

CARBONDALE & RURAL FIRE PROTECTION DISTRICT

MINUTES OF THE MEETING

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

CARBONDALE FIRE HEADQUARTERS

MAY 11, 2016

The Board of Directors of the Carbondale & Rural Fire Protection District met for their regular meeting on May 11, 2016 at the Carbondale Fire Headquarters/Training Building.

President Gene Schilling called the meeting to order at 5:32 p.m. Directors present were Mike Kennedy, Louis Eller, Carl Smith and Tom Adgate. Also present were Ron Leach Jenny Cutright, Rob Goodwin, Frank Nadell, Eric Gross and John Colson.

CHANGES TO AGENDA

Carl Smith requested to add the following item under Staff Reports:

- PPE Update

OATH OF OFFICE, LOUIS ELLER AND TOM ADGATE

Gene Schilling administered the Oath of Office to Louis Eller and Tom Adgate.

ELECTION OF OFFICERS

General discussion regarding officers followed.

MOTION: made to keep the officers the same. It carried and passed unanimously.

CONSENT AGENDA

The items on the consent agenda were:

- Approve the Regular Meeting Minutes of April 13, 2016
- Approve Current Bills and Balances

MOTION: made to approve the consent agenda. It carried and passed unanimously.

PERSONS PRESENT NOT ON THE AGENDA

No members of the public had any comments.

STAFF REPORTS

Staff Planning Meeting Update Ron Leach said the staff planning meeting was April 27. He said the purpose is to methodically work through the master plan. He added the staff is currently working on strategy 5. Ron Leach said the staff discusses the master plan at every Wednesday staff meeting along with the fourth Wednesday of each month at 5:30 p.m. He noted that the evening meeting is so that members of the public can attend, but there have not been any so far. He noted that some board members have attended.

Ron Leach said that the staff has been working at refining the capital needs assessment. He said the staff has been analyzing the tax revenues for the current cycle and expected revenues for the 2018 cycle.

Ron Leach said that master plan objective 4.1.3 is about contingency funds. Ron Leach said that the unofficial minimum reserve amount has been \$1 million. He said that Mark Chain recommended \$2 million in the master plan. Ron Leach said that the reserve balance policy needs to come from the Board of Directors. Ron Leach said that different governments have different policies regarding their minimum reserve balance. He said that some have a specific dollar amount, while others use a certain number of months' worth of expenses. He noted the current operating budget is \$2.5 million.

Tom Adgate questioned the current general fund balance. Ron Leach noted there is \$2 million in the fund, but explained that the amount is high due to the way the property taxes are received. Ron Leach said that the majority of the property taxes are received between March and June, and very little is received at the end of the year. He said that is why the reserve balance seems high right now.

Carl Smith said that if the reserve balance amount is increased, those funds need to be cut from somewhere. He said if the policy is a certain number of months' expenses the reserve amount would need to change each year.

Louis Eller said that Mark Chain's recommendation was \$1 million for operating reserves and \$1 million in a contingency fund in case of a large event, such as a wildfire. He said that is something that the Board of Directors should discuss.

Ron Leach said that in 2015, the balance was under \$1 million, which was part of the urgency to ask voters for a mill levy increase. He noted that the two year mill levy override is a temporary stop gap measure, not a long term fix.

Ron Leach said that the bond ratings can also be affected by the reserve balances. He said that the bond rating companies look at a district's reserves and how stable they are. Louis Eller noted that a better bond rating saves the taxpayers money.

President Gene Schilling left the meeting at 5:52 p.m. Vice-President Mike Kennedy presided over the meeting.

PPE Rob Goodwin said that the PPE has been ordered but not delivered. He said that the PPE has been reorganized to remove some of the non-compliant bunker gear from service. He said that once the new PPE is delivered, more non-compliant gear will be removed from service. Rob Goodwin said that when PPE is ordered, it is made from a certain fabric, liner, etc and the manufacturer waits until they have enough orders to do a run of that style.

