

Albany County Fire District #1 Board Meeting Minutes November 16, 2022

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 3:42 pm. Board members present were Luke Hawkins and Brett Wadsworth. *Chairman Hawkins moved to adjourn into Executive Session for purposes of receiving legal advice. Motion was seconded by Treasurer Wadsworth and approved unanimously.* The regular board meeting reconvened at 5:00 pm. Secretary Burkhart arrived at 5:20 pm.
2. Minutes of 10/19/2002 Board Meeting, Exec Session 11/2/2022: *Chairman Hawkins moved to approve the 10/19/2022 minutes as presented. Motion was seconded by Treasurer Wadsworth and approved unanimously. Chairman Hawkins moved to approve the 11/2/2022 Exec Session minutes. Motion was seconded by Treasurer Wadsworth and approved unanimously.*
3. Comments from the public: Todd with TSVFD stated that he has been testing the Active 911 dispatch app and he loves it. It is a wonderful tool and he hopes we are planning to move forward with it.
4. Financial Report:
 - a. Bills to be paid – *Chairman Hawkins moved to approve the November Financial Report as presented. Motion was seconded by Treasurer Wadsworth and approved unanimously.*
5. Report – Outside Agencies/Guests:
 - a. Laramie Fire Department – No report
 - b. County Emergency Services – No report
 - c. Dispatch, LARC – No report
 - d. County Fire Warden – No report
6. Board Topics;
 - a. Hazmat response and billing – Met with FireRecovery.com and they can process commercial and private claims. They work with many agencies. They work to recover the costs on incidents we would submit to them, and then pay through an invoicing system. Can be used for recovery of funds incurred with DOT incidents. They have other capabilities as well.
 - b. Fire Pay, Per Diem, Line of Credit – There is frustration that we are not at the 90% pay out at the next pay cycle for firefighters pay, food and lodging. Travel vouchers are being 100% on the next pay cycle. Lodging has become the largest part of per diem and is often out of pocket for the firefighter. The Board is looking into a line of credit for 2023. Each year the Board adjusts the payout initially as they make progress to improve the financial status of the District. The Board will be working on policies to make sure paperwork is correct before per diem can be paid out. The Board has contacted ANB Bank regarding the line of credit, and Attorney Goetz is looking into what the state allows, especially with regard to the interest that would accrue on the account and using public funds to pay that interest. We will hopefully have something in place at the start of the

year for next fire season. Teri Jo will work on revising the draft SOG Fire Paperwork for Billable Fires, get to the Board and then to the Chief's for their review.

- c. WyCo AFG Grant Discussion – We need to advertise the amended budget three times and then vote on it during the December meeting. It is a 95% grant or a cap of \$200,000 on the purchase price. WyCo Associates will cover anything over that. The vendor will forward the paperwork to the District and then we will send it in.
- d. Background Checks criteria, proposal – This is part of the second step of the new firefighter packet. Chief Essley asked if the board has considered those who have already had backgrounds checks, which could be a cost savings. Board stated there are pros and cons to doing all or not. Background checks may not check on moving violations. The moving violation section was a direct copy and paste from WARM. This states that if you can't drive, then you can't be a firefighter. Do we want that? What about felonies; any felony forever? What about a prison inmate who was on a hand crew, does their time and is released and has fire experience? Will work on the policy and send out another draft.
- e. Mutual Aide – Changes to the map are fairly easy. When there is no response, that creates a six minute page delay, and then the second page would include the mutual aide area. Basically, they have "shape" areas. TSVFD response area is a "shape". VVFD response area is a "shape". We can identify the mutual aide "shape" areas and update with LARC. Chief's need to review and then give specifics on the new "shape" area(s) where they would like mutual aide. We can do a work session in the next couple of weeks to outline the "shapes", as Chairman Hawkins has the maps to sit down with. Would like to get created before the next meeting. The TSVFD/VVFD "shape" is already done. These mutual aide "shapes" are for response only, they do not affect revenue at all.
- f. Emergency Reporting – ER.com has been purchased by ESO and ESO is making changes in the next several months. Chairman Hawkins spoke with Joyce about consolidating our accounts into one, but not losing any department data. She suggested a new FDID number for ACFD1 that we would all start using. Each department's FDID number would then become inactive for reporting purposes, but you could still access the data and run reports. Chairman Hawkins has asked for an in-person meeting regarding this the early part of December and would open it up as a work session with Joyce. She stated to Chairman Hawkins that they would not charge for the inactive accounts, they would only be record books.
- g. EMS Grant award Status – ACFD1 has been awarded approximately \$13,000 to explore the solution to rural EMS services in Albany County. The grant expires 5/31/2023.
- h. CAT Tender Updates – VVFD's is back home tonight and will be in service this evening. Centrals was dropped off today and they will evaluate. They hope to have CVVFD's done and ready to pick up by Friday.

