

Albany County Fire District #1 Board Meeting Minutes February 15, 2023

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 or Order: Meeting was called to order at 5:31 pm. Board members present were Luke Hawkins and Matt Burkhart. Brett Wadsworth joined via zoom.
2. Minutes from the 1/18/2023 Board Meeting: *Secretary Burkhart moved to approve the January Board Meeting minutes as presented. Motion was seconded by Chairman Hawkins and approved unanimously.*
3. Comments from the public: None
4. Report – Outside Agencies:
 - a. LFD – Chief Hotchkiss joined, nothing to report, discussed the EMR class and there is interest from VVFD in attending.
 - b. EMA – Steph Baker is moving on and Kate Allred will be the interim again.
 - c. LARC – Nothing to report.
 - d. County Fire Warden – The AOP meeting is tomorrow in Casper and will be attending virtually. Albany County received a grant to revise the County Wildfire Protection Plan and they are working on an RFP, hopefully out in the next 45-60 days. Would like it completed by Fall 2024 depending on contractor availability. The old plans are on the Wyoming State Forestry website. This is not tied to the evacuation plans that EMA is working on. County Fire Warden Dinges is available to teach an Engine Boss Responsibilities class (paperwork class) for and departments that wants to hold a class.
5. Financial Report:
 - a. Bills to be paid – Chairman Hawkins requested clarification on the Strategic Items: Strategic Objective A – LFD’s principal engine that rolls when we need assistance, it is in the City of Laramie Agreement the District will pay ½ of the eventual purchase of that apparatus and we need to plan and save for it. Strategic Objective B is money set aside in the amount of \$40,000 for the fiscal year for the newly created District Coordinator position. The LFD Contract is the recurring amount we pay to the City of Laramie for LFD to respond for fires within the district. Tender Repair & Maintenance includes money for the CAT tender repairs and maintenance and periodic replacement requirements as well. Capital Improvement in the past, and prior to the current budgeting arrangement, the District took on responsibilities for some capital improvement projects (ie. CVVFD’s well, BLVFD new station). Contingency contains funding for misc. items and various meals when meetings occur at departments, or when someone approaches with a need (ie. County Fire Warden Dinges and wildfire mitigation). ACFD1’s portion of PA’s includes CVVFD’s well. Fire Pay & POV Outstanding is what is still owed. Department truck funds is accounting for the withheld truck funds for federal fire dispatches that we are trying to work our way out of not having to do this anymore. Secretary Burkhart questioned the CPA services expenditure. This is for ACFD1’s annual audit. He asked if this goes

out to bid. A couple of years ago ACFD1 requested bids for our annual audit. However, only one company would do a cash basis audit. *Chairman Hawkins moved to approve the February Financial Report as presented. Motion was seconded by Secretary Burkhart and approved unanimously.*

b. PA Approvals –

i. *Chairman Hawkins moved to ratify the emergency PA for CVVFD's request to replace the heater at the Albany Station in the amount of \$3900, 100% dept funds. Motion was seconded by Secretary Burkhart and approved unanimously. PA 381*

ii. *Chairman Hawkins moved to approve the following requests for VVFD: Engine Boss Training in the amount of \$600, 100% dept funds (PA 382); Garage door replacement in the amount of \$6000, 100% dept funds (PA 383); and Reflective stripes and letters on district tender in the amount of \$900, 100% ACFD funds (PA 384). Motion was seconded by Secretary Burkhart and approved unanimously. Treasurer Wadsworth abstained.*

6. Board Topics:

a. Committee Reports – Policies, Apparatus naming – The policy committee is Secretary Burkhart and Chief Essley. They would like more diversity for the group from other departments. They would like to start at one place and move forward with cohesion. Last couple of years legal issues have exploited some inefficiencies in policies and bylaws and we need a more cost effective and cohesive way to handle this. The apparatus committee is Mike Fossum, Dylan Whitmer and Chief Lam.

b. CDL Status Update State training – Secretary Burkhart stated the policy is acceptable to district insurance. WYDOT is considering a written test for the district without going through the ELDT process to issue a permit. The district process would not include an actual CDL license. However WYDOT questioned how we would do the on-road test because legally they cannot drive except in an emergency situation. Thoughts on a closed course on private property. Initially the ELDT rule started there was a “behind the wheel” component with so many hours of training. That is not in the final rule, it is only theoretical and written with no “behind the wheel” component. Courses are available for \$50-\$250 that would cover the theory part, the test for the permit is \$45. We could set ourselves up as an ELDT testing site and secure a tester, or could test with WYDOT in Cheyenne. The Wyoming State Fire Marshal's office is a closed enrollment ELDT provider. Solicit from Chiefs, does anyone want to do an April training? Chief Isborn will be the contact. Also, Secretary Burkhart thanked Chief Isborn as he was instrumental in contacting our insurance companies and helping figure out the process over the last month. This course would not supersede the EVOC course, this covers ELDT to get CDL permit. There is an exemption form for single state so no DOT physicals, but you can't drive out of the district. Must be acting within the scope of job duties as outlined in job descriptions.

