



**RECORD OF PROCEEDINGS
REGULAR BOARD MEETING
July 18, 2023**

Roll call in person: Directors John Young, Ed Van Walraven, Scott Arthur, Leroy Duroux, Basalt Director Hutch Foster, Chief Thompson, Deputy Chiefs Richard Cornelius and Kevin Issel, Fire Marshal John Mele, Division Chief Daniel Palmer, Battalion Chief Chance Goldyn, IT Director Erik Johnson, HR Director Renee Thomas, Finance Director Jennifer Thompson, Lieutenants Paul Blangsted, James Dirkes, Firefighters David Herrera, Jesse Tanner and Nick Wall, Administrative Assistant Susan Herwick

Attendance via Lifesize: Directors William Boineau and Dave Heivly, Attorney Bob Cole, Consultants Hillary Fletcher and Courtney Sievers, Lieutenants Mo McPhee, Brent Perusse and Jessica Waltenburg, Tucker Kinney, Ian Lumsden, Paul Massey

Minutes of Last Meeting: Director John Young made a motion to approve the minutes of the June meeting. The motion was seconded by Director Scott Arthur. All were in favor and the motion carried 5 – 0.

Consultant Report: Hillary Fletcher and Courtney Sievers discussed/explained the questions that would be asked of the B&RFPD tax payers in the next couple of weeks. They will start with some icebreaker questions followed with Bond issue questions, informational questions, then return to bond issue questions to see whether feelings had changed after everything had been explained to the taxpayer. Results plus or minus 5% will go forward with a bond question. They will keep everything as simple as possible for the taxpayers. It will be a hybrid survey of a text message and survey link plus telephone calls to those people who we need a better survey sampling from. We would like to receive 300 – 400 responses.

We need to educate the taxpayers about the fact that we are temporarily going to lower the mill rate from 8 to 6 mills. People are in favor of supporting fire districts but are hesitant because of higher taxes. The survey process will take ten days to two weeks. The initial results will be out the following day. Final results will take 2 – 3 days to process. The results will be presented at the August Board meeting so that we can make a decision. We need to certify the ballot question by September 8, 2023.

Director John Young made a motion to approve \$15,000 and move forward with the survey. Director Scott Arthur seconded the motion. All were in favor and the motion carried 5 – 0.

Attorney's Report: Attorney Bob Cole stated that he had been working on a bond issue ballot question to insert into the survey of taxpayers to be done. He has also been working on the Communications Intergovernmental Agreement. It is a basic agreement to continue participation with the Pitkin County Regional Dispatch Center. The changes to the agreement were explained by Chief Thompson. The Communications Board will evaluate the Communications Director. Director John Young made a motion to approve the IGA. The motion was seconded by Director Scott Arthur. All were in favor and the motion carried 5 – 0. Director John Young amended his motion to approve the IGA including any revisions brought forth by the agencies that haven't approved the IGA yet as long as those revisions were approved by Director Ed Van Walraven, Chief Scott Thompson, and Attorney Bob Cole. Director Arthur seconded the revised motion. All were in favor and the motion carried 5 – 0.

Attorney Bob Cole stated that HH will be challenging. He explained that it is confusing to people. Taxpayers will go with whom they trust more to be telling them the truth. Attorney Cole feels that we are in good shape for a question to be on the ballot. Once voters have been informed of the pros and cons of HH they will probably reject it based upon a ballot survey that has already been done.

Chief's Report: Chief Scott Thompson stated that he would like to give all full-time employees a retention bonus of \$2500 as a thank you from the Board. This is non-budgeted money. The money would come from additional money that we are receiving due to increased interest rates. Director John Young stated that this should be an annual budget discussion. Discussion. Director David Heivly stated that we need to do whatever we can to retain our employees. Finance Director Jennifer Thompson explained the funding for this bonus. The bonus money will be done on a separate payroll so that it doesn't count towards their taxable wages. We will have to do an amended budget for this year anyway. Director Leroy Duroux made a motion to give all full-time employees a \$2500 retention bonus. Director John Young seconded the motion. All were in favor and the motion carried 5 – 0.

Finance Report: Finance Director Jennifer Thompson stated that we are at 47% of budget spent for the year which is about right. We have gone out on one federal wildfire assignment and hope that we will be assigned to others. She went over the preliminary 2024 budget figures. We will have a \$677,000 increase in revenue next year from the changes that we know about. We will have a shortfall of \$283,000 in funding but we have over 10 million in assets. The increases and decreases in line items were explained.

Chief Scott Thompson stated that we have a gap in the mid-valley area with our artificial intelligence for wildfire detection and he would like to put a camera on the top of Crown Mountain in order to fix that lack of detection. Grants will be sought to help cover the cost. The need for this and the other camera sites throughout the valley were explained. The consensus of the Board was to go ahead with this project.

