

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

JULY 14, 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
Addy Marantino, Secretary
Levy Burris, Director

Others Present:

Randy Callahan, Fire Chief
Leif Sackett, Transitioning Fire Chief
Zach Pigati, Wildland/Operations Division Chief
Scott Van Slyke, EMS Battalion Chief
Orrin Moon, Prevention Division Chief
John Gredig, IT Director
P.J. Tillman, Administrative Director
Dino Ross, Legal Counsel for the District (via telephone)

ADDITIONS/DELETIONS/CHANGES TO THE AGENDA:

None.

CONSENT AGENDA:

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 his firm has not engaged in any substantive legal matters over the last 30 days. He stated that the Colorado legislative session is in adjournment.

FIRE CHIEF REPORT:

Fire Chief Callahan introduced Michael Churchill to the Board. He stated that Chief Tillotson from the Glenwood Springs Fire District will be joining the Board meeting virtually.

Fire Chief Callahan stated that for this month's Board packet, there are three New Business Items. One New Business Item is a general discussion on televised Board meetings. He stated that IT Director Gredig and Michael Churchill will present various options on that matter. Fire Chief Callahan stated that the second New Business Item is a ratification of a formal approval request to opt-in to the Coronavirus Relief Fund. Fire Chief Callahan stated that the third New Business Item is an approval of provisional Division Chief job descriptions. Fire Chief Callahan stated that the Old Business Item focuses on ongoing funding discussions.

Fire Chief Callahan congratulated Battalion Chief Thad Vroman as he departs from the District to Georgia with his family. Fire Chief Callahan thanked Battalion Chief Thad Vroman for his remarkable and honorable years of service.

Fire Chief Callahan stated that Battalion Chief Alvey will move from his 40-hour Health and Wellness position back to a 48/96 shift schedule. Fire Chief Callahan stated that the intent of the Health and Wellness position was to work on the District's FOCUS surveys to try and reduce workers' compensation costs and maintain the District's health and wellness programs. Fire Chief Callahan stated that Battalion Kevin Alvey has been working with Chief Staff on COVID-related redundancies. Fire Chief Callahan explained that if someone from the District were to fall ill, Battalion Chief Kevin Alvey would be able to step in and assist with that process. Fire Chief Callahan stated that Battalion Chief Alvey has also been working with Prevention Division Chief Moon. Fire Chief Callahan stated that Battalion Chief Alvey has contributed greatly in that position.

Fire Chief Callahan stated that the Garfield County Fire Chiefs continue to meet weekly with the County Health Executive Director Yvonne Long. Fire Chief Callahan stated that the Garfield County Fire Chiefs meet on Tuesdays. Today he heard on the radio that the County has had its fourth COVID-related death. Fire Chief Callahan stated that the County has up to 423 cases and they keep escalating.

Fire Chief Callahan stated that the Health Department has asked that fire districts send out the message of wearing masks, social distancing, and washing hands. Fire Chief Callahan stated that the weekly meetings are really beneficial.

Fire Chief Callahan informed the Board that the District completed its second round of Fire Service Organizational Culture of Safety (FOCUS) surveys. He stated that a year and a half ago, the District completed its first round and Fire Chief Callahan traveled to Drexel University with Lieutenant Landon Churchill. Fire Chief Callahan stated that there were no costs to the District to conduct the surveys. He stated that the District has been able to study and learn from previous results.

Fire Chief Callahan stated that forty-two District members participated in this survey and the District is waiting for the survey results to measure what improvements have been made and what corrections to make.

Fire Chief Callahan stated that it has been a busy month. He stated that the District has had multiple callbacks and multiple fires.

Fire Chief Callahan thanked Director Burriss for being on the calls. He stated that there have been many mutual aid requests. Fire Chief Callahan stated that Grand Valley Fire Protection District and Glenwood Springs Fire Department have helped the District this last month. Fire Chief Callahan stated that the District has experienced significant acuity calls and tragedy.

Fire Chief Callahan stated that there was a triple fatal accident/fire. Fire Chief Callahan stated that the crews delivered one baby and there was another baby that was delivered shortly after being transported to the hospital.

