

Albany County Fire District #1 Board Meeting Minutes September 20, 2023

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

1. Call to Order: Meeting was called to order at 5:31 pm. Board members present were Luke Hawkins. Secretary Burkhart joined at 6:30 pm via Google Meet.
2. Minutes from the August 16, 2023, Board Meeting: *Chairman Hawkins moved to approve the minutes as presented. Motion was seconded by Secretary Burkhart and approved unanimously.*
3. Comments from the public: None
4. Report – Outside Agencies:
 - a. LFD – Operations Chief Kevin Lam updated the Board regarding door access codes. The main door into the training facility will be PIN now, not key operating and he will create a unique 6-digit code for ACFD1. Once he has the PIN in hand, he will deliver it to Training Coordinator Parten and District Coordinator Farber. Working on amendments to dispatch County calls and where the county should be talking. In larger areas dispatch tells you where you are talking. Working on an SOP for City and County regarding this. The fire medical assist seems to be working well.
 - b. EMA – Kelsey updated the Board that the next round of radios should be in within the next 1-2 months. The Homeland Security communications specialist position through a grant has been approved. This position will include programming, repairs, installations for all county radios, sirens, generator repairs, alert system, it is a full-time benefited position within EMA.
 - c. LARC – Kim – Working on implementing the fire assist for medical calls and assigning 05CAT1 on the radio. When you respond that you are En route please do so on 05CAT1.
 - d. County Fire Warden – No one present
 - e. District Coordinator – District Coordinator Farber met with Bailey Quick the County grant writer and discussed grant success processes for the District. Most important are data gathering documentation and access to quick data gathering. Also, important to create more project proposals versus item proposals. The future onboarding of image trend and will hopefully assist with data gathering. He also met with Kristi Andrews, for Humans Resources and onboarding. He has been working on job descriptions, policies, SOG's. He has 12 job descriptions that need legal review and HR review prior to proposing. He has drafts of policies/SOG's but would like to refine them for easier access, more user friendly, and more accessible to employees as they are onboarded. Suggested and onboarding packet for the future and also planning for LOD events. He plans to do a bulk presentation that will allow everyone time to review. Dispatch is going well but he is wondering if there is a legal need to put a medical assist dispatch in active alert call notes.

- f. Training Coordinator – EMA training included LZ and Red Cross trainings. The first fire dept to use the training facility will be on October 7th. The training calendar is updated on the webpage and linked to a google calendar, and also includes WSF trainings. On Octobers 21st District Coordinator Farber will be doing a command-and-control training, and we will also be hosting another crime scene preservation training. If you need training let Jasmine know.
 - g. Wildland Coordinator – Wildland Coordinator Turner addressed the policies the board started but hasn't yet implemented regarding the fire pay policy. We need to get the updated policy implemented; fire paperwork has been pretty poor this year. An update will be worked on and brought back next month. The Summer went well and thank you to VVFD for stepping up and helping out. There were a lot of lessons learned over the summer and he is looking forward to working on those over the winter. The relationship with the Forest Service has gone really well and he hopes it continues to move forward. Currently one truck in LA and WYCO is back on the Board. Thank you to all the firefighters that assisted with the prescribed burns this year, it went really well. Jeremy with the Forest Service had great things to say and hopes to continue building that relationship.
 - h. Peer Support Team – The Peer Support Team finished the second round of training. Forms have been created and sent to legal for review, we are just waiting on an email address and a few little tweaks to finalize. Will host a kickoff in October. An EAP letter has been created to take to counselors and they pay off of that letter and everything remains completely confidential. Brian Cook a Peer Support Co-Chair updated the group that so far, the program has been well received with a couple of contacts already, and this is really good for the County and a bonus for the district. There is another Peer Support Training coming up October 10 in Denver. This is a great opportunity if more people are interested in getting involved. Currently there are representatives on the team from TSVFD, VVFD, Central and Admin. WYCO, BLVFD, CVVFD are not currently represented in the team, we would love to have them. This is all grant funded so no District/Departments funds are involved. Also, this is for the entire family, not just the firefighter, but includes six visits for spouses and children as well.
5. Financial Report:
- a. Bills to be paid – Secretary Burkhart is not present yet, so no action will be taken until he joins. Bookkeeper Gillum presented the Treasurer's Report. Secretary Burkhart joined the meeting and this discussion resumed at 6:32 pm. He would like to add in the Active Alert payment. That payment is for November so it can wait until next month. *Chairman Hawkins moved the financial report be approved as presented. Motion was seconded by Secretary Burkhart and approved unanimously. Chairman Hawkins moved that because Secretary Burkhart joined the meeting virtually and is not physically there, that District Coordinator Farber be a second authorized signatures for the financials and bills to be paid for tonight, September 20, 2023. Motion was seconded by Secretary Burkhart and approved unanimously.*

