

**Evergreen Fire District
Board of Trustees
Meeting**

Meeting Minutes
Regular Board Meeting of August 6th, 2018 – 5:30 pm

CALL MEETING TO ORDER:

Chairman Verworn calls meeting to order at 5:44 pm.

TRUSTEES PRESENT:

Brodie Verworn
Dave Adams
Randy DePaul
Jack Fallon

TRUSTEES ABSENT:

Kyle Nace

RECOGNIZE PUBLIC IN ATTENDANCE:

Josh Cox
Craig Williams
Ben Covington
Rachel Burns

PUBLIC COMMENT:

(none)

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.

FINANCIALS:

Discuss and Approve June 2018 Financials

Dave Adams moves to accept and approve the June 2018 Financials as presented; seconded by Randy DePaul; unanimously approved.

PROPOSALS:

(none)

PAST ITEMS/UPDATES:

1. Approve meeting minutes of Regular Board Meeting of July 2nd, 2018

Randy DePaul moves to accept and approve the Regular Board Meeting Minutes of July 2nd, 2018; seconded by Dave Adams; unanimously approved.

2. Levy Committee Discussion

Jack Fallon states that out of the 38 people contacted; 12 were at the meeting (produces a sign in list and attaches them to the July meeting minutes.) He states that 5 who were not able to attend

the meeting said they would attend future meetings. He states the meeting lasted 1 hour and 32 minutes and that items discussed had been emailed to everyone prior to the meeting. Craig and Jack each led tours of the fire department. He states that both Chief Williams and Chairman Verworn attended and asked if either have any feedback. Verworn states that he felt it was very beneficial to have fire staff available to help answer questions promptly. He states he feels it is important for at least one Trustee to also be in attendance as well as at least one staff person (Ben or Craig). Chief Williams states that he plans on attending all meetings unless he gets a wild land fire resource order. Fallon states that Chief Williams will be speaking about staffing models; what has been done; what is being done; and what the future should look like as well as the functionality of fire models and history of the 24 hour shift vs. a 10 or 12 hour shift that may be used by other facilities. Fallon states that the dilemma may be discussed of liability running 24 or 48 hour shifts due to fatigue. He states that may be related more to high volume departments vs. the average 7 calls per shift at EFD which is considered 'low volume'. Covington asks Fallon if he expects different people to show to the next meeting and Fallon states he expects most of the same plus a few of those who said they couldn't attend the first meeting but would attend in the future. DePaul asks if there was an attendee who is not an EFD resident or land owner and Fallon confirms. DePaul asks what the benefit of that person (*Mark Johnson*) in attendance. (*Mark Johnson is General Manager of Flathead Electric Co-Op*). Fallon states that he runs a big business in Evergreen and whatever happens at the department impacts all users of the co-op in Montana. He adds that Mark Johnson runs a large operation with different schedules and calls that he would have him participate but that he doesn't know to what degree his participation will be. Verworn asks if Fallon would have an issue with cc'ing all Trustees with any of his communications with committee participants. Fallon states that he has already been doing that and that all Trustees have seen everything he has sent to the group. Verworn asks Fallon in regard to expenses incurred with putting the levy information together; which account are the expenses to be taken from. Fallon states that has to be decided. Verworn asks Chief Williams which fund is best suited to incur the expenses. Covington states it should be 7204 or it should be split. Chief Williams states that most expenses were being split during the first levy but that a lot of the expected expenses ended up as donations at the last minute. Chief Williams states that most incurred expenses were coded 7204 with only one or two coded 9428. He adds that it has not been budgeted for with the exception of the newsletter. He states that is actually 'public information' for which there is actually a line item for and asks if it should be tied into the levy. He states \$6,000 is budgeted for the newsletter this fiscal year and that it has not gone out to the public yet. Verworn asks what the timeline is for sending out the newsletter and Chief Williams states the timeline is whenever the news letter needs to go out. Chief Williams states that \$6,000 usually can produce and distribute 2 newsletters and that the District is overdue for one. *Chairman Verworn calls for a motion to determine which account the levy expenses will be paid from.* Fallon states that a motion could be made to split the expenses between 7204 and 9428. He states that it may not require a motion if a budget amendment will not be done at the end of the year because all budget items are discretionary. Verworn asks Fallon if there is an expense projection for the total cost and Fallon states the biggest expense was having the committee participant note books put together with printed copies which was over \$1,000. He states that there will likely be some future printing and food expenses. Fallon states that financial statements and some charts he is currently working on will need to be printed and projects an additional \$200 to \$300 will be needed. Ben asks what it should be coded as and suggests 'Levy Committee'. Fallon states it could be broken out as 'Levy Committee' and asks if there is a 'Publicity' account or 'Public Information' account. Covington states there is a 'Public Education' line item but it's for fire safety and prevention. Fallon states that historically it has gone under Fire Safety. Verworn asks if it's listed under the newsletter if funding can be brought into the account. Fallon states that the 9428 has a line item that states "Levy Campaign Materials". Covington states that it is one or the other; campaigning or educating but that

