

Albany County Fire District #1 Board Meeting Minutes February 16, 2021

This meeting was held as a hybrid meeting with in-person attendance as well as through Zoom. (Formal action taken by the Board is indicated via italics.)

1. Call to Order: Meeting was called to order at 5:00 pm. Board members present were Luke Hawkins, Matt Burkhart and Brett Wadsworth joined via Zoom.
2. Minutes of 1/19/2021 Board Meeting, Work Session and Exec Session: *Chairman Wadsworth moved to approve all minutes as presented. Motion was seconded by Treasurer Wadsworth and approved unanimously.*
3. Comment from the public: FirstNet with AT&T – First responder network, built throughout WY, partner with Union Wireless, where they are hanging their gear on union wireless infrastructure. Fire responders (Fire/EMS/Law enforcement/dispatch) have priority and pre-emption in the network – in times of crisis it will clear the network. Agency paid and subscriber paid plans (\$40/month, hotspot is \$45) same price on either. Works on tablets – they are \$40 but bundling discount. Have to have a voice line, can't just have a tablet. Agency side data plan is \$36.80. They will get map of coverage area to Matt. It will work outside local area, it is nationwide. They have a fleet of deployable's that are available. For crisis or planned events (CFD) there is extra capacity, and they are completely self-sufficient. Contact our local store or Michelle, for agencies to set up subscriber paid account and approve volunteers on a case-by-case basis, which are validated yearly. They offer a lot of devices just make sure device is valid on FirstNet. They can do individual house presentations as well.
4. Financial Report:
 - a. Bills to be Paid – *Chairman Hawkins moved to approve the January 2022 Financial Report as presented. Motion was seconded by Secretary Burkhart and approved unanimously.*
5. Report – Outside Agencies:
 - a. Laramie Fire Department – Final walk through of the drill grounds is scheduled for the week of 2/21/22. They are still waiting on steel. Gus will get with ACFD#1 trainers to schedule some training. Need to schedule a time to meet about the City of Laramie Contract.
 - b. County Emergency Services – She needs to know the radio needs of ACFD#1 as she prepares for a grant. Chief's get radio inventories to Michele, and she will get to Kate.
 - c. Dispatch, LARC – No one present
 - d. County Fire Warden – The EFSA Premium request is out, ACFD#1 and Albany County split this 50/50 and the payment is due the first week of July. From the Annual Operating Plan (AOP) meeting – mini mob wages have gone up. By signing the AOP agreement agree we as a District agree to follow and adhere to 310-1. When of federal fires (Forest Service) we need to meet their guidelines. When acting locally we can utilize the local standards that we have. For example, if we respond to local fire on private ranch, the guys need to meet local

standards. When we respond to a Forest Service fire locally during the first operation period, we must meet local standards. However, once we reach midnight that first night (IA), then the District must follow 310-1, and firefighters have to be red carded to be on that incident. This only accounts for WY. You cannot go into Colorado at all unless you meet the requirements set forth by 310-1. If going through Casper Dispatch, you must meet 310-1. For example, to run a chainsaw after IA – you must have the sawyer qualification on your red card, you cannot run one just because you have one on truck. As for private land within the perimeter of the fire after IA, that would be something the local IC and Agency Administrators must decide on. Badger was an agreement with the Incident to allow what happened; however generally the answer is no. The AOP it is on the Wyoming State Forestry website. The State portion for all, and the district portion is specific for our district. Encourage everyone to familiarize themselves with this document. It works hand in hand with our mini mob. And those two documents guide paperwork. A department cannot operate with no standards, refer to 310-1 if needed. Also, if it's a resource you need a red carded qualified resource boss with that resource.

6. Board Topics:

- a. Fire Pay – No fire pay. The 549 truck pay, paid at 60%, as this was the amount decided upon for the first year.
- b. MASA/Retirement, Grant's Policies – Need to break apart the retirement policy into two parts; what is eligible at the state level and what is eligible as the district level. MASA – A benefit that is offered however with rule changes is might not be as good a deal moving forward, however all insurance is going up. Can/is it used as a recruitment/retention tool? We could move forward with our annual budget including "seats" per department in MASA with each department have "x" number of seats covered by the District. This year the board will probably have to pay again. *Chairman Hawkins moved to continue what the Board has been doing at 100% contingent that the policy in place for retirement for "active/good standing" apply would be paid for by the District, and if firefighter is eligible but not "in good standing" it would be paid by the individual. Motion was seconded by Secretary Burkhart.* There are concerns that the policy sets for how the Board is going to handle MASA and Retirement and probationary firefighters. Chairman Hawkins rescinded the motion. *Chairman Hawkins moved to pay MASA in full. Motion was seconded by Treasurer Wadsworth and approved unanimously.* As for other policies and grant policy there is no discussion at this point as it is sitting with Attorney Goetz and the Board.
- c. ISO – Currently the District cannot hold the 5 standard. How do we feel about trying to retain the 5 rating? Emergency Reporting for all could help with obtaining the information needed for this. Chiefs are interested in maintaining a 5 rating and would like to see a list of requirements to determine how to move forward and decide after receiving further information.

