

Albany County Fire District #1 Board Meeting Minutes October 19, 2022 DRAFT

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 held at Vedauwoo Volunteer Fire Department and called to order at 5:01 pm. Board members present were Luke Hawkins and Brett Wadsworth via zoom, and Matt Burkhart joined in person at 5:10 pm.
2. Minutes of 9/21/22 Board Meeting: *Treasurer Wadsworth moved to approve the minutes as presented. Motion was seconded by Chairman Hawkins and approved unanimously.*
3. Comments from the public: Gilbert Tso, a board officer with the Paddocks HOA and resident of the Paddocks spoke regarding resident concerns of there being only one ingress/egress for emergency vehicles and that this does not conform to IFC code. These concerns have been raised to developer and the County Commissioners along with the concern regarding the density of homes in the subdivision, coming up on 90 homes, and there are only three (3) hydrants serving 75% of the density. Phase 1 has three hydrants supporting 49 homes. Phase 2 has 2 homes, 22 lots and 6 hydrants supporting them. Because of the homeowners being underserved by hydrants and limited access, the Paddocks HOA has contacted a law firm to try to enforce the codes. The developer has informed the Paddocks HOA that he will be applying for approval to add another 20 plus lots for development. The Paddocks HOA has requested the County Commissioners halt all further approvals until the limited fire hydrant issues and the limited ingress/egress issue have been resolved. The Albany County Planning Department has responded to the Paddocks HOA saying there is nothing they can do; and the County has not adopted IFC and can't enforce it. The Paddocks HOA would welcome input/support from the district. Chairman Hawkins stated this in an ongoing issue within the County and is much bigger than just the Paddocks, as multiple developments have the same issue. He was not aware of the hydrant issue however. Any developments that exceed 30 homes, per code, should have multiple ingress/egress for evacuation purposes and emergency response access. Chairman Hawkins is happy to sit down face to face and meet. ACFD#1's position is a position of safety and response, and it continues to be a battle. There are significant risks with regard to structures, medical calls, and grass fires with significant wind events. Cy has met with the State and they are not able to help, it falls back on Albany County. Cy would publicly ask for help as well.
4. Financial Report:
 - a. Bills to be paid – *Chairman Hawkins moved to approve the October Financial Report as presented. Motion was seconded by Secretary Burkhart.* Discussion – when will we be dispersing the rest of the fire money. We still owe \$35,000-\$40,000 this year to get everyone paid. We could pay 100% in accordance with previously established policies and to be determined amount for anyone else who goes out the rest of this year. *Motion was approved unanimously.* Checks will be coming from the County for the Sugarloaf and Washakie Park at \$98,000.

Treasurer Wadsworth moved to pay all firefighters who have returned from fires up to this point, up to 100%. Motion was seconded by Chairman Hawkins.

Discussion – Motion made to accelerate tonight and then board members come in to sign the checks. Secretary Burkhart asked how much money would be left to send to departments for truck pay. Truck pay won't be considered until the wrap of this season of firefighter's going out. In the past, and we don't think it has changed, the first priority has been to pay firefighters. Treasurer Wadsworth asked the departments if they are hurting and need truck funds now. Chad stated there is another \$4500 coming as well. *Motion was approved unanimously.*

5. Report – Outside Agencies/Guests:

- a. LFD – No report
- b. EMA – Received their SHSP grant award agreement letter for \$67,000. Initially asked for \$210,000. Applied for WYDOT ARPA funding for the remaining \$143,000 and hope to find out by the end of the month whether they will receive those funds. These grant monies are to purchase WyoLink capable radios and are prioritized by department need. Once the award letter has been signed and they receive the executed copy they will purchase the radio equipment. Continue to expect a delay in shipment due to supply chain issues. Let them know if you have thoughts/comments/concerns for the Airport Exercise AAR with LFD. Link to updated training and exercise request form requesting department needs.
- c. LARC – No report
- d. County Fire Warden – Received grant money for the County Wildfire Protection plan and will meet with Board members and federal partners, in hopes of putting out an RFP the first of the year to secure a contractor by spring so work can begin. The current plan is on the Wyoming State Forestry website. Please note travel was paid on Sugarloaf, however this was an exception to the rule. We usually do not pay travel vouchers on fires within Albany County. Do not expect to get paid for travel vouchers again in the future when you respond to a fire in Albany County.

