

Albany County Fire District #1 Board Meeting Minutes March 20, 2024

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 5:30 pm at Central North, a hybrid meeting of in-person and virtual attendance via Google Meet. Board members present were Luke Hawkins, Matt Burkhart and Brett Wadsworth.
2. Approval of Agenda: *Chairman Hawkins motioned to approve the agenda as amended. Add in 7.f. Bookkeeper, Add is 7.g. Credit Cards, 8.d. Image Trend, and move Financial Management Policy Draft from 7.d. to 8.e. The motion was seconded by Treasurer Wadsworth. The vote was unanimous.*
3. Public Comment: No comment from the public.
4. Present for Approval, the Board Meeting Minutes from the February 21, 2024: *Chairman Hawkins motioned to approve the minutes as presented. The motion was seconded by Treasurer Wadsworth for discussion. Treasurer Wadsworth added a comment to the end of 6.i., "and desired outcome. An active, forward-leaning Chair is essential. We didn't run for these positions to simply sit on our hands. Without the District Board there is no District. Of course, without VFD's & firefighters we can do nothing." The minutes were approved as amended and the vote was unanimous.*
5. Reports --- Outside Agencies/Guests:
 - a. LFD – No one present.
 - b. EMA – Training for PR334 When Disaster Strikes. Hazard mitigation plan update first meeting is on 4/11. Waiting on radio grants. Welcome to the new comms specialist, Scott is a retired chief with 32 in fire from Wisconsin.
 - c. LARC – No one present.
 - d. County Fire Warden – The county has acquired new FEPP truck 5602, currently stationed at Central South, and is being used as a backfill for their Type 6 which is out of service. He would like present for consideration to keep it at North. It is available for use by any department when their vehicles are full; jump on it, fight fire, come home, clean it up. It does still need some stuff on it. It is good for initial attack, not dispatch. The pump works and it drives well. We have received the invoice from Casper Dispatch, which is something sent annually, it is more of a polite ask for contribution to the center in the amount of \$1,000; He will pay this for the county. The agreement between the Medicine Bow FS and the County for prescribed burns was approved by the County Commissioners last night. This is an addendum to the AOP, and it can compensate us for our help on their prescribed burns. We went through a "tryout" period last year and we got the job. They saw the benefit and budgeted money to pay us. The budget is not gigantic, it is \$7500. He will prioritize paying people who are working first and deprioritize paying equipment. Because if we charge for all the equipment, we will work for 10 minutes, and the Forest Service will look at that and say it wasn't worth it to budget money for this. May have to look at a compromise with a greatly reduced engine rate, or district involvement in paying. Anything on

Medicine Bow is fair game and they can order us for. This is ONLY on this forest; this is NOT for dispatch. We cannot do prescribed fire on a dispatch resource order as there is NO mechanism in place for the Forest Service to pay us, this is through the AOP and Stafford Act. Please attend the paperwork class on Saturday night, all are welcome. Attending IC team meetings and there are taskbooks changes on the horizon, with more on the ground trainings for taskbooks, and a deemphasis no class time. Going to expect field training.

