

# Hebgen Basin Fire District

## Meeting Minutes

February 6, 2018

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Meeting was called to order at 1803 hrs.

**Board Members Present:** Ken Davis, Gay McBirnie, Kyle Goltz, Nancy Heideman, Mike Gavagan

**Also in Attendance:** Chief Grube, Emily Barnes, Jeremy Gallagher, Ethan McDowell, Tyrel Stoker, Mikee Reesman, Lynette, Carrie Egging, Tyler Beam, Teri Gibson, Richard Gibson,

**Recorder of Minutes:** Emily Barnes

**Public Comment for Items Not on Agenda:** No public comment.

**Approval of Minutes for January 9, 2018 Regular Board Meeting:** Mike Gavagan made a motion to approve the minutes as written and Nancy Heideman seconded. Motion passed.

**Approve Claims/Deposits:** Ken Davis made a motion to approve the claims as presented. Gay McBirnie seconded. All in favor. Motion passed.

**Chief's Report:** See attached.

### **New Business:**

#### **Approval of Fulltime Firefighter/EMT Position**

**Vacation Relief Position:** Chief Grube seeks approval from the board to hire Landon Zimmerman for the vacation relief position. Nancy Heideman motions to accept the hiring of Landon Zimmerman for the fulltime firefighter/emt vacation relief position. Gay McBirnie seconds motion. All in favor. Motion passed.

**Ambulance Audit:** Ken Davis goes over the ambulance audit report (see attached). Davis then suggests to the board that they come up with a new policy to clarify what exactly needs to be done with refusal reports. He explains that it isn't entirely clear for the firefighters, which then makes it even more confusing for the billing process. A clear policy that addresses the issues specifically can get everybody on the same page so the firefighters know exactly what the board expects from them. It is discussed that in the next couple of months they will work on drafting up a new policy to address these issues.

**Union's Request for Binding Arbitration:** Chief Grube states that on the 19<sup>th</sup> of January, the union sent in a request to begin the process for binding arbitration. Kyle Goltz explains that there is no vote for the board to take, Montana law states that once union has sent in request for binding arbitration, there is no further vote/action for the board to take. Chief Grube goes over a timeline of HBFD and the Residency Policy (see attached). Chief Grube then explains that the district has sent the union a last, best offer in hopes to avoid arbitration. Lynette has questions about who the arbitrator will be and how this person will be chosen. Chief Grube explains that they receive a list of seven arbitrators and will choose one from the list. Lynette also has questions for the union members about when they will be meeting and discussing the new offer that has been sent to them. The union members explain that they just received the offer and they will be holding an open meeting, however, the details of the meeting have not been discussed yet. They explain that they will be posting the meeting information once decided. Ken Davis explains that the current situation is the very reason he dislikes unions - he dislikes the tension and animosity it brings between the board and the union members. He also would like to remind the union members that even during this negotiation fight, the board is still looking out for their safety and making sure they have the best and safest equipment. Nancy Heideman would like it to be known that she did send out a letter to some community members asking for feedback on the

residency issue. She states there has been many community members voicing their opinion and sending letters to the board members on this matter. Teri Gibson would like to state that as a community member, she would like to make sure the union members have access to the public comments that the district has been receiving, and if the union has letters, they should also be sharing those with the board. She is assured they will receive all the letters and the public comments that has been sent in.

Next Board Meeting March 6, 2018 6:00pm

Chief announces the election in May for the two open Board of Trustees seats.

Meeting adjourned: 1904

## Chief's Report

For

February 6, 2018

Incidents in January (37)

Incidents Year to Date (40)

Transfers from YNP (7)

Mutual Aid Requests (1)

EMS Calls (15)

Transports (11)

Fire (4)

2<sup>nd</sup> Out (2)

3<sup>rd</sup> Out (0)

Multiple App (5)

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2017 Incidents in January (28)

2017 Incidents Year to Date (37)

January 2017 Transfers from YNP (1)

Mutual Aid Requests (3)

EMS Calls (10)

Transports (12)

Fire (5)

### Accidents

We had no accidents to report in January.

### Staff Activities and Training

Training has kept us very busy during the month of January. We had our biannual EMT Refresher the 5, 6, and 7<sup>th</sup>. We also had our annual AEMT Refresher class on the 30<sup>th</sup> of January. Irene now works for Best Practice Medicine and came down and taught the 8 hour class. We will be having a class on February 26 for all EMS personal on the administration of Narcan. We have also started working on Firefighter 1 with all of our new members. On January 26, we were paged out for a car fire next to a home. We were able to stop the fire from spreading to the home. Jeremy and Ethan did a great job.

