

# **CARBONDALE & RURAL FIRE PROTECTION DISTRICT**

## **MINUTES OF THE MEETING**

## **BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

### **CARBONDALE FIRE HEADQUARTERS**

**JUNE 8, 2016**

The Board of Directors of the Carbondale & Rural Fire Protection District met for their regular meeting on June 8, 2016 at the Carbondale Fire Headquarters/Training Building.

President Gene Schilling called the meeting to order at 5:29 p.m. Directors present were Mike Kennedy, Louis Eller, Carl Smith and Tom Adgate. Also present were Ron Leach Jenny Cutright, Rob Goodwin, Bill Gavette, Frank Nadell, Eric Gross and Dan Cudahy from McMahan and Associates.

### **CHANGES TO AGENDA**

Gene Schilling said that Jenny Cutright requested to move the 2015 Audit up on the agenda. The Board of Directors verbally agreed to the change.

### **CONSENT AGENDA**

The items on the consent agenda were:

- Approve the Regular Meeting Minutes of May 11, 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.

### **FINANCIAL REPORT**

Review 2015 Audit Dan Cudahy, from McMahan & Associates, presented the 2015 audit to the Board of Directors. Dan Cudahy presented a slide show explaining the purpose of an audit adding that the district received a 'clean' opinion on the 2015 audit. He said that a clean opinion provides reasonable assurance that the financial statements are free of material misstatements and is the highest level of assurance auditors provide. Dan Cudahy said that Jenny Cutright keeps the books in great shape. He said that his firm recommends to many clients to have a CPA oversee the bookkeeping, but he does not feel it is necessary for Carbondale & Rural Fire Protection District. He said that Jenny Cutright does everything that is required and keeps the books correctly. Dan Cudahy said that the district has a very good team with Ron Leach and Jenny Cutright keeping the financials in good order.

Dan Cudahy explained how an audit is performed. He said that auditors review and test areas that could be considered a risk area. He reviewed GASB (Governmental Accounting Standards Board) 68 for reporting pensions. He said GASB 68 added 14 pages to the audit.

Dan Cudahy reviewed how the district is doing financially. He said that the district struggled due to the property value decrease, but it is financially well managed, especially considering the extremely difficult economic conditions of the past several years. He said that he has watched the reserve level decrease, which was similar to what happened to other entities that rely on property taxes.

Dan Cudahy said that the district's reserve balance during the economic downturn prevented catastrophic problems. He said that he recommends a high level of reserves due to the mill levy structure.

Dan Cudahy reviewed specifics in the 2015 audit. General questions followed. Dan Cudahy said that the district's reserves are \$1.8 million, including debt covenant restriction and \$600,000 of capital assigned funds. He said that the reserves are about 50% of the total expenditures. Dan Cudahy recommended increasing the reserve balance. He added that the best financial thing that the district can do is pass a permanent mill levy. He also said that about \$1.2 million of the reserves are set aside for debt and assigned capital.

Dan Cudahy said that he would not recommend lowering the reserves. He said that property values are recovering from the crash and that there is no guarantee that it couldn't happen again. Further discussion regarding reserve balances followed. Dan Cudahy noted that 100% of revenues is a common reserve balance, especially in resort areas.

Dan Cudahy complimented Jenny Cutright and Ron Leach on their financial management of the district.

## **STAFF REPORTS**

Staff Planning Meeting Update Ron Leach said the monthly public staff planning meeting was held on May 24. He said this is the fifth month of the meeting and there have been no members of the public in attendance. He said that the dates have been on the website, articles in the Sopris Sun, on Facebook and KDNK. He said that it does know what else can be done to encourage public participation.

Ron Leach said that the staff is on Strategy 5: *Provide services, activities, and responses that meet all quality baselines and approach or exceed established benchmarks*. Ron Leach said that the Standard of Cover document describes the response goals, level of service goals, standard of care goals and staffing goals. He said that the goal is to meet the goals 90% of the time. He added that Bill Gavette & Rob Goodwin are using the Evergreen Strategic Plan and the Commission of Fire Accreditation International document as guidelines for the standard of cover. Ron Leach said that the Standard of Cover will be an ongoing process and will be worked on continuously.

