

# Battle Creek Fire Protection District

## Minutes for Meeting November 21, 2024

There being a quorum (accommodated by telephonic votes), the meeting of Battle Creek Fire Protection District was called to order on November 21, 2024 at 6:30 PM by President John Esposti in the Hayward Fire Hall with directors, Ray Summers, Levi Van Sambeek, present and Jack Brandt and Leo Van Sambeek available by phone; additionally, Fire Chief Dale Gadbois, Ast Fire Chief Dave Lindblom, and Administrator Garrett Dixon also in attendance.

Secretary Report: All members having received the September 12, 2024 meeting minutes in advance to the meeting, a motion was made by Levi V. and seconded by Ray S. ***“to dispense with the reading of the minutes”***, the motion passed. and there being no discussion nor amendment to the minutes a motion to approve the minutes was made by John E. and seconded by Levi V. to ***“approve the minutes to the September 12, 2024 meeting”***, the motion passed.

Treasurer Report: Levi V. provided a report on financial status of the district and fire department based on the November 20, 2024 bank balances. The balances for the district's cash accounts were: General Operations checking, \$204,253.51; Contract Fire checking, \$35,363.15; Money Market Savings, \$25,753.38; all totaling \$265,074.36. Additionally, three CD investment accounts total \$160,763.71, two of which are earmarked to the USDA loan. The total assets for the district were \$425,838.07. This is a nearly \$37,000 increase from the previous meeting's reported balances. The Fire Dept checking balance was \$102,041.51. A motion to ***“accept the financial report”*** was made by Ray S. and seconded by John E., the motion passed.

### Old Business:

- None

### New Business:

- 2025 Fire Department Budget: Fire Chief Dale G. submitted a proposed budget for department operations in FY2025 totaling \$637,298 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 (which is primarily the annual USDA loan payment), and other income results in a \$153,971 shortfall from our tax levy revenue. Discussion continued regarding the necessity to use existing cash reserves to cover the shortfall in the 2025 budget year and ultimately the need for an Opt-Out for the FY2026 Fire Department's operating budget. Given the increasing cost of operations caused by inflation and the statutory constraints of a 3% annual tax revenue growth and a motion was offered by Ray S. seconded by John E. ***“to begin the process to prepare an Opt-Out submission by July 15, 2025 of approximately \$200,000 for a period of 3 – 5 years to meet the Fy2026 department's operating budget and beyond; as we gather more information the actual amount will be adjusted”***. There was additional discussion regarding the mechanics of an Opt-Out submission. The motion passed with the votes present and with the additional telephonic vote of Leo V.

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With regard to the Fire Department's FY2025 budget, a motion was made by John E. and seconded by Levi V. **"to approve the Fire Department's 2025 budget year as presented"**, the motion passed with the votes present and with the additional telephonic vote of Leo V.

- **Annual Meeting:** A date for the District's Annual Meeting was set for Thursday, February 20, 2025. The required announcement noticed will be accomplished by Sec. Ray S. The director's whose terms are expiring are: Leo Van Sambeek, Ray Summers and Jack Brandt. Elections for these vacancies will be held at the Annual Meeting.

## Fire Chief/Administrator Report:

### Chief Gadbois:

- Reported 329 calls to date. The recently hired firefighter was introduced.
- The Keystone Station recently received water damage which will be covered by insurance, Al Star Construction will do the work.
- The BCFD will participate Hermosa Christmas Parade to be held on 14 at 6:30pm.
- The District Christmas Party will be held in January 2025, date TBD.
- Chili feed will be held on March 7<sup>th</sup> in the Hermosa School
- Chief Dale G. reported that the Custer Co. consolidation discussions are dead.

### Ast Chief Lindblom:

- The Pennington Co. Fire Service Board has deferred their Opt-Out due to issues surrounding property tax concerns and has been assured that the budget will be covered.
- Work Comp. remains a topic of concern, a issue of the status of Volunteers has been resolved.
- The New Underwood VFD has been reorganized after the resignation of numerous firefighters.
- The Pennington Co. dispatch has revised the "Alarm Level" clarifying the activation of additional departments.

The next BCFD meeting will be the Annual Meeting to be held on Thursday, February 20, 2025 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 Ray S., motion passed; the meeting adjourned at 7:425 PM.

Respectfully submitted by Ray Summers, Secretary