something could be created. Fallon reads that there has been \$7,000 spent over the past year on 'levy campaign materials' and states that is probably not accurate. It is suspected that the news letter had been miscoded as 'levy campaign materials' and 3 newsletters had gone out. Fallon states that 'Public Education' may be the right line items with 'Safety' or 'Levy' as subcategories.

3. Stamp/Signature Discussion

DePaul asks if anyone had any input and Dave Adams states "I think it's crazy that we sign these checks anyway because I know the County doesn't sign them." DePaul states that he would like the discussion tabled until the next Board Meeting and that he is working on something but has not got it put together yet.

NEW ITEMS/UPDATES:

1. Current Policy Manual

Chief Williams states there are approximately 40 items that need to be deleted from the policy manual due to no longer being policy or adding new/revised policy. He states those items will be reviewed by Administration and then reviewed by the Board and will be open to suggestion. He states that revision is underway.

2. Christopherson Attorney/Client Agreement

Chief Williams states that if the Board agrees with going forward with this attorney/client agreement that the first item to be discussed, by order of importance, would be item #3. The entire policy handbook would be given to her for review and revision. She is willing to review items electronically to avoid having to make appointments and etc. She has a substantial background in advising fire districts in setting policies. She is highly regarded and is currently legal counsel for several districts in the Flathead Valley. Verworn states that he has inquired as well and that she was also highly recommended to him and that he is comfortable with her as their choice. Chief Williams states that \$2,000.00 is budgeted for each year for legal matters but is not sure of the cost a policy rewrite will incur. He states that her rate is approximately \$200.00 per hour and will most likely be substantially more than the budgeted \$2,000.00. Chief Williams states that the Administration will write and develop the policy(ies) to keep costs as low as possible. Fallon asks about the mileage fee and says that he assumes they are viewing an old contract because the mileage rate given is applicable to 3 years ago. Fallon states if she is referring to the business standard mileage rate by the IRS, it should read \$.53.5. He states that the language should indicate the current year business standard mileage rate. Chairman Verworn calls for a motion.

Fallon moves that the Board enters into an Attorney/Client Agreement with Kim Christopherson; seconded by DePaul; unanimously approved.

3. Social Media Policy

Verworn states that EFD does have an internet policy that was created in 2010. He states that internet and social media are changing exponentially. He states he has put together policy based on input from other entities who were aware of the media coverage of the recent social media issue at Evergreen Fire Department. Fallon states the policy needs to be reviewed because he reads things in the policy that are outside of the scope of social media that should be addressed in other parts of the policy. He asks if other department personnel have read through the policy and if there has been any feedback from personnel. Verworn states that personnel would have been given the policy once it was approved by the Board. Fallon states that, as a process, he would like the policy developed with personnel input before any final decision was made. He doesn't agree with the Board stating 'This is the way it is. Now you can review it and give us your feedback.' He reiterates that personnel feedback is needed first. Adams disagrees with Fallon

