

REGULAR MEETING
BOARD OF DIRECTORS
DE BEQUE FIRE PROTECTION DISTRICT

DE BEQUE FIRE STATION
JANUARY 10, 2022

MINUTES

CALL TO ORDER/ROLL CALL:

Pursuant to notice, the regular board meeting of the De Beque Fire Protection District was called to order by President Annette Tanner at 6:02 PM on Monday, January 10, 2022.

OPEN WITH PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE TO FLAG:

The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

ROLL CALL/ESTABLISH QUORUM:

Cynthia Farris, present; Melanie Hansen, present; Dustin Koehler, absent (excused); Maria Ramthun, present; Annette Tanner, present; A quorum was present and the meeting, having been duly convened, was ready to proceed.

Others present: Forest Matis, De Beque District Fire Chief; Lieutenant Jason Lee; Lieutenant Nate Voorhees; Secretary Kim Latham via Zoom.

ADDITIONS OR DELETIONS TO AGENDA:

- 1) Minutes Approval October 12, 2021
- 2) Submitting Intention to Run for Board
- 3) Update Web Site; Add Board Member Terms
- 4) Crew Update

APPROVAL ITEMS:

- 1) Minutes from Regular Board Meeting October 12, 2021 – **Motion was made** by Vice President Ramthun and seconded by Board Member Cynthia Farris to approve the minutes for the regular board meeting on October 12, 2021. **Vote:** Cynthia Farris, aye; Melanie Hansen, abstain; Dustin Koehler, absent; Maria Ramthun, aye; Annette Tanner, aye. Motion passed.
- 2) Minutes from Budget Workshop November 29, 2021 - **Motion was made** by Secretary Hansen and seconded by Vice President Ramthun to approve the minutes for the Budget Workshop meeting on November 21, 2021. **Vote:** Cynthia Farris, aye; Melanie Hansen, aye; Dustin Koehler, absent; Maria Ramthun, aye; Annette Tanner, aye. Motion passed.
- 3) Minutes from Regular Board Meeting December 14, 2021 - **Motion was made** by Board Vice President Ramthun and seconded by Board President Tanner to approve the minutes for the regular board meeting on December 14, 2021. **Vote:** Cynthia Farris, aye; Melanie Hansen, aye; Dustin Koehler, absent; Maria Ramthun, aye; Annette Tanner, aye. Motion passed.

PUBLIC COMMENTS:

No public comments

OLD BUSINESS:

- 1) PTO Adjustments – Lieutenant Nate Voorhees presented to the Board his report on PTO (Personal Time Off) research. Upon comparison, DFPD is at the bottom of the list and is substantially lower than other local area fire/ambulance personnel PTO compensation. Lieutenant Voorhees presented options for PTO comp calculations, with the lowest amount the most viable under current income restrictions. Discussion ensued regarding the new FMLA laws that govern the amount of medical leave employees are allowed starting 2022. The Board requested that Chief Matis write a policy that

will be effective as of January 1, 2022 that encumbers the new FMLA laws, along with PTO compensation that is reasonable for the employees. The Board will vote on the policy at the regular board meeting in February. Chief Matis will send a draft of the policy to the board members prior to the February meeting for comments. Chief Matis suggested the board set goal dates for implementing the PTO amounts – perhaps starting at 50% and getting to 100% by 2025.

- 2) House Update – The attorney advised to treat the occupancy of the residence as a third party rental value on a month to month basis. The value of the rental benefit does need to be added on the employee’s W2 form, but the value can be pro-rated to the specific use of the house according to the explicit use of the house. The specific use would be three rooms (possibly a fourth if a second bedroom is utilized) while the rest of the house would still be accessible to the District for use. Vice President Ramthun said their needs to be some kind of policy for deposit down for cleaning, etc. like a real rental. It needs to be a month to month basis so either party can vacate the agreement at any given time. The proration would be decided by getting a fair market value and then prorating the specific use areas vs the common/non used areas. There are five bedrooms and a common area upstairs, one bedroom, an office, two bathrooms, a common area, kitchen, and laundry area downstairs. The employee will pay the utilities (water/sewer, gas/electricity, & residence use propane). President Tanner suggested we set a flat rate for utilities, utilizing an average of billing amounts and asked that rental comps be emailed to the board prior to the next meeting. The contract will be ready for perusal and signature at next board meeting.

