

**Minutes East Grand Fire Protection District
Board of Directors Meeting
November 15th, 2023**

Board Directors Present: President Garth Hein, Vice President Donald Maurais, Treasurer Rachel Hoyhtya, Secretary Richard Kramer, Director Ryan Barwick.

Staff Present: Chief Todd Holzwarth, Fire Marshal Dennis Soles, Training Coordinator Steve Waldorf, Office Manager Kristen Rybij, Assistant Fire Marshal Ryan Mowrey, Volunteer Coordinator Jed Henry.

Legal Counsel Present: Linda Glesne.

- ❖ Director Garth Hein opened the Board of Directors meeting at 18:04 p.m. There was a quorum of Directors present. There was no public and there were no additions to the agenda.
- ❖ Director Donald Maurais moved to open the 2023 Public Hearing for the 2024 Budget. Director Rachel Hoyhtya seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

Director Garth Hein asked three times for any public input on our 2024 budget. There was none.

- ❖ Director Donald Maurais moved to close the 2023 Public Hearing for the 2024 Budget. Director Rachel Hoyhtya seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

The Board reviewed the October 25th, 2023 minutes. Ryan confirmed he received the clarification he needed on the budget. Garth revisited Rachel's concern for the lack of communication regarding special needs at addresses during incident responses. Garth explained how his department uses a system of "caution notes" per address which will notate anything of importance from special needs to hazards. Todd believes that the new County Flex System may have this capability and will look into this further. Ryan Mowrey noted that our new subscription to First Due will have a Community Connect portal for the public to input their own specific special needs / notes of importance for their residence. This data will then be pushed through during an incident on our apps alongside the Flex data. Garth requested that Dennis have Linda review the documentation we have regarding the absence of a generator for the fire pump at the WP Workforce housing to make sure that the reasoning for our support of this decision is properly documented to avoid any future liability.

- ❖ Director Rachel Hoyhtya moved to approve the October 25th, 2023 minutes as written. Director Donald Maurais seconded. The motion passed unanimously.
- ❖ Director Rachel Hoyhtya moved to adjourn the regular meeting and enter into Executive Session – 24-6-402(4)(b), C.R.S. "Conferences with the District's Attorney regarding legal advice on specific legal questions regarding mill levy calculations." Director Donald Maurais seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

The regular meeting was adjourned at 18:14 p.m.

The regular meeting was reopened at 19:05 p.m.

Discussion of Financials: Impact fees are still flat, but we have an anticipated \$14,900 for two mixed used buildings going up in Winter Park. The Equipment Testing & Certifications line item came in a bit over budget this year due to unexpected inflation rates for ladder testing and an oversight in budgeting annual flow testing due to the newness of our SCBA apparatus. LPL transferred another matured bond into the general fund in the amount of \$273K.

- ❖ Director Ryan Barwick moved to approve the financials. Director Richard Kramer seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

Chief's Report: We are working with Big Valley to get a refined projection of costs for 2024. Concrete work for the South Station is expected to be completed within the next two weeks. There will be a noted stall in progress in January and the beginning of February as we wait for steel. The waterline is fixed at the Iron Horse Fraser River crossing and the Mary Jane tank is full. To date, we are 90 calls ahead of last year. The gas meter at the South Station is in and will be used for temporary heating until the concrete is done.

Fire Prevention Bureau Report: New development applications are flat according to WP Planning & Zoning. The Mill Apartments are struggling to fill the workforce housing units reserved for those who make the median income or less. These income requirements are set by

State and Federal regulations. District plan and development reviews have also fallen flat. Dennis allowed Headwaters Condos to use non-combustible siding and soffit outside in place of sprinklers they claimed they could not get piping to. Dennis also noted that he felt confident with the electrical engineer's interpretation of the electrical code which supports the absence of a generator for the fire pump at the WP Workforce housing. Although both the alarm and sprinkler systems are fully functional and approved for the WP Workforce Housing - Bldg. #2, Dennis is only signing off a CO for each floor, one at a time, under the request of the building department.

Training Coordinator Report: Steve met with the two new Assistant Chiefs at Grand Fire #1 in an effort to help them formulate a model for running EMS calls which follows ours – running the bad calls and calls when they are out of district. Currently our Medical Director is the same across the County, but training is run through GC EMS, and we are trying to move away from that system to one through the Grand County Chiefs or the County Training Group. It was noted that many of our District trainings include exercises that are eligible to be logged as CE credits. Dr. Selenke is also providing trainings that count towards CE credits. Todd plans to get a group membership to MSAC so our crew can get EMT / EMTS credits for a reduction in price. Steve is currently working on a more structured training approach for when we recruit a new Officer so that they have a clear direction to follow.

There were no public comments.

Board Business: It is anticipated that there will be another round of small refinements to the 2024 budget before final adoption. Todd noted that he has not had much luck with any worthwhile loan or grant funding opportunities for the South Station. Ryan asked what our financing options were for the project. Todd explained that as a Special District, we are not allowed to partake in any long-term debt (bonds) without voter approval – long-term being anything over a year. Our best option right now is a lease purchase as it has to be approved by the Board every year as an annual expense in the budget. The amount we will apply for will depend on our final expected revenues and how much money will have transferred from our LPL bonds maturing in the spring. Todd is also working with LPL to weigh the penalty cost of early bond distributions against the interest rates of lease purchase monies as some maturity dates are as far out as 2028. Kristen noted that she revised the 2024 Impact Fee budget expenses to reflect \$15K to conduct a new Impact Fee Study in 2024. Todd noted that we will actually plan for the study to take place in 2025 with preparations beginning in 2024. Kristen then presented the highlights of a proposed 2024 salary increase in alignment with what we dubbed “Phase II” of the 2023 Market Study. Last year we moved everyone to the midpoint of their salary as our first move. This year, it is proposed that we add a one-time tenure specific salary increase to differentiate those of us over midpoint further within the pay range. Kristen pointed out that this increase would be in addition to the annual base market structure movement and COLA increases. Board and Staff held a lengthy discussion which brought multiple concerns to the table as the proposal showed staff reaching their salary maximums years before it was appropriate. There was no way we could afford and / or justify the compounding fiscal ramifications of this. It was found that Kristen erroneously calculated the staff's proposed tenure increase and a revision of this will bring the annual increases (which are to include a combination of market movements, COLA, and tenure) into a more fiscally sound annual process. Additional items needing clarification include how the min / mid / max of each salary was originally calculated and what the difference between the standard annual market adjustment and COLA is. Kristen then revisited a previous discussion regarding an increase in vacation time accrual and how we might deal with the abolishment of the “use it or lose it” practice. Do we pay out unused vacation time each year in order to avoid unfunded liabilities? Ryan noted that we may be exempt from having to do this. The Board clarified that it is was not their intent to take away unused vacation time from us, or to force us to use earned vacation time that we simply cannot. Garth reiterated that the vacation policy is ultimately up to the Chief, but it is in our best interest to formulate one that supports employee relations as well as avoids large unfunded liabilities in the future. Kristen will look into this further with the Employer's Council and propose a solution next meeting. Todd gave the Red Dirt meeting summary with the most important highlight being that us and Grand Fire #1 both dropped our annual contributions from \$25K to \$15K until we can use up some capital funds. There was a short discussion over future traffic control plans for the intersections of the Red Dirt Station and the South Station.

The regular meeting was adjourned at 20:40 p.m.

Garth Hein

Donald Maurais

Rachel Hoyhtya

Rick Kramer

Ryan Barwick