and states input from personnel should not be allowed on policies. He makes correction suggestions to paragraph 5 and that 'cleared with his Chief' should read 'his/her' and that at the bottom; paragraphs 2 and 3 should be 6 and 7. Chief Williams states that he has voiced concern to Chairman Verworn that he didn't want to be 'judge and jury' and that there is a burden on him or someone else in his absence. He would encourage using common sense rather than requiring written permission but acknowledges the need for a social media policy. He does not want to impose policy only to immediately be in violation of that policy. He states he wants the policy to have merit and that if certain people/groups are exempt then he stresses that there needs to be language in the policy stating so. Covington states that policy can't be enforced on the public. Chief Williams states he is aware of that and that his main concern is that the social media policy isn't so stringent that it becomes a morale buster. Fallon states that it is all the more reason why the policy needs to be vetted further by personnel before being approved. He states "You don't approve something and then ask it to be reviewed and then reapprove it. That is not the way to develop policy. You develop policy by getting all of the input from all of the people that are going to be impacted by it and figure out how to make it all work. There are some situations where it is just not going to work. We have to figure out how to word the exceptions." Trustees agree to send the document out to personnel for review 'as is' except for the 2 edits Adams mentioned.

4. Issuance of District Trustee Email Accounts Discussion

Chief Williams states that Kim Christopherson wanted to know if the District Board has District issued email addresses for future communications with her and is always best practice to separate personal and business accounts. Covington states that additional email addresses will cost additional money and that he didn't have an approximate dollar amount at this time.

RESOLUTIONS:

(none)

CHIEF'S REPORT:

June 2018 Call Volume

Chief Williams states that the first page is a year-to-date comparison that shows 2017 and 2018 ytd figures; then 2017; and then June 2017/18 comparison, only. The reports also show a breakdown of EMS and Fire calls. Jack Fallon points out overlap of first 6 months of 2017 and 2018 which shows 32% overlap vs. 54% overlap. Chief Williams states that the numbers also include the IFT component and he states that he feels there isn't a lot of data that can be derived from the overlapping call data. He states "Any time we have a call for service for an inter-facility over 911 and since they're separate staff, it does not present a true clear picture of overlapping..." Fallon asks about the 'dispatched to enroute' time for EMS of 19 minutes vs. 1 minute and 46 seconds and then look at 'dispatched to arrival' of 25 minutes vs. 6 minutes there may be 40 more EMS calls but how many are inter-facility transfers that don't require a timely 'dispatched to en-route'? Chief Williams confirms that Fallon is correct and that there currently is not a way to break down or separate inter-facilities from 911 calls. Chief Williams states that he keys in on the 'dispatched to en-route' because it provides a clearer idea of where the department is at in terms of response and that the 'dispatch to arrival' is increasing because there is an increase in mutual aid calls and responding further and further away creating longer response times. Fallon asks about 'average time on-scene' and if it includes the 'en-route travel time'? Adams states it is the actual time at the scene. Fallon asks if time back to the station or to the hospital is a different time component and Chief Williams states it is tracked as a separate time. Fallon states that the reporting company used is a national reporting entity and really wouldn't listen to local people about modifications. Chief Williams states there are serious hoops to jump through to do so and that it can be petitioned but there is "a bank of voting membership that will vote on it because it wouldn't be specific to just EFD. It would become a national data collection component." Fallon asks "Don't other entities do inter-facility transports?" Chief Williams

states "It's rare but we're an anomaly in terms of fire districts...most inter-facilities are done privately." Adams states "Great Falls Fire, they don't do anything on-scene. They show up and they don't even start IV's. They make sure the patient is alive-ish still when the ambulance gets there and they leave...They're not even allowed to do IV's out of the fire department; no drugs; no nothing." Chief Williams states AMR; American Medical Response is a very predominant ambulance there and in the state. Fallon asks if a municipality subsidizes those ambulance services. Chief Williams states it is his belief that they do. Fallon asks if there would be a way to find out the subsidy dollar amounts. Chief Williams states that he assumes it public knowledge because it's taxpayer money. Fallon states that the big study is what is the amount of the subsidy compared to what the revenue collection is and that it may be a wash. Fallon states the only thing to look at would be the municipalities that have a separate control aspect than the non-profit entities. Chief Williams asks if all Trustees are satisfied with the data that has been presented for call volume and all are satisfied with the reports presented.