Chief Scott Thompson stated that if a bond issue is needed, the Snowmass-Wildcat Fire Protection District Board will need to approve some funding from their capital projects fund to assist with building the training facility.

HR Report: Changes need to be made to the employee policy manual to remain in compliance due to some new laws that have come out. These changes will need to be approved in December. The new law

will become effective on August 7, 2023. The State will trump Federal government with this law. We are already do a lot of the requirements of this law.

Strategic Plan – there is some movement with retention and compensation. We are proposing to survey the market in August. Succession planning will present to the executive staff and Board of Directors in August.

The empowerment and process mapping teams are working on their initiatives.

The employee recognition team will present to the executive staff in September and the Board of Directors in October.

Compensation recommendations based on the market survey are to add 10% for 2024. They will be presenting at the meeting in August. We would like to propose transition COLAs in 2024. A 5% COLA and a 2% adjustment for the shortfall that occurred in 2023. Premium pay and shift differential pay for keeping certifications. Longevity pay 2% every two years from 15 – 25 years here. The Board approved this proposal.

Fire Marshal's Report: Fire Marshal John Mele reminded the Board that National Night Out was scheduled for Tuesday, August 1 from 5:00 – 8:00 p.m. at River Park in Basalt.

FM Mele told the Board that the Town of Basalt was close to adopting the 2021 codes and Pitkin County had adopted the 2021 codes already. The Town of Snowmass Village hadn't adopted the 2021 codes yet.

Deputy Chief of Operations Report:

Deputy Chief Richard Cornelius stated that our volunteers completed a total of 291 hours in June. 238 of those hours were in-station, 23 hours were Responding from Home/Work, and 30 hours were All Call Only from Home/Work.

Incidents

In June 2023, we responded to a total of 212 incidents. 89 of those incidents were EMS related. In June 2022, we responded to a total of 154 incidents. 84 of those incidents were EMS related. This is an increase of 58 incidents or a 37.7% increase in calls over last year.

2023 YTD

We have responded to 1299 incidents so far this year. 615 of those were EMS related incidents.

2022 YTD

Last year, we responded to 1193 total incidents. 604 of those were EMS related incidents. This is an increase of 106 incidents or 8.9% over last year.

Update on the Spring Creek Fire

The crew (Paul, David, Zach and Joseph) completed their Spring Creek Fire assignment. We had a Type VI on the fire since June 27 which initially started as a Mountain Area Mutual Aid (MAMA) assignment. The crew extended their 14-day assignment another seven days but was demobilized on Thursday, July 13. This provided a valuable learning opportunity. One crew

member, David Klebes was able to work as an ENGB Trainee and is very close to completing his Qualification Record.

Congratulations

Congratulations to Jesse Tanner on becoming a Colorado State certified Paramedic as of June 16, 2023!

Grant Ambulance

We have a VIN assigned and expect delivery of the Ford F-450 commercial chassis in October. We also received a credit of \$4115 as the pricing came in lower than anticipated. If all stays on schedule, we can expect delivery of the new ambulance in February 2024. This will allow us to meet the grant extension deadline of June 20, 2024.

Deputy Chief of Administration Report:

Deputy Chief Kevin Issel stated that one of our front-line Engines needed a new pump. Both of the new fire prevention vehicles have arrived. Landscaping at Station 46 will begin soon. The installation of the emergency generator at Station 41 is on-going. We will have the last of our employee housing units occupied the second week in August.

Master Plan: Chief Thompson stated that the short-term items are still being worked on. Training documentation is being worked on. Other than that, there are no big changes. He expects to see ISO to show up any day. Station 46 has been a plus for the homeowners of Sopris Mountain Ranch.

Public Comments: None

Board Comments: Director Leroy Duroux stated that it is getting concerning with the way people are being careless with fire. Do we have a drone? Chief Scott Thompson stated that yes, we have a drone and IT Director Erik Johnson is certified to operate it. We put the last two wildfires in the newspaper to increase people's awareness to the risk of wildfire. There are also wildfire ads in the paper each week.

Director Heivly stated that home ownership was more desirable than renting. Was there anyway that some of our employee housing could be converted to deed restricted housing? Chief Scott Thompson stated that no. The only units we have that aren't attached to a fire station need to be owned by a non-profit organization. We would need to buy free market housing and sell it to our employees. Employee housing requirements were discussed.

Old Business: None

New Business: None

Staff Comments: None

The All-Hands meeting in August has been cancelled. Please attend National Night Out at River Park in Basalt instead.

Adjournment: Director John Young made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Director Leroy Duroux seconded the motion. All were in favor and the motion carried 5 – 0. The meeting was adjourned at 10:27 a.m.