

Albany County Fire District #1 Board Meeting Minutes August 16, 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 to Order: Meeting was called to order at 5:30 pm. Board members present were Luke Hawkins, Matt Burkhart and Brett Wadsworth.
2. Minutes from 7/19/2023 Board Meeting – *Secretary Burkhart moved to approve the minutes as presented. Motion was seconded by Chairman Hawkins and approved unanimously, with Treasurer Wadsworth abstaining because he was not present at that meeting.*
3. Comments from the public: None
Chairman Hawkins moved to amend tonight's agenda under Action Items to add item e. Motion to Consider MOU with District 10. Motion was seconded by Secretary Burkhart and approved unanimously.
4. Report – Outside Agencies:
 - a. LFD – Operations Chief Kevin Lam joined the meeting. Facilities within the City of Laramie are in the process of updating door locks to digital keypads. They are a manually entered 6-digit code and LFD will have them on their fire stations. LFD would like to provide the opportunity for County agencies to have access. They propose a single code for ACFD1 with a central point of contact for district firefighters to contact. Looking at Training Coordinator Parten and District Coordinator Farber. Over the last six weeks Commander Hotchkiss asked dispatch to move all county-based calls to 05CAT1 to clean up communications and add consistency. This is a trial run to see if it works well. Questions about starting on Fire 1 then moving to 05CAT1 or starting on 05CAT1. It will have to be added to Active Alert. What channel should they respond to when in route. Move forward creating a policy and developing a standard protocol for 05CAT1 and exceptions. LFD mentioned that scene management on Monday's motorcycle accident on 230 was outstanding, command was clear, scene control was clear, they were very pleased with the efforts and same comes from the medical crew as well.
 - b. EMA – Radios have been received from Bearcom for BLVFD, CVVFD and Central. The second batch is coming in a month or two for the rest of the departments. Kelsey Norsiden is the new administrative assistant. Red Cross Shelter training on 9/12/23 from 5:30-8:30pm.
 - c. LARC – Dispatch Supervisor Kim attended the meeting, and she is working with District Coordinator Farber now regarding dispatch for the District.
 - d. County Fire Warden – No one present, on a fire AK.
 - e. District Coordinator – Working with Kim in dispatch. Radios are here. Attending periodic meetings. Will get a typed report following this meeting.
 - f. Training Coordinator – Attended the Farmer's Market for recruitment. Women's League would like us to do a presentation. Helicopter LZ training with SAR on

8/26/2023 from 2-5pm at the Readiness Center. Semi live fire training
9/16/2023.

- g. Wildland Coordinator – En route home from TX.
 - h. Peer Support Team – Next training is this Friday and Saturday
 - i. Legal – MOU on the agenda. We have an MOU with Larimer County, what about Jackson County? Will work on MOU with Jackson County.
5. Financial Report:
- a. Bills to be paid – *Chairman Hawkins moved to approve the financial report as presented. Motion was seconded by Secretary Burkhart and approved unanimously.*
 - b. PA Approvals –
 - i. *Chairman Hawkins moved to approve Central's request for firefighters to attend Wheatland Fire School in the amount of \$800, 100% dept funds. Motion was seconded by Secretary Burkhart and approved unanimously. PA 409*
 - ii. *Chairman Hawkins moved to ratify the emergency repair of WYCO engine which was approved on 7/20/23 in the amount of \$9087.10, 100% dept funds. Motion was seconded by Secretary Burkhart and approved unanimously. PA 408*
6. Action Items:
- a. Unmitigated Impact Purchase – District has received two payments so far. Receiving \$168,000/month and will continue until 3.1 million is received, approx. 18-20 months. Items were requested by Central and CVVFD and the District. Items included support for paid firefighter positions. A work session was held to prioritize the requested items. Attorney Goetz will confirm if we have to pay back funds received if the lawsuit goes through and is successful. Are paid positions an appropriate use of funds and after two years how would we sustain those positions/funds? Moving forward on SCBA Compressor (Central) and Type 3 (CVVFD). *Chairman Hawkins moved for the Chiefs to move forward to get RFP's and have everything purchased through February. Motion was seconded by Treasurer Wadsworth and approved unanimously.*
 - b. District Type 6 from WYCO – Will get to Central North next week. BLVFD would take it and put it at Wildhorse Ranch. Are the Chiefs comfortable with four type 6's out at the same time? Board wants to see functional proposals in written format prior to the work session with pros and cons. No decision was made tonight.
 - c. Credit Cards – Board would like to gain oversight and be able to see all of the credit cards. We have a \$50,000 total credit limit between all district cards. Treasurer Wadsworth would propose two cards/department to be standard but look at a third card on a case-by-case basis with proper justification. Proposes we start with a \$6000 dispatch card, \$1500 admin card, and then a single resource card could be requested at \$3500 for those taking department apparatus. Need to implement one department at a time. Start with CVVFD, they need to turn in all their old cards and get new ones. Then move to the next department and