b. PA Approvals –

- i. Three PA requests from BLVFD - Secretary Burkhart is not present yet and usually abstains from BLVFD's PA requests, the Board may have to hold a special meeting to approve. Secretary Burkhart joined and he typically abstains but given that Treasurer Wadsworth is not present he doesn't have any conflicts with the PA requests and feels he can vote so BLVFD can move forward. *Chairman Hawkins moved to approve BLVFD's requests for Arctic Entry System in the amount of \$6600, 100% Dept Funds (PA 410); Gravel/Fill for Station 2 in the amount of \$3000, 100% Dept Funds (PA 411); and Booster Hose for BL1 in the amount of \$733.90, 100% Dept funds (PA b412). Motion was seconded by Secretary Burkhart and approved unanimously.*

6. Action Items:

- a. EMS pursuit options – update only – No update at this time.
- b. Social Media Policy – update only – District Coordinator Farber has received feedback related to defining what social media is, what platforms count as social media and are blogs included as well. Also, should it cover WyoLink and scanning – is that related to social media? Do we need to further define what confidential/confidentiality is? District Coordinator Farber used the proposed language approved through legal already in the Confidentiality Policy to bolster the definition of what is confidential information. Social media should be defined as all-encompassing internet-based platforms that you can generate content in. Questions – feedback? *Chairman Hawkins moved to approve the Social Media Policy subject to the edit legal has already reviewed and approved. Motion was seconded by Secretary Burkhart and approved unanimously.*
- c. Harassment Policy – update only – District Coordinator Farber is building a general policy that the district needs to have, based off the City of Laramie Employee Handbook. Any feedback is always welcome. He received feedback from Secretary Burkhart regarding more descriptive language related to discrimination/hazing/some other things and he added in the items from the work session to the copy that was sent out. Veterans should be included as a protected class as well. WE can edit genetic information, age and add in other protected class as defined by law. Secretary Burkhart joined the meeting and discussed his comments. Should be expanded to include all protected classes. *Chairman Hawkins moved to approve the Harassment Policy. Secretary Burkhart seconded for purposes of discussion. Secretary Burkhart is concerned that the policy seems specific only to what is commonly thought of as harassment and this is an opportunity to consider hazing and intimidation as harassment as well. The Board could also address in an HR handbook and the onboarding process. Intimidation is addressed in the definition. Chairman Hawkins amended the motion to approve the proposed Harassment Policy with amendments specifically to include an expansion of protected classes, as those state by law, as well as to include a specific callout for intimidation and hazing to be provided by legal. Motion was seconded by Secretary Burkhart and approved unanimously.*

- d. I-80 WYDOT Projected Project Pursuit – WYDOT is asking for support from ACFD1 to pursue a grant related to the I-80 expansion project to include Skyline Dr, 30th St connect to Skyline Dr and extended roads parallel to I-80 per Skyline Dr. The County needs a letter of support by 9/29. Legal stated that in the event a special board meeting cannot happen before then, Legal suggests a draft of the letter, due to lack of quorum, be submitted with follow up of the final letter approved at a special board meeting. Issue revisited after Secretary Burkhart joined the meeting. *Chairman Hawkins moved to support the I-80 WYDOT Expansion project with a letter of support. Motion was seconded by Secretary Burkhart, and he stated that this is a worthwhile project that will shorten our response times to communities we service, motion was approved unanimously.*

