



REGULAR MEETING
BOARD OF DIRECTORS
DE BEQUE FIRE PROTECTION DISTRICT

DE BEQUE FIRE STATION
JUNE 13, 2023

MINUTES

CALL TO ORDER:

Pursuant to notice, the regular board meeting of the De Beque Fire Protection District was called to order by President Annette Tanner at 6:04 p.m. on Tuesday, June 13, 2023.

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; 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 Jesse Hughson; Secretary Kim Latham.

ADDITIONS OR DELETIONS TO AGENDA:

- 1) Addition – Swearing in of Elected Board of Director Cynthia Farris. Board of Director Member Cynthia Farris was sworn in as DFPD Board Member (Four-Year term ending in May of 2027).

APPROVAL ITEMS:

- 1) Minutes from the May 8, 2023 Regular Board Meeting. Motion was made by Board Secretary Hansen and seconded by Board Vice President Ramthun to approve the minutes as presented for the May 8, 2023 board meeting. **Vote:** Cynthia Farris, aye; Melanie Hansen, aye; Dustin Koehler, absent; Maria Ramthun, aye; Annette Tanner, aye. Motion passed.
- 2) Financial Reports:
 - a. Financial Statements for April 2023 were presented to the Board. Motion was made by Board Vice President Ramthun and seconded by Board Member Farris to approve the Financial Statements as presented for April 2023. **Vote:** Cynthia Farris, aye; Melanie Hansen, aye; Dustin Koehler, absent; Maria Ramthun, aye; Annette Tanner, aye. Motion passed.
 - b. Insurance Adjustments (Write-Downs)/Writes-Offs (Bad Debt) for April 2023 were presented to the Board. Medicare/Medicaid has written down a great portion of the billing amounts for Medicare/Medicaid coverage, anywhere from 70% to 100% in write-down value. These write-downs are dictated by the government and are not negotiable. Current write-offs are from billing periods in 2021 and 2022, but we can't go back and change the figures for prior years because of completed audits. Discussion ensued regarding whether or not we could just do away with billing for ambulance services since we don't really even receive enough money to pay EMS wages when the team is on an ambulance run. Fire Chief Matis noted that while we end up receiving from \$0 - \$160 for ambulance runs for Medicare/Medicaid covered transports, we cannot do away with billing due to other governmental regulations that tie to grants, funding, and service ratings that would be severed if we didn't bill for services. Motion was made by Board President Tanner and seconded by Board Vice President Ramthun to approve write-downs in the amount of \$48,042.06 and write-offs in the amount of \$0.00 for April 2023. It is noted that an estimated amount of write-downs was written in the 2023 budget; however, the write-down amounts from March and April were significantly larger than anticipated and will affect our income budget line for the year.



Vote: Cynthia Farris, aye; Melanie Hansen, aye; Dustin Koehler, absent; Maria Ramthun, aye; Annette Tanner, aye. Motion passed.

PUBLIC COMMENTS: None

OLD BUSINESS:

- 1) Kitchenette Upgrade. A plan/color scheme for the kitchenette upgrade was presented to the BOD. The cabinets/countertops, etc. should be here in about three weeks. We will install the cabinets and will have an electrician come in to complete the electrical duties. Lieutenant Hughson is recommending that we remove the two water fountains and replace those with a coffee station and water bottle fill station since we have had numerous problems with the fountains that have caused a bit of repair expense and that don't seem to fix the problems. The plans also include a movable prep island that can be moved as needed and will have a storage area. Matt (Bollig) donated an industrial coffee machine for the coffee station.
- 2) Water Heater Update. The water heater has been replaced. The solar portion was not working to help heat the water, but costs to repair the solar panel system would be very high, so Chief Matis made the decision to by-pass the solar portion.
- 3) Heating/Cooling System Update. Parts came in, but during the process of repairing the system, it was discovered that the thermostats and expansion valves are also not working, so we are again waiting for parts. This issue has been on-going since the heating system went out in December of 2022.
- 4) Jet Boat Day. DFPD team and family appreciation day is scheduled for July 22. We will have a lunch barbecue/potluck at noon followed by jet boat rides beginning at 2:30.
- 5) DSL Update. ACS has finally been able to patch the system together that communicates with Mesa County Dispatch via our Starlink internet system. We are the first Starlink connection with the Mesa County Dispatch system, so we are foraging new ground. They would like us to take a week or so to make sure everything is working well before discontinuing CenturyLink services.

NEW BUSINESS:

- 1) None

FIRE CHIEF REPORT:

- 1) Policy Tech training has begun. So far it is looking like it will work very well for us. We are in the process of uploading documents. This will be a policy document program that will enable us to update, track, approve, and sign off on District policy matters.
- 2) Ladder 81. We have someone interested in purchasing Ladder 81 and who wants to fly out here to look at it; however, Ladder 81 is currently out-of-service due to a joystick issue that is under warranty. If we sell Ladder 81, we will have to look at purchasing a rescue pumper that has pump capacity equal to Ladder 81 to keep our current ISO rating. Pumper replacement is estimated to take approximately two years.
- 3) We received a letter from DOLA regarding our mill levy increase. Dino (our attorney) is addressing this issue with DOLA as we have uploaded the documentation needed for the increase.
- 4) Deployment. We are anticipating fire deployments for the summer. Crews are ready to go when called upon.
- 5) We've had an increase in fire calls already due to the dry grass issues.
- 6) Our team continues to complete training. We now have another employee who has completed Paramedic training, so we now have another Paramedic on our staff.
- 7) Crew Updates. Lieutenant Hughson reported that the crews continue to complete projects around the station as time permits.

BOARD COMMENTS:

Board President Tanner brought home additional SDA manuals for Board Members from the SDA regional meeting she attended this morning and reported on a few things that were emphasized at the meeting:




- 1) Tax funded entities cannot commit to any contracts longer than two years without a vote from the constituents.
- 2) Large construction contact bid amounts were increased to \$120,000 before being required to open the contract up to the bid process. Contractors must have a performance bond.
- 3) The Board of Directors should meet, as a Board, with the County Commissioners at least once a year.
- 4) The Board of Directors instructed Secretary Latham to make sure the Board of Directors are bonded, and the Board of Directors Treasurer has a higher level of bond than the other Board members.
- 5) The Board of Directors are limited to a two-year term (eight years) but can be appointed to the term by the Board if there is no other interest/application for new Board members. If appointed, they are eligible to run again at the end of the term.

ADJOURNMENT: Motion was made by Board Member Farris and seconded by Board 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. The meeting was adjourned at 7:16 p.m.

Next regular meeting: July 18, 2023

Approved by the De Beque Fire Protection Board of Directors on July 18, 2023



Annette Tanner, President





Melanie Hansen, Secretary