

**RECORD OF PROCEEDINGS FOR THE
COLORADO RIVER FIRE PROTECTION DISTRICT
BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

MARCH 10, 2020

STATION 41, 1850 RAILROAD AVENUE, RIFLE, CO 81650

The regular scheduled meeting was called to order by Chairperson Lambert at 6:30 pm. The Pledge of Allegiance was said and a moment of silence was given.

ROLL CALL:

Board Members Present:

Alan Lambert, President/Chairperson
Matt Weisbrod, Vice President
Paige Haderlie, Treasurer (arrived at 6:34 pm)
Addy Marantino, Secretary
Levy Burris, Director

Others Present:

Randy Callahan, Fire Chief
Leif Sackett, Operation Division Chief
Zach Pigati, Wildland/Training Division Chief
Mike Scott, EMS Division Chief
Orrin Moon, Prevention Division Chief
John Gredig, IT Director
P.J. Tillman, Administrative Director
Dino Ross, Legal Counsel for the District

ADDITIONS/DELETIONS/CHANGES TO THE AGENDA:

None

CONSENT AGENDA:

Minutes of February 11, 2020 Regular District Board meeting
Prior Month Financial Reports
Prior Month Accounts Payable Reports

Director Burris made a motion to approve the consent agenda items. Vice President Weisbrod seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

PUBLIC COMMENT:

None

LEGAL COUNSEL UPDATE:

Attorney Ross stated that the only action item presented to the Board is a Multi-Agency Assistance to Fire Fighters Grant (AFG) Memorandum of Understanding (MOU). Attorney Ross stated that the MOU was vetted by the Glenwood Springs Fire Department's legal counsel. Although the wording and overall drafting of the MOU is not up to preferable standards, the substantive content within the MOU does not raise legal concerns. Attorney Ross stated that Chief Staff recommends signing and approving the MOU as it is a time sensitive matter.

Operation Division Chief Sackett stated that the MOU needs be signed by all parties by Thursday to move forward with the grant application.

Fire Chief Callahan stated that other agencies have already approved the MOU, so trying to revise the MOU is not a viable option. If the Board deems the language of the MOU to be unacceptable, it would need to simply withdraw from the group seeking the grant.

President Lambert stated that it would cause more damage to back out of the MOU and felt that the Board should accept the MOU.

Director Burris stated that the primary concerns with the MOU were based on semantics rather than content.

President Lambert thanked Attorney Ross for his attention to detail and his advice on legal documents.

Attorney Ross stated that Michelle Ferguson has been providing Chief Staff with legal guidance regarding the effects of the Coronavirus in the workforce.

Fire Chief Callahan stated that Michelle Ferguson has been assisting Chief Staff with the annual harassment training as well.

Attorney Ross stated that the Bill increasing contributions to the FPPA administered statewide defined benefit pension plan has passed the Colorado Legislature and has been sent to the Governor for signature.

Attorney Ross stated that the Race Trait Hair Style Anti-Discrimination Act has passed the Colorado Legislature and has been sent to the Governor for signature. The vast majority of the bill relates to teachers and students within the education community; however, it does amend the definition of "race" within the Colorado Anti-Discrimination Act, which applies to almost all employers in Colorado.

Attorney Ross informed the Board that the first of the Wildfire Risk Mitigation bills has passed the Colorado Legislature and has been sent to the Governor for signature.

House Bill 1004, another Wildfire Risk Mitigation bill, has been sent to the House Appropriations Committee.

Attorney Ross discussed HB20-1017 with the Board. He stated that both the Special District Association (SDA) and Colorado State Fire Chiefs are opposed to legislation, which includes all fire stations in the State within the definition of "safe house". Discussion followed regarding the numerous problems with including fire stations in that definition.

Attorney Ross discussed several other bills that are pending before the Colorado Legislature that could impact the District if they become law. He also discussed several bills that have died and are no longer pending before the Colorado Legislature.

President Lambert asked Attorney Ross if there were any updates on the Gallagher Amendment. Attorney Ross stated that, to date no legislation on the Gallagher Amendment has been introduced in the Colorado Legislature and he has not heard of anything being considered.

Director Burriss asked for the number of the bill that would create "safe houses".

Attorney Ross stated it was HB20-1017.

FIRE CHIEF REPORT:

Fire Chief Callahan reviewed his report. He stated that the Board packet includes a new business MOU item, along with a May 2020 election update, a quarterly strategic plan update, and a Coronavirus informational update.

