

Battle Creek Fire Protection District

Minutes for Meeting

September 12, 2024

There being a quorum, the meeting of Battle Creek Fire Protection District was called to order on September 12, 2024 at 6:39 PM by President John Esposti in the Hayward Fire Hall with directors, Ray Summers, Levi Van Sambeek, and Jack Bradt present; additionally, Fire Chief Dale Gadbois and Administrator Garrett Dixon also in attendance.

Secretary Report: All members having received the June 20, 2024 meeting minutes in advance to the meeting and there being no discussion nor amendment to the minutes a motion to approve the minutes was made by Levi V. and seconded by Jack B. to ***approve the minutes to the June 20, 2024 meeting***, the motion passed.

Treasurer Report: Levi V. provided a report on financial status of the district and fire department based on the end of August, 2024 bank balances. The balances for the district's cash accounts were: General Operations checking, \$92,172.91; Contract Fire checking, \$37,000.46; Money Market Savings, \$25,439.86 all totaling \$154,612.33. The District Investment account include three Certificate Deposits totaling \$160,723.45. The Fire Dept checking balance was \$73,808.48. The total assets for the district were \$389,144.26. This is a nearly \$52,000 reduction from the previous meeting's balances. A motion to ***accept the financial report was made*** by Ray S. and seconded by Jack B., the motion passed.

Old Business:

- None

New Business:

- Annual Tax Levy Request: John E. stated that the tax levy request is due by October 1, 2024 with a maximum levy available of \$486,327.11 based on the Pennington Co. Auditor's calculation. Additionally, we have a "stored CPI" of approximately \$8,800 available. After an extensive conversation regarding the department's budget request and an estimated shortfall in excess of \$150,000 the potential of an "opt-out" request was discussed. It was noted that such a request procedure must be filed before July in a given year. It is inevitable that an "opt-out" will be requested in 2025. Given the existing timelines, Levi V. moved and was seconded by Ray S. ***to request the maximum available levy of \$486,327.11 plus the "stored CPI" of \$8,800 for a total of \$495,127.11.*** the motion passed. President John E. will sign the 2025 Tax Levy Request and forward it to the County Auditor's Office.
- 2025 Fire Department Budget: Fire Chief Dale G. submitted a proposed budget for department operations in FY2025 totaling \$635,575 which is a 15% increase due to the impact of inflation on salaries, utilities, fleet fuel and a projected \$35,000 pump repair on the ladder truck. With an additional District budget of \$23,000, primarily the annual USDA loan payment, and other income results in a \$153,448 shortfall from our tax levy revenue. Discussion continued regarding additive sources of revenue. A motion was made by Ray S. and seconded by Levi V. ***to suspend the payment to the Department of \$6,500 monthly from the Contract Fire account***

Battle Creek Fire Protection District

for the remainder of this year and defer this monthly payment to the 2025 budget year, the motion passed. Additionally, a suggestion was raised by Ray S. to allow the CD for \$107,206 to mature on March 23, 2025 and use this cash reserve to augment the FY2025 budget. Chief Dale G. also suggested that an additional review of the budget could result in some savings and offered to report back to the board in November. A meeting to take final action on the budget was set for November 21, 2025.

- Report of September 7th Open House: Garrett D. reported that the Hayward Station Open House was a great success. The fund-raiser for the LUCAS apparatus stands a \$10,050 in raffle ticket sales with additional sources being explored to complete the campaign. Those attending the Open House were very appreciative of the Fire Department and enthusiastic. An estimated 60-70 individuals attended.
- Plan Annual Meeting: This is deferred to the November meeting.

Fire Chief/Administrator Report:

Chief Gadbois:

- Reported 262 calls to date, currently 20 – 25 active volunteers on the force, including 6 full-time employees. There is one vacancy, still attempting to recruit.
- The annual Fire Fighters Banquet will be held on November 9, award nominations will be made to honor our Fire Fighters.
- Garrett D. reiterated that the Custer Co. Fire board has awarded Title III funds of which the BC Fire District will receive approximately \$34,000 for PPE including helmets, boots and Infra-red camera equipment.
- The new Hayward Station sign was installed prior to the Open House. Garrett indicated that the old sign will be hung in the meeting room.
- Chief Dale G. reported that the recent hail storm in Hermosa cause some non-critical damage to the building and determined it was not worth submitting a claim.

The next BCFD meeting will be the budget/regular meeting and is scheduled for November 21, 2024 at 6:30 PM at the Hayward Station.

There being no additional items of discussion a motion **to Adjourn** made by Levi V. seconded by Jack B., motion passed; the meeting adjourned at 7:55 PM.

Respectfully submitted by Ray Summers, Secretary