

Hebgen Basin Fire District

Meeting Minutes

March 10, 2020

Meeting was called to order 1801 hrs.

Board Members Present: Gay McBirnie, Kyle Goltz, John Costello, Ken Davis

Also in Attendance: Chief Grube, AC Jessop, Lindsey Charlton, Brad Wittrock, Jeremy Gallagher, William Polansky, Jason Gras, Tim Martindale, Jason Jarret, Skip Morris

Recorder of Minutes: Lindsey Charlton

Public Comment for Items Not on Agenda: No public comment

Informational Presentation

Gallatin County 911 and Search and Rescue Representatives came to discuss need for increasing mill levies. Jason Jarret introduces himself to the board and is speaking on behalf of Gallatin County Search and Rescue. Jason reports to the board that the commission is planning to put levies on next ballot, asking public to vote for 2 mills. Last vote was 1986 with only ½ of a mill increase and then increased to a full mill within the last 10 years. Gallatin County SAR is the busiest SAR in the state and had 113 calls last year. The additional mill funding would be used to improve infrastructure, increase recruitment, improve retention rate, and improve support for volunteers. Kyle Goltz asks Jason how much of the funding will be allotted to West Yellowstone, the southern end of the county that seems to always be forgotten. Jason respond that it is extremely difficult to maintain volunteers in West Yellowstone so that would be the first thing to work on, possibly looking into a paid coordinator position. Ken Davis asked why Search and Rescue does not try to recover money from the people needing the service. Jason responds that research shows when fees are charged, the injuries still happen and often later at night putting SAR teams at a greater risk.

Tim Martindale introduces himself to the board as the new 911 Director. Tim shares that he came into the position with immediately tackling the radio project. Tim reports that since 2006 the budget has grown to over 1 million dollars and the mill has not grown to match. The goal is to add 6 mills to improve 911 functions and begin a new text to 911 program. If the additional 6 mills are approved the West Yellowstone Dispatch will receive approximately \$200,000.00. The radio project will be presented to the commission next Tuesday and if this project is funded without the additional mills then other projects will feel the financial burden.

Martindale reports that \$800,000 per year, starting on year 2 will go to radio project. There will also be a change in staffing with a merger with MSU and replacing the radio/comms manager. Currently the Gallatin County 911 has a staffing issue with having 9 full time employees and 2 part time employees but have 19 total positions. The 911 center is currently in the process of looking for other sources of revenue and will be reworking the AMR contract.

Approval of Minutes for February 11, 2020 Regular Board Meeting: Gay McBirnie motions to approve Regular Board Meeting Minutes. John Costello Seconds. All in Favor. Motion Passed.

Approve Claims/Deposits: Ken Davis motions to pay claims. Gay McBirnie Seconds. All in favor. Motion passed.

Chief's Report: See attached.

New Business:

Verizon Contract Renegotiation Request

Verizon is attempting to renegotiate the current cell tower contract by offering lower monthly payments to District. The first rejected offer was for 755.88 per month and the second offer was for 862.00 per month. Chief states that there is not any benefit in the district renegotiating this contract since we currently receive roughly 13,000 per year. Verizon spent a lot of money putting in site and there are not too many locations to move cell site to. Current contract auto renews every 5 years with a 2% annual increase in rent rate. Ken Davis states that the tower has other things hanging off of it so it would appear that Verizon has a revenue stream. Chief responds that another part of the contract is Verizon must provide a 90 day notice to terminate then remove all equipment from the site. Kyle Goltz recommends that the District send Verizon a letter stating to leave the contract as currently established. Ken Davis motions to have chief send letter stating we have no interest in changing the current contract. John Costello seconds. All in Favor. Motion passed.

Budget Update

Chief reports that we are on par with current budget sitting around 66%. There are a few line items that district is at 75%. One error is with Medical Fees due to a returned check not getting reposted. Lindsey will be getting with Black Mountain to get this issue corrected. Chief asks board to approve a few budget amendments. Chief explains to the board that these amendments are just moving funds collected from a MT State Fund Dividend Check, sparky the fire dog grant funds, and funds from selling old plow truck. The funds will be used to purchase extrication tools and a Snow Blower for the Tool Cat. District already purchased Sparky the Fire Dog costume.

Chief requests to make the following budget amendments:

Apparatus Sales account #362300 increase by \$3,200.00

Miscellaneous Revenue account #362110 increase by \$13,600.00

Fire Prevention Expense Budget account 920000, object #315 Increase by \$2,400.00

Machinery and Equipment Expense Budget account 920000, object #940 increase by \$36,800.00

Station 1 Seal Coat Expense account 920000, object #974 decrease by \$17,095.00

Machinery and Equipment Expense Budget account 920000, object #940 increase by \$17,095.00

Ken Davis Motions to approve budget amendments as chief has presented. Gay McBirnie seconds. All in Favor. Motion passed.

Next meeting 04/14/20 at 6:00 PM

Meeting adjourned: 19:12