Fire Chief Callahan congratulated EMS Division Chief Scott who has accepted a leadership position with the Colorado Division of Fire Prevention and Control (CDFPC). He stated that the resignation of EMS Division Chief Scott has enabled the District to flatten its organization structure and create an EMS Battalion Chief position.

Fire Chief Callahan stated that the District's EMS Battalion Chief position will function temporarily until stable funding solutions for the District are determined. Fire Chief Callahan stated that Battalion Chief Scott Van Slyke has volunteered to take the role of the new 40-hour workweek EMS Battalion Chief position. Fire Chief Callahan stated that EMS Battalion Chief Van Slyke has been working on Coronavirus preparedness measures, paramedic retention/development, EMS oversight and continual education, and assuring ongoing communications with external stakeholders.

Fire Chief Callahan stated that the District continues to struggle with employee retention. There has been a total of three resignations during the month of February, which includes the resignation of EMS Division Chief Scott. Fire Chief Callahan stated that all of

the resignations resulted in employees being hired by other agencies. Furthermore, staffing continues to be at critical levels, with paramedics in high demand.

Fire Chief Callahan stated that, although the District is down 15 personnel, there are several employees that are interested in pursuing full-time positions that are being offered with the current internal hiring process.

Fire Chief Callahan stated that Chief Staff is working on gathering data to up-staff an ambulance with senior management personnel during peak response times.

Fire Chief Callahan informed the Board that EMS Battalion Chief Van Slyke was going to give the Board an update on the Coronavirus, as there have been several updates since the Board report was sent last Thursday. However, EMS Battalion Chief Van Slyke has made a prior commitment to teach a Fire Academy class tonight.

Fire Chief Callahan stated that the District continues to be engaged with the community. It is a mission of the District to engage with the community during incidents and during non-incident times. Fire Chief Callahan thanked every member of the District for their dedication, especially with the flux of ongoing events, such as the mill levy increase election, Coronavirus outbreak, resignations, and hirings.

NEW BUSINESS/ACTION ITEM REQUESTS:

a. Fire Chief/Operation: Review and consider Multi-Agency AFG (Assistance to Firefighters Grant Program) MOU for SCBA Grant

Fire Chief Callahan reviewed the components of the joint Assistance to Fire Fighters Grant (AFG) MOU for the replacement of self-contained breathing apparatus (SCBAs). He stated that the grant includes the Gypsum Fire Protection District, Glenwood Springs Fire Department, Grand Valley Fire Protection District, and Colorado River Fire Protection District. He stated that Chief Staff believes that a joint grant application will increase the chance of being awarded the grant.

Fire Chief Callahan stated that Chief Staff is grateful that the Glenwood Springs Fire Department has written the grant as the District does not have the bandwidth to write the grant at this time. Fire Chief Callahan commended Operation Division Chief Sackett and IT Director Gredig for their involvement with gathering and providing data for the grant.

Fire Chief Callahan stated that Chief Staff recommends approving the MOU for the AFG.

Operation Division Chief Sackett explained why the District decided to wait another year before pursuing a joint AFG.

Secretary Marantino made a motion to authorize the Board Chair to sign the joint Memorandum of Understanding of the Assistance to Fire Fighters Grant. Director Burris seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

OLD BUSINESS/ACTION ITEM REQUESTS:

a. Fire Chief/Administration: May 2020 Election Update:

Fire Chief Callahan stated that at the last Board meeting there was great discussion and the consensus of the Board was to move forward with Chief Staff conducting the May 2020 election.

Fire Chief Callahan stated that all three incumbent candidates have submitted self-nominations. There were no additional nominations or write-in candidates. Because the District also has the mill levy increase on the ballot, the three Director positions must also be on the ballot; however, the only candidates will be Levy Burris, Alan Lambert, and Matt Weisbrod, so as long as they each get at least one vote they will be re-elected.

Fire Chief Callahan commended Administrative Director Tillman, IT Director Gredig, Administrative Assistant Garay, and the rest of Chief Staff for the collaboration on the election preparation process.

Administrative Director Tillman stated that she and Operations Division Chief Sackett met with Edna, the Deputy County Clerk and Recorder, yesterday to do the testing in order to use their municipal scanner. Currently, Chief Staff is waiting for the ballots to be printed. Administrative Director Tillman stated that the process is going smoothly. She thanked Lieutenant Smith for all of his hard work in combining the property owners list with the registered voters list.

