

## **CARBONDALE & RURAL FIRE PROTECTION DISTRICT**

### **MINUTES OF THE MEETING**

### **BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

### **CARBONDALE FIRE HEADQUARTERS**

**OCTOBER 11, 2017**

The Board of Directors of the Carbondale & Rural Fire Protection District met for their regular meeting on October 11, 2017 at the Carbondale Fire Headquarters/Training Building.

President Gene Schilling called the meeting to order at 5:52 p.m. Directors present were Mike Kennedy, Tom Adgate and Michael Hassig. Also present were Ron Leach, Jenny Cutright, Rob Goodwin, Bill Gavette, Frank Nadell and Mike Wagner. Directors Tom Adgate and Gretchen Stock Bell were absent.

### **CHANGES TO AGENDA**

There were no changes to the agenda. Gene Schilling requested this item be removed from the regular agenda. The Board of Directors verbally agreed.

### **CONSENT AGENDA**

The items on the consent agenda were:

- Approve the Minutes of September 13, 2017 Regular Meeting
- Approve Current Bills and Balances

MOTION: made to approve the consent agenda as noted. It carried and passed 3-0.

### **PERSONS PRESENT NOT ON THE AGENDA**

There were no members of the public present other than staff.

### **2018 BUDGET**

Present Preliminary 2018 Budget Ron Leach presented the 2018 preliminary budget. He reviewed the property tax line item. Ron Leach said that the preliminary budget represents a status quo budget, other than the 1.75 mill levy that expires on December 31, 2017.

Ron Leach said that ambulance service contributes to the overall budget. He said about 65% of ambulance calls are Medicare patients. He reviewed the Medicare billing process noting that they Medicare bills are closely securitized. He added that the ambulance billing is handled in-house. He said that Kat Bernat is a subject expert on Medicare billings. He said the District has very few denials because of the work that Kat Bernat does. He added that she goes to an ambulance billing training annually. Ron Leach said that she is a recognized ambulance billing expert in our area.

Ron Leach said that the District commissioned an audit on the Medicare calls. He said that 165 claims were reviewed and the report came back very positive. He said that there were three calls

that should have been billed differently. He noted that the report confirms that Kat Bernat is doing the District's ambulance billing correctly.

Ron Leach said the other component of Medicare scrutiny is what the medics write on the narrative. He said that our crew does a great job of writing reports properly. He added that Kat Bernat educates the crews on narrative writing. Rob Goodwin reviewed how reports are written and how Kat Bernat and the crews work together to properly write narratives.

Ron Leach reviewed the wages line item. He said \$2.4 million of the budget, or roughly two-thirds, is allotted to personnel expenses. Ron Leach said there is a 3% cost of living increase budgeted for the staff, along with a full-time employee. He said one of the keystones of the mill levy continuation request is to staff four per shift, so two calls can be staffed at the same time. He said that three people were hired in 2015 when the mill levy passed to accomplish this.

Ron Leach said that the District is entering in to an agreement with the Town of Carbondale to provide more fire prevention and inspection work than the fire district has been doing. He noted that one employee has been assigned to this job description, so one of the shifts lost a staff member that needs to be replaced.

Ron Leach said that the cost of health insurance is high. He said that the fire district is experiencing the same problem as the rest of the country. Ron Leach said that the increase in premium is 5% for 2018. He added this is a great benefit for the employees. He noted the wildfire wages and said that those costs will be reimbursed. He added that the District makes money on the wildfire assignments.

Ron Leach said that the audit costs are going up. He added that he will be sending the audit engagement letter to the auditor. He said that public outreach is a newer line item, it was recommended in the master plan. He said that the staff has worked hard on public outreach.

Ron Leach reviewed the other line items noting the TABOR reserve line. He said 3% of the expenses is required to be budgeted. He said that about \$80,000 of the 2017 TABOR reserves were used for the Marble fuel release project.

Ron Leach said that the estimated 2017 expenses are \$2,968,539 and the 2018 budget for expenses is \$3,174,814. He said that would keep the district with just under \$1 million in reserves, if the mill levy continuation does not pass. He noted that the unofficial board policy is to keep \$1 million in reserves.

Ron Leach said there are no capital items budgeted if the mill levy continuation does not pass. He noted the ladder truck lease payment is included, saying that the truck gave the district 4 of the 5 ISO point needed to reduce the ISO to a 3.

Ron Leach reviewed the bond fund, noting the bonds were refinanced in 2017 to save the taxpayers money.

Ron Leach reviewed the volunteer pension fund and how it is funded.

Ron Leach reviewed the budget that will be used if the mill levy override extension passes. He noted that the reserves will increase with this budget. He added that there will be needed capital purchases, including an ambulance.

Consider Approval of a Public Hearing Date for 2018 Budget Ron Leach said the Board needs to set a public hearing for the 2018 budget. Ron Leach recommended the November 8, 2017 regular meeting. The board verbally approved the date for the public hearing.

Consider Approval of Public Information Plan for 2018 Budget The Board of Directors directed staff to post ads as needed, including the Sopris Sun and the Crystal Valley Echo, spending up to \$400.

## **STAFF REPORTS**

November 2017 Election Update It was noted that ballots will be mailed next week.

## **OLD BUSINESS**

Discussion regarding Fire Code IGA Ron Leach said that the District has not received the final fire code IGA.

Discussion regarding Ambulance Purchase Rob Goodwin said that the staff is getting bids from three companies. He reviewed the companies. He said that he and Kevin Greene have been test driving ambulances. Ron Leach said that he hopes to have the bids in for the November 8 meeting. General discussion regarding ambulances followed.

Marble Fuel Release Update Rob Goodwin said the plan was approved by the State of Colorado. He said the dirt was removed, testing soil as the dig occurred. He said after testing the District received approval to fill the hole and that part of the project is complete Rob Goodwin said that there will be two more ground water tests, and as long as they are clean no further action will be needed.

Gene Schilling said that this item could be removed from the monthly agenda. He said he would like an update when the water samples are done.

Grand Avenue Bridge Construction Rob Goodwin said it has gone very smooth. We have had no trouble getting to the hospital when needed.

MOTION: made to adjourn the Board of Directors meeting at 6:51 p.m. It carried and passed unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,

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Jenny Cutright, Recording Secretary

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Gene Schilling, President