

**EFFICIENCY REPORT FOR THE
BRAIDWOOD FIRE PROTECTION DISTRICT
WILL COUNTY, ILLINOIS**



**APPROVED BY
THE BRAIDWOOD FIRE PROTECTION DISTRICT
DECENNIAL COMMITTEE**

Summary

The Decennial Committees on Local Government Efficiency Act was formed by Illinois Public Act 102-1088; 50 ILCS 70/1. The Act became effective in June 2022, requiring fire protection districts to form a committee to study the topic of efficiency once every ten years.

The Braidwood Fire Protection District ("Fire District") formed its Committee on Local Government Efficiency on May 16th, 2023 to study efficiencies and report recommendations regarding those efficiencies and increased accountability pursuant to the Act.

The committee's purpose is to collectively review efficiency and accountability methods currently in practice but also explore potential opportunities to improve productivity.

The members of the Committee collaborated over an 18-month period to study the fire district's application of efficiency in various aspects including but not limited to financial, procedural, cooperative, and operational efficiency.

This document will report on the findings of the committee. The document will also share the recommendations and explore the applications of the suggested outcomes.

It is important to emphasize the impacts of evolution and adaptation within the external environment as it relates to the application of this report in a decade's time. While assumptions are made about future outcomes, the ideas, perceptions, and theories presented will be altered or require adaptation to sustain some level of application. Our experiences in management find that planning, objectives, and tangible goals are important to improving practice and procedures.

Managing anticipated and unforeseen change is the most difficult challenge an organization faces as it balances adaptation to change and sustainment of the mission. While the District maintains commitment to the strategic planning process, the process does not offer alternatives or encourage fluidity for adaptive outcomes. Managing change and planning for flexibility in goal obtainment provides an improved capability of incorporating concepts of this report into future organizational applications.

Decennial Committee Information

Committee Members

Mike Dillon, BFPD Trustee President

Bill Ritze, BFPD Trustee Treasurer

Charley Boyd, BFPD Trustee Secretary

Christopher Jude, BFPD Fire Chief

Mike Tenerelli, Community Resident

Teri Post, Community Resident

Support to the Committee

Kristin Wexell, Executive Administrative Assistant

Decennial Committee Meetings

October 17th, 2023 @ 0930

March 19th, 2024 @ 0930

October 15th, 2024 @ 0930

All meetings were held pursuant to the notice requirements of 50ILCS70/20. Meetings were posted and when public were present at meetings, the chairman asked for input. Meetings were conducted in accordance with the Illinois Open Meetings Act. Copies of the public notification and meeting minutes are attached at the end of this document.

Demographics

The Braidwood Fire Protection District (BFPD) is a small career/part-time Fire Protection District located in Will County. The District consists of full-time positions of Fire Chief, Executive Assistant, and 3 career Firefighter/Paramedics as well as 50 part-time Members. The Fire District has a part-time Deputy Chief, supported by 3 part-time Captains and 1 Lieutenant. Additionally, the support staff positions including but not limited to: Training Officer, Public Education Coordinator, EMS Coordinator, and Buildings and Grounds are assigned as collateral duties to part-time Members.

The district is governed by a three-member Board of Trustees. The Trustees serve rotating six year terms and are appointed by the Will County Executive.

The Braidwood Fire Department was established in 1877, the Braidwood Fire Department is the oldest volunteer fire department in Braidwood, Illinois. With a mission to provide the highest level of life and property protection services, the department has been serving the community for over a century. In 1948, it was reorganized into Braidwood Fire Department, Inc., acquiring a state charter and taking over operations from the City of Braidwood.

The District has two staffed fire houses with 3 Advanced Life Support ambulances, 3 Engines, 1 truck, and numerous other pieces of emergency response apparatus. The call volume consists of emergency medical, fire, mutual aid, hazardous materials and emergency water rescue calls. Technically trained staff participate and represent the District with the MABAS Division 15 Water Rescue Team and Technical Rescue Team.