Landon Zimmerman is our new Vacation Relief FF/EMT. His first day will be February 12. Chris Ledeker turned down the FF/Paramedic position we offered him. So we have William Polansky coming in on Wednesday February 7 for some additional firefighter testing. If he is able to pass the testing, it is our plan to offer him the position.

### Medical Director

I have a meeting with Dr. Hess and Dr. Weber on Friday February 9 on becoming our new medical directors. I will keep the board informed on our progress.

### Surplus Property

On January 16, a Kawasaki Mule became available from the DLA with 336 hours on it. I put in for it and got it. It was in Colorado Spring so I ran down and picked it up the Weekend of the 20<sup>th</sup>. It is my plan to use the Kawasaki Mule for event such as Wildland Fire, SAR events and during the Yellowstone Half Marathon.

### **Apparatus Update**

The power load system we have ordered for Ambulance 2 is in. I am working on scheduling the installation. There is a good chance it will be installed next week. We have been having some trouble with the air valves on the rear suspension on Ambulance 2. The new valves will be in this week and installed. The cost to replace both valves was about \$300.00.

### **CPR Manikin**

The grant we were expecting for the new CPR Manikin has come, so I have ordered it. I expect the Manikin to show up in the next week or so.

### **Fire Code and Subdivision Review**

James and I have been very busy doing Code review on a number of projects. Such as the sprinkler and alarm plans for the Learning Center, sprinkler review for the boarding house on Gibbon Avenue. We have also reviewed the preliminary plat for the housing project on electric for hydrant placement.

On Thursday Dan Sabolsky and I meet with the Developer of the Moonrise property and looked over the preliminary designs. We are just starting the code review on the project.

Memo

January 31, 2018

TO: Chief Shane Grube and Board of Trustees  
FR: Ken Davis and Gay McBirnie  
RE: Ambulance audits.

On January 22 and 30th, Gay McBirnie and I conducted an audit of ambulance billing practices for the fire district.

During that time we reviewed 43 separate runs from billing through remittance and found no irregularities or any sign of impropriety in the records we reviewed. We did not look at all billable ambulance runs in the period reviewed, June 30, 2016 to July 1, 2017 we selected, at random, 43. This number was based on a previous recommendation to the board that a larger number would be more representative of a fiscal year's business.

This review was also our first review of records since the district purchased the Billing Bridge program and so a review of the billing process may be in order.

Once the ambulance run report, PCR, is completed that information is transmitted to the Billing Bridge. The district clerk then reviews the PCR and creates the itemized bill that the customer or insurance company receives. In the case of some insurance companies these bills go to them electronically. In other cases the district clerk will mail a bill to the customer for them to remit to the district.

In the case where remittances come via EFT, the clerk gets a report from the county showing deposits being made, and from whom; the clerk can then reconcile that report with the billing program as well as the bank's records. In those cases, then, the remittances are reconciled by both the county and the district clerk against bank records without the clerk ever touching the deposit. In other cases she receives checks which are deposited in the usual way where she records them and someone else takes the deposit to the bank. EFTs have minimized the amount of checks going through the office and, by our observation, very little cash business occurs. It was observed in cases where funds come directly to the clerk's office, those funds are deposited within 5 days of receipt.

#### Observations.

The district clerk appears to be well organized and is very familiar with the accounting programs used in this process. She has expanded on how deposit and remittance files are organized which made the audit process flow easily.

There were four instances where the crews did not get any billing information from the patient; for a response, typically refusals. We were told that if a person is a 'local' they are not billed.

There were 89 response fees billed (\$175.00) in the period we reviewed where the patient refused transport. The number where all or a portion of the fee was collected was 34.

The district is incurring a large amount of liability from unpaid Medicaid claims for patients who live outside of Montana, as with in-state claims if Medicaid does not accept the bill the customer is not allowed to pay it either. There were at least 9 of these and many of them were ALS transports

Recommendation:

As in previous reports, it is our recommendation that the crews obtain billing information from each patient contact regardless of whether or not they will be billed. Not obtaining that information removes any possibility of the district billing for services in the future if deemed necessary or appropriate.

The trustees need to adopt a policy giving staff guidance on the issue of 'local' refusals. Generally if a person has a local street address or P.O. Box they are not charged a response fee if no transport occurs. However these responses do end up in the billing system to be written off later. The trustees need to provide guidance as to whether or not locals are billed.