- Objective 5.1.1 – Meet all deployment objectives with 90% reliability for all types of emergency incidents, as outlined in a Standard of Cover document. Ron Leach said that this was discussed at length. He said that Almont has identified additional staffing needs though the District does not have the funds to hire needed additional staff. Ron Leach

said that Carl Smith said at the planning meeting that if there isn't a staffing plan, then requests made for staffing should not be made. Carl Smith said that a staffing plan needs to tie back to the master plan and then presented to the taxpayers. Ron Leach said that the first step is developing a standard of cover and if the Board agrees to it. Ron Leach added that at this time in 2017, the board will be discussing if they want to put out a ballot question to extend the mill levy or not.

- Objective 5.1.2 – Establish a staffing plan with triggers to hire additional staff as needed for emergency operations, fire prevention, training, and public education. Ron Leach said that to accomplish inspecting all of the building occupancies, another person is needed in the fire inspection division.
- Objective 5.1.3 – Complete annual inspection of all business occupancies. Ron Leach said that it annual inspects are a standard. Louis Eller noted that he has heard some criticism that buildings are not inspected. Ron Leach said that due to staffing constraints, buildings are generally not inspected unless the owner or tenant calls. Gene Schilling said that he feels strongly about inspecting buildings but is not ready to hire an additional position. He added that the Town Manager feels the fire department should be inspection buildings annually. Eric Gross noted that the town attorney called to discuss this.

Carl Smith said if money wasn't an object, inspections are something that needs to be done, but the tax payers said that the district needs to limit expenditures and inspections were listed as something that would be done. Carl Smith said that he has concerns about a number of places that should be inspected. Gene Schilling agreed that inspections are a high priority, but the district doesn't have the funding to accomplish it. Ron Leach said he would like to be able to inspect every building in the district annually. Discussion regarding inspections followed. Bill Gavette noted that he reviews new construction and performs an inspection per week.

- Objective 5.1.4 – Utilize existing technology to improve data collection for the fire inspection program. Ron Leach said that preplans are needed. He said that this is also a function of the fire prevention division. He said that the staff has been working on the preplan program. He said that staff goes to public buildings and preplans a fire. He said that track what is the building made of, locations of the exits, gas shut off, Knox box, hydrants, etc. He said there are over 300 buildings in the preplan database. Further discussion regarding preplans followed. Ron Leach added this is another program that the fire district is challenged to do with limited staffing, especially in the summer time when the call volume increases. Ron Leach noted that preplans are good for ISO points.
- Objective 5.1.5 – Evaluate and refine as necessary public education and prevention programs that reduce the incidence of personal injury and property loss with key performance indicators to measure success of these programs. Ron Leach said that this is also a function of the fire prevention division.

Ron Leach said that community paramedics were also discussed. Carl Smith explained what community paramedics do. General discussion followed. No action was taken.

- Objective 5.1.7- Continue to promote community AED and CPR programs so that all communities have sufficient resources (equipment and trained personnel) to implement emergency cardiac care as soon as possible. Ron Leach said that the district has a robust community CPR & AED training program. He said that CPR is taught throughout the fire district. He estimated at least 100 people are trained annually. Ron Leach said that CPR saves lives.

Ron Leach said all of the ideas are good, but they take money to accomplish.

Ron Leach said that the staff will meet again at the end of June. He said that the entire staff stays late for the meeting. He said the staff has to stay late for meetings and trainings many times per month. Gene Schilling said that the staff discusses the master plan every week at their staff meeting. He said if the public is not attending the night meetings, he doesn't feel that the staff should have to present the meeting at night as well. He suggested waiting until after the June meeting to decide if the meeting time should be changed. Ron Leach said that the idea of the night meeting was for the public come and discuss the master plan, but they haven't shown any interest.

Summer Staffing Carl Smith asked what the summer staffing program was. Ron Leach said that five people have been hired for the summer. He said the IA program is getting started. He said that the IA Team came upon an unattended large campfire in Redstone and extinguished it. He said by extinguishing the fire, it may have prevented a larger problem.