- c. SAFER Grant NOFO – The deadline is March 17, 2023. Might not be able to apply for funding for coordinator positions, page 60 of NOFO states for firefighters in seats for fire suppression. Will investigate it.
- d. ER/ESO – New ESO rep is Mark Norford and Chairman Hawkins will reach out to him with the intent to move forward with one account.
- e. Mutual Aid Areas/Shapes – There is one section on 230 that Central needs to have with BLVFD. Unofficial email from Steve that VVFD is covering TSVFD when TSVFD is not in service. We need to figure out who covers where when there is no/partial coverage for an area.
- f. Peer Support Team and Building Warriors Update – The funding and the players are in place, would ideally like to see 2-3 members from each department who would be willing to go through the peer support training. Please send Chairman Hawkins the names. Looking at April for the training. Also, there are six sessions total per firefighter. The firefighter can use all six or divide up into three sessions for firefighter and three sessions for spouse.
- g. Organizational Chart, Coordinator Job Descriptions from Work Session – The district coordinator job description has been a work in progress for almost a year. Through work sessions it was determined it needed to be broken down into a district coordinator, wildland coordinator and training coordinator. Overall budgeted amount for all three would be \$40,000. Treasurer Wadsworth indicated that the total budgetary requirements as listed if at the high end would be \$45,000. Benefits are negotiable and not accounted for in the budgetary numbers. Timeline would be to advertise, receive letters of interest, interview and then hire and Chairman Hawkins would like this completed by the March board meeting. These are all brand new positions that will have to be evaluated (ie. monthly). We don't have to hire all three positions and we need to address the budgetary constraints. The District portion of the truck funds cannot cover the wildland coordinator position this year but maybe next year. LCFA might be paying for a wildland coordinator position with earned truck funds. Could meet with Chiefs and if there is value, we could investigate it for next year. The SAFER grants NOFO states that you must have a coordinator already on staff to apply for and put in for funding of firefighter positions. Prioritize and fund one now, others later, which one(s)? *Chairman Hawkins moved to post all three coordinator positions as written, other than formatting, for letters of interest and is seeking discussion for a timeline. Motion was seconded by Secretary Burkhart for purposes of discussion.* Discussion – there have been multiple work sessions to address this. Maybe duties could be combined between training and wildland coordinator positions. Secretary Burkhart doesn't feel the wildland coordinator should be able to dispatch out on federal fires. Fire Warden Dinges stated he does not have a difficult time coordinating while dispatched out, everything is done on your phone, and he doesn't feel the duties are conflicting. Secretary Burkhart doesn't feel the wildland coordinator position can be done with fidelity with someone who dispatches out. Fire Warden Dinges stated that a point of contact is needed and someone to organize is helpful, with most of this work

occurring during December through April for PMR's, training, red cards and coordinating of district resources with lists of firefighters and apparatus that are available to dispatch out during that season. He also stated that a point of contact within the County would be invaluable to Albany County as a whole. These are all three part time positions, the district coordinator is the only position with benefits available and salary amount would depend on benefits. All are negotiable. We have funds budgeted and set aside for almost a year that have not been used to fill these positions. They would be at will and evaluations would be done regularly. Chairman Hawkins is excited for how these fit within the district. Secretary Burkhart is willing to move forward and go with the wildland coordinator as is for this year, but he will be vicious about it next year if they don't perform, they will not be allowed to dispatch out, as he is concerned about all of the other job duties getting done if they dispatch out, he does see the benefit of all the other things and thinks the person in that position should be there for that though. Request if approved by the Board would be to advertise by February 20, Letters of Interest by March 6th, start interviewing, with interviews done by March 22nd. Need to make the district coordinator format match the wildland and training coordinator positions. Also send resume with LOI that address qualifications, knowledge, skills and abilities, licenses and certifications. *Motion was approved unanimously with formatting and font corrections as discussed by the end of the week, advertise positions on 2/20/2023, letters of interest/resumes received by March 6, 2023 will be vetted by the board for possible interviews, and coordinator positions are open until filled.*

- h. Fire Pay Spreadsheet – Firefighters want access to the spreadsheet but the board does not want it public. Use last 4 of SSN in spreadsheet, this is frowned upon and considered PII. Use initials but many people have the same initials. Assign a number to each firefighter that is not PII. Teri Jo brought up that this became an issue when the board changed to one check per firefighter, not one check per fire. We can easily address this by printing one check per fire and then the check stubs show the information the firefighters are needing. The board wants to move forward with separate checks for each firefighter for each fire they are paid for.
7. Action Items – to be voted on:
- a. Hamaker Power Bill North - \$15,000 will come from District funds and \$12,000 will come from Central funds to pay the power bill. This is based on the point at which the departments became responsible for their own utilities. The district portion will come out of capital improvements. *Secretary Burkhart moved to pay the utilities associated with the lease of the Hamaker building for Central North at \$15..... from District funds and \$12..... from Central funds. Motion was seconded by Treasurer Wadsworth.* Discussion – Central's portion will be handled the same way the monthly rental is done, by a transfer. *Motion was approved unanimously.*