NEW BUSINESS:

- 1) Fire Chief Position. The fire fighter personnel requested this matter be put on the agenda with the possibility to move Forest from Interim Fire Chief to full time Fire Chief. The position, regardless of who is selected, has been included in the budget. It was clarified that the Board can appoint from within without opening the position up to outside applicants. Board President Tanner asked Chief Matis if he is interested in the position. Chief Matis affirmed that he would accept the position if it were offered to him. The employees present were asked if they were in favor of Chief Matis being appointed to the position. They affirmed they were in favor of the appointment. **Motion was made** by Board Member Farris and seconded by Secretary Hansen to offer the full time Fire Chief position on a permanent basis to Interim Chief Forest Matis. **Vote:** Cynthia Farris, aye; Melanie Hansen, aye; Dustin Koehler, absent; Maria Ramthun, aye; Annette Tanner, aye. Motion passed. It was decided to make Chief Matis’ start date March 1, 2022 and address wages at next meeting.
- 2) Opening/Acceptance of Bids for Trailers. The closed bids were opened by the board members and top bidders were decided. Top bid for the Pace Trailer was Zeke Guadern at \$2315.99 and for the Interstate Trailer was Forest Matis at \$1651.
- 3) Junior Firefighter Program. Chief Matis presented specific guidelines and standards for the Junior Firefighter Program as a foundation for the program, to be edited as needed as we move forward. **Motion was made** by Board President Tanner and seconded by Board Vice President to approve the policy as written with an effective date of January 10, 2022. **Vote:** Cynthia Farris, aye; Melanie Hansen, aye; Dustin Koehler, absent; Maria Ramthun, aye; Annette Tanner, aye. Motion passed.
- 4) Insurance Claims.
 - a. Chief Matis reported that our insurance company reported they should have gone after the public service company for the power surge damage of two years ago. They are going over why that was not done and will get back to us on that.
 - b. The person responsible for hitting the ambulance will be responsible for the damage/injury payments for that accident.
- 5) Annual Reviews for 2021. Chief Matis reported on the process they are implementing for employee reviews. President Tanner requested that the reviews from the employees regarding Chief Matis’ performance evaluations be emailed to her so she can go over them.
- 6) HRA. We have an HRA (Health Reimbursement Account) built into our budget. Chief Matis recommended we load a debit card for each employee with their yearly HRA amount that will be usable only for approved medical expenses. Each employee will receive the card and each year the HRA amount can be loaded to the debit card. Employees can then use the card as needed, with the cards cancelled upon termination of employment. In the event of employment termination, the

amount left on the card will return to the Fire District. If the Board is interested, Chief Matis will bring a packet of information regarding this process to the board.

- 7) The Board would like to give a gift card to Kim Reeves for all her help during the transitions this last summer.
- 8) Web Site Update. The board would like the web page to be updated, which is something Forest and Kim have been discussing. President Tanner has been having issues with her debeque.fire email since her personal email changed. Chief Matis will look into seeing if he can figure out a fix for that.
- 9) Submitting Intention to Run for Board. All Board members are planning on running for the Board in the upcoming election with the exception of Board Member Koehler, as his position is not up for election. Each person running needs to submit a letter of intention to run to Dino Ross. Kim was requested to send an email to each Board member with Dino's email address so the intention to run emails can be sent to Dino.

ACCOUNTANT'S REPORT – Kim Latham

- 1) Financial Statements for December 2021 were submitted to the Board.
- 2) Expenditures for December 2021 were submitted to the Board.
- 3) Insurance Adjustments/Write Offs for December 2021 – Write Downs = \$3865.72. No Write Offs were presented to the Board.
- 4) **Motion was made** by Vice President Ramthun and seconded by Board Member Farris to approve the financial statements for December 2021 as presented. **Vote:** Cynthia Farris, aye; Melanie Hansen, aye; Dustin Koehler, absent; Maria Ramthun, aye; Annette Tanner, aye. Motion passed.
- 5) **Motion was made** by Board Member Farris and seconded by Vice President Ramthun to approve the insurance adjustments for December 2021 of \$3865.72 for write downs, and \$0 for write offs. **Vote:** Cynthia Farris, aye; Melanie Hansen, aye; Dustin Koehler, absent; Maria Ramthun, aye; Annette Tanner, aye. Motion passed.