- d. Wildhorse Substation Discussion – Mike Fossum presented proposal from WHR, which has 400 40-acre lots and 35 full time residents, and 100 lots with improvements currently. They sent a letter to BLM, asking the BLM to donate property for construction of 2000 sq ft fire station and 2400 sq ft community center. This would be a 2-bay station with the full 4400 sq ft available for use by District if needed (ie. ICP for fire). There would be no public access to the fire station portion of the building. Their HOA would pay for materials for the community center and fire station and all ongoing utilities, insurance, property tax, and maintenance. BLVFD would be responsible for filling the propane tank. Submitted by Chief and BLVFD Board. The HOA will own the land once the BLM gives it to them. The BLM has expressed interest and they would also use it for fire/training area. It would be a minimum of 40 acres. It would be surveyed before development started in WHR. The HOA would be donating the 2000 sq ft fire station to the BLVFD/District and would be part of BLVFD. They submitted a letter to the BLM in November, and hope to hear back from them in June. Currently there are 3 full-time and 1 part-time fire department members that live in WHR. The District attorney is looking at liability/insurance issues. What happens when someone else in a development wants fire protection as well, precedent setting? What about water and water storage and septic locations. WHR would provide with a well and water storage. What is the long-term cost, what is the investment cost? Treasurer Wadsworth is in support of moving forward with it. Secretary Burkhart is in support, but he is a member of this department. The Board needs a cost analysis. Chairman Hawkins is in support of moving forward. Need to have meetings in the future with our District attorney, as well as agreement and what happens if separation like happened between BLVFD and WYCO in the future?
- e. WyCo Dozer Contractor – Owned by a single resource dozer operation, with own equipment boss and engine boss. Business would lease to WyCo, and WyCo would put it on the board. It would go out with dozer operator who owns it. 10% of the equipment pay would go to the department and then 10% of those funds would go to the District. WyCo could help with administrative work. Operator is out of Yoder. His family has a cabin in the WyCo area. This basically a private contractor going out as a cooperator. It is a way to circumvent the federal contracting system. While it is not expressly forbidden, it won't fly well with others and the State as it's cheating the system. Contractors must go through the VIPER system which is extensive, and they have to meet all specs etc. to become an authorized federal contractor. Every dozer operator around the country does it. Our agreement is a cooperative agreement – not a contract. Basically, this rise him higher than the VIPER contractors and it is highly frowned upon. With the Districts current system it would take him three years to get paid in full. Eric validated what County Fire Warden Dinges said above, it is not kosher to have a contractor acting like a cooperator.

- f. ARPA Updates – County Commissioners are moved to a tiered system for disbursements and the first is under emergency. The ARPA funds we requested did not meet these first criteria however the funds are still there.
 - g. Wind Projects Update – Pre-hearing statement are March 3-4 and moving along well. Rail Tie will begin in Spring 2023 along with Rock Creek. We requested \$5.4 million with Rock Creek. We requested \$7.4 million with Rail Tie and received \$4.5 million.
 - h. Incident Response and Dispatching – Please continue to contact Chairman Hawkins with issues/discrepancies. They continue to have software and staffing level issues. County is using a new crew force program (not I Am Responding/Who’s Responding) that they are using. This new system is no cost to the departments.
 - i. Emergency Reporting – Would like consolidation before wildland season. Need a grant/data collection/report writing person who could help with consolidation process. There will be new logins and passwords and will have to enter firefighter qualifications again. Chairman Hawkins would ask the Board’s approval to hire someone to help with all these items. Would like a job description, pay scale and look at budget. Secretary Burkhart is in favor of coming up with a job description, reasonable pay rate and looking that budget if there is a benefit to the Chiefs. Eric would not be able to hand over the daily logs to another individual. Training/recordkeeping could be done by this person and maintenance/calls could be done by the individual departments. This person could also represent the District at meetings/events. The District ultimately must answer back to the taxpayers. They could be used for data collection for grants/reporting purposes. Need to create an SOG on what should be entered into ER for grants/reporting purposes.
 - j. CDL Status and Process – WYDOT Z endorsement is supposed to cover firefighters. Secretary Burkhart will continue to reach out to WYDOT about the Z endorsement. With the changes at WYDOT, they will no longer renew permits under the old system. Need to plan to complete the training and testing so we don’t lose any of the permit holders.
 - k. Equipment Operator, Red Cards & “Local Standards” for firefighter pack test – There are interagency standards through the AOP. Establishment of own requirements for local standards. Need to be reasonable and prudent. Need to consider the liability of the District as well. What is our local standard? Trained to a standard versus qualified to a standard? Need to write a local standard. Go out to Chiefs for their comment by the next meeting. Please provide comments to inform a March decision. They would like County Fire Warden Dinges’ input as well.
7. Chiefs Report: No Chiefs meeting
8. Department Reports:
- a. CVVFD – Two new EMT’s that are National/State qualified. They will be doing their RT130 class on April 23rd. Looking at buying a new type 6 to replace Engine 14 which would be sold.