- i. Bathroom RFP Status – The ARPA grant funds expire December 2023. Secretary Burkhart has the specs nearly done, is putting the information together and then will review for legality, send out to the three respective departments for their review, and then send out for the RFP process as a design build. Hope to release after the first of the year.
 - j. Expenditure Policy Draft – Eric stated the document is acceptable. It captures the preventive maintenance and pump testing. It was sent out in time for review and there was no feedback/comments. *Chairman Hawkins moved to accept the Expenditure Policy Draft as presented. Motion was seconded by Treasurer Wadsworth.* Discussion – If you need to fix items that are an emergency (heaters stop working in frigid temperatures), get it fixed but let the Board know. If they are non-emergency expenses get them to Teri Jo the way we do everything else. *Amend policy under D4 to “Each request will be sent to Board members for review and will be considered at the next monthly District business meeting”.* *Motion was approved unanimously with change to D4 above.*
7. Action Items – to be voted on:
- a. Application for Active Firefighter Membership – *Chairman Hawkins moved to accept the application for Active Firefighter Membership as presented. Motion was seconded by Secretary Burkhart.* Discussion – One page one, fourth bullet point under Applicant Prerequisites remove the “*”. The “(or alternate)” came from discussion that say we have a career wildland firefighter who is dispatched out “x” number of months a year who might not be able to meet the minimum meetings/trainings/callouts but would still be an asset/resource to the department/District and this would allow them to appeal that. Treasurer Wadsworth suggested adding verbiage to the effect of “a minimum 10% or contribute in other ways that would be satisfactory for Chiefs and other department leadership”. Also add in the word “should” maintain a driver’s license. Secretary Burkhart mentioned the application currently states they must pass a State of Wyoming criminal and background check, this creates limitations so change to “District approved criminal and background check”. On the bottom where they are signing it states they are consenting to perform the background and driving record check, although at this point we don’t have one. Once one is implemented it would be appropriate for people to know what’s in it and what they consenting to before signing. Can approve it for use once that background check is in place. Just remove the pre-requisite to pass the criminal history background check, because at this point we don’t have one yet. All the departments have participated and commented. Do the departments support this? Chief Essley questioned being able to have a released felon, who was a firefighter in prison, join the department, even though they may not drive. Not a specific person in mind, just a possible felon who did his time and he’s out and he fought fire in prison, so he knows what he is doing. The Board doesn’t want the liability of knowing what the background check says, they just want a pass or a fail. We have to give the vendor the criteria. Add in “provide a list” for credentials. Provide an appeal process in some format. Bullet three under

Applicant Prerequisites would be to successfully pass a District approved criminal history/background check. Application can be absolute, the background check is where you need the verbiage for the appeal process. Please submit comments on the draft background check as we work out those guidelines. Clarify “which area are you most interested in serving”, with department/position. *Motion was approved unanimously.* (Ten-minute break to eat food that was delivered by Laramie Ford for their First Annual Gratitude Banquet for First Responders.)