The District operates on a fiscal year from June 1st to May 31st annually.

BFPD includes residential and several multi-family properties, retail structures. The District currently covers 36 square miles, 3 miles of Interstate 55 and roughly 3 miles of commuter and freight traffic. We cover portions of the Kankakee River as well as the Braidwood Lake, along with 2 recreational camping club with lakes, and 1 golf course.

Three significant factors have contributed to the growth of the District's financial position:

- The rise in ambulance transports while participating in the GEMT program
- Reassessment of the EVA of the nuclear power generation facility within the fire district.
- The acquiring of the Custer Park Fire District via IGA when CFPD closed their doors in October of 2023, then officially by referendum vote on June 1, 2024.

Fire stations

Station 1	275 W. Main St., Braidwood
Station 2	21750 W. State Route 113, Custer Park
Training Grounds	902 N. School St., Braidwood

Budget and Finance

The fire district operates under Illinois Statute as a special form of government for the purpose of fire protection, rescue and emergency medical services. The elected Board of Trustees pass an annual ordinance budget for budget and appropriations of funds for the fire protection district. The Board is the levy authority for determining the amount of levy necessary to support the operations of the Fire district. Budget hearings are conducted as required and recorded in the meeting minutes. Truth in Taxation Hearings have occurred, when required by Illinois Statute. The district's finances are audited annually by an independent auditing firm and annual financial reports are filed with the Office of the Illinois Comptroller. The daily accounting practices of the district is contracted to an outside accounting firm. The fire chief, treasurer, and accountant work together to manage the annual budget. The district maintains a purchasing policy as well as an investment policy. The board reviews all purchases and funds transactions through a monthly report and list of bills. Accountability of purchases is managed through administration and accounting and all bills are reviewed and approved by the Board of Trustees.

EMS Operations

The Fire District EMS operations are directed through the Morris Hospital Emergency Medical Services System and a medical director. Paramedics use standing medical orders established by a Regional EMS System designated by the Illinois Department of Public Health to deliver medical services on a daily basis. Braidwood Fire district paramedics also receive specialty certification in Advance Cardiac Life Support and Pediatric Trauma Life Support.

Our ambulances are equipped with state-of-the-art advanced life support equipment. Equipment and supplies include but is not limited to cardiac monitors connected to local hospital emergency departments, automatic CPR devices, and advanced level medications. Power loading devices and cots to help reduce the risk to EMS staff incurring back injuries.

Training

Braidwood firefighters conduct weekly training while on shift. Cadets and volunteers are also encouraged to attend these weekly training courses. Training includes emergency medical care continuing education, rescue, fire suppression, drivers training, hazardous materials, technical rescue operations, and incident command. Much of the training is provided by the officer on duty, training officer, or acting company officer. The fire district also sends firefighters to outside training classes throughout the state.

Fire Apparatus Maintenance

All apparatus is maintained by the use of fire apparatus mechanics from an outside certified Emergency Vehicle Mechanics Shop out of St. Charles Illinois. We also have in-house personnel that have extensive experience in the maintenance and repair of emergency vehicles. Daily apparatus checks and documentation are required of all front-line response vehicles, and a weekly inspection is also performed on all apparatus to ensure that everything is accounted for and in good working condition, this is completed on all our apparatus.

Inspections

The Fire District uses qualified personnel to complete weekly pre-plan reviews of all public and high hazard areas of the fire district. We have certified inspectors to complete annual life safety inspections of all public and high hazard areas, which are documented and kept on file. We inspect new construction of commercial buildings to ensure compliance with the 2015 Life Safety Codes as well as the 2015 International Fire Code.

Fire and Life Safety Education

Braidwood has a part-time F&LS Specialist that we employ to provide education to the senior community, residents and school age children within the fire district. We are very active with the schools each year, during fire prevention week. We are active in the outreach to get smoke detectors into every household by utilizing the state funded programs through our District. We are very active in our community in promoting fire and life safety from school children all the way to our elderly in the community. Monthly coffee time with the local senior community has provided many of them with fire and life safety tips and materials to help promote safety in their homes.