6. Board Topics:

- a. Hazmat Response and Billing – Looking at Fire Recovery USA, as they are a company that bills the insurance companies of DOT transport vehicles that have incidents, and they help recover volunteer expenses associated with responding to those incidents. They do the billing for us, we just include a DOT number off the vehicle in question in our ER reports that are sent to them and then they pay us if they recover money from the insurance companies. They bill at an industry standard rate. This is for apparatus and consumables only. We will not bill for volunteer time because of volunteer immunity issues.
- b. Fire Pay – Looking into a line of credit to accelerate 65% payment to 90% payment and begin discussing per diem and the increase given the hotels and food. Try to figure out something to we can put into policy before next fire season. A line of credit is available through the bank, and they have done for

other Albany County agencies as well. Also need to look at interest rate charges. Chief's to comment on their willingness to help pay interest rate charges accrued for their firefighters associated with the line of credit to pay their firefighters quickly for federal fires. Secretary Burkhart suggested the District just pay it. However, is that an appropriate use of public funds. The interest rate amount is an important piece. Go to the bank with worst case scenario fire season and see what they say the possible costs could be. Discussion regarding large local fires and the amount of time it takes Michele to process that paperwork for the State. Secretary Burkhart stated that doesn't matter because they are our employees and that within 30 days they should get paid for what they did the last 30 days. We are the only fire district in our state that is getting firefighter pay out of our own resources. For everyone else (other counties) you must wait under the federal fire pays out. County Warden Dinges stated that the County already advances money to the District to the tune of months, typically within 60 days of their return from the federal fire. And the State of Wyoming is advancing money to the County to the tune of several months. Chief Sommerfeld stated it is the per diem, out of pocket expense, they are more concerned about. Compensate as soon as possible for those, that is what they are more concerned about. Need to prioritize this. Suggestions – pay upon arrival home. How do you pay them immediately upon their return. Can the fire department pay per diem as well as the hotel. Hotels are what really increase the travel vouchers. When you start talking about paying for someone else's food though things get messy. You get a set amount per day/meal. However, you don't always spend that set amount at every meal every day. Someone could underspend or they could overspend. You would have to keep and track all food receipts and then determine each meal and each day what would be owed back the department card. If they overspend, then they would owe the department an amount out of their pocket that they did not get reimbursed for on their travel voucher. Or you could have a firefighter who doesn't want to pay you back for their food at all. Hotels are easy because there are receipts and it's a set amount. During fire season we go to a public meeting every two weeks, the second one to approve payment for travel vouchers only. Could we approve in advance, a spending authority up to a specific amount. Pre-covid this was less of an issue because there were fewer hotels, most people slept on and were fed on the fire. Covid, post-covid this changed because of social distancing. Will this continue? County Warden Dinges answered that moving forward people will be in hotels more than they were five years ago. Possible changes at the incident level, where the incident pays for hotels rooms at the incident to avoid these massive ME&I bills. Currently if a department is paying for hotels on a card, the only way to get reimbursed for those hotel rooms is to include on a travel voucher. Generally, you cannot put more than one person's hotel room on a single travel voucher. We can create a line on our spreadsheet for hotels charged to department cards, then Teri Jo could just hold that money and pay the department for the hotels from each firefighters travel voucher so the department can then pay and reconcile their

credit card bills. If you are a firefighter on a fire and you charge your hotels to your own personal card then you would keep the hotel reimbursement from the travel voucher payment. Per diem is paid 100% with their first fire paycheck. Treasurer Wadsworth will touch base with ANB Bank and Chairman Hawkins will contact Attorney Goetz and he would like to hold some work sessions.

