

Evergreen Fire District Board of Trustees Meeting

Meeting Minutes
Regular Board Meeting of December 4, 2017 - 5pm

CALL MEETING TO ORDER:

Chairman Foust calls meeting to order at 5:05 pm

BOARD MEMBERS IN ATTENDANCE:

Dave Adams
Jon Foust
Kyle Nace

ABSENT:

Dave Edwards
Jack Fallon (late attendance)

RECOGNIZE EFD STAFF/ PUBLIC IN ATTENDANCE:

Jared Pitcher
Craig Williams
Ben Covington

Tommy Hodges
Jack Knuffke

PUBLIC COMMENT:

At this time, public may comment on any public matter that is not on the Agenda of the Meeting and that is within the jurisdiction of the District.

(none)

FINANCIALS:

1. Discuss and Approve October Financials

Due to accountant having a family emergency the week prior, EFD administrative assistant did not receive the financials until shortly before the Board meeting but did upload them to Google Drive for review.

Dave Adams makes motion to table October Financials until all Board members have had a chance to review them. Kyle Nace seconds the motion; motion passes unanimously.

PAST ITEMS/UPDATES:

1. Approve meeting minutes of Regular Board Meeting of November 6th, 2017

Dave Adams makes a motions to approve the meeting minutes of the regular Board meeting of November 6th, 2017 as presented; seconded by Kyle Nace; motion passes unanimously.

2. Levy Committee Update

Craig informs the Board that so far 10 committee members have been identified out of several hundred contacted but is representative of the district demographics. He states that an email was going out later this evening and still hoping to have the first meeting this week. He reiterates that he plans on letting the committee members dictate the days/times/duration of those meetings. The slideshow and presentations are complete. Jon Foust asks Craig if there had been any work from the County Attorney about EMS

being able to go out and hang signs since EFD is not a tax paying enterprise. Craig states that has not been done yet and would be done during the PR campaign. Craig asks the Board if the process should be delayed in lieu of trying to find more committee members or just continue with those 10 people. Craig tells the Board that while most people contacted have been supportive of a levy the majority of people simply don't want to commit to being a committee member for various reasons. Jon Foust suggests the possibility of committee members being able to log in online for meetings. Craig states that he has been thinking that if he could get a good list of people and they are willing to respond via email; the power point presentations could be distributed and shared and members could respond at their leisure. Craig states that he has had several people say yes to serving on the committee but then back out. Current committee members do have competing interests because they are members of other committees and are busy gearing up for the holiday season. He states that only 2 of the committee members are retirees and that many are business owners and a few "average joes/2 wage earners". The first email to committee members is going out tonight (December 4th) in trying to develop a first meeting date and set the agenda; starting with an open house and history of EFD; disciplines and programs and what we do; working towards challenges and needs. Jon Foust suggests stopping at the Moose Lodge because there would be support by people who were a part of the district before having an ambulance service and EFD was dependant on Kalispell. Kalispell's ambulance service is now half of what it had been and they are now dependant on Evergreen Fire District. Craig states that even though he has support from Moose Lodge, Rotary, Lions and the Chamber as well as others it has been difficult to get people to commit to serving on the committee. He adds that he has reached out to others who have run levies in the past including school districts and they have had the same difficulty in getting people to commit to participating as a committee member. Jack asks if Craig has an outline of the meetings and presentations. Craig states that he can put them on the website and/or email it out. Craig asks the Board if they would like a segment where they participate and have a topic in terms of Board responsibilities and function and if so, where they would want to be on the presentation timeline. There will be other agencies coming in that will speak to the relationships and value that we have brought to them and vice versa and Craig states he feels that it would be important for the Trustees or a representative of the Board to speak along with these agencies. He states that the first open house would be a station tour. It will help the committee members to see that all apparatus has been maintained very well and although it looks shiny and new; it is actually 20 years old. He tells the Board that while the majority of the information will be provided as power point presentations he is trying to keep it as interactive as possible. Jack Fallon states that he wants to be notified of all the committee meetings dates because he would like to attend as many as possible to observe. Craig states that because it will be official public meetings there will also have to be minutes so that everything is properly noticed.

NEW ITEMS/UPDATES:

1. Christmas Gift Certificates

Craig asks that a motion be made for the purchase of Christmas gift certificates. The actual number of gift certificates is not 44 but 40 and not counting Board members. Board members can be included. The gift certificates are \$25.00 each which would be a total of \$1,000.00 (not including Board members). Jack Fallon asks which account the money is paid out of. Craig states it is paid from 4212. Jack Fallon asks how many years has the amount been \$25.00. Chairman Foust states it has been a long time. Craig states at least 10 years. Dave Adams states it's been longer than 10 years and may have been

only \$20.00 “twenty years ago.” Chairman Foust states that the gift certificates were for \$25.00 when he was a member of EFD and that was “at least 10 years ago.” Dave Adams states that he is excluding himself from the discussion as it could benefit himself in some fashion since he is also personnel of EFD. Ben asks Jack if he thinks the amount is too little or too much. Jack states that the purchasing power of \$25.00 now compared to 10 or 15 years ago is about the same as \$20.00. Jon Foust asks if Jack is considering giving \$30.00 gift certificates and Jack states “Might as well.” Chairman Foust states that the amount would then be \$1,200.00 instead of \$1,000.00.

