

Missoula Rural Fire District  
Board of Trustees  
Missoula, Montana 59804

April 12<sup>th</sup>, 2022

The Missoula Rural Fire District (MRFD) Board of Trustees (BOT) met in regular session at the Station 1 Headquarters meeting room and via a "Zoom" video conference on **Tuesday, April 12<sup>th</sup>, 2022.**

**CALL TO ORDER:** Chairman Murphy called the meeting to order at 19:00 hours.

### **PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

**ROLL CALL:** Present: Chairman Ben Murphy, Vice-Chairman Larry Hanson, Secretary Dick Mangan, Trustee Jeff Merritt, and Trustee Dan Corti.

**READING OF THE MINUTES:** Trustee Merritt moved to accept the minutes as written. Vice-Chairman Hanson seconded the motion. Motion voted and passed.

**PUBLIC COMMENT:** No one from the public was present for comment.

**CLAIMS:** Secretary Mangan made a motion to accept the claims as submitted. Vice-Chairman Hanson seconded the motion. Motion was voted and passed.

**COMMUNICATIONS:** Raquel Wilkinson conveyed that the communications included a thank-you letter, a Record of Exceptional Performance for Tim DeVos, a Public Relations Outreach Breakdown, two DFM Reports, and an IT Report.

**TRUSTEE REPORTS:** Vice-Chairman Hanson communicated that he had a thank-you letter from Cheryl Hanson. Chairman Murphy shared that he attended the Station 4 open house and was pleasantly surprised there were so many in attendance.

### **STAFF REPORTS:**

**Local 2457:** BC Bowman reported that Lieutenant Kottwitz will be transitioning as president of Local 2457, replacing Captain Burgess. Captain Ballard graduated from the International Association of Fire Fighter's 7<sup>th</sup> District Executive Leadership Series Course. He is the first graduate of this program in the State of Montana.

**Battalion Chief (BC):** BC Bowman reported that the Calls for Service in March were 265, 116 more calls than this time last year. There was a chimney fire off Highway 12 and an Automatic-Aid dispatch to Frenchtown for an accident resulting in a vehicle on fire. There were two fully involved structure fires. The first was a garage and shop on Haugen Drive, where Captain Burgess was the acting BC and did an excellent job on the incident. The second structure fire was a single-wide trailer in the Target Range area. There were two airport crash responses, both landing without incident. Also reported was a rescue call for a sick patient at the West Fork Butte Lookout. MRFD responded with their rescue compliment and All-Terrain Vehicle (ATV) to the trailhead. BC Bowman requested Search and Rescue aid. Life Flight was also requested, but they could not land due to the soft snowpack. Search and Rescue took over the operation since they had more suitable equipment to handle the rough terrain. Secretary Mangan requested an analysis of how the Constitutional Initiative 121, which will be voted on in November 2022, will impact MRFD if passed.

**Finance and Human Resources (HR):** Melissa Schnee reported that MRFD is balanced with the County through February 2022. The front office has been working on an Accounting/Front Office Procedure Manual. May is open enrollment for Aflac and Mutual of Omaha's voluntary benefits. MRFD is preparing for the Fuel Mitigation season that starts in May. CPAT is also in May, and advertising has begun for the open entry-level firefighter positions. Melissa also reported that she has been working through the budget request process and collecting priority list requests for the next Officer's Meeting.

**Assistant Chief of Operations:** Chief Finlay was not present for his report.

**Fire Chief:** Chief Newman reported that the Awards Banquet went well and that a survey will be going out for feedback from those who attended. A letter of resignation was received from Engineer Bausman. The Captain's Assessment is scheduled for May 10<sup>th</sup> and 11<sup>th</sup>. Chief Newman also reported that he's still working on the potential location of Station 1 and has met with the Office of Emergency Management, the Sheriff's Department, and the University of Montana on the matter. There have also been some preliminary discussions about creating a single public safety building. Chief Newman attended a 911 Advisory Meeting and held the Accreditation Manager Assessment and the Training Officer Assessment. Engineer Horsens is now officially MRFDs Accreditation Manager, and Lieutenant Crocker will be taking over as Training Officer for BC Cowan. Also reported, Chief Newman and Engineer Horsens attended the Center for Public Safety Excellence Conference, obtaining great information. Chairman Murphy asked if there would be another job opening with Engineer Bausman resigning. Chief Newman answered that there will now be four entry-level firefighter openings.

**OLD BUSINESS:** No old business.

**NEW BUSINESS:**

- 1. Letter of intent to open the Collective Bargaining Agreement (CBA) for negotiations:** The Board received the Letter of Intent to open the CBA negotiations. Trustee Merritt asked how many Board members needed to be part of the negotiations. Chief Newman replied that historically, it has been two members but didn't see any issue if more wanted to be involved with the process. Per the contract, negotiations need to start within 30 days unless mutually agreed upon. The request was made for the third week in August and the Board agreed.
- 2. Letter of intent to open negotiations for the administrative staff:** The Board received the Letter of Intent to open administrative staff negotiations.
- 3. Sign the updated Board By-Laws that were approved in the March 2022 regular board meeting:** The Board was notified that the By-Laws are available for the required signatures.
- 4. Performance Improvement Plan (PIP) form update:** Melissa indicated that the policy has not changed, only the form. The previous one said "...three-month follow-up on or about," and the date would be filled. The proposed change is to say "...three-month follow-up on or before," so the date becomes a deadline. Trustee Merritt moved to approve the update to the PIP. Vice-Chairman Hanson seconded the motion. Motion was voted and passed.
- 5. Annexation approval for 28541 Highway 12 W, Lolo, MT 59847:** Trustee Merritt moved to approve the annexation. Vice-Chairman Hanson seconded the motion. Motion was voted and passed.
- 6. 3-year Audit Proposal approval:** Melissa pointed out three options on the contract. Her recommendation was to go with the three-year proposal. Trustee Merritt moved to approve the

three-year audit proposal. Vice-Chairman Hanson seconded the motion. Motion was voted and passed.

**ADJOURNMENT:** Secretary Mangan made a motion to adjourn. Vice-Chairman Hanson seconded the motion. Chairman Murphy adjourned the meeting at 19:30 hours.

Respectfully submitted,



Jenn Culp, Administrative Assistant  
Missoula Rural Fire District



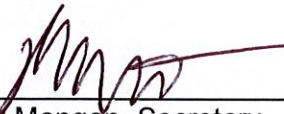
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John (Ben) Murphy, Chairman

5/10/22

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Date



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Dick Mangan, Secretary

5/11/22

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Date