

MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING OF THE WOOD RIVER FIRE PROTECTION DISTRICT

Call Meeting to Order: Commissioner Jay Bailet called the meeting of the Wood River Fire Protection District to order on April 19, 2023, at Wood River Fire District Station 3, 11053 State Hwy 75, Bellevue, Idaho at 3:00 PM.

Attendance: Commissioners Jay Bailet, Dennis Kavanagh, Steven Garman (virtually via speakerphone), Chief Ron Bateman, Operations Chief Bass Sears, Office Manager Stephanie Jaskowski

Action Item: At 3:01 pm, Commissioner Garman motioned to open the Public Hearing for the Wood River Fire Protection District Purposed New Fee Schedule. Commissioner Kavanagh seconded the motion, all in favor; Steven Garman, Dennis Kavanagh and Jay Bailet role called in favor, motion carried.

Open Session for Public Comments: None

Action Item: Approve and Sign Meeting Minutes from the Commissioner Meeting on March 22, 2023. Commissioner Garman motioned to approve the minutes from March 22, 2023, Commissioner Meeting, Commissioner Kavanagh seconded the motion. All in favor, motion carried.

Action Item: Approve and Sign March 2023 Payables. Commissioner Garman motioned to approve and sign the March 2023 Payables; Commissioner Kavanagh seconded the motion. All in favor, motion carried.

Chief Report:

ITEM: Financial Information / FY 2024 Budget (Chief's Report)

DESCRIPTION: Financial situation / FY 2024 Budget. We are on the reverse slope of the fiscal year, and I have included my most recent cash flow projections with this report. I've been conservative, erring on the side of caution, and our end of the FY balance (\$1.758 million) is just above where I had calculated our beginning balance for the FY 2024 Budget (\$1.750 million). So far, so good.

Prior to our May meeting I need to submit, per Idaho Statute 31- 1602 (2), "...an itemized estimate showing both probable revenues from sources other than taxation that will accrue...during the fiscal year...and all expenditures...with a brief explanatory statement of the request" to the County Budget Officer (the County Clerk, Stephen McDougall Graham). I believe, too, that last year I was asked to send it to the County Administrator, too (Mandy Pomeroy). Since I have made no changes to the FY 2024 Draft Budget that I presented to the WRFR BoFCs in February, our request of the BCAD remains

\$1,552,390. It's a reduction from our request last year and a reflection of 54% of anticipated operational expenses (My earlier calculus reflected a higher percentage, not to exceed 58%).

With all that said and understood, I was forwarded copies of the BCAD audited financial reports for FY 2020, 2021, and 2022. They, too, are included with this report. I've highlighted (in blue) line items with a significant variance from the budgeted amount. These documents do show a substantial increase in the fund balance over the BCAD past three years. That increase appears most attributable to higher collections and less spending on capital.

ACTION PROPOSED: It might seem appropriate to look at these audited financials and believe our request should be increased, not decreased (following more closely my plan presented in April 2021). After all, we are spending our operational reserve 63% down to 55% in FY 2024 (see my projections). It is my belief that we cannot encourage the BCAD to spend their funds if we don't do so ourselves. I think future conversation should be about that percentage and increasing it. Also, we could speak more about our capital needs, but all in all, I want to encourage you to support this path for FY 2024. Please feel free to reflect on this and give general directions, if otherwise. No formal action necessary.

Commissioners had no questions and support the Chief's work with these matters and future planning.

ITEM: "Consolidation" Conversations (Chief's Report)

DESCRIPTION: I've put "consolidation" in quotes because it's not the word I would prefer to use. It is, however, the word that the community seems to be using, though. So, with this increased talk, Chiefs McLaughlin, Robrahn, Bauer, and I have met for lunch a couple of times, most recently last Thursday, April 13th [Note: We have not excluded HFD and BFD; they have indicated that they don't have an EMS funding request and the lion's share of the conversation has been about forthcoming funding conversation].

It's been our incredibly optimistic desire to go to the next BCAD in agreement on a funding request for the Valley in FY 2024. I believe that hinges on an agreed upon level of service (LOS) – what are we trying to do? Additionally, how well are we doing what we want to do? Keep in mind that the community survey revealed that "EMS response was faster than what an established or expected response time standard might be" (p. 5). In other words, we seem to be doing a good job. In May / June 2021, the BCAD asked us to define an increased level of service. That is when we finalized and presented the metric we've continued to track (see attached letter with blue highlighted sentence). At the time, Chief Robrahn described an increased LOS with similar language. With that in mind, I asked SV how our metric stacked up in their community – was it 50% of the time? 60% of the time? Chief McLaughlin said that his data collection revealed that an ALS ambulance was on scene 81% of the time in the City of Sun Valley.

We talked, too, about an Urban Response Area (URA). Would it be a better tool for a LOS conversation? I've included three pages from the FRFR Strategic Plan that describes how this might be developed. I didn't believe that topography and station locations were conducive to creating a URA here; that's why we went with municipal boundaries (for our performance metric). It didn't really add significant populations (Croy, Indian Creek, Broadford Road, Valley Club, Starweather, Heatherlands).