Response Information

Braidwood Fire District's call volume has steadily increased year after year, as expected. For the year 2023 we ran 1902 calls, 62% of them being EMS related incidents, and 38% being fire related incidents. For the year 2024 we are on track to exceed 2000 calls with the percentages being close to 50/50 split. The increase in call volume was anticipated upon acquiring the Custer Park Fire District in October of 2023.

Findings

The committee reviewed and discussed many facets of the organization listed above. After reviewing the findings by this panel, we feel the fire district operates efficiently and is effective in delivering fire protection and emergency medical services to the community it serves. The fire district utilizes a capital spending plan and has been proactive in planning for the future protection needs of a growing community.

The fire district has intergovernmental agreements and shared resource agreements with other fire districts and municipalities to share resources. The district works along with the City of Braidwood in the advancement in building codes and code enforcement for a safer community. The fire district works together with the school district to improve the quality of life and safety of the community by reaching out to the children and teachers at the school district. The fire district has worked along with the library to educate the elderly population of the fire district in life safety plans.

The fire district has assisted a volunteer department that did not have the volunteers needed to run their calls consistently and effectively. Initially Braidwood Fire Protection District entered into an Intergovernmental Agreement to provide fire and EMS protection for Custer Park Fire Protection District. After almost a year of the agreement the Custer Fire District Trustees decided to fold the organization and asked the Braidwood Fire Protection District to take over their district and provide fire suppression and EMS to their district. This timeline also aligned with the referendum to annex into the Braidwood Fire Protection District, which was initiated by the Custer Park citizens and passed in the March 2024 General Primary Election.

It is the findings of this committee that while there is always room for improvements, Braidwood Fire Protection District is providing responsible fire and EMS services to the people of the fire district. We feel that the District is moving in a progressive direction in making sure they are fully staffed with full-time and part-time personnel to provide the needed fire suppression and EMS care to the community they serve.

NOTICE AND AGENDA –QUARTERLY MEETING OF THE BRAIDWOOD FIRE PROTECTION DISTRICT DECENNIAL COMMITTEE ON EFFICIENCY

Notice is hereby given that meeting of the Braidwood Fire Protection District Decennial Committee on Efficiency has been set for Tuesday, October 17, 2023 at 9:30 a.m. to be held at the Braidwood Fire Protection District Headquarters, 275 W. Main St., Braidwood, IL, for the purposes set forth in the following agenda:

- I. CALL TO ORDER
- II. ROLL CALL
- III. PUBLIC COMMENT
- IV. INTRODUCTION – PURPOSE AND SCHEDULE
- V. REVIEW OF JURISDICTION AND POWERS
- VI. REVIEW OF PROGRAMS AND SERVICES
- VII. SURVEY OF RESIDENTS IN ATTENDANCE
- VIII. OTHER BUSINESS
- IX. ADJOURNMENT

**MINUTES OF THE BRAIDWOOD FIRE PROTECTION DISTRICT
DECENNIAL COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON
October 17, 2023, AT 9:30 A.M. AT
275 W. MAIN ST., BRAIDWOOD, IL**