District Staffing

Chief Williams states that the additional staffing proposal had been working well and has generated a lot of interest but is starting to plateau resulting in inconsistent coverage of shifts. He states there have been gaps due to additional 911 CAD coverage and/or inter-facility coverage in the evenings. He states it is not a money issue but rather a personnel availability issue as well as a seasonal issue. He states the inconsistency has him concerned to the point of not being able to fill any wild land resource orders for the year due to not being able to find coverage for personnel wild-land fire absence. Chief Williams states there had been an Officers meeting and that he and Covington are looking at an idea that may resolve the issue and become a long-term solution. There is a possibility that there may be more 'permanent-type' positions for inter-facility personnel. Chief Williams states there is currently not a concrete proposal but states he and Ben are number crunching and all Trustees will be contacted to vet numbers and ideas. He assures the Board that 911 coverage is consistent for initial crews. The issue is with the secondary crew; the additional medic and additional basics and there are problems with getting the weekend and evening slots filled as well as some inter-facility coverage lacking in the evenings. 911 crews are still having to be sent out in the evenings at times and that is what the program was put into effect to prevent. Verworn asks if 911 calls were being lost because of this issue and Chief Williams states 911 calls weren't being lost 'per se' but that it would be nice to be able to get some wild land income too and the opportunity to do so would be gone in about 8 weeks. He continues that it is shocking to think there was over \$300,000 made in revenue last wild land season and so far not a single dime has been made this year due to these issues. Chief Williams states the department had lost its main qualified engine bosses to DNRC and reiterates that the remaining qualified personnel are willing to go on wild land fires but the issue is backfilling in their absence which would be 14 days. Fallon asks if there is not enough total personnel (40) and that now 50 personnel are needed or do we not really have 40 personnel who are truly trained and/or available? Chief Williams confirms the latter part of Fallon's question and states that he doesn't know if there needs to be more personnel added overall at this point but mustering those currently on the roster to contribute more if possible or just contribute. He states "We do have some t-shirt wearers and we are currently addressing that but we are also finding that some folks do have two and three jobs." The question is "What are the slots that the District needs filled vs. what are the slots that somebody's willing to work around their schedule with three other jobs?" Fallon asks "The staffing that we just changed to; can you explain that again? It's the secondary crew that is supposed to be here so that the primary crew doesn't have to do that." Chief Williams states "We have one basic and one medic on shift 24 hours a day. The proposal was to add an additional EMT and Paramedic for a 12 hour shift in conjunction with those two during the day, only. They would leave and then it would revert back to just those two in the evening." Fallon asks what hours they are working and is told they are 12 hour shifts; 7 am to 7 pm when the department is most busy. Fallon notes the hours given are 14 hours and asks how he is accommodating the extra hours after 7 pm with inter-facilities. Chief Williams states that is when it reverts back to the primary crew. Chief Williams reminds Fallon that the IFT crew does not respond to 911 calls. They are IFT, only and are brought in during the evenings to keep the primary crew from