If we were a single system, with a cooperative, full-time staffing plan at Greenhorn we could add those latter three plus Gimlet, Cold Springs, Meadows RV / Trailer Park, too.

We have also been discussing an MOU that would allow us to “trade” members back and forth. I think the conversation is further along with WRFR and KFD at the present time, but SV is certainly part of the talk. I will likely bring you more specific information at our May meeting.

The Commissioners had no comments and were complementary on receiving this information.

ACTION PROPOSED: For information only; no action necessary.

ACTION ITEM: Automatic Aid w/ Carey Fire Rescue (Chief’s Report / Action Item)

DESCRIPTION: As part of the preparation for the ISRB Audit, I’ve begun to ask our partners if we can update our aid agreements. Our current agreement with CFR is from August 2017. It was to “continue in effect for three years ...or until terminated by either party.” Well, we haven’t changed anything – just updated the dates and added a map to help explain. Stephanie sent this out on Friday. CFR approved at their meeting on April 6th.

ACTION PROPOSED: Subject to any discussion, I would ask for a roll call vote directing the Chair to sign and the office manager to attest.

Commissioners held discussion clarifying historical agreements with the new agreement of any change(s).

Action Item: Wood River Fire Protection District and Carey Rural Fire Protection District Automatic Aid Agreement - **Commissioner Garman motioned to** approve and have the Commissioner Chair Jay Bailet sign the Carey Rural Fire Protection District Automatic Aid Agreement and have the Office Manager attest the signatures. **Commissioner Kavanagh seconded the motion. Roll Call Vote, Commissioners Bailet, Garman and Kavanagh voted all in favor, motion carried.**

ITEM: Miscellaneous (Chief’s Report)

DESCRIPTION: Speaking of consolidation, I wanted to include my attempt to clarify a March 15, 2023 editorial by the Mt. Express Board. I emailed three times – on March 20th, 24th, and 31st – attempting to better understand their opinion. My emails are included with this report. They are not antagonistic but seek to understand. The paper did not reply. I simply wanted my efforts to communicate with the paper a part of the public record.

Commissioners held brief discussion

CLIC – This is the informal group that I’ve been trying to get up and running. We’ve had two meetings at Station 4 (Wiseguys) with another on tap tomorrow night. We had 17 people at our first get together and 10 at last Thursday night’s meeting. Typically, we have discussed the reading (tomorrow is emotional intelligence and self-awareness) and bounced leadership thoughts and experiences around for about 75-90 minutes. It seems to have created some new relationships and reinforced others. I hope that it continues.

One quick story of success: We had a code call earlier this week that was in an automatic aid area with KFD. Cecily Moore was on that call and at last week’s meeting. She spoke yesterday about how much more comfortable she was interacting with KFD member Tom McLean on scene, having got to visit with him beforehand.

ACTION PROPOSED: I feel like 3 of the 4 items in this report are interconnected; they all have to do with agency relationships – fire / EMS with fire / EMS and fire / EMS with BC. We have been intentional about changing the narrative. No action necessary.

Commissioners held discussion clarifying the CLIC membership participation from other agencies and are pleased to hear of these meetings and would be interested in learning more about future collaborative efforts from the other agencies with a possible MOU in the future between the districts.

Operations Chief Report:

- **We are operating!**
 - 316 calls in 2023, 2.90 per day on average, 128% of three year moving average projects to ~1,244 calls in 2023. 88% of calls have been EMS.
- **Apparatus committee progress**
 - **Tender:**
 - Identified as #1 apparatus need; would replace WT673 which is older than some RFT.
 - After extensive discussion and investigation, have not found any demo units that would be available soon enough to justify compromises required with demo specs, plan is to go to bid for a custom tender.
 - Base specs to be: commercial chassis, 2 person cab, 3,000 gallons, dump tank, 1,000gpm pump, side and rear dump, cross lays, LDH hose bed, hose reel, bumper line, pump & roll.
 - Estimated cost to be ~\$450,000

Representative style of tender we are interested in soliciting bids for:



Commissioners held discussion clarifying questions on the proposed apparatus and equipment to be stocked on it and gave their thanks and appreciation to the Apparatus Committee for their efforts in identifying and specifying the best equipment/apparatus for our needs and within our budget. What to do with the WT673 when the new equipment comes in. Chief Ron mentioned he has developed a plan to finance this purchase as noted in his financials.

- **Backcountry rescue vehicle / utility squad:**

- More discussions of pros and cons of UTV (side by side) vs compact pickup. The versatility of compact pickup outweighs the small number of places a UTV can go that a compact pickup cannot. Would like to proceed with purchase of new or lightly used Toyota Tacoma TRD Off Road crew cab short bed, mildly up fit it for offroad use and equip for backcountry access and rescue.
- Base specs to hopefully include: mild (~1-2") lift, off road tires, brush guard, lights, tow package, front and rear winch, overland rack, emergency lights, VHF & 700mhz radios, deked drawer system, rescue skid with stokes mount and attendant seat on top deked drawer system.
- Estimated cost of base vehicle ~40,000 - \$45,000



- Estimated cost of build out \$30,000

Commissioners held discussion of this new vehicle acquisition.