NEW BUSINESS/ACTION ITEM REQUESTS:

a. Fire Chief/Administration: Review and Consider Televised Board Meeting Options – Presentation by Michael Churchill:

Fire Chief Callahan stated that IT Director Gredig and Michael Churchill will be presenting options for televised Board meetings for Board review.

IT Director Gredig stated that Chief Staff has met with Michael Churchill from the City of Rifle and has identified some options for televised Board meetings.

IT Director reviewed the pros and cons for Option (1) computer-based meeting tools such as Web-Ex, Zoom, Go To Meetings, and Teams; Option (2) commercial recordings of meetings; Option (3) interactive live meeting broadcasts (Facebook live); Option (4) static meeting recordings; and, Option (5) pre-configured meeting location (Rifle Council Chambers).

Fire Chief Callahan stated that Michael Churchill is excited in his role at the City of Rifle for a partnership opportunity.

Michael Churchill stated that the objective of his department is to incorporate many other meetings, at no cost to the entities, to ensure the public is informed and are able to view decision-making processes within the community.

Mr. Churchill informed the Board that the School Board is moving their meetings from Tuesday's to Monday's, which opens the City of Rifle's availability to accommodate the District if wanted.

Mr. Churchill stated that it was his understanding that the District would like to be more visible to the community and felt the collaboration with the City of Rifle was one way to accomplish that goal.

Mr. Churchill stated that showcasing videos to the public is a means to ultimately build awareness and trust with the members of the community.

Secretary Marantino asked if Channel 10 was primarily for the City of Rifle or if it expands to the Town of New Castle.

Mr. Churchill explained that through the FCC, cable companies negotiate with cities because of the right of way use of pulling cables. Mr. Churchill stated that there is a Channel 10 for each city, from Rifle to Carbondale. He stated that there are three different types of channels: public, government, and education.

Mr. Churchill stated that he is the subcontractor for the Town of Silt and has started to discuss with them allowing access to other governmental entities. They have expressed some interest, but it is up to them because each city controls its channels and decide what goes on the government channel.

Mr. Churchill stated that his department has moved to an online platform. He stated that the majority of the viewership has stemmed from online videos on the demand platform.

Mr. Churchill stated that his department has moved to OTT boxes and Roku. It is a content management system which incorporates various video servers. He stated that all of the content is published at once which makes it easy to manage.

Vice President Weisbrod asked how many meetings are broadcast live?

Mr. Churchill stated that the City Council and Planning Commission meetings are broadcasted live.

Mr. Churchill explained that publishing meetings online through the internet should be easier now than it was before.

Director Burris asked if there would be any cost to the District if the content was made available to the other towns.

Mr. Churchill stated that there would not be costs associated, but the administration from the neighboring towns of New Castle and Silt would have to communicate their preferences on this matter first.

Board discussion ensued.

Mr. Churchill discussed the mechanics of hybrid meetings.

Vice President Weisbrod asked if there is a COVID-19 Grant on purchasing equipment for broadcasting information and meetings to the public.

IT Director Gredig stated that Chief Staff has applied for a Resistance for Firefighters Grant. IT Director Gredig stated that the District has filed for some broadcasting equipment like the City of Rifle uses.

Vice President Weisbrod stated that incorporating digital meetings allows accessibility for the public, especially for those who want to be more engaged with the District.

Mr. Churchill stated that digital meetings have great advantages for the District internally as well.

Further discussion ensued on the usability of the District's meeting room.

IT Director Gredig stated that Chief Staff recommends recording meetings as it does so currently. He stated that he will provide the recordings to Mr. Churchill to see what can be done. IT Director Gredig stated that this step allows the District to utilize a consistent platform.

IT Director Gredig stated that this step is a part of Fire Chief Callahan's communication strategy for the District.

Secretary Marantino stated that she would prefer to showcase the tables and meeting set up so the public can see how the District is handling its finances.

Treasurer Haderlie stated that one of her concerns of having meetings at the city buildings is it creates the notion of funding, which is the opposite of what is occurring.

Vice President Weisbrod asked about the legal ramifications of recording digital meetings.

IT Director Gredig discussed one the District's resolutions that discloses the process of recording and maintaining meeting records.

Mr. Churchill stated that the public also has the option to attend public Board meetings and record as they see fit.