- b. Building Warriors/Peer Support/EAP ARPA Grant Acceptance – Chairman Hawkins has been working with some local professionals, clinicians with their own practices, who are interested in the Building Warriors program and working with a support member from each department to become a peer support for that department. This program would be in addition to Snow and McIntyre and what they offered previously. Models are already in place with the Building Warriors program, and we would need to determine which model works for us. We would all have access to a network. It would all be as confidential as you want it to be, depending on the individual’s level of comfort. *Treasurer Wadsworth moved to accept the Building Warriors Peer Support EAP through the ARPA grant. Motion was seconded by Secretary Burkhart and approved unanimously.*
- c. CDL Proposal by Chiefs – During the last meeting the Board requested Chief Isborn find documentation from other rural departments showing their policies. There is not policy, it is just how they do it, or they train internally as close to the CDL standard as they can and document their hours. There is no in-depth policy documentation to mirror. It is noted within their by-laws that they do the training internally to certain standards. Can we integrate the CDL policy into the existing draft EVOC policy? LCCC offers an online CDL class for \$250.00 along with fifty hours of drive time. Add LCCC option into EVOC policy, with addition that this would result in an actual CDL, the District option would not result an actual CDL. However, either would be sufficient. The State Fire Marshall’s office is also working on compiling their own CDL program. LGLP is willing to come talk with the District and also assist with the policy format for this issue. Goal to finalize the draft, meet with LGLP, and then vote to begin the program in January.
- d. FireRecovery.com – Other departments in the State are extremely happy with it. They can work to recover costs associated with all MVA’s (commercial, in-county, out-of-county), structure and Hazmat. We would have one account for the District where money would be paid to the District and then passed through to be divided among the responding departments, where hopefully the Chief’s that responded to the incident can mutually agree to equitably divide those funds. We need to decide what the criteria would be use for submission for cost recovery. Treasurer Wadsworth recommended to contract with FireRecovery.com to collect insurance proceeds for responses by Albany County Fire District #1 fire departments for all commercial, Haz-Mat and out of county private vehicle accidents. It was suggested just for non-residents. The insurance

company is the one paying and there is money allocated in their insurance policies specifically set aside for fire departments to recover costs. The owner is already paying for this money to be paid to fire departments when they pay their insurance premiums. If we don't recover these costs from the insurance company the insurance company just keeps that money, even though the policy owner is paying for that service. Basically, the insurance company is just making money off it. This is a standard thing with insurance policies and part of the pay-out of a claim associated with the at-fault driver in an accident. For now, we aren't sure about billing residents of Albany County because they are already paying our services. However, it's not the resident that is paying, it is their insurance that is paying as part of their insurance policy. We would need to communicate this information very clearly, and so maybe we don't want to start with County at this point, but we could always go back. This same thing is also part of homeowner insurance policies. Submissions are done through Emergency Reporting where that narrative is sent to FireRecovery.com. The only extra step is if it's a commercial truck you need to get their DOT number and look up who that is registered to and include in your narrative. We send the reports that we want to be paid for to FireRecovery.com. The insurance agencies determine the at fault party and FireRecovery.com works to recover funds from the at fault parties insurance company which is then sent as a check to the District who pass those funds through to the departments. It is up to the Chiefs to determine when to submit for reimbursement. We don't have to submit, it is optional. *Treasurer Wadsworth moved that ACFD#1 contract with FireRecovery.com to collect insurance proceeds for responses by ACFD#1 departments for non-county commercial, haz-mat and private vehicle accidents as allowed by law. Motion was seconded by Chairman Hawkins and approved unanimously.*

- e. Fire Pay Line of Credit – District is pursuing a line of credit through ANB Bank but we aren't sure about the interest being paid by public funds so it being tabled for now. The Board is in favor of paying at 90% in the next pay cycle if funds allow and we are approved to move forward with the line of credit. Next year we will be at 70% pay in the first pay cycle, along with 100% on travel vouchers, whether we can move forward with the line of credit or not.
8. Chiefs Report: Did not meet, worked on the CDL policy through email.
9. Department Reports:
- a. WyCo – If no one want WyCo 6 they will send it back to the State. Consensus was to send it back.
 - b. TSVFD – They contacted the landowner who stated he never received the letter from the lawyer. He reached out to Attorney Goetz with his contact information. Todd Miller is now a Lieutenant in the department. Clarified that for medical calls in the Boulder Ridge area they can assist, open gates, flag, etc. However, outside of that area the ambulance will most likely beat TSVFD. Their new type 6 is in the works.
 - c. Central – All apparatus are in service, except the tender. They have one heater out in the South Station, working on getting it fixed. Their open house was

during the wind event, and they had a crew staged for blow-overs. Working to implement a Firefighter 1 Academy in January. Will submit for Mid-Winter Fire school training requests.

- d. VVFD – They have had 8 MVA calls in the last 16 days and 5 of those would have been billable under FireRecovery.com. Their Christmas Tree fundraiser starts the day after Thanksgiving in the large lot across the street from Walmart. Justin and Austin are working on getting drop lines in for air to all the vehicles, so they don't have to wait for the air to charge when they receive a call. Tender is back, they will fill it up and put back in service tonight.
- e. CVVFD – Medical calls, unattended campfires calls, and truck was in SD for a week. Had their election of officers and all stayed the same, except they do not have a Secretary. Still cannot get in touch with the well drillers, so they will be pursuing other well drilling options.
- f. BLVFD – Their new Engine 3 (old AC27) is in service, and their old Engine 2 is at VVFD. They have used the LFD training grounds twice. Wildhorse Ranch has not received any updates from the BLM.

