

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

OCTOBER 13, 2020

STATION 41, 1850 RAILROAD AVENUE, RIFLE, CO 81650

The regular scheduled meeting was called to order by Chairperson Lambert at 6:44 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 Transitioning Fire Chief Sackett, Transitioning Fire Chief
Zach Pigati, Wildland/Operations Division Chief
Scott Van Slyke, EMS/Training Division Chief
Orrin Moon, Prevention Division Chief
John Gredig, IT Director
P.J. Tillman, Administrative Director
Alizah Garay, Administrative Assistant
Dino Ross, Legal Counsel for the District

ADDITIONS/DELETIONS/CHANGES TO THE AGENDA:

None.

PUBLIC BUDGET HEARING:

Chairperson Lambert opened the Public Hearing on the proposed 2021 Budget at 6:00 pm.

Transitioning Fire Chief Sackett stated that the County's preliminary assessed valuations came in late Friday afternoon. He stated that Chief Staff has been working diligently over the last couple of days to put together the proposed 2021 Budget. He stated that Chief Staff is not ready to make any recommendations, but has some items to present for discussion.

Fire Chief Callahan stated that this budget is tougher than the one presented last year. He stated that, since 2016, the District has had a decrease of 2.6 million dollars in its budget revenue, and it is closer to 3 million dollars now.

Fire Chief Callahan stated that over the last two years the District has cut 1.2 to 1.5 million dollars out of the budget in the areas of personnel and programs. He stated that the depletion continues to exceed the cuts made.

Transitioning Fire Chief Sackett stated that there is a spreadsheet with the District's audited 2019 budget, a Year-to-Date 2020 budget, and three 2021 budget scenarios.

Transitioning Fire Chief Sackett stated that Scenario 1 is a critical proposed 2021 budget, Scenario 2 is an essential proposed 2021 budget, and Scenario 3 is a necessary proposed 2021 budget.

Transitioning Fire Chief Sackett stated that Scenario 1 has 1.1 million dollars. He stated that it is a result of an unsuccessful mill levy ballot measure and the District's projected decrease of \$684,000 in revenue based on the preliminary assessed valuation, resulting in a \$373,000 deficit. Transitioning Fire Chief Sackett stated that under this budget scenario, the District is not looking at making any capital purchases and is postponing some facilities maintenance. He stated that any unscheduled repairs are either delayed, unmet, or prioritized. Transitioning Fire Chief Sackett stated that the District is not going to go after grants that cannot be one hundred percent funded.

Transitioning Fire Chief Sackett stated that in the Scenario 2 budget, Chief Staff added 5% towards the District's adopted pay policy. He stated that this is in response to the District's personnel being its greatest asset. He stated that it also helps offset recruitment, training, and retention costs.

Transitioning Fire Chief Sackett stated that the Scenario 3 budget is very similar to the Scenario 2 budget. He stated that Chief Staff added 10% towards the pay policy. He stated that the Scenario 3 budget is very similar to where the District is at this year as far as training and expenditures. Transitioning Fire Chief Sackett stated that in all three Scenarios, Chief Staff has made budget cuts.

President Lambert asked how long the District's reserves will last given the three scenarios.

Transitioning Fire Chief Sackett stated that it appears the reserves will be depleted in three to five years. He stated that he does not have an answer for each Scenario, but will have it at the continued budget hearing. He stated that when they started this process a little over a year ago, Chief Staff predicted reserves would be depleted in 2023. He stated that the District has done a good job over the last couple years in making cuts, and is not near where it was projected to be at this point.

Board discussion ensued. The consensus of the Board was to consider Scenario 3 and have Chief Staff present accurate numbers at the continued Budget Hearing.

Director Burris made a motion to continue the Budget Hearing to the next Board of Directors meeting on November 10, 2020. Vice President Weisbrod seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

President Lambert recessed the meeting for a five-minute break.

Following the break, President Lambert reconvened the meeting.

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 legal counsel worked with Chief Staff on the consideration of other financial options for the District.