Director Burriss asked what would occur if the District were to enter into a contractual agreement or a memorandum of understanding with the City of Rifle on this matter.

Mr. Churchill stated that his approach does not entail a written partnership and, if funds were given to the City of Rifle, it would be considered a donation.

Mr. Churchill stated that the main objective is to assist with providing information to the public.

Further Board discussion ensued.

The Board thanked Michael Churchill for his presence and information.

Mr. Churchill thanked the Board for being receptive of his cause.

b. Fire Chief/Administration: Review and Consider Provisional Division Chief Job Descriptions:

Fire Chief Callahan stated that there are two provisional Division Chief job descriptions presented for Board approval. He stated that these job descriptions are intended to be a stop-gap measure while the District works towards developing permanent Division Chief job descriptions that have been vetted by CPS HR.

Fire Chief Callahan stated that the permanent job descriptions will differ from the jobs descriptions presented. He stated that Chief Staff is working on obtaining one Division Chief job description under an umbrella of all the responsibilities while reducing a Division Chief position. He stated that the intent is to formalize Wildland/Training Division Chief Pigati's role to Operations/Wildland Division Chief.

Fire Chief Callahan stated that EMS Battalion Chief Van Slyke will be undertaking both EMS and Training temporarily. He stated that EMS Battalion Chief Van Slyke's role will transition to a Division Chief position.

Fire Chief Callahan stated that the two provisional Division Chief job descriptions have not been vetted by CPS HR, Chief Staff did not want to spend

funds, as the permanent job descriptions will be vetted by CPS HR within 60 to 90 days, or sooner.

Fire Chief Callahan stated that the two job descriptions are a stop-gap measure in response to structural issues and liabilities.

Fire Chief Callahan was pleased to say that CPS HR believes the District has a healthy culture that can support a new type of Division Chief job description.

Director Burriss asked if the salary range for the presented job descriptions were reflective of the compensation policy.

Fire Chief Callahan stated that while the main objective is to reach the 75th percentile of the compensation policy pay range; the salary range of the job descriptions are reflective of the range to which all members of the District have been raised.

Director Burriss stated that he wanted to make sure that the job description salaries were reflective of the minimum salary range from the compensation policy and were within the approved budget.

Secretary Marantino made a motion to approve the provisional Division Chief job descriptions. Director Burriss seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

c. Fire Chief/Administration: Ratification of CRFPD Election to Opt-In to the Coronavirus Relief Fund (CVRF):

Fire Chief Callahan stated that Governor Polis signed Executive Order D2020 for the Coronavirus Relief Fund that will be administered through the Department of Local Affairs. Fire Chief Callahan stated that the application process for the Fund required a signed letter from President Lambert.

Fire Chief Callahan stated that Chief Staff recommends ratification of the District's election to opt-in to the Coronavirus Relief Fund through the DOLA and the letter signed by President Lambert.

Secretary Marantino made a motion to ratify the District's application for the Coronavirus Relief Fund and the letter signed by President Lambert. Vice President Weisbrod seconded the motion.

Board discussion ensued on communicating with one another when signing documents like the application letter for the Coronavirus Relief Fund prior to a Board meeting.

The motion passed unanimously.

OLD BUSINESS/ACTION ITEM REQUESTS:

a. Fire Chief/Operations/Administration: Continued – District Funding Research Review & Options:

Fire Chief Callahan stated that the Old Business Item remains the same as last month's Board meeting. He stated that this is a continuation of that discussion. He stated that Chief Staff brings forth the same options (1) a November 2020 mill levy election, (2) a November 2020 de-Gallagherization election, (3) a November 2020 mill levy election and a November 2020 de-Gallagherization election, (4) a November 2021 mill levy election, and (5) remain status quo.

Fire Chief Callahan stated that Chief Staff is working diligently on budget reductions.

Vice President Weisbrod asked if there were any updates on the statewide ballot to repeal of the Gallagher Amendment to the Colorado Constitution.

Fire Chief Callahan stated that, the last he heard, there is an opposition force building. Fire Chief Callahan stated that, at the Colorado State Fire Chiefs' meeting, he heard there was a group starting to form to support the ballot to repeal the Gallagher Amendment.

