

**HOODLAND FIRE DISTRICT # 74**  
**BOARD MEETING MINUTES**  
**JULY 14, 2020**

Those Present: Board Members: Shirley Dueber, Darcy Lais (Conference Call), Jacob Rackley, Mary Ellen Fitzgerald (Conference Call) and Cliff Fortune (Conference Call). Staff: Steve Abel; Interim Fire Chief, Carol Norgard; Financial Manager, Lt. Eric Macy, Lt. Andy Figini (Conference Call) and Sally Chester (Conference Call). Guest: Jessica Rackley.

1. Call to Order: By Shirley Dueber at 7:10 PM.
2. Roll Call – With the meeting being offered with the Conference Call option, a roll call was performed.
3. Pledge of Allegiance: Led by Jacob Rackley.
4. Persons to be Heard.

Reminder: The Board is not to ask questions or make comments; the Board is to remain mute.

A. Jessica Rackley: Read her account of what she and others have experienced and expressed her frustration with the Fire District's and Board's response/lack of response to multiple reports that were made.

5. Approval of Minutes.
  - A. Board Meeting Minutes on Tuesday June 9, 2020.

MOTION MADE: By Shirley Dueber to approve the June 9, 2020 Board Meeting Minutes as submitted.

2ND: By Cliff Fortune.

DISCUSSION: None.

VOTE: Passed Four Ayes (Shirley Dueber, Mary Ellen Fitzgerald, Cliff Fortune, Jacob Rackley) and One Abstain (Darcy Lais).

B. Special Board Meeting Minutes on Tuesday June 23, 2020.

MOTION MADE: By Jacob Rackley to approve the June 23, 2020 Special Board Meeting Minutes as submitted.

2ND: By Darcy Lais.

DISCUSSION: None.

VOTE: Passed Unanimously.

5. Approval of Minutes Continued

C. Strategic Planning Meeting Minutes Saturday June 27, 2020.

MOTION MADE: By Mary Ellen Fitzgerald to approve the June 27, 2020 Strategic Planning Meeting Minutes as submitted.

2ND: By Cliff Fortune.

DISCUSSION: None.

VOTE: Passed Unanimously.

6. Communications.

A. Article regarding a water rescue call at Trillium Lake. Hoodland Fire responded to this call along with Clackamas Fire District #1, Sandy Fire, and Clackamas Water Rescue.

7. Reports:

A. Chief's Report by Fire Chief Steve Abel.

i. Government Camp Station: Roof is completed. Significant issue with ISO rating and station staffing.

ii. Station 351: Working on a plan to move the crews back to the Main Station versus the Domicile.

iii. Apparatus Driver Course: Scheduling classes to get more volunteers certified to drive apparatus.

iv. Volunteer Mentorship: Met with volunteer officers to get this program going.

v. Lieutenant Testing: Lt. Phil Burks retired and left a Lt. vacancy, so there will be a testing process.

vi. Audit: Working hard to get FY 2017-2018 Audit completed. One auditor has now been dedicated to working with HFD, so the process is going quicker.

vii. Polices: Whistleblower Policy is being presented at the meeting tonight. It was an SOG, but it should be a Board Policy.

viii. Strategic Planning: Fourteen members participated and we had some good discussions.

## 7. Chief's Report Continued

ix. Live Fire Training: This finalized the training for ten new firefighters. Support Group and CERT were a big help at the event.

x. Net Duty: Purchased an online scheduling program for staffing. This will be used to fill volunteer shifts.

xi. Firehouse Sub Grant: Applying for the grant to pay for part of the cost to replace the Jaws of Life.

### B. Support Group Report read by Fire Chief Steve Abel.

i. Next Support Group Meeting is October 5, 2020.

ii. Support Group Garage Sale 2020 is cancelled.

iii. Support Group will be helping with the HFD Picnic.

iv. Support Group served lunch at the Burn to Learn. The Lunch equaled out to \$4.64/per person.