7. Board Topics:

- a. Background Check update – We have Legal approval, the funding is coming from the District, either from a grant that is being pursued or from Murdoch’s donation, meaning no district/department funds will be used for this, there is no financial burden to the departments regarding this. Legal made edits to policy and that edited policy needs to be published so everyone can see what the actual policy looks like. This applies to all current firefighters within the district and getting them updated as well as those onboarding as new would also receive background checks. Chief Essley asked if anyone other than private vendor can be used, are there other acceptable backgrounds checks such as FFL conceal carry? The others do not meet the policy written by the District and therefore would not be acceptable forms of background checks. By following what was written in the policy this ensures that all firefighters would then be held to the same standard across the District. Will this be required every year to have a “current” background check. The current policy is written to have a self-reporting component, so no, this will not need to be repeated yearly. This policy needs to go on the website for all to review.
- b. Bathroom Updates – CVVFD’s well has been drilled but has not been stubbed into the building yet. VVFD and TSVFD have not heard anything yet and both have water but very low flows. Chiefs are ready to move forward so either. Secretary Burkhart spoke with Bailey Quick, and the architect and they have reworked the proposal to make it more general in terms and he will send it to legal for review. If approved, he will post again. This is a design build contract, very general. If one of the coordinators is interested in working with him, he is happy to have that help. District Coordinator Farber is interested in helping.
- c. RFP Flow Chart and Implementation Algorithm – The Board has received from Legal, and it was being put into pdf, wondering if that is finalized that yet. The Board had requested documents be put together, statutorily what is required, and that those be shared with the board. Once the Board approves those can then be shared with everyone. This will need to be an action item on the next agenda to approve to then be able to share with the group.
- d. Bylaws – Revisions and reviews, the Board has received VVFD’s and are looking for other departments for legal review to make sure they are not in conflict with

District bylaws. Board has decided that this is a good time to submit current bylaws again for a periodic review.

8. Chiefs Report – Regarding ISO and pump testing, is the District still seeking an ISO rating and if so, are pump tests required yearly? What are the requirements for pump testing? Chiefs feel this is not the best way to spend department resources if there is not some benefit to pump testing. The District could save money if coordinating pump testing district wide to take advantage of possible discounts, and District Coordinator Farber is looking into this. Also discussed District SOPs, new hires, Wyoming State Forestry paperwork and who should be responsible for overseeing that. Discussed the money coming in from Rail Tie and possibly reviewing the truck funds withholding and firefighter pay but determined these to be different things. The Chiefs are ready to set up new email addresses. There were questions on background checks that were addressed tonight. Back to pump testing, what are the costs per apparatus to have that done right now? It depends on the size of the pump. Do we do an official test every few years in conjunction with ISO and then, if reasonably priced, purchase and do internal pump testing in between? Need to look to NFPA standards as once a year is standard.
9. Department Reports:
 - a. CVVFD – Well in place, just need to get the water into the station.
 - b. BLVFD – The department and the auxiliary would like to thank Wildland Coordinator Turner for taking Mike and their wildland engine out.
 - c. WYCO – Their crew is back from Louisiana, and they will have a live fire training in October.
 - d. TSVFD –Transferring Engine 57 to Crook County. WSF is planning to burn slash piles, so a possible live fire training on that.
 - e. Central – Crew still in Louisiana. Their treasurer is pending contract agreement and they are looking into security cameras at South due to vandalization.
 - f. VVFD –They have eight firefighters involved in meeting tonight from VVFD. Their tender has a major leak in the pump and Gary Hobbs is coming up tomorrow to look at in their station. Their auxiliary purchased a trailer for their use and for the department to use as a warming trailer. New officer positions. They participated in several of the Forest Service prescribed burns, and they are working with Laramie County 10 on training under the new agreement.
10. New Business – District Coordinator Farber is wondering if there is anything the Board has that needs done for the department or the District that the coordinators can help with. When positions change within the departments it's helpful to let administration know so they can update bank account access as well as email groups and the website. Also letting administration know when you add or drop people from your roster helps to ensure everyone is covered under Workers Comp but also helps to make sure the District isn't spending funds on people who are no longer associated with the District for Workers Comp, retirement, MASA. Do we need an SOG/SOP or Policy that outlines what information needs to be communicated? District Coordinator Farber consulted with Legal today to improve the workflow across the District and it is Legal's opinion that it is possible for Teri Jo to have a District email and District Coordinator Farber

would like to see that happen. Secretary Burkhart will meet with District Coordinator Farber on how to accomplish and Legal will be involved in the initial process.

11. Adjourn – *Chairman Hawkins moved to adjourn the meeting at 7:23 pm. Motion was seconded by Secretary Burkhart and approved unanimously. Work Session 10/11, Business Meeting 10/18.*

Respectfully Submitted,
Michele Turner, ACFD#1 Administrative Assistant