River Rescue Rob Goodwin said there was a river rescue on Tuesday, May 10 below Aspen Glen. He said that there were three people in a boat that were not wearing PFDs. He said they hit

a strainer and needed rescue, but were not injured. Rob Goodwin noted that the busy call season is starting.

Live Fire Training Frank Nadell said the Colorado Division of Fire Prevention and Control has a mobile live fire unit. He said the intention is to move it around the state for fire departments that do not have live burn facilities, so they can have live fire training. He said the unit will be in Carbondale May 26 – 29.

Rob Goodwin said that having live fire training is very important. He said that they will have as many firefighters attend the training as possible. He said that the number of structure fires is down due to better code requirements, but when they do happen, they are more intense and dangerous. He said that flashovers happen within 6-7 minutes which is much sooner than the 15-20 minutes when many of the board members were trained.

FINANCIAL REPORT

Discussion of 2017 Budget and 2016 Year to Date Ron Leach said that he would like to have a budget report on the agenda each month for the rest of the year.

Ron Leach reviewed the 2015 budget and audit. He noted that 2015 began with \$1,545,420 in reserves. Ron Leach said that the district collected about \$225,000 in ambulance revenues. He noted that about 60% of those revenues are from Medicare. Ron Leach said that Medicare is constantly reducing their benefits and denying more claims, which in turn reduces the district's revenues. He noted if submitted claims are not perfectly correct, they will be denied.

Ron Leach said that the District nets about \$1000 daily when a truck is sent out on a federal wildfire. He said the amount listed under wildfire contracts is the gross amount received, which covers wages and expenses.

Ron Leach said that health insurance is an expensive benefit. He said that the short term disability program has been put in place and is a very good benefit for the staff. Ron Leach said that training was cut significantly in 2015 due to the budget crisis. He said that firefighting is a dangerous business and people need to be well trained.

Ron Leach said that the district came in under budget in 2015. He added the audit was just received and copies were distributed at the beginning of the meeting. He said the budget called for \$1.5 million in reserves and the actual was \$1.7 million. He added if there had been a large wildfire, there was a good chance there would be less than \$1 million in reserves at the end of 2015.

Ron Leach reviewed the 2016 budget. He said that there are \$1 million additional revenues in property taxes in 2016, than 2015. He said that \$400,000 was from the increase in property valuations and \$600,000 was from the two-year temporary mill levy override.

Ron Leach reviewed the staffing line items. He said that one new full time position has been hired, as called for in the 2016 budget. He added that volunteer incentive has increased \$14,000 in 2016. He said that there are only a few things that can really be given to the volunteers other

than swag, good equipment and good training. He said that there was \$15,000 budgeted for the May 2016 Board of Directors election, but it was cancelled saving those funds.

President Gene Schilling returned and presided over the meeting at 6:22 p.m.

Ron Leach said that a large part of the EMS budget is medical drugs. He said that everything, down to sterile water, expires and must be replaced. Carl Smith said that the expired drugs and medical supplies are collected and he takes them to a facility in Denver where his daughter volunteers. He said that those expired items are sent to third world countries for use.

Ron Leach said that rebuilding the budget for the training program has been a priority. He said it is more effective to take a local and make them a paramedic, than take a paramedic and make them a local. He said his philosophy has always been to train current members. Ron Leach said that the total 2016 budgeted expenditures are \$400,000 over 2015. He said that a large portion of that is from the personnel and training budgets. Ron Leach added that the budgeted end of 2016 reserve balance is just over \$1 million.

Discussion regarding the cost of ambulance service versus fire service followed. Ron Leach noted that that the majority of the costs are personnel. He added that the majority of the emergency calls are EMS calls. Further general discussion regarding EMS and fire calls followed. Ron Leach added that the operating costs for the EMS service is more than the fire service, but the capital costs for the fire service are more than EMS service.