- e. Training Coordinator: Reminder about wildland weekend EMA training this weekend. Upcoming April 6 there will be wildland radio communication training. Also, a heavy rescue training with Curtis Extrication on April 20, bunker gear required. CVVFD and WYCO RT 130 on April 27th. EV Safety Course online training.
- f. Marla set up an ACFD1 wildland division in her system. Every department has its own people, but for the division they needed a space for that. Thank you to Chad for letting the district borrow his new type 6. It's a really good truck and would be great to store it at north for the summer. Also, can be used as a loaner if another district truck goes down. Already had fires in Laramie County. Between Laramie County and Mason Lane, we had two months off. We have already been in NE and currently WYCO is in TX on severity. Yoder has two trucks in MN. As for the Medicine Bow prescribed fire budget, we need to come up with the best use of the \$7500. Last year we did it for free, this year we have \$7500. Wildland classes are this weekend. Possibility we might have access to a dozer in Encampment, someone working on a Viper contract. PODs meeting with Forest Service was invaluable. Looking at fighting fire more and more with computers, setting up lines, amazing piece of technology, up and running in June. Attended the AOP meeting in Casper. Red cards are out to some people. Would like Chief's to check fire shelters and how old they are. Central had quite a few that were out of date, and we might have to start thinking about replacing them, they are about \$500/piece. He needs a list of what you have, what needs replaced, and a timeline on replacement. Unfortunately, no one has a big surplus of them sitting around.
- g. Peer Support – People are using the EAP program; it is for spouses and children of first responders as well. Information can be found online on website. It is confidential and an EAP letter is sent out within 24 hours of receiving the request. Auxilium is holding Peer Support training in Colorado, add in dates. We have funding to send ACFD1 members to this training. It will be held at Louisville Fire Station 1. Encourage any firefighter who wants to join, it's helping our brothers and sisters in fire service.
- h. Board member reports –
 - i. Chairman Hawkins - Neglected to put on the agenda and amend the agenda. The reasons for job descriptions were not communicated well. Their intent was to help attract the right people, guide training, offer liability for both parties, assist with retention, provide a clear understanding of expectations, and help gauge performance. Meetings

with Chief Johnson, legal, coordinators, peer support, LARC, Scott with EMA, County Fire Warden, rural fire chiefs, shad cooper, County Commissioners, County Treasurer, County Assessor, Dr. Waters, Wyoming State Fire Marshall, AFG grant, Jackson County fire chief Benson. Was in Casper with Fire Chiefs Association Advisory Committee. Worked on 2023 reflections, answered questions about peer support, bathrooms. Would like OSHA information, links and videos, on the website, along with legislative bill information. The board will need to take some time to go through the ones in effect July 1, 2024. Volunteer EMS and SAR 24 hour leave time for responding and for training for state employees. Not of them have the details of the how to, they have only just been passed at this point.

- ii. Brett – Finding bookkeepers and doing the books.
- iii. Matt – Working on admin for google site and active alert. Working with District Coordinator Farber on mailing to all taxpayers regarding topics.

6. Financial Report:

- a. Bills to be paid – Received a \$100,000 check for tenders to add into account on the tender line. *Chairman Hawkins motioned to accept the March Financial Report as presented. Motion was seconded by Secretary Burkhart. The vote was unanimous.*
- b. PA's –
 - i. *Chairman Hawkins motioned to approve TSVFD wildland PPE request in the amount of \$8642.63 (VFA Grant 50 dept/50 aux match with department reimbursed 50% from grant) (PA 230) and WYCO Engine 4 equipment in the amount of \$1383.84 (VFA Grant 50 dept/50 aux match with department reimbursed 50% from grant) (PA 231). Motion was seconded by Treasurer Wadsworth. The vote was unanimous.*
 - ii. *Chairman Hawkins motioned to approve VVFD SCBA equipment in the amount of \$1000. Motion was seconded by Secretary Burkhart. The vote was unanimous with Treasurer Wadsworth abstaining. PA 232 Repair the cooling system on their new Tender 3, one they just purchased for \$5000 to replace the CAT tender. The radiator needed to be replaced and they are hoping to get help from district, since we just sold those tenders, to get the coolant leak fixed and get operational. The work being done by Nicole, labor is free, just need the parts. Treasurer Wadsworth will abstain but working on the Financial Management Policy to capture decisions by prior boards about what district can/will allow payment on. The district would pay for maintenance on tenders with 2000 gal or more, this one is 1800 gal, but VVFD has gained the district some time. He suggests instead of paying for maintenance, the district helps with acquisitions costs. Chairman Hawkins motioned to approve VVFD repair of cooling system on the new tender in the amount of \$2800, 100% district funds. The motion was seconded by Secretary Burkhart for purposes of discussion. What is the district's role in paying for tender*

maintenance, if yes, what is the plan for tenders, minimum sizes, who has them etc. The vote was unanimous with Treasurer Wadsworth abstaining and he suggested helping with initial acquisition costs pending final review of this policy. PA 233

