move toward replacing aging vehicles while saving money by depending less on the maintenance division to keep our vehicles on the road. Chief Veseling also wants to improve the efficiency of the department and prioritize our way of spending. If we can spend less money in certain areas, we can thereby spend more money in the areas that need it



most. This vision also includes being at the forefront of anticipating growth in the district. He believes in the notion of being proactive and less reactive.



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CHIEF VESELING CONTINUED

The Chief stated, "With the most recent Village of Oswego release of a comprehensive plan, projected growth in the village and the peripheral growth in the outlying areas of the district, we would be naïve to think that we wouldn't need a station five in the coming years". Once again, the Chief believes in being proactive, and has therefore been looking into the manpower needs of the district. The district has four stations, and Chief Veseling is looking to develop an overall plan for the maintenance of each station, improvements to the stations, and staffing for each station.



As you can see, the Chief has a vision that encompasses many facets of the district. The district has achieved many accomplishments over the years with each new Chief leading the way. The torch has now been passed to Fire Chief Michael Veseling and we anticipate the district continuing to grow and improve in all areas. All of the firefighters believe in producing quality work for those we serve, so we look forward to being a part of his vision as he takes the district to the next level just as each chief has before him. Congratulations to Chief Veseling and we look forward to working together for the good of our community.

D/C FLANDERS CONTINUED

D/C Flanders started his career in the fire service in 1996 in Elburn, Illinois. He later moved to Sugar Grove and, ultimately, came to Oswego Fire in 2003 as a firefighter/paramedic. D/C Flanders moved through the ranks making Lieutenant in 2005, and was then promoted again to Battalion Chief. In 2012 he was appointed the Assistant Chief of Administration and held that position until his most recent appointment to Deputy Chief of Operations. Over the past several years he has worked very closely with Chiefs Neitzer and Veseling, which has prepared him nicely for his current role.



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D/C FLANDERS CONTINUED



D/C Flanders agrees whole-heartedly with Chief Veseling on taking on an approach that is more proactive and less reactive. Whether we are looking to improve a fire station or buy a new piece of apparatus, he believes that philosophy to be key, and should therefore be applied to all areas of our district, allowing us to move to the next level. D/C Flanders has been a part of this growing process for the district since his date of hire, and has seen the many changes and continuous improvements being made by each of the prior administrations. By applying the thought process of pro-activity to all areas of the department, he believes we can become even more efficient. Even though the district has made great strides in recent years with respect to efficiency, the D/C makes it very clear that a proactive strategy can greatly enhance our efficiency in the years to come, which leads us down the path of exceeding our overall

goals as service providers to our community. D/C Flanders also points out our overall relationship with the community as a whole. When our station was open on Main Street, it was very easy to communicate with large numbers of the population regularly throughout the year. The community interaction is not the same as it was when we were in downtown Oswego. The D/C wants to get some of that community interaction back. Although we do a ton of public relation events per year, he would also like to be proactive in communicating with the community and getting back some of that small town feel so people can once again know us personally .

After speaking with Chief Veseling and Deputy Chief Flanders, it has become apparent that a clear path has been chosen with the intent to lead the department to become more efficient with a more proactive approach. Congratulations to D/C Flanders-we look forward to working with you to achieve your goals along with the Chief's vision to exceed our goals to better serve our community.