- c. Policy Reviews and Revision – Per Chief Isborn, CDL policy would mirror the existing CDL requirement and document within the department that is an industry standard set by multiple volunteer fire departments across the State and approved by the State Fire Marshall, with precedent being set. The State Fire Marshall office is looking into building an actual formal training that would be available to departments. This would prove we have a standard operating procedure and we want it standard across our region. As for the second page mutual aid agreement, if there is a page with no response and then a second page should include the next closest department on that second page. With the new system, dispatch cannot see when you put yourself into the system as responding. All chiefs are good with this change to the Dispatch matrix. *Chairman Hawkins moved to include the next closest department on the second page if there is no response on the first page. Motion was seconded by Secretary Burkhart and approved unanimously.* Eric wants to address the serious immediate concern and paying for Fire Truck Certification's services in the current expenditure policy. Pre-approvals allow the board to fulfill their fiduciary responsibility. For regular recurring preventative maintenance, a PA is not needed, however it needs to be presented to the Board so they are aware of how public funds are being spent. Chief Sommerfeld likes the current process, it's works, and there has never been a hang up with it. When you have an email to approve a serious immediate concern/need to fix a broken apparatus, that still must be ratified at the next public board meeting. Also, treasurers are not supposed to pay credit card expenses that do not have a receipt. Will re-draft the Expenditure Policy. Everything has been submitted for audit and we are waiting on their selections for testing. The lease requirement is new, and Teri Jo will need copies of leases associated with any of our buildings.
- d. Background Checks Criteria/Proposal – DCI and one other entity were approved as 3rd party for background checks. Chief Isborn asked for clarification on what would disqualify for a moving violation. Michele will touch base with LGLP/WARM.
- e. SLIB Grant Status – With regards to the federal AFG grants, Bill 4882 is the reauthorization of the SAFER and AFG grants which are set to sunset in 2024. Assistant Chief Whitlock will watch this bill and let the Board know when we need to start writing in for support.
- f. TSVFD and VVFD Mutual Aid Map – VVFD and TSVFD would like a mutual aid tone in the pie section of their map. Other areas to possibly include would be BLVFD/Central for Hwy 230 mm 6 through mm 10 and CVVFD/BLVFD along the 130 corridor for highway residents. Chief's will add to their agenda and Chairman Hawkins will meet with LARC on how to correct this.

- g. EMS Grant Status – Looking at around \$17,000 which would allow the District to help facilitate the conversation on how rural EMS services are provided in Albany County; do we need an EMS District; is the entirety of the District covered; and do all firefighters have some basic level of PPE to respond.
 - h. Emergency Reporting – They are in the process of moving to HER and are unsure what “parts” they will be keeping and what “parts” they will be getting rid of. Secretary Burkhart will reach out to the State regarding the consolidation.
 - i. CAT Tenders – Quote is \$870/tender for repairs, plus fuel and per diem. Total was \$3710 to repair the three tenders’ cushions strips and containment brackets with Knapheide parts. *Secretary Burkhart moved to accept Atech’s quote to repair the three District tenders out of District funds. Motion was seconded by Treasurer Wadsworth. Chief’s will get the tenders there. Motion was approved unanimously.*
 - j. Public Announcement of Meetings – Based on Statute we must continue to advertise in the Laramie Boomerang.
 - k. Bathroom RFP Status – Secretary Burkhart took VVFD’s plan and put them into RFP requirements. Met with Chief Davis. Needs to meet with Chief Essley. There is a \$280,000 cap for all three bathrooms.
7. Chiefs Report: Covered all of it already.
8. Department Reports:
- a. BLVFD – Will have a CPR and BLS training, and LFD is supporting with an auto fire training utilizing the simulator. With regard to LFD and their training station, requests need to go through the Board/middle-man (currently Chairman Hawkins). Fill station will be Jan/Feb/Mar 2023 and they will be able to fill SCBA tanks. Have all PA requests on Woodslanding – power, concrete, doors, lights, insulation is scheduled, and heat is scheduled after insulation.
 - b. WYCO – Received a grant for their Type 6. Please let Board know how the grant was awarded – WYCO or ACFD. It is a reimbursable grant. Like to send the old 2.5 ton back to WSF.
 - c. TSVFD – Mutual aid request by Livermore for structure fire on Red Mountain just inside CO. Provided scene safety on MVA, and the fire on the railroad tracks.
 - d. Central – Durango is out of service. No word on Tender 31 pump status from Patrick. Scrapped the classroom because of the expense of the bid. EVOC class before the end of the year. Their open house is 11/5/2022, a fundraiser and costume parade from 11-4.
 - e. VVFD – Had an airplane crash and a train fire in three days, no fatalities. They are testing radio repeaters between Jelm and Pole Mountain. They will hold their annual tree fundraiser in the empty lot across from Walmart and they will also be donating trees to families in need. BLVFD gifted BL2 to VVFD. AC27 went to BLVFD and BL2 went to VVFD. The acquisition of Central’s apparatus warranted the divestment of an apparatus. VVFD returned the generator to WSF to make room. Cost of apparatus (maintenance, insurance, etc) is being transferred between departments. Please look at what you are gaining versus the cost of acquiring it.