Action Item: Backcountry Rescue Vehicle / Utility Squad Acquisition request. **Commissioner Garman motioned to** approve the Intent to purchase a Backcountry Rescue Vehicle/Utility Squad with a budget of \$75,000. **Commissioner Kavanagh seconded the motion. Roll Call Vote, Commissioners Baillet, Garman and Kavanagh voted all in favor, motion carried.**

- **Flooding**

- Tracking snowpack / snow water equivalent percentages daily.
- Impacts a greater number of our ambulance district constituents than fire district constituents. Our role tends to be more on the side of “routine” EMS calls for service that become not routine (because we have to negotiate flood waters) than true “swiftwater” / “flooding” type calls.
- Low elevations about same as 2017 SWE, up high about 75%. Low elevations 140% of 2019 SWE, up high 110% of 2019.
- All swiftwater rescue equipment, including new raft, has been consolidated on utility trailer donated by Kelly White; will allow rapid response with already inflated raft for both swiftwater (on river) and calm water (flooded houses) incidents, will significantly simplify removing patients from houses through floodwaters.



- **New personnel**

- Continuing to assess our potential paradigm shift as we bring on more EMS only members and then bring them up to speed on the fire side.
- In discussions with two new EMS only members (Riley Hopeman and Kyl Samway) about attending the wildland portion of the academy this year, allowing them to respond to every kind of incident except working in IDLH structure fire environments.

- **Hiring process**

- Hiring process for EMT/Firefighter position is set for Saturday, May 13th; all day event.
- All hands on deck to staff the Fire Scenario, EMS Scenario, Interview Board and duty staff for day.

- **Hughes Fire**

- E653 is at Hughes as the first vehicle in Meridian for maintenance and repairs.

Fire Marshal Report:

13 new building applications have come in so far compared to 26 at this time last year. Final inspections for Certificate of Occupancy are at 16 successfully completed so far. In your packets this month, you will find the final draft of the Permit Fee schedule that I had put together previously. This is an action item for the Board to review and adopt. The International Fire Code (IFC) has requirements for permitting to ensure public safety during construction and operations of potentially dangerous activities. The new Fee Schedule follows the 2018 IFC Section 105 which is the current Fire Code adopted in Blaine County.

It's important to note that not all the individual fees shown in the schedule may ever necessarily be needed in the Wood River Fire Protection District but by adopting a complete fee schedule now, we will have a permit fee baseline for any future development and for future consolidation of fire departments. The costs associated with each fee are based on an average of the actual cost of personnel per hour plus the benefit load.

In addition, I have included in your packet a rough draft of revised burn permit regulations that I have been working on with input from a concerned citizen in our District. There has been concern with the increased risk of open burning escaping control areas and threatening buildings and other property in our District. This is only a draft at this point and my attempt is to match some of the state regulations on open burning to limit our risks of controlled burns becoming wildland fires.

I am continuing to schedule fire final inspections, plan reviews and complete other Fire Marshal business as quickly as possible as well as handling emergency calls as a paramedic.

I am thankful for this opportunity to continue to serve as an emergency responder and to promote public safety to the citizens and visitors that we serve.

Commissioners will review the Open Burning Regulations provided and let Marshal Elle know if they any questions. They held discussion on the purposed new fee schedule for Resolution 2023-01 finding no fault in the new costs stated.

Old Business: None

New Business: None

Any Other Business: None

Action Item: Resolution 2023-01: Adoption of the New Wood River Fire Protection District Fee Schedule. **Commissioner Garman motioned to adopt Resolution 2023-01 for the New Wood River Fire Protection District Fee Schedule. Commissioner Kavanagh seconded the motion. Roll Call Vote, Commissioners Baillet, Garman and Kavanagh voted all in favor, motion carried.**

Action Item: Close Public Hearing: Wood River Fire Protection District Purposed New Fee Schedule – there was no public comment. **Commissioner Garman motioned to close this Public Hearing at 3:45. Commissioner Kavanagh seconded the motion. Roll Call Vote, Commissioners Baillet, Garman and Kavanagh voted all in favor, motion carried.**

Adjourn: Commissioner Garman motioned to adjourn the regular meeting and Commissioner Kavanagh seconded the motion for Adjournment at 3:46 pm. **Roll Call Vote, Commissioners Bailet, Garman and Kavanagh voted all in favor, motion carried.**

Meeting Adjourned.

Attest:



Stephanie Jaskowski, District Clerk

APPROVED:



Jay Bailet, Chairman



Steven Garman, Commissioner



Dennis Kavanagh, Commissioner

Date: 5/17/2023