- b. BLVFD – They will be doing the S130 class April 25th from 6-10. Trained on new thermal imaging camera and gas meter.
- c. WYCO – They have new auxiliary members for administrative work and there will be a new treasurer.
- d. TSVFD – No report.
- e. CENTRAL – Making progress on south station. Working on getting new engine in service and AC-27 out of service and sent to BLVFD.
- f. VVFD – Lost two members. New Chief is Matt Isborn. Looking into less expensive internet options. They use Who’s Responding and it works well for them, no issues, everyone get the pages. Currently mapping all the drafting sites in the County and then creating a layer on Who’s Responding. Met with Anthony to provide Haz-Mat and extrication training.

9. PA Approvals:

- a. *PA-332 - Chairman Hawkins moved to approve BLVFD’s BL 10 repairs; \$715; 100% dept funds. Motion was seconded by Treasurer Wadsworth, Secretary Burkhart abstained, motion was approved unanimously.*
- b. *PA-333 – Treasurer Wadsworth moved to approve BLVFD’s PA for SCBA setup of cascade system/fill station; up to \$15,000; 100% dept funds; and their PA-334 for SCBA services/hydrotests; \$925; 100% dept funds. Motion was seconded by Chairman Hawkins, Secretary Burkhart abstained, motion was approved unanimously.*
- c. *PA-335 – Secretary Burkhart moved to approve VVFD’s PA for VV1 engine repairs; \$1140.80; 100% dept funds. Motion was seconded by Chairman Hawkins, Treasurer Wadsworth abstained, motion was approved unanimously.*
- d. *PA-336 – Chairman Hawkins moved to approve Central’s PA for AC21 tire replacement; \$4000; 100% dept funds. Motion was seconded by Treasurer Wadsworth and approved unanimously.*
- e. *PA-337 – Treasurer Wadsworth moved to approved WYCO’s PA for new pages/portable and mobile radios \$15,000; 100% dept funds. Motion was seconded by Chairman Hawkins and approved unanimously.*
- f. No PA needed for WYCO’s 2022 type 6 because not spending district funds. WYCO 6 would be sold first and if approved for another purchase then WYCO 9 would be sold. Treasurer Wadsworth supports replacing trucks at WYCO along with Chairman Hawkins and Secretary Burkhart.

10. New Business: All grants should be under ACFD#1 not the individual departments. Chris Fallbeck with Wyoming State Forestry wanted to pass along that reporting is very important not only for us receiving grant monies, but also for State. The more the State can show activity through reporting the more grant funding that can be awarded to the State which is passed onto the individual districts/departments. Wyoming is very under reported so we fall short on grant funding. However, last year our reporting increased and were we able to obtain more funds to award through grants. There was no title for the WYCO snowmobile per Jackie with Albany County Clerk’s office.

11. Next Meeting: March 23, 2022; please note one week later due to Spring Break

12. Adjourn: *Chairman Hawkins moved to adjourn at 8:45 pm. Motion was seconded by Secretary Burkhart and approved unanimously.*

Expenditures by the Board totaling \$36,780.80 to include BLVFD's BL 10 repairs; \$715; 100% dept funds; BLVFD's PA for SCBA setup of cascade system/fill station; up to \$15,000; 100% dept funds; BLVFD's SCBA services/hydrotests; \$925; 100% dept funds; VVFD's PA for VV1 engine repairs; \$1140.80; 100% dept funds; Central's PA for AC21 tire replacement; \$4000; 100% dept funds; WYCO's PA for new pages/portable and mobile radios \$15,000; 100% dept funds.

Respectfully Submitted,
Michele Turner, ACFD#1 Administrative Assistant