### C. CERT Report read by Fire Chief Steve Abel.

i. Personnel: 13 Active, 4 on LOA, and 1 Pending.

ii. Members volunteered 375 hours last month.

iii. Multiple Firewise/Public Education booths scheduled in various locations.

### D. SDAO Assessment Report Update by Chief Steve Abel.

i. Working on a Draft Strategic Plan.

ii. Continuing to update Policies and SOGs.

iii. Developing a plan for crew quarters at the Main Station.

iv. Continuing to work to get caught up on Audits.

v. Apparatus replacement schedule has been developed.

vi. Continuing to work to improve the training program.

vii. Continuing to schedule monthly officer development classes.

8. Finance by Financial Manager Carol Norgard.

A. Budget Report.

i. Bank Statements and Reconciliations for June 2020.

B. Year to Date Budget Report through the end of FY 2019-2020.

i. Received an extra \$50,000 in taxes.

ii. Spent 71.6% of the Budget.

C. Year to Date Budget Report for FY 2020-2021 (July).

9. Unfinished Business.

A. Government Camp Fire Station Staffing by Mary Ellen Fitzgerald and Fire Chief Steve Abel.

i. Citizens of Government Camp are sending emails to the Board expressing their concerns. The ISO rating increased in Government Camp which negatively affects insurance coverage. Citizens want to know what is being done about staffing the Government Camp Station to reduce the ISO rating.

ii. Attempts to recruit and retain volunteers who live in Government Camp has been unsuccessful in the past. We should still try to recruit new volunteers who live in Government Camp.

iii. There are multiple options to staffing the Government Camp Station but there are challenges to overcome including increased budgetary expenses, drivers training, Union requirements, and recruitment/staffing.

iv. Multiple volunteers are currently interested in becoming residents but there are still some challenges that will have to be overcome.

v. ISO (Dave) is coming back on July 30, 2020 to discuss the rerating.

vi. Fire Chief Abel and Board Member Mary Ellen Fitzgerald will be attending the next Government Camp CPO Meeting.

vii. In the past some Government Camp citizens decided not to volunteer because of the beard issue with SCBA masks. We might be able to explore options if that is still an issue.

9. A. Unfinished Business - Government Camp Fire Station Staffing Continued

- viii. Possible discussion regarding Government Camp potentially leaving the Fire District.

B. Social Distancing Update by Fire Chief Abel.

- i. Fire Chief Abel was given direction by the Board to contact Dr. Present for guidance and come up with a written plan about social distancing guidelines in the Fire Station.
- ii. Current plan includes members monitoring symptoms and staying home when they feel sick. Continue to frequently wash hands. Disinfect surfaces at the Station.
- iii. In March 2020 public access to the Fire Department was closed and remains in effect.
- iv. In March 2020 In-Person Training Drills were cancelled and volunteers were discouraged from coming into the Station. This alienated volunteers and contributed to the issue of not maintaining or building skills. Training Drills recently resumed and are being performed with social distancing in mind.
- v. Recommendations from Dr. Present include Fire Chief, Deputy Chief, and Office Staff all working from home.
- vi. Challenges for Fire Chief, Deputy Chief, and Office Staff working from home to working from home include lack access to the Network/Server, impromptu communications would not happen, unable to provide direction and accountability to employees, unable to provide mentoring from a distance. If we discourage the volunteers from coming into the station we could push them away when we really need to be engaging them. We are currently working to rebuild the fire district. We are in the process of recruiting new volunteers and are planning to have another recruit academy this Fall. Sandy Fire is following a plan similar to HFD and also doesn't have a written policy.
- vii. Public Meetings continue to be offered with a remote call in option for members and the public can only attend via call in.
- viii. Polling the staff members they agree that the current practices in place are a reasonable balance for efficiency and safety.