7. Action Items:

- a. Present for Approval, Fire Pay Intent Draft – Treasurer Wadsworth voted and approved at last meeting for 75% but there was a request for something on paper. This puts it in black and white, but also states that if we have another Mullen Fire all bets are off. *Chairman Hawkins motioned to approve the document as presented. Motion was seconded by Secretary Burkhart for discussion. Secretary Burkhart wants to make it very clear that this is a loan, and it comes from district reserves regarding taxpayer dollars. Clean up the language so that it is very clear. Until funds received from state any funds are paid from district resources. The vote was unanimous.*
- b. Present for Approval, Safe Streets Initiative – Albany County is applying for grant for a study and has asked us to jointly sign and endorse it. *Chairman Hawkins motioned that he signs the document. The motion was seconded by Treasurer Wadsworth for purposes of discussion. This is a template letter that had us listed as a partner? There are a lot of things outside the scope of what we are interested in; things about increased access to multi modal transportation, better access for community services, some things more relevant to ACS D than to ACFD1. This is a template letter that went out with organizations and our name in there already. No this was not discussed with County Planning before, and Chairman Hawkins does not know why it went out that way. Amend pending legal approval and there is no financial expense associated with this, they are looking for support only. The vote was unanimous.*
- c. Present for Approval, Vehicle, Apparatus and WARM coverage draft policy – Received great feedback. *Chairman Hawkins motioned to add this to the existing Vehicle operations Policy that we currently have. The motion was seconded by Treasurer Wadsworth for purposes of discussion. Does not replace Vehicle Operations Policy, it adds to it. We are looking for insurance algorithm, how do we do figure out coverage repair for building damage, 3 RFP's for body damage on vehicles. Add Section 3 from draft to existing policy. Report, verbal or written notice, to district coordinator within 72 hours based on feedback and within 5 normal business. Scratch out majority of draft, add section 3, timelines, minors in/on apparatus open houses, etc., building loss flow chart, add vehicle ops flowchart, and also the WARM screen shots. Put in supporting documentation as an attachment. Do not add 8. Simplify seven with a simple waiver. Like to see reported to the board or their designee. not the district coordinator. Add nine belongs somewhere other than here; put in personnel behaviors or whatever. Motion amended to add section 3 with 72-hour notification to district board or designee, submit to WARM within 5 normal business days, add nine as well, section seven is not added but will create a general waiver, and add attachment*

or appendix for building loss/vehicle loss flowchart example from WARM. The vote was unanimous.