repeat the process. Currently two departments have debit cards. Should remove the debit cards and replace them with credit cards if they want them. *Treasurer Wadsworth moved the District move to organizational credit cards, one department at a time, with the normal being two cards, but three cards are possible depending on credit limits and credit outstanding. Discussion - Single resources using a credit card would need to be in district apparatus, not POV's. How does this give us better oversight? Currently all cards are issued to individuals and are not organizational cards, this would provide standardization. What about having dispatch cards that are assigned out? Like to move forward with, generally, two cards, case by case up to three cards at amounts listed above. Motion was seconded by Chairman Hawkins and approved unanimously.* The second part of this is payment of dispatch hotel rooms. There is concern from the Chiefs needing to get firefighters repaid quickly when they are putting thousands of dollars on their personal credit card. Travel is paid at the next meeting upon their return. Discussion to pay them right away when they return. The board allows us to use dispatch cards for hotels on dispatch fires. Teri Jo can increase amounts as needed depending on the situation. Concern – depending on the length of time for a department and their approval cycle for bills, it can take some time for expended credit to be paid down and if they are attempting to dispatch again, they may not have the full \$6000 available. Teri Jo receives the fire packages and can bring to the next meeting with the current department hotel charges, get approval, and pay them with, probably more rapidly and with less hindrance to the departments with regard to getting hotel receipts. This would clean it up, be more rapid, more transparent, better accountability and they would get their funds quicker. Currently the department treasurers only pay for transactions they have receipts for. The hotel receipts are included in the fire package. What about hotels for training? That would be the department's responsibility because they are responsible for paying for training. Single resources dispatched out can have a card if they take District apparatus. *Treasurer Wadsworth moved the District to pay hotel charges placed on organizational credit cards for dispatch only. Motion was seconded by Secretary Burkhart and approved unanimously.*

- d. EMS – Is the Board interested in pursuing and is ACFD1 willing to expand services to include EMS with our current resources, using the money available to us now, meaning our current mil levy, as there is no money coming from anywhere else to pay for this. The State legislature has approved and provided flexibility for special districts in a legal and accepted format to provide emergency services and you can use fire funds to include fire and medical. Initially funds were to be used for fire protection/suppression only. Should the Board consider EMS services, we need to make a determination with public input whether we want to expand that scope? Another avenue is to create a special district that would include more mil levy. Secretary Burkhart would like to take this to the community and see what their input is. *Chairman Hawkins moved to expand service to include EMS with current resources. Motion was seconded by*

Treasurer Wadsworth for purposes of discussion. Discussion – We would not be committing any type of purchase agreement, just looking at what agreements we would make. We are in a weird position between responding for medical assist, medical condition, good samaritan. Secretary Burkhart is supportive of exploring how it would work but hesitates to commit funds. Would the Board support expanding the scope of what ACFD1 is designed to do, beyond fire suppression/protection? Next, would we be willing to use District resources to determine if we can do that? Need to poll the constituents and get feedback from the communities we serve. Chairman Hawkins amended motion to authorize ACFD1 to explore whether or not it would like to expand its services. Motion was seconded by Treasurer Wadsworth and approved unanimously. Chairman Hawkins moved to authorize legal resources to investigate whether and what legal means are available to expand the scope of the District's services to include EMS. Secretary Burkhart seconded for purposes of discussion. Discussion – Funds have not been allocated for this purpose at this point. Some research needs to be done. Other fire districts have created different legal ways to do this such as joint powers boards. There are ways to get there, but until the Board agrees to explore and allocate resources to have an attorney do that, we can't get there. Unfortunately, our EMS grant expired in March. District Coordinator Farber is happy to help and do some front-end work. We can look at it on a month-to-month basis. Have \$40,000 budgeted for legal services and are running below budget and could try to get grant extended. Motion was approved unanimously.