9. B. Unfinished Business – Social Distancing Update Continued

- ix. Fire Chief Steve Abel does not like the draft policy that he wrote based on best (conservative) practices and recommendations from Dr. Present.
- x. HFD has a lot of challenges to overcome and if we follow the draft policy productivity will slow down and we will be struggling to move forward to accomplish our goals.
- xi. Issues with draft policy include: Keeping Office Staff at home will cause issues with the Audits, etc. Discouraging volunteers from coming in will cause problems because we are trying to reconnect, reengage, and recruit volunteers. The layout of the station is not set up for social distancing. Kitchen is small, office space is shared, etc.
- xii. We are between a rock and a hard place, but we need to move forward.
- xiii. On Duty Crews are living together and are like a family since they are spending a lot of time together in close contact.
- xiv. The Board doesn't think that the Fire Chief and Deputy Chief should work from home.
- xv. Fire Service/EMS personnel are already trained, informed of risks, and take precautions against contagious diseases.
- xvi. Taking extreme conservative measures is only going to alienate volunteers and slow down progress.
- xvii. Masks should be worn when coming into contact with the public or coming into close contact (less than 6 feet). Temperatures checks could be done on those coming into the station for a drill.

10. New Business.

- A. Rename Chief's Account to HRA Account by Fire Chief Steve Abel.
  - i. Chief's Checking Account has been maintained for several years. The Account is no longer used much anymore. It was set up before department credit cards were common place.

10. A. New Business – Rename Chief’s Account to HRA Account Continued

- ii. We recently switched our employee medical insurance to a higher deductible plan and agreed to reimburse employees the difference between the previous deductible and the new deductible. We have an administrator set up to handle this, but they need an account to draw money from to be able to process the reimbursements.
- iii. Recommendation is to have the Board authorize renaming the Chief’s Account to HRA Account.
- iv. \$39,000 will need to be transferred into this account to cover the health insurance deductible costs.

MOTION MADE: By Mary Ellen Fitzgerald to rename the Chief’s Account to the HRA Account.  
2ND: By Jacob Rackley.  
DISCUSSION: None.  
VOTE: Passed Unanimously.

B. Deputy Chief Position.

- i. Currently have two applicants, one internal candidate (lives in District) and one external candidate (lives out of District).
- ii. The Levy talking points stated that the Chief Officer would be local to be able to respond quickly.
- iii. The current job description says that they have to live within 20 minutes of the Fire District boundary. This allows for someone to live 40 minutes from the core of the Fire District, which doesn’t meet the intent of the Levy.
- iv. Also it was not advertised that the position was Levy funded and the position could go away due to lack of funding.
- v. Direction from the Board is needed if we should proceed with the testing process, cancel and start over, or explore alternative options.
- vi. The Levy language said that we would hire a Paramedic Chief Officer, which was met when Scott Kline was promoted to Battalion Chief.

10. B. New Business – Deputy Chief Position Continued

- vii. Multiple challenges include budgeting constraints, potential layoffs, issues recruiting a Deputy Chief to meet the intent of the Levy, and the CBA says that Eight Union Firefighters need to be maintained to have a Resident Volunteer Program (Government Camp).
- viii. Trying to find a solution where the Fire Prevention Program is maintained, minimize the likelihood of layoffs, meet the intent of the Levy, and maintain the eight Union Firefighters per CBA to have a Resident Volunteer Program.
- ix. The idea is to have two Union Battalion Chief positions. One Battalion Chief Fire Marshal and One Battalion Chief Training and Operations Officer. Because the positions are in the Union they would receive overtime. This would allow us to keep eight Union firefighters on staff and maintain a Resident Volunteer Program per CBA. If the second Battalion Chief position was filled via an internal promotion, this could eliminate a layoff and save someone's job.
- x. Carol ran the financials and they work for this two Battalion Chief plan.
- xi. The FY 2020-2021 Final Budget numbers came out better than expected. There is \$1.1 million in Beginning Fund Balance versus \$976,000. Also \$120,000 did not need to be borrowed from the Building Reserve Account in order to balance the budget.
- xii. Battalion Chief overtime could be mitigated by having them work a 35 hour work week and use flex time. The requirement would be to live 20 minutes to the Main Station.
- xiii. Concern with two Battalion Chiefs being in the Union. This means that discipline would be the responsibility of the Fire Chief.
- xiv. Concern about not meeting the "Deputy Chief" talking points of the Levy. The two Battalion Chief Plan better serves the community and does meet the official language stated in the Levy.