- I. CALL TO ORDER:
Bill Ritze, acted as Chairman, called the meeting to order at 8:30 a.m.
- II. ROLL CALL:
Present for the meeting were Trustee Charlie Boyd, Fire Chief Chris Jude, Resident Teri Post, Trustee Bill Ritze, Resident Mike Tenerelli, and Executive Assistant Kristin Wexell.
- III. PUBLIC COMMENT
None
- IV. APPROVAL OF PREVIOUS MEETING MINUTES (OCTOBER 17. 2023):
This meeting is the first official Decennial Board Meeting, therefore there are no Minutes to approve.
- V. INTRODUCTION – PURPOSE AND SCHEDULE:
Chief Jude explained that the Decennial Committee will meet three times to review and make sure that the Fire District is working to be accountable and efficient to the public. In the first meeting, today, the Committee will cover administrative items. In the second meeting the Committee will cover compliance items, and in the third meeting operational items will be reviewed and discussed. The Committee has 18 months from May 31, 2023 to complete the review and submit the report.
- VI. REVIEW OF JURISDICTION AND POWERS:
Administrative Items
Chief Jude reported on the administrative procedures and processes, staffing structure and how the budget process works. He went over the purchase policy, capital projects and different grants offered and the process that the District goes through to qualify and submit for grants. Chief explained that he relies upon District Meetings, the Administrative and Executive Assistants, the Officer's and Staff, to gather and disseminate information. He holds and attends meetings with the various internal organization departments and ranks, frequently where there is open communication that is used to improve upon the administrative processes in place, when needed.
- VII. REVIEW OF PROGRAMS AND SERVICES:
This item will be discussed in the meeting when operational items will be reviewed.
- VIII. SURVEY OF RESIDENTS IN ATTENDANCE:
None in attendance.
- IX. OTHER BUSINESS:
Compliance Items will be covered in the next Decennial Meeting.
- X. ADJOURNMENT:
The Chairman then stated that the next regular meeting will be held on March 19, 2023, at 9:30 A.M. at the Braidwood Fire Station 1.

Upon motion duly made and seconded the meeting was adjourned.

**NOTICE AND AGENDA –QUARTERLY MEETING OF THE BRAIDWOOD FIRE PROTECTION
DISTRICT DECENNIAL COMMITTEE ON EFFICIENCY**

Notice is hereby given that meeting of the Braidwood Fire Protection District Decennial Committee on Efficiency has been set for Tuesday, March 19, 2024 at 9:30 a.m. to be held at the Braidwood Fire Protection District Headquarters, 275 W. Main St., Braidwood, IL, for the purposes set forth in the following agenda:

- I. CALL TO ORDER
- II. ROLL CALL
- III. APPROVAL OF MEETING MINUTES
- IV. PUBLIC COMMENT
- V. COMPLIANCE ITEMS
- VI. SURVEY OF RESIDENTS IN ATTENDANCE
- VII. ADJOURNMENT

**MINUTES OF THE BRAIDWOOD FIRE PROTECTION DISTRICT
DECENNIAL COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON
March 19, 2024, AT 9:30 A.M. AT
275 W. MAIN ST., BRAIDWOOD, IL**

I. CALL TO ORDER:

Bill Ritze, acted as Chairman, called the meeting to order at 10:10 a.m.

II. ROLL CALL:

Present for the meeting were Trustee Bill Ritze, Trustee Mike Dillon, Trustee Charlie Boyd, Fire Chief Chris Jude, Resident Teri Post, Resident Mike Tenerelli and Executive Assistant Kristin Wexell.

III. APPROVAL OF PREVIOUS MEETING MINUTES (OCTOBER 17, 2023):

The Chairman asked if there were any additions or corrections to the Decennial Committee Meeting Minutes from the meeting held on, October 17, 2023, as distributed.

Mike Dillon moved to approve the minutes, as presented. Bill Ritze seconded said motion. The Chairman conducted a vote and announced that the motion unanimously passed.

IV. PUBLIC COMMENT

None

V. COMPLIANCE ITEMS:

Chief Jude reviewed that the Fire District Compliance with the varying standards and requirements for the Fire District:

- OSHA reporting are and postings are done annually by the deadline and uploaded to their portal as required. OSHA did a field visit in April of 2021, which went smoothly. They did a tour of the bay floor and maintenance areas. The inspector was pleased with cleanliness and safety of our floor and equipment operations. It was requested that a protective guard on the maintenance room grinder be installed, which was rectified. Only a few signage recommendations were made at the time of the survey and the kitchen was equipped with a first aid kit. They then reviewed the historical records for the annual injury reporting and posting, which were found to be in order
- Braidwood Fire District has policies in place to ensure that all employees are informed and adhere to the compliance requirements. Decennial Committee will meet three times to review and make sure that the Fire District is working to be accountable and efficient to the public. In the first meeting, today, the Committee will cover administrative items. In the second meeting the Committee will cover compliance items, and in the third meeting operational items will be reviewed and discussed. The Committee has 18 months from May 31, 2023 to complete the review and submit the report.
- Braidwood Fire Protection District requires and maintains records and requires trainings and certifications to remain in compliance in equipment and apparatus (ie. Forklift, scissor lift, etc.) These requirements are outlined in the Policy Manual.
- NFIRS reporting and requirements for maintaining eligibility for government grants are completed on regular monthly basis and are kept current.
- Target Solutions is used for the shift to complete regularly scheduled inspection and inventories for apparatus and supplies. This is also the platform used for employees to take training and record initial training at the time of hire and annual employee re-training logs for Bloodborne Pathogens, Harassment, etc. The annual training calendar is accessible to all employees through Target Solutions, and is reviewed and updated monthly.
- ISO survey was completed in 2017, at which time our ISO rating decreased from a 4 to a 3. ISO will notify us when it is time to schedule the re-evaluation for the whole District (including Custer Park FPD territory).

VI. SURVEY OF RESIDENTS IN ATTENDANCE:

Committee resident Teri Post expressed that she appreciates the Fire Districts community involvement through Public Events, as well as keeping the residents informed with agency related updates through social media.

VII. OTHER BUSINESS:

Compliance Items will be covered in the next Decennial Meeting.

VIII. ADJOURNMENT:

The Chairman then stated that the next regular meeting will be held on October 15, 2024, at 9:30 A.M. at the Braidwood Fire Station 1.

Upon motion duly made and seconded the meeting was adjourned.

NOTICE AND AGENDA –QUARTERLY MEETING OF THE BRAIDWOOD FIR PROTECTION DISTRICT DECENNIAL COMMITTEE ON EFFICIENCY

Notice is hereby given that meeting of the Braidwood Fire Protection District Decennial Committee on Efficiency has been set for Tuesday, October 15, 2024, at 9:30 a.m. to be held at the Braidwood Fire Protection District Headquarters, 275 W. Main St., Braidwood, IL, or attend online via Zoom at the following link:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/81968158700?pwd=OUYvK294bJLdTubFUxaEPCbGI0QT09>

Meeting ID 81968158700 Pass Code: 458727

AGENDA

- I. CALL TO ORDER
- II. ROLL CALL
- III. APPROVAL OF MEETING MINUTES
- IV. PUBLIC COMMENT
- V. STUDY OF LOCAL GOVERNMENTAL EFFECIENCIES
 - i. OPERATIONAL ITEMS
- VI. SURVEY OF RESIDENTS IN ATTENDANCE
- VII. PREPARATION OF EFFICIENCY ACT REPORT
- VIII. OTHER BUSINESS
- IX. ADJOURNMENT

**MINUTES OF THE BRAIDWOOD FIRE PROTECTION DISTRICT
DECENNIAL COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON
October 15, 2024, AT 9:30 A.M. AT
275 W. MAIN ST., BRAIDWOOD, IL**

I. CALL TO ORDER:

Charlie Boyd, acted as Chairman, called the meeting to order at 9:30 a.m.

II. ROLL CALL:

Present for the meeting were Trustee Charlie Boyd, Fire Chief Chris Jude, Resident Teri Post, Resident Mike Tenerelli, Attorney John Motylinski and Executive Assistant Kristin Wexell.

III. APPROVAL OF PREVIOUS MEETING MINUTES (MARCH 19, 2024):

The Chairman asked if there were any additions or corrections to the Decennial Committee Meeting Minutes from the meeting held on, March 19, 2024, as distributed.

Chris Jude moved to make the amendments to the meeting minutes, moving signage and first aid verbiage from ISO to the OSHA inspection, under the Compliance items.

Charlie Boyd seconded said motion. The Chairman conducted a vote and announced that the motion unanimously passed.