Ron Leach said that an extra person was added to the shifts for the summer. He said it is the busy time of year. Ron Leach said that the on-duty crew responded to seven 911 calls yesterday. He said recently a shift had 13 911 calls, with four of them concurrent. Ron Leach noted that if there is a call in Marble the ambulance and crew are out of service for at least three hours.

Rob Goodwin said hose testing has begun. He said that every piece of fire hose in the district needs to be tested annually. He added that there are two to three special events per week that need staffing.

Louis Eller asked what the short term wildfire forecast was. Rob Goodwin said that the national outlook predicts that wildfires in this area will be 'normal'. Rob Goodwin noted that normal is about 3,000 fires in Colorado.

## **FINANCIAL REPORT**

2017 Budget Ron Leach reviewed the income statement. He said the income statement is a good way to look at how the fire district is doing. Ron Leach said that there is 35.7% of property tax left to collect. He noted that property taxes come in large amounts early in the year, then trickle in at the end of the year. He also said that the bills include the June bills, so there are six months of expenditures.

Ron Leach said that the fire district is totally dependent on property taxes. He added that there is 60% of the wage budget left, and 63% of the total budget. He said we are doing well managing the budget.

### **OLD BUSINESS**

Modular Sale at H Lazy F Update Ron Leach said the tenant will be out on June 15. He said that Mike Kennedy has talked to the broker and the plan is to sell the modular.

Mike Kennedy said that some cosmetic work needs to be done on the modular before it can be listed. He said that affordable housing has been discussed a number of times. He said the subject of purchasing a unit in the town was mentioned. Mike Kennedy said it would be trading in something the district already owns for something that would cost about \$400,000.

Louis Eller said that he said that he does not see that the value is worth the expense. Discussion regarding other housing ideas followed. Louis Eller said if the board wanted to spend money on housing, he said he would like to make a significant expenditure and ask the voters if they support it. He added that housing is not the mission of the fire district.

Carl Smith said that he supports selling the modular. He said the district is not getting the value out of it. He said that the staff isn't being paid high enough wages to live in Carbondale. He reviewed the housing situation in Jackson, WY and added that the Aspen School District has taken out ads asking people to rent to their teachers. Further general discussion regarding selling the modular home followed.

**MOTION:** made that the president can sign a listing agreement. It carried and passed unanimously.

Mike Kennedy said that the district should look at all of the rental units and see if the District is getting the value from the tenants or if they should be rented at a higher rate with no shift requirements. Ron Leach said that is a good business practice, but it won't work here. Ron Leach said that if the rent was raised the tenants would not be able to live in the district. He said one of the tenants does two night shifts per week. He added that the goal is to maintain the volunteer base. He said if the goal is to make a profit, that is not happening. He said that to have the tenants on shifts and to be available at a fire station is worth it.

Louis Eller said that the district has been leaders in the affordable housing market for years. Carl Smith there that there are good trade-offs having people living in the stations. He referenced a recent fire in Redstone where the resident went to the fire station for help when the home caught on fire.

PPE Update Rob Goodwin said that he spoke with the vendor. They said the order would be shipped from the manufacturer on June 10.

## **NEW BUSINESS**

Protected Health Information (PHI) Request Eric Gross said that he spent a fair amount of time researching the issue and is prepared to discuss it when the John Colson attends the meeting to make his request.

Wildfire Meeting Louis Eller said there is a meeting at Holy Cross Energy regarding wildfire prevention. Rob Goodwin said that Jake Spaulding is at the meeting representing Carbondale Fire.

Recent Emergency Calls Mike Kennedy asked about recent calls. Rob Goodwin said that there have been three river rescues recently.

Footsteps Marketing Mike Kennedy said that the monthly fee for Footsteps Marketing needs to be reviewed. He said it is very expensive. Discussion the services received for the fee followed. Ron Leach will talk to Footsteps and report back.

MOTION: made to adjourn the Board of Directors meeting at 7:22 p.m. It carried and passed unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,

---

Jenny Cutright, Recording Secretary

---

Gene Schilling, President