having to do the inter-facilities but what is happening is inconsistent coverage with the IFT personnel in the evenings resulting in primary crew having to take IFT's which significantly delays response times for 911 calls. Fallon asks if there can be two 8 or 12 hour overlapping shifts of Basics and Medics. Chief Williams states that it doesn't matter which shifts are created because it comes down to availability. Fallon states that when things are busy between 8 am and 10 pm and IFT crew could be at the station from 6 am to 6 pm and another IFT crew available from 12 pm until midnight. Chief Williams states there is already an IFT crew at the station 24 hours a day. Fallon states his plan is to have 2 IFT crews overlapping from noon to 6 pm when there are more calls. Chief Williams states he has not been able to vet out if those calls are inter-facility vs. 911 calls. Fallon states busiest times are Wednesday through Saturday with Monday being almost equivalent. Fallon states he will structure this information for the committee meeting; days of the week; hours of the day; and how one year compares to the prior year and what the historic pattern is to give the committee an idea of when the calls occur and the best way to address coverage for the calls. Chief Williams states IFT personnel are not hourly employees. They are paid based on the time of the inter-facility and/or the mileage of the transport. He states that what is looked at is the overall paid out to IFT personnel over the course of the last fiscal year and then studying turning them into an hourly employee instead. He states there were more pros than cons but it comes down to identifying personnel who would be interested in doing this. It would make forecasting and scheduling much easier because currently there is nothing that requires IFT personnel sign up for shifts other than getting in their required two minimums per month. Chief Williams reminds the Board that he is currently still in negotiations with KRMC and with the addition of North Valley there will be a significant increase in call volume over what is currently being experienced. Verworn asks if EFD will be taking over what Whitefish is doing and Chief Williams states the unofficial answer is yes. Verworn asks what Whitefish call volume is and Chief Williams states it is generally about 50 calls less per month. Verworn states they run 3 or 4 inter-facilities a day out of Whitefish. Chief Williams states that he wants to make sure that the contract that has been in place for nearly a decade with KRMC is not jeopardized and that we are prepared with adequate personnel. Fallon clarifies that KRMC is saying that it will be a flat rate whether the IFT originates at KRMC or North Valley even though there may be more time or mileage involved with North Valley vs. KRMC. Chief Williams states it's a combination of flat rate based on just a flat rate of what the call is and then a mileage component. Fallon confirms there will be an off set for mileage and states "as long as you have something to accommodate the distance, that's good". Chief Williams states that after having looked at some of the data there could actually be a cost savings if IFT personnel were brought on hourly. Fallon asked if he means the same hourly rate used for the same positions and Chief Williams states it could be same rates or slightly less. Fallon states he would use the same rates and not to use less. Adams states he disagrees with that because they aren't doing the same job. Fallon asks what their motivation would be then to change to an hourly rate if they're going to make less under the hourly rate. Chief Williams states that is a discussion that still needs to be had with the IFT personnel and that one pro would be guaranteed hours which they currently do not have. Verworn asks if there would be more entrants that would sign up for hourly than for pager pay and Chief Williams states that is what he is hoping for. Fallon asks if they are expecting to be medics and Chief Williams states EMT's and they will do nothing fire related. Fallon asks if any of the IFT personnel are training to be fire fighters and is told no they aren't. Fallon asks if this is going to be implemented before the next meeting and Chief Williams states "possibly" and that he and Ben are currently meeting with every employee and having this discussion. He hopes that will generate more staffing for the interim. Verworn asks if there is currently any personnel who are not EMT's but who wish to become EMT's and is told no there are not per EFD policy that everyone does have to be an EMT within one year of hire. Verworn asks if there has been any headway on the apparatus hunt and Chief Williams states it is #3 on the list of priorities currently but they did discover that the affordable options and historically purchased through California Corrections were voted no by employees because the ambulances that have been purchased do not have a CPR side seat that are not required for correctional institution ambulances. Captain Boyce will be contacting Global for ambulance pricing. Chief Williams states he is a third of the way through making a list of specifications for an engine and assembling a 'truck committee' consisting

of interested personnel. Fallon asks for a list of KRMC committee members that Chief Williams is negotiating with. Chief Williams makes sure that he has all necessary signatures on the Attorney/Client Agreement and states he has nothing more for discussion.

Adjourn.

Chairman Verworn adjourns the meeting at 7:26 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.



Chairman Brodie Verworn



Secretary Dave Adams