

Battle Creek Fire District

Minutes of a Regular Meeting

April 4, 2019

Meeting called to order at 6:31 PM by Jim DeHaai in the Hayward Fire Hall with five Directors, Fire Chief Paul Johnson, Bookkeeper Garrett Dixon, and Firefighter Association President present. Director John Esposti was absent because of his mother's death, and the Board extended its sympathies to John and his family.

Minutes of the Annual District meeting were distributed by email before the meeting. The minutes were approved with a wording correction from "Fire District's budget" to "Fire Department's budget" upon motion and second by Cofoid and Esposti, respectively. Another clarification was made that the Department's "two-minute response time" actually means a "two-minute out-the-door time" since response time might be construed as time-to-arrival at the incident location, which is highly variable because of potential distances involved.

Treasurer Van Sambeek distributed a set of financial reports for the District and Fire Department. The financial (cash) summary, as of March 31, 2019, shows:

Total of District Checking Accounts	\$ 338,774.69
CD – USDA required Hayward Building Payment	\$ 25,000.00
CD – (unassigned obligation)	<u>\$ 200,000.00</u>
Total	\$ 563,774.69

Fire Department Operations	Jan 1-Mar 31	Budget	Percent	Remainder
Deposits from District	\$116,700	\$421,402	42%	\$246,090
Interest Received	\$1			
Payroll, FTE Ins., Taxes, Workman's' Comp	-\$65,486	-\$301,000	30%	-\$209,306
Training Expenses	-\$24	-\$3,500	16%	-\$2,954
Gas, Tele, Garbage	-\$2,295	-\$30,000	14%	-\$25,753
Office Expenses	-\$550	-\$1,000	55%	-\$451
Building Maintenance	-\$1,755	-\$10,000	24%	-\$7,593
Vehicle Maintenance	-\$609	-\$10,000	17%	-\$8,330
Fleet Fuel	-\$1,463	-\$7,500	40%	-\$4,536
R&R Equipment	-\$11,638	-\$10,000	122%	\$2,221
3rd Party Testing	-\$4,343	-\$5,000	87%	-\$657
Insurance	\$0	-\$23,000	0%	-\$23,000
Hayward Building Payment	\$0	-\$20,402	0%	-\$20,402
Keystone Station Rebuild	-\$24,898			

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Motion made by Summers and seconded by Cofoid to accept the financial reports. Unanimously approved.

Unfinished Business and Updates

DeHaai reported that

- Signage changes are still being worked on. For example, Summit Signs has proposed \$400 per 4x8 foot aluminum sign.
- Regarding property adjacent the Hayward Station, Southern Hills Water desires to purchase 0.62 acres and perform some cut-and-fill operations beneficial to the District. The District might also consider selling some other land behind the station.
- Regarding the Spokane (Iron Mountain) Substation, the District has a quit-claim deed for the land and the USDA has no claims on the building. The original land-donor (Tom Fork) has sold his adjoining property; in consideration of his donation, he now requests \$10,000 if we sell the property. The Directors noted his request, but the District's opinion is we are not obligated to do so. If the substation is sold, the District would retain the stand-by generator and its transfer switch and the radio tower.

Summers moved with second by Cofoid that the District declare as surplus two parcels of land: 1) unused land adjacent the Hayward Station and 2) the Iron Mountain Substation land and building, and contract John Preston to perform a property-value assessment on the parcels to determine values for surplus-sales advertising and minimum-bid reserves. The Board's understanding was that minimum sales' price must exceed 75% of Preston's value assessment and that sales proceeds would be used to pay down the Hayward Fire Hall mortgage with USDA. Motion passed unanimously.

As discussed during last fall's budget process, but not formally acted upon, Summers moved with second by Reder that the District approve the purchase of a basic laptop computer for use by the District President. Motion passed without opposition.