Operations Division Chief Sackett stated that Lieutenant Smith has done a phenomenal job. Operations Division Chief Sackett stated that the Town of Silt and the Town of New Castle have been very cooperative in terms of letting the District use their mailboxes for the ballot drop-offs on election day.

Fire Chief Callahan stated that the County has approved Chief Staff's process of combining the property owners list with the registered voters list. He stated that there are great checks and balances between the District and legal counsel in regards to the election process. He stated that he is very pleased with the progress made.

President Lambert thanked Administrative Director Tillman and the rest of Chief Staff for their efforts.

b. Fire Chief/Operation: Strategic Plan Progress Update:

Fire Chief Callahan stated that updating the Strategic Plan has helped Chief Staff give the Board updates and allows the District to stay on track. Fire Chief Callahan stated that Chief Staff meets quarterly to review every objective of the 2019-2024 Strategic Plan.

Fire Chief Callahan stated that he is pleased with the progress of completion of the Strategic Plan. He foresees that the completion of the goals of the Strategic Plan will peak and then level off as goals are achieved.

President Lambert thanked Chief Staff for keeping the Strategic Plan in the forefront.

Fire Chief Callahan stated that Administrative Assistant Garay has helped sustain the Gantt chart of the Strategic Plan.

President Lambert thanked Administrative Assistant Garay for her contributions to the Strategic Plan.

c. Fire Chief/EMS: Coronavirus Informational Update:

Fire Chief Callahan stated that EMS Battalion Chief Van Slyke apologizes for not being present. As part of EMS Battalion Chief Van Slyke's update, Fire Chief Callahan stated that the District is aware of the effects of the Coronavirus. It is a rapidly moving target that has evolved drastically since last week. There have been many external meetings on this topic.

From the District's point of view, there is a recognition of various emotions and beliefs tied to the Coronavirus.

Fire Chief Callahan stated that the District is setting aside personal beliefs and focusing on the District's responsibilities and services to the communities.

Fire Chief Callahan stated that the District is focused on preparation, responses, and internal and external communications.

The overall plans have not changed, but the tactical levels of the plans can alter. The District has been given updated Dispatch protocols. The District's concerns include unnecessary exposure to the Coronavirus and losing personnel to quarantine measures. The District has response profiles developed to minimize concerns. The District has preliminary family support plans for personnel who may become quarantined, if they become necessary. Fire Chief Callahan stated that Chief Staff is prepared to work remotely if needed and Battalion Chiefs and Lieutenants

are tasked with ensuring crews are properly outfitted to address Coronavirus patients. He stated that command meetings are ongoing as well. The District is also prepared for citizen inquiries. The District's intent is not to escalate this matter but to take care of its citizens and personnel if the Coronavirus makes its way into the District.

President Lambert asked how the Coronavirus differs from other influenzas and infections that come through.

Fire Chief Callahan stated that some people claim that the Coronavirus is not different than common viruses and flues, and there are others that claim the virus is substantially different. Due to the wide range of perspectives and not having enough knowledge on this topic, Fire Chief Callahan stated that he does not feel comfortable answering President Lambert's question.

Fire Chief Callahan stated that the District's main focus is on its response to patients and personnel that may contract the Coronavirus.

Fire Chief Callahan stated that the District has updated and communicated with several City managers on action plans.

Secretary Marantino stated that the Governor made an announcement this morning that the Western Slope has opened up its emergency cache and supplies are available. She stated that there was a process to gain access to those supplies.

Fire Chief Callahan stated that the Governor declared a State of Emergency today. Fire Chief Callahan stated that Anna Cockrand sent the District the procedures.

DIVISION INFORMATIONAL MEMORANDUM:

Operations Division Chief Sackett:

Operations Division Chief Sackett stated that Chief Staff worked with CPS HR on the temporary Lieutenant and Engineer processes. He congratulated Adam Olson and Robert Cooney on their Engineer positions, and Landon Churchill, Sierra Carroll, Eric Langner, and Kevin Carlson on their Lieutenant positions.

Operations Division Chief Sackett stated that Chief Staff will continue to work with CPS HR on the full-time position assessment process in the fall.

Operations Division Chief Sackett gave an update on the Type 6 engine. He stated that it is nearly complete and that it just needs to be painted to match the rest of the fleet.