Ron Leach said that as of the end of the first quarter, the District has received 36% of the budgeted revenues, noting that a large portion of the total budgeted property tax revenues have already been received for the year. He said 22% of the wages have been spent and the total expenses are 21%. Both are under budget.

Ron Leach said that the listed estimate is mainly the budgeted amount with two exceptions. He said that there is \$90,000 budgeted for income for the sale of the modular home near Station 4 and \$51,000 received for wildfire contracts was from 2015 wildfires but the revenue was received in 2016. Ron Leach said the unrestricted carryover at the end of 2016 is budgeted to be \$1.2 million.

Ron Leach said that the 2017 property taxes will not change much from 2016. The only adjustment would be from new construction. He said that the next valuation cycle is 2018-2019. Ron Leach reviewed the first draft of the 2017 budget. He said that the total 2017 budget is \$3 million, with a \$1.1 million carryover.

Ron Leach said that a threshold question for the 2018 budget is if the board wants to ask the voters to extend the mill levy. He said that the decision will need to be made in 2017. He added if there is not a mill levy override for 2018, the district will receive about \$500,000 less in property tax revenues.

OLD BUSINESS

Status of H Lazy F Mobile Home Ron Leach said the original intent of purchasing the mobile home was to have someone on-call to respond at Station 4. He said the person living there is moving and the mobile home is not needed since quarters have been built at Station 4.

Ron Leach said that Mike Kennedy has been working with a realtor whose specialty is modular homes. Mike Kennedy said that the realtor said there are a few things that need to be done to get it ready for sale, including carpet replacement, painting and replacing trim and skirting. He said that he does not think it will be a large expenditure to ready it for sale. He said the realtor is prepared to put the unit on the market once the maintenance is done. General discussion followed.

Carl Smith said he is in favor of selling the modular home. He said that he was in Jackson Hole, WY recently and their housing situation is worse than in the Roaring Fork Valley. He said that Louis Eller had suggested using the proceeds from the sale toward the training ground plan, but Carl Smith suggested looking at more affordable housing. Gene Schilling said that the school district has language in their affordable housing plan to all first responders to reside in their units. Mike Kennedy said if the board wants to buy an affordable housing unit, why would they want to sell what is already owned. No action was taken.

NEW BUSINESS

Concurrent Calls Gene Schilling said that on Saturday, May 7, there was a part at 3:58 pm for a medical call, another page at 4 pm for an EMS fall and a third call at 4:13 pm for an unconscious person. He said that is three calls in a 15 minute period. He said concurrent calls are happening more often.

Fire Chief Job Description Gene Schilling said the Colorado River Fire Rescue Fire Chief, Mike Morgan, was recently hired as the Director of the Colorado Division of Fire Prevention and Control. He said that he does not have a college degree. He added that the state must have felt that he was the right person for the job, but if they had required a college degree ,he would not have the job.

Calling in to Board Meetings Gene Schilling said that it is challenging to have board members participate in conversation when they call in to a meeting. He said that there are times it may have to happen but requested it not be a common practice. Carl Smith said that he is on another committee and calls in to that meeting often. Gene Schilling suggested if calling in to meetings is going to happen often, a better phone system is needed.

CDPHE Grant Carl Smith said the grant hearing for the District's CDPHE grant is tomorrow and he is on that committee. He said he will not be commenting on the District's grant.

2015 Audit Louis Eller requested Jenny Cutright contact the auditor and see if he can attend the Board of Directors meeting in June.

Other Gene Schilling welcomed Tom Adgate to the Board of Directors. He also thanked John Coalson for attending the Board meeting. He said having the media attend helps let the public know what is happening with the fire district.

MOTION: made to adjourn the Board of Directors meeting at 7:04 p.m. It carried and passed unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,

Jenny Cutright, Recording Secretary

Gene Schilling, President

Michael R. Kennedy, Vice- President