Attorney Ross explained to the Board the general structure of "lease purchase financing".

Attorney Ross stated that, based on the federal Department of Justice asserting that HB20-1017 violates federal law, his recommendation is that the District not accept control substances from citizens until there is further guidance on this matter.

FIRE CHIEF REPORT:

Transitioning Fire Chief Sackett stated that there is a New Business item that goes over a proposed Resolution in support of the Statewide Ballot to repeal the Gallagher Amendment, an Old Business item of a Strategic Plan update, and some financial options to discuss. He stated that, as already discussed, Chief Staff has been working on the District's initial proposed 2021 Budget.

Transitioning Fire Chief Sackett stated that the several fire departments along the valley, including the District, were jointly awarded a million-dollar AFG grant. He stated that the SCBAs have been ordered. He stated that the new SCBA compressors in Station 61 and Station 41 are up and running.

Transitioning Fire Chief Sackett stated that the District's wildland crews have been deployed to California and the crew that was on the Mullen Fire returned today. Transitioning Fire Chief Sackett stated that Garfield County is in exceptional drought. He stated that the District remains on high alert and hopes to receive some moisture next week.

The Board and Chief Staff discussed the District's exceptional drought conditions and ways to educate the public on what exceptional drought conditions entails.

NEW BUSINESS/ACTION ITEM REQUESTS:

a. Review of Resolution Advocating Voter Approval of the Gallagher Amendment Repeal and Property Tax Assessment Rates Measure – November 3, 2020 Election:

Transitioning Fire Chief Sackett stated that the Gallagher Amendment Repeal and Property Tax Assessment Rates Measure will be on this year's statewide ballot in November. Transitioning Fire Chief Sackett explained that District has been strained by the impact of COVID-19, wildfires, and an increase in service demands. He stated that Chief Staff recommends that the Board adopt the proposed Resolution in support of the Gallagher Amendment repeal to help stabilize the District's revenues.

President Lambert stated that the Gallagher Amendment has resulted in a continual decrease in the residential assessment rate, which has contributed to the decrease in the District's annual revenues. Repeal of the Gallagher Amendment would stop further the decrease in the residential assessment rate by locking in the current rate at 7.15%. President Lambert stated that this is better than the projected decrease in the residential assessment rate to 5.88% in 2021.

Secretary Marantino made a motion to adopt Resolution No. 2020-10-01, a resolution advocating voter approval of the Gallagher Amendment Repeal and property tax assessment rates measure during the November 3, 2020 election. Treasurer Haderlie seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

OLD BUSINESS/ACTION ITEM REQUESTS:

a. Strategic Plan Update Information Item:

Transitioning Fire Chief Sackett reviewed the Strategic Plan Update. He stated that there were some items that improved. He stated that grant opportunities and maintaining physical fitness equipment have gone up to 100 percent.

Transitioning Fire Chief Sackett stated that Objective 5.2.5 transitioned from a low priority to a high priority due to COVID-19 and wildfires. He stated that there are better communications with other agencies and the community.

Transitioning Fire Chief Sackett stated that sometime next spring the Board and Chief Staff can review the Strategic Plan.

Attorney Ross stated that if the meeting is a study session, then the Board and Chief Staff must ensure that there are no formal actions taken.

Vice President Weisbrod stated that Fire Chief Callahan will not be with the District past December 2020.

Chief Staff and the Board invited Fire Chief Callahan to the next Strategic Plan study session next spring.

b. CRFR Funding Options Information Item:

Transitioning Fire Chief Sackett stated that Chief Staff has been collaborating with Attorney Ross and a financial attorney on possible funding options for the District. He stated that when the District receives input from the financial attorney, Chief Staff will bring a recommendation to the Board.

President Lambert stated that it is important for the District to have options. He stated that he appreciates the work Treasurer Haderlie has contributed on this matter.

Board discussion ensued on financial options, with the financial attorney potentially reviewing any loan documents received from the local banks.