Kyle Nace makes a motion to approve 40 Christmas gift certificates purchased from Super 1 in the amount of \$30.00 per certificate for a total of \$1,200.00 to come out of account 4212; seconded by Jack Fallon; motion passes with one abstention.

2. EMS Stipends

Jon Foust asks if EMS stipends are already a part of policy and Craig confirms that it being included on the agenda was an error. The stipends are indeed already policy as they were a resolution and approved to be annual and will be pulled from EMS account 9428.

RESOLUTIONS:

(none)

PROPOSALS:

(none)

CHIEF’S REPORT:

1. October Call Volume

Craig refers to an email that he sent out to the Board members as an ‘update’ prior to the Board meeting to minimize time spent on the Chief’s Report during the Board meeting. He tells the Board that EFD is at the 2,400 mark for call volume and expects some records to be set by the end of the year for most responses, ever. EMS call volume is being driven by Kalispell being down to one ambulance as well as an increase of calls out to Creston. The November numbers are comparable to August and September numbers with little to no break in call volume to focus on other things within the department. Craig reminds the Board that the duration of an average call is 1 to 2 hours per call and EFD averages 6 to 8 calls per day. In addition, there is paperwork and restocking/replenishment to do once back at the station. The paperwork takes much time and careful and complete documentation is key to receiving as much revenue as possible. Craig states that this is what is driving a lot of the discussion on the levy because EFD is still running on the same man power as it did in 2011 with little change. Craig tells the Board that a lot of things are getting accomplished with only 2 personnel on shift compared to Kalispell who has one ambulance with 2 personnel on shift. He tells the Board, “We’re in this for the long haul but this can’t go on forever like this by any means.” Jack Fallon asks again for clarification on the difference between “reviewed” and “total” number of calls. Craig tells him that the once document with 4 graphs is an internal document that Cheri creates based on the data (actual number of all calls). The other report is generated by Emergency Reporting who EFD subscribes to for as part of our billing. The difference between the two is that “reviewed calls” means that these calls are pending regardless of the call type. It means that they haven’t been completed yet or they are hung up through EFD billing company who has kicked them back because they are in need of more information. This report is not a true reflection of the call volume which is why the internal report was created. Jack states that he feels that defining the difference is important because

both reports are evaluation tools. He wants to avoid any accusation of inflated numbers if people do not understand the difference between the two reports because they are public information. Jack suggests using year to year comparisons on both reports to avoid confusing the public and that the definition of the difference between the two reports needs to be very clear and understood. Jack then asks about "overlap percentage". Jack states that his understanding is that there may be 5 calls in one day but one may be a 'double tap' and that doesn't justify having a second crew on shift. He asks if that means every 2.5 calls is a 'double tap' or is does it indicate something different than that? And do you wait until it's 100 % or 75 % to where it makes sense to have 2 crews operating? And is it cost effective to have 2 crews operating because of overlapping? Craig answers Jack by saying that it is a little more complex because the overlaps also take into account the inter-facility crews and the inability to differentiate between the two. The report captures any time EFD is out on a contractual inter-facility transport (non 911) which is a separate crew completely. Craig states "For instance, let's say they are out in Helena Flats and we bus a 911. That's reflected in the overlap percent." He adds that there is a different way it could be done but would have to happen through the Dispatch Center who has started to track it county wide.

2. Wildfire Revenue Update

Craig tells the Board that revenue is still at approximately \$174,000.00. He states that he anticipates more revenue due to invoices that are unaccounted for including the Sprague Fire and one other. He still anticipates EFD revenue near the \$200,000.00 mark. Craig credits the team efforts of the department members for the successful wildland season. He tells the Board that when the payments come in there will be a few small things he would like to see repayment on and would also like to look at some things for the wildland program. Jack Fallon asks Craig what he means by 'repayment' and Craig gives an example of \$2,900.00 for repayment (fund transfer) of wages that came out of 9428 to cover the personnel out on wildland fires and missed shifts. Craig states he feels it would be fair and equitable to reimburse 9428 for those costs. Craig also mentions funds for 'wear and tear' on some of the wildland apparatus to get them ready for service. Jack Fallon asks if there is a dollar amount figured out and Craig states there is not but will not include any major repairs/purchases. Jack Fallon clarifies it being less than \$25,000.00 which Craig confirms it should be less than that. Jack states that although it has been a percentage amount going into the department account he wonders if it should be a dollar amount going into the department account this time. Craig agrees and Jack asks what dollar amount he thinks would be appropriate. Craig answers that he will have a more definitive answer for the Board after the holidays because the department account (4212) gets somewhat depleted during Christmas. It provides the Christmas dinner, entertainment, presents for personnel and etc. Craig addresses Board meeting meals and asks which account it will be pulled from. He states that it has been about \$1,900.00 with \$2,000.00 having been budgeted. Craig states there will be a need to re-budget for it or transfer money if the Board wants to continue with meeting meals. Jack asks if there is consideration in putting money into the Benevolent Fund. Craig states it has \$11,000.00 in it currently. Jack states that maybe \$10,000.00 should be put into the Benevolent Fund. Ben states that maybe the process should be changed because he feels it is somewhat demoralizing. Dave Adams states that the process used to be simple in that a need would be brought to the Chief and Board Chairman by the individual in need or by other personnel aware of an individual's financial need (car problems, rent, housing situation or etc.) and the individual would receive some financial help. Dave states that now the process is an application process instead of being gifted. Since the process has been changed the program has not been used. Jack states that while it's there to help people it should not be too convenient to get. Jon recollects the assistance as being 'one-time-only' and wasn't given 'willy-nilly'. The program was initially part of the department association but would now be