## History of HBFD and Residency Time Line

2007	Town and District enter into Talks concerning annexation
May 14, 2008	Town and District enter into interlocal agreement for Annexation, District is required to assume current CBA with Union and all current employees.
August 8, 2008	Town Negotiates new Collective Bargaining Agreement "CBA" with IAFF 4432 allowing them to start working 48/96 shifts. Town Firefighters start moving out of town.
December 23, 2008	Gallatin County Clerk and Recorders is presented with petition for annexation
February 19, 2009	Gallatin County Commissioners hold public hearing on annexation.
March 29, 2009	Annexation goes into effect
July 1, 2009	HBFD takes over all operations of Fire Department
February 2011	First new fulltime employee Asst. Chief Hired Residency is part of Employment Contract.
June 2011	HBFD and Union start negotiating new CBA. No union members live in the District, all live 70 plus miles away.
11/16/2011	NEW CBA is signed exempting all employees covered under July 2008 CBA from residency Requirement. All new hires are required to live within District. CBA Signed 11/16/2011 Wage Increase 1%, 1%,1% plus colas, Actual 2.6%, 4.2%, 3.1 % totaling 9.9% over 3 years.
01/11/2012	Ball first totally new employee hired under new CBA, Residency is also in employment contract.
09/12/2013	Ball terminated for violation of employment contract. No grievance filed by union.
03/15/2014	First CBA Meeting with Union over July 2014 CBA
04/08/2014	Residency Requirement Policy on Agenda Boarding Meeting Agenda "info only"
05/13/2014	Residency Requirement Action Item for clarification purposes to HBFD policy's on Agenda. Full Board Present  Staff at Meeting James McBirnie, Cory Meyer, Cassandra Mitchell, Seth Russell, and James Jessop. Staff spoke out against. Board approved 5 to 0 votes for residency policy clarification. No Grievance filed by union

08/08/2014 Current CBA Signed Wage increase 3%, 2%, 1% plus cola, Actual Raise 4.5% 3.6% 1.1% totaling 9.2% raise over three years plus longevity pay which is a new item added into contract.

01/25/2017 First CBA Meeting for 2017 Contact  
Union proposes 3%,2%, 1% plus cola and do away with Residency Policy  
District proposes 1%, 1%, 1% plus cola

02/09/2017 Union files a request with Board of labor for Interest Based Bargaining

02/21/2017 Interest Based Bargaining Class  
Union identifies 3 issues  
Wages, Residency, Staffing  
No idea for wage was brought forward by Union  
District identifies 5 issues  
Staffing, Pay for Volunteers, Health insurance, Voluntary call back, Residency

03/03/2017 District brought forward language on voluntary call back, and change of residency policy from District Boundaries to 26 minute response time and a wage offer of 2%, 1%, 1%, plus cola.  
Union states the 26 minute response time is a good start but not enough, Union Requests 180 minutes since that is how far we transport patients away from West Yellowstone.  
Union requests some sort of ladder system for employees

4/11/2017 Union presents proposal for 5%, 5%, 5%, plus cola for wage increase and 150 minute response time,  
District proposed a certification pay process.

04/24/2017 District sends last best offer to union, with certification pay, increase in longevity, 2%, 1%, 1%, plus cola, and residency change to 26 minutes.



05/02/2017 Union files for Mediation with Montana Board of Appeals

05/30/2017 Both parties meet in mediation which is unsuccessful

06/01/2017 Union files request with Montana Board of Appeals requesting Fact Finding

07/25/2017 Fact Finding Hearing conducted

09/08/2017 Post Hearing Briefs submitted to Fact Finder

12/26/2017 Fact Finding recommendation

District's Proposed Wage

Union's Proposed Residency

01/02/2018 Board meeting on Fact Finders Recommendation

Board requests negotiating team return to table to find compromise

01/16/2018 Union and District Meet

The Union represented by Cassandra Mitchell and James McBirnie meet with Mike Gavagan, Kyle Goltz and Chief Grube.

The Chief started the meeting by saying we were not here to debate the fact finders recommendation but we here to find common ground and move past our impasse to find a resolution.

Chief Grube asks what the Union could do? The union states they would accept the Fact Finders Recommendation. Union is told Fact Finder Recommendation will not work the district, and asked them for their next proposal.

The Union presented Proposal #2 "Remove the Residency policy, pay people who choose to live here \$750.00 per month housing stipend on top of their normal wage and they would accept the districts wage proposal.

Trustee Mike Gavagan asked the union what kind of proposal they had that would allow us to a keep a 30 Minute response time.

The Union stated they had nothing. Meeting ended

01/19/2018 Union Files Request with Montana Board of Appeals requesting binding Arbitration.

02/05/2017

District sends Union their Last, Best, Offer in hopes of avoiding arbitration.

3%, 3%, 3%, plus cola, Actual increase 4.3%, 5.1%, 3%+cola = already guaranteed 12.4% raise not including cola for 2019. 30 min Residency Requirement, Certification pay up to \$1200.00 dollars annually, Increased longevity pay from \$3,600 dollars to \$8,200 over 20 years of service, Voluntary call back pay which is 2.4 hours times base hourly rate for every 24 hours on call. Example \$44.55 for EMT, \$47.57 for Paramedic.