INTERIM FIRE CHIEF'S REPORT –

- 1) Chief Matis gave an update on the ambulance situation since the accident. Collbran has loaned us an ambulance to use as needed (only on second calls). The ambulance will continue to be under their insurance plan. It was noted that we should put on the web page that we are currently down an ambulance.
- 2) Junior Firefighter program is progressing, and both current Junior Firefighters are signed up for EMT classes. There has been some confusion on whether or not the District would pay for the EMT classes. Classes taken through the school will be paid for by the School District. Classes we put on will be paid for by the Fire District. We do not cover the cost of classes through other avenues.
- 3) Fire assignment payment for the last fire have been approved and we should receive payment soon. There is interest in surrounding fire districts sending employees through cooperation with us (whether they go through their District and need help with the form submissions or whether they go under us).
- 4) Officer's meeting was held to discuss operations and evaluate how things are going.
 - a. There has been positive feedback on the track we are on. The Lieutenants have been doing a great job at scheduling and making sure we have sufficient coverage at all times. There has been an increase in back to back call outs (out on a call when another call comes in). Chief Matis reported that we should be prepared for continued back to back call outs. The Board would like to see reports on the District's call out statistics.
 - b. Snow removal needs were discussed and the importance of clearing the parking area.
- 5) End of Year reports were completed and submitted.

PARAMEDIC TRAINING: Jason Lee reported on the District Policy for reimbursement for paramedic training. There were some gross inconsistencies with how the policy was originated and implemented in the past. It was agreed that employees would be reimbursed one half of the costs for paramedic training, but the reimbursement plan was never voted on by the Board. After discussion it was decided to implement a payment plan to stay under \$5000 and make the payments in two installments for the current reimbursement needed. Motion was made by President Tanner and seconded by Vice President Ramthun to reimburse Lieutenant Jason Lee the agreed amount of \$10,000 in payments of \$4999 on February 1, 2022; another \$4999 on February 1,

2023; and Jason will forego the (leftover) \$2. **Vote:** Cynthia Farris, aye; Melanie Hansen, aye; Dustin Koehler, absent; Maria Ramthun, aye; Annette Tanner, aye. Motion passed. Chief Matis and the Lieutenants will develop a paramedic training policy with their policy update project.

CREW UPDATE:

- 1) Lieutenant Voorhees reported things are going good. The Rescue specs have been sent to Friendly Mountain Fire and should be listed for sale soon.
- 2) The Ladder Truck parts are starting to trickle in. The person interested from Lower Valley Fire District is no longer interested, so Friendly Mountain will list the Ladder Truck for sale as well. We are still waiting on repairs to be completed, but specs have been sent.
- 3) QA report is in two weeks ahead, and entries are done through December.
- 4) Tyler has been diligently working on the Junior Firefighter program and a task book and map for them.
- 5) The State of Colorado has appointed Lieutenant Lee to a committee that oversees the Fire 1 and Fire 2 JPR testing. He is the only Western Slope representative on the committee.
- 6) We are working on getting training up to date. There are students from District 51 that are interested in a Junior Firefighter program, so we are working in conjunction with them to help them move forward.
- 7) One of the Lieutenant's is out due to an ankle injury and cannot currently go out on calls. Chief Matis would like to offer a light duty work option while he is recovering.

BOARD COMENTS:

- 1) The Board needs to approve the meeting dates for 2022. They are the 2nd Tuesday of each month. **Motion was made** by Vice President Ramthun and seconded by Board Member Farris to approve the De Beque Fire District Board Meetings for the second meeting of every month for 2022. **Vote:** Cynthia Farris, aye; Melanie Hansen, aye; Dustin Koehler, absent; Maria Ramthun, aye; Annette Tanner, aye. Motion passed.

ADJOURNMENT: **Motion was made** by Secretary Hansen and seconded by Vice President Ramthun to adjourn the meeting. **Vote:** Cynthia Farris, aye; Melanie Hansen, aye; Dustin Koehler, absent; Maria Ramthun, aye; Annette Tanner, aye. Motion passed. Meeting adjourned at 8:38 p.m.

Next regular meeting: February 8, 2022

Approved by the De Beque Fire Protection Board of Directors on February 8, 2022.



Annette Tanner, President



Melanie Hansen, Secretary