controlled by the Board. Jack asks, "How many people in the last 5 years could have used it to truly get themselves back on their feet that didn't make application for it? Or were they just not needing it as much as those that did apply for it during the times that we did have the application process and it did help them get back on their feet?" Jack feels that it may not be legitimate to say that the application process is deterring personnel from accessing financial help. Ben states that personnel would be inclined not to apply because it isn't anonymous and the majority would not want their peers to know about it. Jack states that it doesn't come before the Board and that it stays with a small group of people (Benevolence Committee). Ben states that out of necessity he had used the program once a few years and that he'd never do it again because the process was embarrassing. He suggests that it would be a better process if brought before the Board. Jon Foust suggests that would be even more open to people knowing because meetings are open to the public. Dave Adams states that any portion of a meeting pertaining to personnel can be closed. Jack states that the current process is an application but is not determined by the Board but rather, the Benevolent Committee. The argument is that it is still made up of other personnel which has been Chief and senior officers which makes the process awkward because the Committee members are peers and co-workers. Craig suggests that the new association that is currently being formed could develop something and then bring it before the Board. He states the current process involves a 3 page application and requires the applicant to write out his/her entire situation of need. Jon asks why the Fund can't revert back to a volunteer organization and suggests transferring the money to the Association account as it was initially designed for. Craig tells the Board that it had been originally controlled by the Association and that it started with a CD from Glacier Bank that expired and that \$10,000.00 was the seed money for the Benevolence Account which includes no tax money. Jon states that it was not controlled by the Board but by volunteers. Craig states that he wants to see the funds being used if personnel are in dire straits. Jon agrees that he would like to see the money go back to the original account. Jack states that part of the confusion that existed was that under the old arrangement of the Department and the District was what assets belonged to which entity and gives the example that at one time, the land and building was in the name of the Department and not the District and is technically District assets. Jack gives another example by asking during the times that the Department put on the 'Hard Times Dance'; how clear was it that was a Department function vs. a District function? He acknowledges that part of the evolution of an entity is trying to figure out all of this along the way and figure out what has worked well in the past. He asks if people understand the distinction between a District and its personnel which are employees and an entity that has volunteers that do their separate fund raising? They are different relationships with different criteria. He states, "If we're going to transfer money to an association and that association happens to be employees of the District is can create confusion." Jack suggests the option of a having a group unrelated to personnel to handle distributions from the account in effort to keep it as discrete as possible and that it may or may not include a Trustee. He states that more discussion may be needed on the matter of District/Employee vs. District/Volunteers as well as when the public is making contributions of less or more than \$100.00; are they making the donation to the District or are they making it to the Department? What is their understanding and what is their expectation of that money when making the donation/contribution. Craig states that it can be included on next month's agenda and he can provide the Board with the history of the account. Kyle states that he would be more comfortable going to 3 strangers and asking for financial assistance rather than 3 of his peers. He suggests that the Department discuss it and propose an alternate process at the next meeting.

3. Luminaries

Craig states that Teri Shively is developing the number of replacement batteries that will be needed. Craig reminds the Board that Teri's parents originally purchased all of the

luminaries and that EFD has an agreement with them that the luminaries will continue. The 2014 budget includes the costs of maintaining the luminaries and purchase of more bags which were ordered today (December 4th). Craig tells the Board that the luminaries will be set up Christmas Eve day at 2:00 pm and all are welcome to participate.

Adjourn.

Chairman Foust makes a motion to adjourn; seconded by Dave Adams; meeting is adjourned at 5:56 pm.

The President of the Board of Trustees, as presiding officer of any meeting of the Board of Trustees, may close the meeting during the time the discussion relates to a matter of individual privacy; and, then, if, and only if, the presiding officer determines that the demands of individual privacy clearly exceed the merits of public disclosure. The right of individual privacy may be waived by the individual about whom the discussion pertains; and, in that event, the meeting must be open.

Submitted by:



Dave Adams/Secretary

Signed by:



Jonathan Foust/Chairman