Fire Chief Callahan stated that the process of donating the command trailer, selling a Type 5 engine, and obtaining a Type 6 engine has allowed the District to reduce annual costs and purchase new bunker gear at relatively no cost. He thanked the District for their commitment on achieving this outcome.

Wildland/Training Division Chief Pigati:

Wildland/Training Division Chief Pigati stated that the Type 6 engine is almost complete.

Wildland/Training Division Chief Pigati stated that there are 16 applications for the Wildland Engine Boss/Lieutenant position and 13 applications for the Wildland Senior Firefighter position. He and Lieutenant Nix are working on the on-boarding process for the open wildland positions.

President Lambert asked if there was a forecast for this year's wildfire season.

Wildland/Training Division Chief Pigati stated that there is a forecast of a warming phase occurring earlier in the year followed by typical spring showers and then heat coming in and drying everything out. He stated that the wildfire season should be better than last year's season, but it will not be as bad as the 2018 wildfire season.

Fire Chief Callahan confirmed that the hiring for the open wildland positions will begin on April 1, 2020.

Prevention Division Chief Moon:

Prevention Division Chief Moon stated that he has been busy. He has received several plans to review, as well as County referrals. He has been working with the Town of Silt on the Silt Heydays event. The Silt Heydays will occur in August at the Veterans Park in Silt. The District intends on joining its Silt Open House with the Silt Heydays event.

Prevention Division Chief Moon stated that the crews have gone through the Grand River Hospital expansion project. He plans on scheduling the crews to walk through the ED Moore facility next week. He believes it is a great opportunity for the crews to see the structure of the new facility. Prevention Division Chief Moon stated that the District may have better access to the new facility than it had to the prior facility.

Prevention Division Chief Moon stated that the District hopes to help with the dismantling of the old building through training exercises for District personnel.

Prevention Division Chief Moon stated that the new ED Moore facility should be completed by January 1, 2021.

President Lambert stated that the old building probably has some asbestos.

Prevention Division Chief Moon stated that the asbestos will have to be removed prior to utilizing the space for training.

Prevention Division Chief Moon stated that he has had conversations on preliminary plans for new subdivisions, as well as new mini-home subdivisions, in Rifle, Colorado.

Prevention Division Chief Moon stated that he has spoken with individuals who are interested in opening a summer school near East Elk.

Prevention Division Chief Moon stated that Community Reduction Specialist Pina has been busy and that Facilities Manager Kelly has been buried with station maintenance.

Director Burris and Prevention Division Chief Moon briefly discussed the possible access roads to the potential new subdivision.

IT Director Gredig:

IT Director Gredig stated that he did not have anything to add to his written report. The Board had no questions for IT Director Gredig.

Administrative Director Tillman:

Administrative Director Tillman gave an update on the Pension Advisory Board election. Since the positions up for election were not contested, the District will not run an election for the Pension Advisory Board.

GOOD NEWS & DEPARTMENT ACCOMPLISHMENTS:

Fire Chief Callahan stated that there was an image of the last Board meeting that was captured in the Post Independent. He stated that there was a lot of great things in the works.

BOARD MEMBER COMMENTS:

President Lambert thanked the District for their continued efforts. With his new position in the Rifle Police Department, he hears some of the calls that the District receives and cannot imagine what District personnel go through every day. He thanked the crews for their service.

Vice President Weisbrod agreed with all the comments made by the Board. He stated that the public does not see what the District does on a daily basis. He appreciates Chief Staff accurately updating and informing the Board on the status of the District.

Treasurer Haderlie stated that there is a lot going on, especially with the global effects due to the outbreak of the Coronavirus. She stated that she is appreciative of the preparedness measures the District is trying to implement to best serve the citizens of the District.

Secretary Marantino agreed with Treasurer Haderlie's comment. She stated that, with the District's short staffing issues, she knows that District personnel are putting in a substantial amount of effort.

Director Burris complimented Chief Staff and the crews for their work. He stated that within the last eight days there have been traumatic responses that were addressed professionally.

ADJOURNMENT:

There being no other business to come before the Board, Chairperson Lambert adjourned the meeting at 7:32 pm.

APPROVAL:

The foregoing Minutes, which has been approved by the affirmative majority vote of the Board of Directors of the Colorado River Fire Protection District, is a true and accurate record of the meeting held on the date state above.

Date: 4/14/2020 

Date: 15 April 2020 