Attorney Ross stated that he had nothing new to add to the discussion.

Fire Chief Callahan stated that he believes Carbondale Fire Protection District is interested in de-Gallagherizing, the Glenwood Springs Fire Department is having discussions on it, and Grand Valley Fire Protection District is not going to de-Gallagherize.

Fire Chief Callahan stated that one of the District's challenges with de-Gallagherizing is that it does not solve the District's main problem. Fire Chief Callahan stated that the other agencies that are discussing de-Gallagherization have already achieved the mill levy funding they need.

Transitioning Fire Chief Sackett stated that if the Residential Assessed Rate (RAR) were to go down to 5.88 percent, that would result in a \$175,000 loss to the budget. Transitioning Fire Chief Sackett stated that the District has a bigger problem than a reduced RAR.

Vice President Weisbrod asked if Chief Staff has looked into what the projected mill levy would be when factoring in a worst-case-scenario drop of the RAR to 5.88 percent.

Transitioning Fire Chief Sackett stated that Chief Staff has not analyzed that mill levy figure to generate a sound budget yet.

President Lambert stated that he believes the District should consider pursuing a mill levy increase in November 2021, given the recent vote of the constituents and the transitioning circumstance of the District.

President Lambert stated that he agreed with Secretary Marantino's stance on beginning the educational process now.

Fire Chief Callahan agreed with President Lambert's statement. Fire Chief Callahan stated that having many fires and calls does not guarantee funding anymore. He stated that community relations are key and that the current circumstance of COVID-19 has caused difficulty with reaching communities face-to-face.

Vice President Weisbrod stated that he is pleased with the progress made for the District's communications plan; however, he suggested that Chief Staff relay a temporary stop-gap message explaining why the District is short-staffed and in dire need of funding.

Secretary Marantino stated that she has a social media platform that is nearly finished.

President Lambert stated that he also is in favor of developing a focused message that is shared across all media forms.

Further Board discussion ensued.

Director Burriss stated that the Board cannot actively begin campaigning but can generate a strong communication plan. He stated that he is not in favor of pursuing a mill levy increase in November of 2020 due to the May 2020 vote of the constituents and the District's accountability to the constituents. Director Burriss stated that he believes the ballot to repeal the Gallagher Amendment may or may pass, and the District may get lost among all of the de-Gallagherizing ballots that are going to be included in the November 2020 election.

Director Burriss stated that the Board needs to make decisions for this year and then look at future funding.

Fire Chief Callahan stated there is a high probability the District will have to close down a station due to staffing shortages. He stated that the District is doing everything it can to prevent that from happening.

Director Burriss stated that even if the District is able to pass a mill levy increase in November of 2021, the District would not receive sufficient funding until 30 months later.

Director Burriss stated that he does not want the District's membership to think the Board does not care about their needs. He stated that the Board has to listen to the direction given by the constituents and lead the District in an accountable manner. He stated that the District will continue to communicate with the public so that it understands that the Board has to take care of the membership as well.

Treasurer Haderlie agreed with Director Burriss's comment. She stated that the public will hear from the District again because the District has to take care of its people as well.

Treasurer Haderlie stated that if the District pursues another mill levy increase in November 2020 and it fails again, she believes the District will incur a higher fallout rate. She stated that it may be best to generate a plan and work diligently toward a potential mill levy increase election in November 2021.

Director Burriss stated that the Board can go to the Community Forum on Wednesdays and attend other places to demonstrate how the District listened to the public and is doing everything it can to serve the communities. Director Burriss stated that the Board can discuss the consequences of the shortfalls the District is experiencing as a result.

Board discussion ensued on communication strategies.

President Lambert stated that it appears the Board is not leaning towards a potential mill levy increase and/or de-Gallagherization election in November 2020.

Director Burriss stated that the District needs to generate a message explaining the decisions being made based on the results of the May 2020 election as well as the conditions of the District.

Attorney Ross asked the Board to confirm that it does not want to submit a letter to the County notifying them that there is a possibility the District may pursue a November 2020 election. The consensus of the Board was that it does not want to send such a letter.

DIVISION INFORMATIONAL MEMORANDUM:

Wildland/Operations Division Chief Pigati:

President Lambert asked what resources were currently deployed.