- d. Present for Approval, Financial Management Draft Policy – moved to 8.e.
- e. Present for Approval, Bookkeeper – Search for replacement, contacted 6 local organizations, met with 4, only 2 submitted LOI's. The interview committee held interviews, evaluated on a matrix which was forwarded to the board. Candidates were Cindy Delaney with SVAR or Michael Schmitt. The interview committee recommends Cindy Delaney for bookkeeping services. Thank you, Brett, for doing all of that. This will double the amount; however, Mr. Schmitt was even higher. Going with Cindy Delaney gives us a partnership with two CPAs, with both having experience with governmental agencies. We were not seeking CPAs; we were seeking bookkeeping services and credit card management. Going to have to budget somehow and keep a more conservative approach going forward. Treasurer Wadsworth recommends engaging with SVAR and contracting with Organized Calculations for fire pay this season. Teri is willing to provide training/mentoring to get up to speed, that not's free either. Also suggests considering that her time spent on fire pay is paid from fire pay line on the spreadsheet. That is being built by 10% that is being held on apparatus to offset district expenses for Michele and Teri on fire pay. Does this firm change anything with the audit? With two they will both back each other up to provide control and put us in good stead for annual audit. Hourly rate is \$85/hour. *Treasurer Wadsworth motioned the Board to select SVAR LLC for bookkeeping financial management, credit card management. The motion was seconded by Chairmans Hawkins. The software will continue to be QuickBooks online. The vote was unanimous. Treasurer Wadsworth motioned to contract with Organized Calculations as to complete training and fire pay processing as required for this fire season, paid out of the fire pay line for fire pay time. Motion was seconded by Chairman Hawkins. The board has not gone into contract negotiations with Organized Calculations yet but has an anticipated end date of the end of December 2024. The vote was unanimous.* With this we are doubling the hourly rate so there will need to be some gatekeeping to prevent emails and phone calls from everyone in the district to the bookkeeper. Will need to restrict the number of directs to her. Department treasurers need to be able to engage, at this point, department treasurers are the conduit to the bookkeeper. Treasurer's, please try to consolidate email, make it efficient to reduce our time on this. Or Chain of Command would be treasurers go through District Treasurer and he can engage with the bookkeeper. Send questions to Treasurer Wadsworth, District Coordinator Farber or Michele. Michele will share a spreadsheet regarding MASA, retirement, worker comp and PA's. Also, we were using Teri's QuickBooks at a discounted rate, so that is a cost as well. OC can release data to SVAR to import into their QBO. Teri, thank you for all of your years of service.
- f. Present for Approval, Credit Cards - FIB is less than optimum for user ease and flexibility. Teri looked into Chase credit card. Each card can have a logo so it

can't be confused with other cards, and also the department name and individual name. However, we have to have individual name, if you don't and there is fraud Chase will not take on the liability, so we have to have names on the cards. Is the bookkeeper going to manage, who's going to turn off and on? *Treasurer Wadsworth motioned to move to Chase credit cards in the approximate same amount with increased credit limits and abandon First Interstate Bank. The motion was seconded by Secretary Burkhart for discussion. If person specific, then every engine boss or single resource will use a credit card. Consider moving cards for every engine boss and control them, not active except when dispatching out and utilize Wildland Coordinator Turner's record keeping for engine bosses within the district. The vote was unanimous.*

8. Board Topics:

- a. Present for Discussion, Bathroom RFP Update – Any actions on contracts? VVFD design sent to them, and Assistant Chief Green said yes. Ready to start from contract signing. CVVFD architect called and completed measurements, not far behind VVFD. TSVFD, needs additional contact but they are snowed in to retake measurements will be awhile. Ben has contact info.
- b. Present for Discussion, Strategic Plan – There was good discussion at last work session. Would like to send out an online survey, with the intent to capture as many people in the district on SWOT as possible. Jasmine created an online survey, with two components, to get info from firefighters. Board will try to get out to departments in May and present results of the surveys. A Strategic Plan will help ensure we are properly serving the taxpayers and so a similar survey will be sent out for taxpayers. Could include a QR code with newsletter to take the survey. These will be two independent surveys. Both are anonymous. And they would like each individual member to fill it out themselves to capture as much unfiltered information as possible. Jasmine will add what do you see the board's role in the management of the district. Compile information and get together in May to analyze trends, extrapolate information to goals, mission, vision, and values. The results will be available in their entirety. This is a stakeholder survey not just a taxpayer survey. Will be open April 1 through April 30 with a work session May 1st. Jasmine will send the initial email with survey but wants someone else to send the reminder emails.
- c. Present for Discussion, EMS Agreement Status – Have a meeting with Dr. Waters tomorrow. Align Providers of WY would like to formalize a contract, and on our end, we want to reduce agreement costs. Thus, an EMS Coordinator position and the need to advertise. Chairman Hawkins is in favor of it being a paid position but doesn't know what that number looks like. Discussion regarding EMS in the district. With the agreement there is a cost. The agreement cost goes down if we have an inside person to handle some of the workload. We have to figure out a plan to increase sustainable revenue, especially with possible new regulations and revenue loss. Needs to take steps to move in a direction to increase sustainable revenue and cover firefighter and EMT liability. Maybe some out there are interested in helping out. We also don't know what align

providers are going to provide. To start with a volunteer position, if interested please submit a letter of interest to the Board.