MOTION MADE: By Jacob Rackley to direct Fire Chief Abel to pursue the dual Battalion Chief option.

2ND: By Shirley Dueber.

DISCUSSION: Mary Ellen would like Carol to put the supporting financials and memo in her inbox.

VOTE: Passed Unanimously.

C. First Reading of Policy 521: Whistleblower Protections.

i. The Auditor noted that we did not have a Whistleblower Policy.

ii. This language is what SDAO recommended and it is very similar to the SOG. It should have been a Policy versus an SOG.

MOTION MADE: By Darcy Lais to approve the first reading of Policy 521: Whistleblower Protections.

2ND: By Jacob Rackley.

DISCUSSION: This policy uses the wording in SDAO's recommended policy.

VOTE: Passed Unanimously.

D. Resolution #2020-09: Resolution Transferring Funds within the 2020-2021 Operating Budget.

i. This Resolution is to appropriate \$30,000 in the Building Reserve Fund to cover the additional costs of replacing the roof on the Government Camp Station and funds to be able to cover costs to make improvements to move the career staff from the Domicile to the Main Station.

MOTION MADE: By Mary Ellen Fitzgerald to adopt Resolution #2020-09: Resolution Transferring Funds within the 2020-2021 Operating Budget to appropriate funds from the Building Reserve Account to be used for the Government Camp Station roof and Main Station upgrades.

2ND: By Jacob Rackley.

DISCUSSION: Government Camp Roof has now been completed.

VOTE: Passed Unanimously.

ii. Secretary/Treasurer Cliff Fortune will stop by to sign the adopted Resolution #2020-09.

E. Resolution #2020-10: Resolution Transferring Funds within the 2020-2021 Operating Budget.

i. The Board agrees to remove this Resolution for the cost of upgrading the the Server item from the agenda for now. Currently in the process of looking at other options including possibly changing IT vendors and the costs of a cloud based server.

11. Motion to Pay Bills.

MOTION MADE: By Darcy Lais to pay all bills as submitted.

2ND: By Jacob Rackley.

DISCUSSION: None.

11. Motion to Pay Bills Continued

VOTE: Passed Unanimously.

12. Board Members Comments.

A. Darcy Lais – Likes the dual Battalion Chief option that Fire Chief Steve Abel came up with, hope this works out.

B. Shirley Dueber – Likes that we are moving forward in a positive direction at a quicker pace. Appreciates the staff and their help.

C. Jacob Rackley – Questions about Facebook Page management and posting information.

D. Mary Ellen Fitzgerald – Amazed at the progress that Fire Chief Steve Abel has made.

E. Cliff Fortune – Appreciates everything that Fire Chief Steve Abel and the staff are doing.

13. Executive Session. None.

14. Other New Business.

A. Suggestion to use Zoom for all Board Meetings instead of Conference Call.

i. The Board agrees that Zoom works better than the Conference Call System.

B. Special Board Meeting on Tuesday July 28, 2020 at 7 PM.

15. Adjournment.

MOTION MADE: By Mary Ellen Fitzgerald to adjourn the meeting.

2ND: By Darcy Lais.

ADJOURNMENT: Meeting adjourned by Shirley Dueber at 9:45 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,

*Carolyn M. Norgard*

Carolyn M. Norgard, Financial Manager

Notes Typed By: Kelli Ewing, Administrative Assistant