

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

### **MINUTES OF THE MEETING**

**BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

### **CARBONDALE FIRE HEADQUARTERS**

**SEPTEMBER 10, 2014**

The Board of Directors of the Carbondale & Rural Fire Protection District met for their regular meeting on September 10, 2014 at the Carbondale Fire Headquarters/Training Building.

President Gene Schilling called the meeting to order at 5:30 p.m. Other directors present were Mike Kennedy, Louis Eller, Bob Emerson and Carl Smith. Also present were Ron Leach, Jenny Cutright, Eric Gross, Rob Goodwin, Bill Gavette, Kat Bernat, Frank Nadell, Ray Sauvey, Tom Flynn, Jeff Wadley, Stephanie Schilling and Vickie Smith

### **CHANGES TO THE AGENDA**

Ron Leach requested to move ambulance collections to beginning of the agenda. Carl Smith requested adding under new business: board packet, public availability, can the public hear, task force involvement and a foundation.

### **CONSENT AGENDA**

The items on the consent agenda were: Approve the Minutes of the August 4, 2014 Special Meeting and August 13, 2014 Regular Meeting and Approve Current Bills and Balances.

**MOTION:** made to approve the consent agenda. Carl Smith asked for clarification on an invoice from TG Malloy. Ron Leach noted it was GIS mapping for the task force and master planning. Louis Eller requested to change a typographical error on the August 13, 2014 regular meeting minutes. It carried and passed unanimously with the change.

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

No members of the public had any comments

### **AMBULANCE COLLECTIONS POLICIES**

Ron Leach said that policies regarding write offs and collection accounts have been discussed. He reviewed a draft ambulance billing policy.

Ron Leach said that the majority of the accounts receivable are collection accounts from the past three years. He said that these accounts are actively being pursued by the collection agency. Ron Leach said that Kat Bernat and Jenny Cutright met with the collection agency and representative recommended carrying one years' worth of collections accounts as receivables. He

added that if any payment on older accounts is collected, it would be entered and accounted. He recommended writing off collections accounts annually.

Ron Leach proposed to continue writing off Medicare, Medicaid and Colorado indigent care patients monthly. He reviewed the requirements for Medicare accept on assignment and noted that the draft policy calls for Medicare patients that do not have supplemental insurance have the balance written off after the Medicare payment. Louis Eller suggested a monthly report to the Board of Directors with the amounts written off and sent to collections.

Ron Leach noted that the draft policy is the rational on how the ambulance billings and write offs are done. Kat Bernat reviewed Medicare write offs. She added that an average ambulance bill is \$1,000 and to take that in to consideration when reviewing the amount of write offs. She said that it generally takes 45-60 days between submittal and response from an insurance company. She also said some of the accounts receivable that are over 90 days are people who are making payments on their account.

Gene Schilling said that one part of the draft policy that needs to be addressed is if the Board of Directors would still like to write off balance due after insurance payment, or the entire balance if there is no insurance, for Carbondale & Rural Fire Protection District and Carbondale Police Department staff and their children. Discussion followed and the Board of Directors were in agreement with keeping this policy.

Discussion regarding M-1 holds and billing followed. The Board of Directors would like to have the changes made to the policy and brought back for final review and vote at the regular October meeting.

Further discussion regarding billing patients who had a need to be transported but did not want to go via ambulance due to the cost followed. Ron Leach said that he has authorized the incident commander to transport someone without charge at their discretion. No charge transports will be added to the policy and will be reported to the Board of Directors when it happens.

## **2015 PROPOSED BUDGET**

Ron Leach reviewed the 2015 proposed budget. He said that the final budget will be in the same format.

Ron Leach said that a preliminary budget needs to be submitted by October 15. He said that the staff meets on Wednesdays at 10 am to work on the budget. He added that Carl Smith has attended many of the meetings and invited the other Board of Directors members to attend. He said that the staff has been working on goals and objectives for 2015. He said the staff is also working on changing the budget format to an objectives based budget with the 5 divisions for future budget years.

Ron Leach said that the staff is working on cutting an additional \$100,000 from the 2015 budget, in addition to the \$500,000 in cuts from 2014 that are being maintained in 2015. Ron Leach

said that he does not intend to cut any additional full time paid positions in 2015. He noted that 3 full time and 8 part time positions were cut in 2014.

Further discussion regarding the draft 2015 budget followed. Ron Leach noted the 2013 audit came back and was more favorable to the reserves than estimated due in part to wildfire contracts and ambulance revenues. He also said that the 2015 property tax will be about \$7,000 higher than 2014, based on the preliminary assessed valuations.