- d. Present for Discussion, Image Trend – Onboarding date is April 9th, and we will coordinate with Monica and Joyce to do this. ER is not being shut down on March 31st. The wildland module that WSF paid for threatened to shut down March 31st. The rest of it up through at least through June for the state. March 31st is from the State Forestry module. Jerod Delay is working on exactly how to move forward with it. ER could be extended for wildland module. *Chairman Hawkins motioned to onboard Image Trend April 9, 2024. Secretary Burkhart seconded for purposes of discussion. The vote was unanimous.*
 - e. Present for Discussion, Financial Management Policy Draft – Purpose is to capture all of the things approved by previous boards but not in the current policy; items that are only in minutes as far as spending. Treasurer Wadsworth will clean it up then send it out for review.
9. Chiefs Report – They did not meet.
10. Department Reports:
- a. BLVFD - 16 members, Jerry Soukup retired after 12 years, they responded to 8 calls last month, medicals, they didn't get paged for Hwy 130 accident even though they are on the border with CVVFD.
 - b. WYCO – Thanked Treasurer Wadsworth for engaging chiefs on financial policy, 14 members, spring training, 3 engine boss trainees with Neal Bowers getting close, Randy is Heavy Equipment Boss in TX on severity, and they had a short dispatch for WYCO to NE, and the last snowstorm impeded getting to a call on 230.
 - c. TSVFD – 9 active, 1 medical, 1 trainee, 1 pa, three MVA's, one wildfire, planning their RT130 on May 11, and they still have a lot of snow at the station.
 - d. Central – 8 probational, 15 members, 3 recruits, 110 calls year to date, 32 calls this month, leadership change, Jason Holloway was elected Central Chief effective 2 weeks ago, Dylan is on leave of absence but will come back as an engineer, AC12 and AC14 are in the shop, AC12 back next week, and AC14 is done and needs to be picked up, and they are working with VVFD on response calls during the day, will be less now, and also will call BLVFD.
 - e. VVFD – 22 members, have a waiting list to get on VVFD as they don't have enough PPE and gear to outfit more people, 11 full, 7 probational, 73 calls and 80% increase, mutual aid with LCFD10 and Central, the LMTV is getting electrical work done and Brush 5 is getting pump package sealing done, Central and VVFD have two new combi tools, battery powered, in service ready to go on rescue, and looking to use VFA grant money to purchase a topper and slide out bed for full extrication and medical assist on Support 6.
 - f. CVVFD – No change in membership, should be getting complete current prices on type 3, assume there will be a 6% increase from last bids, and this was calculated into PA request, RT130 the end of April.
11. New Business – Please get budget submissions before April 1st for the year. Work sessions scheduled May 1 for budgets. June has to be the approval month. Talk to

grant writer about new fire shelters, EMS coordinator, SCBA's. Chief Isborn asked if there is a benefit to possibly adding two more board members to the board to make a 5-person board. They have talked about it, but never said yay or nay, and the revenue or asset question always comes up. Board will check with assessor. Please watch The OSHA video, we will be affected, this is nationwide. It's not something we can pretend doesn't apply to us. The impact on CVVFD and their three stations and fleet will be \$10-20 million. As for input back to OSHA, please be very specific by line number and section when commenting.

12. *Chairman Hawkins motioned to adjourn the meeting at 8:24 pm. The motion was seconded by Treasurer Wadsworth. The vote was unanimous. Next work session April 5, 2024; next board meeting April 17, 2024.*

Respectfully Submitted,
Michele Turner, ACFD#1 Administrative Assistant