DIVISION INFORMATIONAL MEMORANDUM:

Wildland/Operations Division Chief Pigati:

President Lambert asked how many fires the District has been deployed on this year.

Wildland/Operations Division Chief Pigati stated that he does not have that information but can obtain that number for President Lambert.

President Lambert asked how much revenue the Wildland Division has generated this year.

Wildland/Operations Division Chief Pigati stated around \$750,000 has been billed. He stated that, with fires in California going into Christmas, there is a good chance the District will bill almost a million dollars.

President Lambert thanked the crews for their hard work.

Vice President Weisbrod asked if the District plans on pursuing urban interface grants.

Wildland/Operations Division Chief Pigati stated those types of grants are mainly for homeowners to pursue. He stated that the best option for the District is to encourage and assist the Homeowners Association with those grants. He stated that the District started to collaborate with homeowners in New Castle, but with COVID-19, it has slowed down. Wildland/Operations Division Chief Pigati stated that he will look into talking with those folks again and see if the District needs to finish any mitigation.

EMS/Training Division Chief Van Slyke:

EMS/Training Division Chief Van Slyke stated that the crews have been doing phenomenal training.

President Lambert asked if there was something causing an increase in COVID-19 cases in Garfield County.

EMS/Training Division Chief Van Slyke stated it may be due to more interactions with schools back in session and people not wearing masks.

Board discussion ensued.

Prevention Division Chief Moon:

Prevention Division Chief Moon stated that it has been a busy month with several fires. He stated that Fire Prevention week happened at the first of the month. He thanked the crews, Community Risk Reduction Specialist Pina, and Caitlyn Jarvis for a successful fire prevention week.

Prevention Division Chief Moon reviewed Community Risk Reduction Specialist Pina's report on the District's social media page reviews.

The Board, Chief Staff, and Caitlyn Jarvis discussed ways to share District messages on media platforms.

Prevention Division Chief Moon stated that he has three big projections going on at the hospital, Grand River Health, and the senior housing. He stated that there is

a new subdivision in Silt. He stated that it seems like the Building Department is busy with housing and not a lot of commercial buildings.

President Lambert asked about the NAPA project.

Prevention Division Chief Moon stated that he does not know why that project has not started yet.

IT Director Gredig:

Secretary Marantino asked IT Director Gredig if his report could show the Year to Date Call Volume Comparison for each month. She stated that this data could help plan with staffing.

Administrative Director Tillman:

President Lambert commended Administrative Director Tillman for her work. He asked Administrative Director Tillman what she did on the August Complex Fire.

Administrative Director Tillman stated that she was the Fire Deputy Finance Section Trainee and oversaw cost and time keeping.

Secretary Marantino asked if she could email Administrative Director Tillman some thoughts of the proposed 2021 Budget.

Director Burris stated that any emails should be from a question standpoint or feedback.

GOOD NEWS & DEPARTMENT ACCOMPLISHMENTS:

Transitioning Fire Chief Sackett stated that this item is from last month. He stated that it is a signed document from the Veterans Home on the popcorn machine.

BOARD MEMBER COMMENTS:

Vice President Weisbrod stated that he is impressed with the District and Chief Staff. He stated that, in these exceptional conditions, he hopes everyone will be proactive and safe.

Secretary Marantino thanked everyone for their work and Administrative Assistant Garay on the Strategic Plan update.

Director Burris stated that the District shows great professionalism and attitude on different calls on a regular basis. He stated that he recognizes the sacrifice and complements the District for the job done and information presented.

Treasurer Haderlie agreed with the Board members' comments. She stated that it is neat to recognize the growth of the District.

President Lambert stated that he is pleased to see improvements made by everyone within the District through the Strategic Plan update. He stated that, even with dire financial issues and an extreme fire season, the District still pulls together. He thanked the District for its efforts.

ADJOURNMENT:

There being no other business to come before the Board, Chairperson Lambert adjourned the meeting at 7:51 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: NOVEMBER 10, 2020



Date: 10 Nov 20