Wildland/Operations Chief Pigati stated that the District has a Type 6 Engine on the Stewart Fire and a Type 3 Engine deploying tomorrow morning to the Wolf Fire. Wildland/Operations Chief Pigati stated that both fires were close to each other.

EMS Battalion Chief Van Slyke:

Vice President Weisbrod stated that he is pleased with the EMS and IFT (inter-facility transfers) numbers. He stated that the District has positive EMS billings and positive IFT billings, so the IFT program is no longer costing the District.

EMS/Training Division Chief Van Slyke stated that the District was awarded the CREATE Grant. He stated that it is a 50/50 matching grant with a total award of \$7,220.55. He stated that the District will be able to send Firefighter Ben Crow and Firefighter Tyler McKinnon to paramedic school in August.

Prevention Division Chief Moon:

Prevention Division Chief Moon stated that, due to COVID-19, the Burning Mountain Days and the Silt Hey Days are cancelled.

Prevention Division Chief Moon stated that, after much discussion, Chief Staff has decided not to hold an Open House at Station 41 this year because of the uncertainties of COVID-19.

Director Burris discussed the idea of showcasing some of the District's apparatus as a way to communicate with the public and limit exposures.

Vice President Weisbrod mentioned the concept of a virtual type of event that showcases and educates.

Director Burris suggested that the virtual Open House concept can provide positive education on the functions of the District.

Vice President Weisbrod agreed with Director Burris's comment and stated that the virtual Open House can talk about wildfires and the importance of mitigation.

Preventions Division Chief Moon stated that he had a meeting with the Interagency and the other counties on Stage I fire restrictions. He stated that there

seems to be some movement to enter into Stage II fire restrictions in the near future. He stated that further evaluations will occur to determine fuel moisture levels.

Prevention Division Chief Moon stated that Chief Staff is having conversations on this matter and is seeing lightning strikes and sparks on the roads. He stated that Chief Staff is aware of the very dry conditions.

President Lambert asked about the differences in Stage I and Stage II fire restrictions.

Prevention Division Chief Moon stated that Stage I fire restrictions includes smoking in a designated area or in one's vehicles depending on location. Prevention Division Chief Moon stated that the majority of the City of Rifle is a developed area and some campgrounds can be a developed area even though they are out in the urban interface. Prevention Division Chief Moon stated that people can have a campfire in a developed campfire ring.

Prevention Division Chief Moon stated that if the District goes under Stage II fire restrictions, hot work will be affected, such as any pipeline projects and welding. He stated that the restrictions would not allow people to smoke, unless inside a vehicle; nor would there be open fires, including camp fires.

Prevention Division Chief Moon stated that with Stage III fire restrictions, there are no fires allowed.

IT Director Gredig:

The Board had no questions regarding IT Director Gredig's report.

Administrative Director Tillman:

President Lambert asked Administrative Director Tillman if she could create a financial presentation showing the District's dire financial conditions in a way the public may understand better.

GOOD NEWS & DEPARTMENT ACCOMPLISHMENTS:

Fire Chief Callahan stated that the Good News section of the Board report is always there for the Board's reading pleasure.

BOARD MEMBER COMMENTS:

Vice President Weisbrod stated that the District is extremely busy and he is appreciative of everything the District does. He stated that he is appreciative of the ongoing partnerships as well.

Director Burriss stated that, in regards to staffing and budget shortfalls, the reason he is here is to make sure that these are handled appropriately and correctly and to support the jobs of the District.

Secretary Marantino stated that, while the constituents are a high priority, the crews of the District are the Board's number one priority as they are the ones who serve the communities. She stated that she is frustrated with the limbo conditions. She stated that she appreciates everyone and is glad she is able to attend the meeting.

Treasurer Haderlie stated that she agreed with Secretary Marantino's comment. She stated that she is very frustrated with the current conditions but feels confident that the District is leading and pulling through.

President Lambert stated that he is looking forward to the development of a communication plan that meets the District's needs. He thanked everyone for attending the meeting.

ADJOURNMENT:

There being no other business to come before the Board, Chairperson Lambert adjourned the meeting at 8:35 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: Aug 11 2020



Date: 8/11/2020