Gene Schilling questioned if the capital projects fund should have a transfer in 2015. Discussion followed. Carl Smith said that he attended 3 budget meetings with the staff. He said that the staff has come up with good objectives and he is impressed with their work.

## **STAFF REPORTS**

ISO 2002-2012 Comparison Ron Leach said there was a short presentation to the Citizens Advisory Committee on the ISO rating. He said there was a lot of discussion about ISO and the purchase of the ladder and the tender. He said there was not a lot of time to present the information to the CAC. He said he wants to present to the Board of Directors where the District stands with the ISO and how the ladder and tender purchase affected the rating.

Bill Gavette showed a presentation that compared the 2002 ISO report to the 2012 ISO report. They demonstrated how the purchase of the ladder and tender, along with the additional paid staff since 2003, kept the District from dropping to an ISO 6.

Rob Goodwin noted one of the places to improve points for ISO is staffing and training. He said that there are also new places points can be earned, including building inspections and public outreach. He added that the staffing and the equipment purchase was a key factor in keeping the ISO rating at a 5 instead of going to a 6 or worse. He said purchasing the equipment was the best decision the Board of Directors could have made. He said keeping the ISO 5 saved the District taxpayers a significant amount of money annually in insurance premium increases.

Rob Goodwin said that the ladder is also important for the reach it provides. He distributed a photo showing the ladder extended to a roof from the road, next to the telesquirt doing the same. He said that longer ladder's reach could be vital in a rescue. He also said that controlling the roof is critical during a structure fire.

2014 Wildfire Prevention Program Report Ron Leach said that the summer wildfire program wasn't funded in the 2014 budget. He said that \$63,000 in donations were received to fund the program but it turned out to be a light wildfire season. He said the program ended on August 31 for the summer due to the rainy weather. He said approximately \$35,000 of the donations were spent and the donors said to keep the rest of the donation to help fund the 2015 wildfire program.

Rob Goodwin said that the wildfire crews put out several fires during the program. He said they also did hydrant checks throughout the district, inventoried vehicles, interacted with the public and trained. Rob Goodwin said there were a number of lightning strikes in the District when the

wildfire program started and the IA crew monitored and followed up on the strikes to make sure there wasn't a holdover fire. He added they did a lot of communications testing and assisted on other calls too. He noted that there are a lot of simultaneous calls happening during the summer season.

Ron Leach noted that it was very important to be able to account to the donors for their donation. He said that all of the donation funds were spent on the wildfire prevention program.

## **FINANCIAL REPORT**

Auditor Letter Jenny Cutright said that Carl Smith asked for clarification on the audit letter regarding the unamortized debt issuance cost. She distributed a letter from the auditor answering his question.

## **OLD BUSINESS**

2014 Directors Election After Action Review Ron Leach said that the after action review for the 2014 directors election is set for October 27 at 6:30 pm. Discussion regarding election night issues followed. Ron Leach said that the after action review will deal with what went right, what could have gone better and what can be done in the future to make it better.

## **NEW BUSINESS**

Master Plan Request for Qualifications Ron Leach said that Request for Qualifications for the Master Plan was advertised in the Glenwood Springs Post Independent and the Sopris Sun. He said that there has not been any RFQs received yet, though the deadline isn't until September 26.

Board Packet Carl Smith said that since there has been an audience at the Board of Directors meetings, he would like to have a few packets available for the audience. He also requested to post the packet on the website. Discussion followed and the Board of Directors were all in agreement to post the packet on the website and to have a few copies available at the meetings.

Sound Carl Smith asked the audience if they could hear better since the chairs were moved. The audience said they could hear much better.

Foundation Carl Smith asked the other Board members to think about creating a Carbondale Fire foundation in the future so people could donate to it.

Carbondale & Rural Fire Protection District Open House Ron Leach said the open house is scheduled for October 18. He said that this came as a recommendation from the task force. He said 16 volunteers signed up to help at the open house. Gene Schilling suggested inviting the task force to the open house.

Marble Town Council Meeting Louis Eller said that the Town of Marble is talking about building a town hall. He said they are considering adding it on to the end of the fire station. Discussion followed and no action taken.

General Comments from the Public

Tom Flynn recommended giving away batteries for smoke detectors at the open house.

Tom Flynn asked about grant writing for a master plan. Gene Schilling noted that it is helpful to have a cost associated with a project for grant writing purposes.

Jeff Wadley said that the ISO information presented was very good and understandable.

MOTION: made to adjourn the Board of Directors meeting at 7:40 p.m. It carried and passed unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,

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Jenny Cutright, Recording Secretary

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Gene Schilling, President