New Business

Discussion presented by Van Sambeek that the "on-line" QuickBooks accounting has not proven of sufficient value to warrant its cost and it has been difficult to synchronize with our bank. For the remainder of the year, Van Sambeek and Dixon

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will do financial statements within Excel to determine if that is an adequate (and cheaper) alternative.

Fire Chief Johnson reported on the status of the District's firefighting capabilities. He touched on many topics including:

- All shifts are being covered at both Keystone and Hermosa, no complaints have been made to the Fire Chief, and numerous firefighters have participated in lots of training.
- The Keystone Station remodel was completed at a cost of \$24,898.28 plus \$15,000 from Black Hills Energy.

Motion by Cofoid and second by Summers, that, since the Keystone remodel was not itemized in its 2019 budget, to reimburse the Fire Department \$24,898.28 from the Contract Fire Account. Motion passed unanimously.

- Recruitment and retention of staff will become a problem when Western Dakota Tech ends its firefighters' associate degree program (except for continuing its online-only training). District will approach area trade schools to determine if District could provide hands-on training complemented by the trade school's online general credits leading to an associates' degree from that trade school. Such an arrangement could (hopefully) provide 4 to 6 students at a time for staffing. Such a program would be in competition with WDT's on-line course, but would be more comprehensive because of the hands-on training provided. Johnson and Reder will discuss this proposal with WDT. For information only, currently six WDT students are active within the Department.
- Recently, the Custer County Commissioners declared a \$500,000 one-time grant to be split among the nine Fire Departments in the county. After an aborted attempt to split the money, the Commissioners now plan to do an entire county fire-protection needs' assessment (study). Under that premise, BCFD will probably look "too good" to receive much of the grant, as other departments will show more needs.
- The District needs to decide on the status of the Keystone ladder truck and the wildland brush truck. The ladder truck has value for elevated water streams for fires in taller buildings (mostly in Keystone) and for elevated rescues, but less of a need as a ~~tasker~~ ^{pumper}. A good used ladder truck ~~(with good bucket capability)~~ ^{STA} might ~~be an option~~ ^{be an option}. The current ladder truck has little (if any) sales value. The wildland brush truck will need to be replaced due to wear-and-tear. The District's wildland truck generates significant money on contract-fire

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replace pumper
for "tasker"

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assignments (last year \$105,000). The general feeling is that a new truck is uneconomic, but that a good used truck might be available. The current wildland truck might sell for about \$10,000.

Motion by Cofoid and second by Summers to declare the current ladder and wildland-brush trucks as surplus and available for sale or trade, and authorize up to a total of \$125,000 for their replacement (\$50,000 (net) for a ladder truck and \$75,000 (net) for a wildland truck), with full but conditional authority to proceed when a suitable replacement(s) truck is found. Before voting, discussion centered on the needs and motivations, status of the District financials (\$200,000 in unobligated CDs and \$214,000 in contract-fire account), and that the Wildland truck would be purchased out of the Contract-fire account and the Ladder truck would be purchased out of District General account. Motion passed unopposed.

- Summers and Reder moved and seconded that the District declare the non-running snow-thrower machine as surplus, and offer for sale (unadvertised) for \$50 to \$100. Motion passed unopposed.
- Keystone's power bill is down substantially since the remodel (one month comparison!) and was comparable to Hermosa's (\$225 per month). Hayward's \$600-700 per month power bill should come down as well since installation of timers on the high-demand components.
- The District expressed its continuing desire that the community patrons use of its facilities, but that a facilities-use and reservations policy is still needed.
- The Department's annual chili feed and fund-raiser will be April 13, from 4 to 7:00 PM, at the Hayward Station.

Additional Items

Brad Lindblom, Battle Creek Firefighters Association, informed the Board that the Association purchased and outfitted an enclosed and lockable trailer for moving tables and chairs between events and for securely storing them.

Public Participation

None

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It was decided that the next meeting will be May 16, 2019 at 6:00 PM in the Hayward Fire Hall.

Motion by Summers and second by Reder to adjourn. Hearing no objection, DeHaai adjourned the meeting.

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