- b. Upgrade Zoom Equipment – Members have requested that the zoom equipment be upgraded. Need an “owl” or a camera and a computer that is owned by the department to run the zoom meetings. Possibly use Murdochs donations funds. *Chairman Hawkins moved to upgrade the zoom equipment by adding \$500 to what was leftover from the previous line-item budget. Motion was seconded by Secretary Burkhart and approved unanimously.*
 - c. WYCO 6 – Jeffrey City is interested in purchasing. WYCO would like to donate to Jeffrey City. Wyoming State Forestry will haul to Jeffrey City. *Treasurer Wadsworth moved to donate WYCO 6 to Jeffrey City, with all expenses for transport and title transfer to be paid for by Jeffrey City. Motion was seconded by Chairman Hawkins and approved unanimously.*
8. Chiefs Report: No Chiefs meeting.
9. Department Reports:
- a. VVFD – 19 calls, 15 firefighters, Saturday they received a second page per policy for the campfire and it did work.
 - b. CVVFD – RT130 on April 22nd starting a 9:00am with the pack test to follow. Backup date is April 29th. They are looking at other well drilling companies, reached out to eight, heard back from one and their response was they cannot drill in the ground at CVVFD. Rod Oliver is trying to work with original company and he is adamant they stand by their original quote. Michele will get the address to Kenny, along with Sean’s number, for the burn pile.
 - c. BLVFD – Issue with the paging for three calls since the last meeting, Sand Creek, the accident on Wildhorse Ranch and Whirlwind Lane. The fill station has arrived, no date for set up yet. Thank you to LFD for the donation of their extractor, it will be picked up Friday. They would like to have more active alert seats and move away from Who’s Responding. Would the district like to transition towards Active Alert? Leave it up to the Chiefs and individual departments as to the value they each receive and how they want to move forward.
 - d. WYCO – No calls and they have been plowing snow. A little damage to the building due to the above average snow load.
 - e. TSVFD – No one present.
 - f. Central – 44 calls, 16 firefighters and 3 apparatus out of service. AC22 has a pump issue, AC21 has a part leaking and Tender 31 is still in Casper, where they are still waiting for a part to be delivered, part of the plumbing system for the truck spray system. Treasurer Wadsworth spoke with Patrick about a proposal to fix the pumps on the district tenders. PCM was replaced on AC5, but still having issues and quote to fix was \$5,000, probably won’t fix at that price. Still waiting on parts for one of the heaters at the South Station. There is still a 55 gallon drum sitting on a property from the region 3 wreck. Get information to Chairman Hawkins and he will forward to Officer Matthews.
10. New Business:
- a. EMR – LFD is looking for interest, Chairman Hawkins will forward information again, this is not an EMT class.

- b. Secretary Burkhart will look at the price break for the next level of seats. Would everyone like to move toward Active Alert only instead of Who's Responding. It's whatever works best for your department. If Active Alert works better, it is also cheaper, but if it does not then stay with current product that is working. Encourage everyone to move to Active Alert sooner rather than later as long as there are no operational reasons. The Active Alert form is on the website but the fact you have to print it out and do a hard copy is out of date and a pain for everyone and an impediment to getting this done, they need to be able to sign virtually, a signable pdf. Teri Jo has a printer if needed. Departments can also just sign the form, scan and email.
 - c. Teri Jo would like to purchase scanners for department treasurers. *Secretary Burkhart moved to approve the purchase of district owned scanners for use by department treasurers out of Murdochs funds. Motion was seconded by Chairman Hawkins and approved unanimously.*
 - d. Foam – The District will pay for the freight on the foam. If interested let the board know how many gallons you need. It's \$170/5 gallon bucket and there are 36 buckets on a pallet, with shipping of \$635.
 - e. District email address/website storage – Secretary Burkhart would like to move all emails for officers to an .acfd1 email address through our website domain, which also include a g drive quota and large cloud storage, as well as the full office suite. This would bring departments together, maintain correspondence when someone leaves, address emergency reporting, address new cybersecurity requirements and allow public access to all documents and communications. He will investigate the cost.
 - f. Severity engine – We have pushed for the district to have a severity role in our forest in the past. The big picture is that severity patrol, when not staffed locally, shows that the federal government is upstaffing an area. If you are local on local severity in your local forest then you aren't upstaffing the area, it remains status quo for response.
11. Next work session is 3/8/2023, next business meeting is 3/22/2022.
12. *Chairman Hawkins moved to adjourn the meeting at 8:38 pm. Motion was seconded by Treasurer Wadsworth and approved unanimously.*

Respectfully Submitted,
Michele Turner, ACFD#1 Administrative Assistant