

CARBONDALE & RURAL FIRE PROTECTION DISTRICT

MINUTES OF THE SPECIAL MEETING

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

CARBONDALE FIRE HEADQUARTERS

DECEMBER 1, 2014

The Board of Directors of the Carbondale & Rural Fire Protection District met for a special meeting on December 1, 2014 at the Carbondale Fire Headquarters/Training Building.

President Gene Schilling called the meeting to order at 12:03 p.m. Directors present were Mike Kennedy, Louis Eller, Bob Emerson and Carl Smith. Also present were Ron Leach, Jenny Cutright, Rob Goodwin, Tom Flynn, Chuck Torinus, Ron Kroesen and Chris Pearson.

PUBLIC HEARING REGARDING 2015 BUDGET

President Gene Schilling continued the Public Hearing for the 2015 Budget at 12:03 p.m.

Ron Leach asked the Board of Directors if they had any questions or comments. Louis Eller noted that there is a significant cut in the paramedic program funding for 2015. Discussion regarding the paramedic program fund cuts followed.

Carl Smith asked about the current health insurance rates. He noted that while employees are not receiving raise, that they are receiving a health benefit increase, due to the higher costs for health care premiums.

Bob Emerson noted that there was a \$45,000 reduction in 2014 expenses in the capital project fund. Ron Leach said that it is due to no purchasing needed capital equipment in 2014. Gene Schilling said that at some point there will need to be money spent on infrastructure.

Ron Leach reviewed the budget. He noted that property taxes decreased 42% from 2013 to 2014. He said that 2015's property taxes will be about the same as 2014.

Ron Leach said that wages in 2014 are estimated to be \$1,380,991. He said that amount includes wages paid with the wildfire prevention program donations. He noted that the amount not spent in 2014 is budgeted to be spent in 2015. He said that the wages are estimated to be \$80,000 under budget in 2014. He said that he proposes to use a portion of the unspent funds to give each employee a \$500 bonus in 2014. He added that the bonus will be a statement to the employees that the Board of Directors appreciate and value them.

Ron Leach answered specific questions about line items. He noted that the administration budget includes \$90,000 for the master plan, which is why it is higher than the 2014 budget. He said the training budget has some of the largest cuts, including the elimination of the paramedic training program. General discussion regarding the TABOR reserves followed. Ron Leach noted that

there is no transfer to the capital projects fund in 2015. Ron Leach reviewed the estimated reserves at the end of 2014 and 2015.

Ron Leach said the capital projects fund is used to purchase or replace equipment. He said that there are no capital purchases planned in 2015 other than the necessary leases. He said the bond fund is to pay for the voter approved bonds. He said the pension fund is for the volunteers. He said the general fund is putting about \$63,000 in the pension fund to keep it sound. Discussion regarding how the pension fund is funded followed.

Carl Smith asked if there is an objective based budget being worked on along with the spreadsheet budget. Ron Leach said it was. Carl Smith said that he would like to see on the maintenance budget a list of the NFPA and other tests that are being performed, the cost for the tests, if it is being done in-house or contacted out, the costs for the repairs for those items being tested and a list items that are not being funded, along with their cost. Discussion regarding using the reserves to purchase needed equipment versus funding the budget followed.

Carl Smith said that he brought up several comments in the past few months. He said that he believes there needs to be an ambulance sold and institute a hiring freeze at the Board of Directors level. Gene Schilling said that these are items that the Chief makes decisions about and if they need to be brought to the Board of Directors, he will.

Carl Smith discussed how grants work and what grantors look at when awarding grants. He said that grants are now more competitive. Further discussion regarding grants and selling an ambulance followed. Carl Smith said he is not taking any Board of Directors pay and would like his portion to be earmarked for PPE. Louis Eller suggested taking the board pay, then donating it back to the District. He added that there are expenses during the year he spends his own funds on.

General discussion regarding equipping volunteers at outlying stations followed. Ron Leach said that the staff has looked at the value of selling an ambulance. He said it could be sold for about \$25,000 and it costs about \$7,000 annually to maintain it. He said that the issue of selling an ambulance needs to be looked at as a level of service discussion, not a budget discussion. He said a decision should be made based on what is best for the community. He said that he feels that the issue of the operations supervisors is also an operational discussion. He said that these two items will not make a difference in the 2015 budget, so they should be discussed after the budget is adopted. General discussion followed. No action was taken.

MOTION: made to continue the public hearing regarding the 2015 budget and adjourn the Board of Directors meeting at 1:04 pm. It carried and passed unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,

Jenny Cutright, Recording Secretary

Gene Schilling, President