10. PA Approvals:

- a. BLVFD – Request for \$33,904.00 for Woods Landing Station Upgrade and \$1200.00 for Woods Landing Station Appraisal, totaling \$35,104.00. BLVFD requests to pay for the remaining expenses, there are seven vendors total, as well as the land appraisal. The Board requested the status of the land transfer. Dan Kricken should be done by the end of this week or next week. His work will be recorded and submitted to the title company next week. Albany County Fire District #1 cannot spend any district/department (public) funds on land that has not been legally transferred into the District's name. Once the land has been legally transferred into the District's name the Board has agreed to hold a special meeting to approve the requested PA funds. Treasurer Wadsworth suggested approving the PA funds contingent upon the legal land transfer to avoid having to call a special meeting. This issue has been in the meeting minutes since March, and it has always been contingent upon the legal transfer of the land to the District. Pending a successful survey and clean title transfer to the District, ACFD1 would then authorize the use of department funds to pay the vendors, but this requires a proof of title transfer. The title company will provide documentation to the District in a title packet. The District (Chairman Hawkins) would then acknowledge to BLVFD that the title transfer has occurred and they can then, at that time, pay the vendors. As for the appraisal, the board needs to know the value of the property for insurance. Please note taxpayer dollars cannot be spent on any of this (appraisal/vendors) until we have a clear/clean title in Albany County Fire District #1's name. *Treasurer Wadsworth moved that the PA's totaling \$35,104.00 (\$33,904.00 department funds for Woods Landing Station upgrade PA371 and \$1200.00 department funds for Woods Landing Station Appraisal PA372) be approved SUBJECT TO a clean title transfer by the title company to Albany County Fire District #1 and receipt of that clean title transfer by the Albany County Fire District #1 Board; and then a verbal and/or*

email approval from the Board Chairman to BLVFD to expend those funds. Motion was seconded by Chairman Hawkins. Discussion – This will provide the same thing that would be accomplished at a special meeting. These are local businesses, and we want to make sure they get paid, and their work protected the value of the buildings. The District has been placed in a corner as we have to have a clean title, period, before funds are spent. Motion was approved unanimously, Secretary Burkhart abstained.

- b. *WyCo – Chairman Hawkins moved to approve the AFG truck acquisition in the amount of \$200,000.00 of grant/department funds. Motion was seconded by Treasurer Wadsworth and approved unanimously. PA373*
- c. *TSVFD – Chairman Hawkins moved to approve the purchase of the used FS Type 6 truck, in the amount of \$8,500.00 of department funds. Motion was seconded by Treasurer Wadsworth and approved unanimously. PA374*
- d. *Central – Chairman Hawkins moved to approve AC5 repairs in the amount of \$1,500.00 department funds (PA375) and SCBA repairs in the amount of \$2,000.00 department funds (PA376). Motion was seconded by Treasurer Wadsworth and approved unanimously.*

11. New Business:

- a. Regional Grant Request by Laramie County Fire Authority – They would like to put in for a Regional AFG grant with ACFD1 to purchase two pieces of equipment, a mobile fire/burn trailer and a mobile CDL driving/pumping simulation. Board feels it is a good idea to pursue a Regional AFG grant with Laramie County Fire Authority.
- b. Treasurer Wadsworth will bring a proposal next meeting regarding the pay out of truck funds. Currently POV's are not charged the 5-10% to help pay for District expenses associated with processing and paying for federal fire pay.
- c. Foam Shipment – Murdoch's funds were approved to pay for the shipping of the foam, which will be \$725.00. How do the departments want to pay for the foam itself? One department purchase and then get reimbursed? The Chief's need to decide how they want to handle the purchase of the foam at the next Chief's Meeting.
- d. BLVFD requested a way to advocate for being better informed when a controlled burn is happening.
- e. Celebration of Life for Trixie Wright, November 22, 2022, from 4:00-8:00pm at Albany Lodge

12. Next Meeting: December 21, 2022

13. Meeting adjourned at 8:09 pm

Respectfully Submitted,
Michele Turner, ACFD#1 Administrative Assistant