- f. CVVFD – Still waiting on the well and trying to contact the well driller.
9. PA Approvals:
- a. BLVFD – Originally stated that no District funds can be utilized until the title transfer happens. Need the survey complete and title work legally transferring ownership completed first, due legal/liability issues for the District as the District cannot spend funds on anything that does not have a legal transfer of ownership. TriHydro is still in the process and hoping to wrap up the end of the month. Title work is being completed. Invoices are due and Chief Sommerfeld started this with enough time to try to get it all done in a timely manner, so this issue did not happen. A special meeting can be called so the contractors can be paid when the invoices are due. *Treasurer Wadsworth moved to table the discussion of the Woodslanding Sub-station upgrade in the amount of \$33,904.00 pending final approval of the survey and land transfer. Motion was seconded by Chairman Hawkins and approved unanimously with Secretary Burkhart abstaining.*
 - b. BLVFD – *Chairman Hawkins moved to approved CPR BLS Training in the amount of \$980.00, 100% BLVFD funds. Motion was seconded by Secretary Wadsworth and approved unanimously with Secretary Burkhart abstaining. PA 370*
10. New Business:
- a. The Substitute Receipt Form would be another tool in our toolkit. Please also include the payment method used and supporting documentation. *Secretary Burkhart moved to approve the Substitute Receipt Form with the addition of the payment method and supporting documentation. Motion was seconded by Treasurer Wadsworth and approved unanimously.*
 - b. Active Alert Free trial is expiring, and they would like to keep for now to maintain parsing and not lose the information we have in there currently. Could use the Murdoch’s funding to pay for this. *Secretary Burkhart moved to pay up to \$600 for twenty devices at \$15/device. Motion was seconded by Treasurer Wadsworth and approved unanimously.*
 - c. We requested \$280,000 of ARPA funds for traditional EAP (therapy/counseling), up to three sessions per year at \$150/session for each firefighter. Also looking into Building Warriors website for support/counseling for firefighters and spouses, either locally or teletherapy.
 - d. Also utilize Murdochs donation to help with shipping costs of foam, in which the shipping cost at around \$1,000 exceeds the actual cost of the foam being purchased. *Treasurer Wadsworth moved to have the District pay up to \$1000 for shipping charges associated with foam for departments out of the Murdochs funds. Motion was seconded by Secretary Burkhart and approved unanimously.*
11. Next Meeting: November 16, 2002
12. *Treasurer Wadsworth moved to adjourn the meeting at 9:32 pm. Motion was seconded by Secretary Burkhart and approved unanimously.*

Respectfully Submitted,
Michele Turner, ACFD#1 Administrative Assistant