IV. PUBLIC COMMENT

None

V. OPERATIONAL ITEMS:

Chief Jude reviewed that the Fire District Operational standards for the Fire District, as follows:

- The Committee discussed the location, condition and adequacy of the District's physical facilities including its fire stations. The buildings and equipment are all properly maintained and in good working order. The stations are conveniently and centrally located for their respective response areas, one being on the West side of the train tracks, and the other on the SE side. This resolves issues of delayed response when the train tracks are blocked by stopped locomotives.
- The District's inventory of fire apparatus and other emergency vehicles is robust and able to respond to a wide variety of incidents. These vehicles are properly maintained, which is documented. Teri Post inquired about the capital replacement plan, to which it was noted that the plan is in place and utilized accordingly.
- The committee reviewed the firefighter, rescue and EMS equipment as well as the PPE, SCBAS, radio and communications equipment, rescue gear and equipment. Each department has an Officer in charge to which they are responsible for the purchase and maintenance of the equipment. All BFPD equipment falls in line with NFPA requirements, and the replacement plans are in place for a 5 years future and these items are budgeted. Most recently we entered into a 10 year lease for the monitors for the ambulances, which includes repairs, maintenance, parts and even upgraded monitors when they are produced. Mike Tenerelli, commented on the E-tools have made it easier to use in more remote areas, which the hydraulic tools were more difficult to access in those type of incidents. Mike Tenerelli also suggested a possible 3rd Lucas device, for the 3rd ambulance, when the budget allows.
- The committee conversed about the water supply sources and their sufficiency for fire suppression in all parts of the District. Chris Jude explained that in the rural areas we have 6500 gallons of water immediately on scene with the first and 2nd engines from Braidwood, then the box cards call for tenders who provide water shuttle to the scene. The plan is solid and works efficiently in the instance of rural fire suppression. We are also looking into the installation of a dry-hydrant at the north end of the Station 2 property to draft from the river. The City has been working on fixing the smaller water mains within city limits and performs regular pressure testing. Mike Tenerelli suggested notifying Public Works of a few known hydrants OOS that need repair or replacement. Teri Post inquired about the current ISO rating for Braidwood, and Chief Jude explained that we are currently a

3. ISO in the midst of re-surveying the District and it will likely be 8 months to a year before if the ISO rating will stay the same or move up or down, as a result of inquiring an additional 16 miles of rural area into the District.
- Dispatching is currently provided by WESCOM and the District uses Starcom radios. The dispatch service is stellar and in-district connectivity is effective. Our Police Department uses the same PSAP, which allows for seamless communication between the two agencies.
 - After examining each of the foregoing areas, the Committee has determined that the District is providing the most adequate service to the public, with the resources available.
 - The Committee identified the greatest strengths of the District are:
 - Working well with the neighboring Districts, including absorbing a smaller neighboring fire district by consolidating it into the Braidwood Fire Protection District.
 - Response times have improved District wide, as we now have a manned fire station on both side of the train tracks.
 - The Committee identified areas of weakness such as needing increased manpower and the need to increase the water supply.
 - The District can address the weaknesses by receiving additional funding from the State of Illinois from additional sources, other than property taxes.

VI. SURVEY OF RESIDENTS IN ATTENDANCE:

Committee residents Mike Tenerelli and Teri Post expressed that are appreciative and satisfied with the performance of the Fire District and the level of service provided to the residents with the resources that are currently available. The services could only improve should additional resources become available to the Fire District.

VII. OTHER BUSINESS:

All required items for review have been discussed, and the Efficiency Report has been reviewed by the committee.

Chris Jude moved to the approve the Decennial Committee Efficiency Report, as presented. Charlie Boyd seconded the motion. The Chairman took a voice vote and the motion passed unanimously.

VIII. ADJOURNMENT:

This meeting concludes the duties of the Decennial Committee, no further meetings will be necessary. Charlie Boyd moved to adjourn the meeting, seconded by Chris Jude. The Chairman took a voice vote and the motion passed. The meeting was adjourned.