- e. Consider MOU with District 10 – MOU was drawn up and has gone back and forth. District 10 representation is not an attorney, but their recommendations for edits were reasonable and cooperative. Attorney Goetz would recommend the changes be approved in the format provided to the Board. *Chairman Hawkins moved to approve the MOU with Laramie County District 10. Motion was seconded by Treasurer Wadsworth. Discussion – The template can be expanded out using the framework and engage other districts. Any clerical errors will be corrected before signing. Motion was approved unanimously.*

7. Board Topics:

- a. Paid Positions – The Boards submitted a grant for paid positions. Board needs to become educated on how to move forward with paid positions (contract vs employee, workers compensation, benefits, etc). If the Board wants paid positions, then it needs infrastructure within the District; for example, how you treat employees and contractors - but as a District, not on a department/station basis. Will need policies/procedures manuals, benefits, non-discrimination, etc, with a District wide policy on how employees are treated. Would current volunteers be eligible if they are qualified? How do you balance paid volunteers when they are on the clock and when they are volunteering? And for contractors we will need independent contractor agreements. HR can help build the infrastructure and then Attorney Goetz can review before it is approved. This could incentivize the younger volunteers. Coordinator Farber noted that once

you introduce paid positions it will dramatically alter every department's culture, their people and how their people are valued. How do we navigate paid versus unpaid, especially when they are performing the same duties? This will tear people up and the roll out needs to be well thought out. Is the money better spent utilizing the people we already have and paying the volunteer to show up? Moved to a work session topic.

- b. Bathroom RFP Status – It has gone out regionally with no response so now we can target and request quotes directly.
 - c. Wifi at North Station – Huge amount of interference with a moderate signal. The provider is Lariat Wireless. Possibly get a FirstNet hotspot, might be cheaper than current service. It's \$60-\$80/month for the business model. Also investigate Vistabeam. Chief Whitmer to look at options, the coordinators will help. Next month's meeting will be held at Central South.
 - d. ACFD1 Zoom Account – Will try Google Hangout next month and use zoom as a backup.
 - e. Tender Repairs – The tanks are the current issue, and a work session was held. In looking at getting new tenders the District is looking at 1-1 ½ years minimum, so we have to do something about the current status of the tenders we have. Options for custom tanks from a company in Sterling, CO. Secretary Burkhart will research.
8. Chiefs Report: Chiefs did not meet.
9. Department Reports:
- a. VVFD – All apparatus is in service. Two WyoTech instructors repaired old AC12 on their own time/own dime and they are developing a good relationship with them. VVFD received a \$1500 check from Toyota Cares, and they have an ad on the radio for recruiting.
 - b. CVVFD – Well should be drilled today, hoping it's done by Tuesday, then the electrical needs to be stubbed into the station. The extrication tools arrived last Thursday. Also receiving a generator from the teardown of the old UW police station.
 - c. BLVFD – For the accident on MM33 – there issues with the paging on this incident. Attending the Wildhorse Ranch annual meeting on Saturday to talk about being fire ready and their escape plan/route that needs to be developed through EMA. As for the BLM, they now need to prove that they need the land.
 - d. WYCO – MM33 call, new truck is in and WYCO1 is out. Will attend the live fire training in NE.
 - e. TSVFD – Two fires, MVA and medical assist. Fire at Mariah State Lands near Garrett Rd.
 - f. Central – Trying to make calls when they can with firefighters in Riverton for training. Firefighter out with Support 6 on dispatch fire.
10. New Business:
- a. *Treasurer Wadsworth moved to create a separate checking account for the Coordinators. Motion was seconded by Chairman Hawkins and approved unanimously. Training Coordinator Parten will be the treasurer. They prefer a*

credit card over checks with a \$1500 credit limit. *Treasurer Wadsworth moved to get a \$1500 credit card for the Coordinators. Motion was seconded by Chairman Hawkins. Discussion – If they have a credit card, they will pay the credit card out of their own account. If the payment is coming out of the District account, because the District is paying the bill, then why would they need their own checking account? If they operate like a department then they need a checking account. If they operate under the District, then they don't need a checking account. They will have an account, order checks, and a credit card. Treasurer Wadsworth amends motion to add in the ordering of checks as well. Motion was seconded by Chairman Hawkins. Discussion – There are rules in place to be followed and not hinder their ability to work. Motion was approved unanimously.*

- b. From the FirstNet work session, they are engaging with WyoLink to see if devices are compatible or accepted and activated under their network. District Coordinator Farber will work with Logan regarding this issue.
11. Adjourn – *Chairman Hawkins moved to adjourn the meeting at 8:39 pm. Motion was seconded by Treasurer Wadsworth and approved unanimously. Work session 9/14, business meeting 9/20 at Central South.*

Respectfully Submitted,
Michele Turner, ACFD1 Administrative Assistant