

Missoula Rural Fire District  
Board of Trustees  
Missoula, Montana 59804

July 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, July 12<sup>th</sup>, 2022.**

**CALL TO ORDER:** Chairman Murphy called the meeting to order at 16:00 hours.

#### **PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

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

**READING OF THE MINUTES:** Trustee Merritt moved to accept the minutes as written. Trustee Corti seconded the motion. Motion was voted and passed.

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

**CLAIMS:** Trustee Corti moved to accept the claims as submitted. Trustee Merritt seconded the motion. Motion was voted and passed.

**COMMUNICATIONS:** Melissa Schnee conveyed that there were several thank you letters from the public, three notices of public hearing for annexation, a notice of approval from the Montana Board of Investments INTERCAP loan for the Type I and Type III engines, a DFM Report, an IT Report, a Call for Service Report, and a Public Relations Outreach Report.

#### **TRUSTEE REPORTS:**

#### **STAFF REPORTS:**

**Local 2457:** BC Lubke reported that several Local 2457 members attended the State Convention hosted by the Locals in Butte and Anaconda at Fairmont Hot Springs. BC Lubke also mentioned that the International Convention is being held in Toronto this year and is working on determining which members will attend.

**Finance and Human Resources (HR):** Melissa Schnee reported that the last month was mostly focused on finance with the FY21 audit, FY22 year-end closing, and FY23 budget. Also, prep work was started for the upcoming Union negotiations.

**Battalion Chief (BC):** BC Lubke reported 310 incidents in June, about 4% over from where MRFD was this time last year. There were a few significant incidents in the last few weeks: several structure fires, a plane crash, a couple of vehicle accident extrications, and a hazmat incident. There were also a couple of large carrier vehicle fires on the interstate.

**Assistant Chief of Operations:** Chief Finlay reported that last month, he was sent as part of the Western Montana All Hazards Incident Management Team to Carbon County, specifically the area of Red Lodge. Efforts were concentrated on the infrastructure as a result of the flooding. He had an opportunity to meet with several folks in that area and worked closely with Brad Davis of the Missoula Fire Department. Immediately following that incident, Chief Finlay traveled to Sioux Falls, South Dakota, to pick up the new water tender, which will go into service on July 18<sup>th</sup>. Later in the month, Chief Finlay

attended the quarterly meeting with the Local Emergency Planning Committee and discussed emergency planning associated with the expected high temperatures and the fire danger level being raised to "high" on July 18<sup>th</sup>. There was also a considerable amount of Standard Operating Guidelines (SOG) work and transitioning to Blue Card. With continued education and certification, BC Lubke was one of the leaders in bringing that to fruition. Through this process, MRFD recognized that some of their SOGs needed to be tailored toward Blue Card. MRFD will transition to that style of command-and-control on September 1<sup>st</sup>, 2022. Chief Finlay also reported that he has been working on personnel evaluations.

**Fire Chief:** Chief Newman reported that the first round of interviews was completed. The next round of interviews will be with Chief Newman and Chief Finlay on July 25<sup>th</sup>. The plan is to hire four new firefighters for early September. We are in the last stage of the Strategic plan; the final draft will go into CPSE on July 15<sup>th</sup> and then will be published so everyone has the opportunity to see what will guide our operations for the next five years. The main topics were training, staffing, fiscal sustainability, EMS and mutual aid. There's a crew down in California right now with a type 5 in the Fresno area but will be coming home soon. The engine will have been down there for a month. Pretty good timing getting back right now as Paul was talking about. Still working on the Station Alerting and we'll have the final numbers in for that, which is part of the finalization of the budgeting process. Lastly, I would like to commend Chief Finlay and Jon Muir for their work as members of the Missoula Type 3 IMT in Red Lodge and the surrounding areas during the terrible flooding.

**OLD BUSINESS:**

**NEW BUSINESS:**

1. **Memorandum of Understanding between Missoula Rural Fire District and Jon Gildea:** Chief Newman informed the Board that as MRFD's medical director, Dr. Gildea has done a fantastic job. He was a tremendous help during Covid as a member of MRFD's internal Covid taskforce. Trustee Merritt makes a motion to accept the Memorandum of Understanding. Trustee Corti seconded the motion. Motion was voted and passed.
2. **General Release of Liability for Donation of Equipment – University of Montana:** During the last Board meeting, Trustee Corti asked if the Rad Meters for the surplus sale be donated to the University of Montana instead. Trustee Merritt motioned to accept the donation to the University of Montana. Trustee Corti seconded the motion.
3. **Annexation:**
  - a. **6090 Wilderness Trail, Missoula, MT 59804**
  - b. **2400 Larch Camp Rd, Missoula, MT 59803**
  - c. **7800 Alta View, Missoula, MT 59804**
  - d. **14400 HWY 200 East, Bonner, MT 59823**
  - e. **5065 Skyway Drive, Missoula, MT 59804**

Trustee Merritt motioned to accept the first five annexations into the District. Trustee Corti seconded the motion. Motion was voted and passed.
  - f. **11853 Bench Rd, Missoula, MT 59808:** The recommendation from the Deputy Fire Marshal was to allow the Board to decide on whether to annex. Some of the concerns for the property included a steep driveway with loose gravel, no turnaround, and no mitigation in the area, which would make it hard to get the apparatus to the property. Trustee Corti asked if the area could be mitigated to create a turnaround. Chief Newman said he would speak with the Deputy Fire Marshal about that possibility. Trustee Corti made a motion to deny annexation. Trustee Merritt seconded the motion. Motion was voted and passed.
  - g. **3900 Coal Mine Rd, Missoula, MT 59802:** Chief Newman does not recommend the annexation of this property at this time. This is mainly due to the unmitigated wildland fire

risk including difficult access and bad road conditions. Trustee Merritt asked if there is a liability to the District if we don't annex. Chief Newman responded no; we shouldn't annex a property if we can't realistically protect it. Chief Finlay commented that this is a much better system than what MRFD had previously. For instance, in the past there was a house annexed into the District south of Lolo that was on the other side of a river and was not accessible by any of MRFD apparatuses. Based on Chief Newman's recommendation, Trustee Corti moved to deny annexation. Trustee Merritt seconded the motion. Motion was voted and passed.

**ADJOURNMENT:** Trustee Merritt made a motion to adjourn. Trustee Corti seconded the motion. Chairman Murphy adjourned the meeting at 16:35 hours.

Respectfully submitted,



Jenn Culp, Administrative Assistant  
Missoula Rural Fire District

  
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John (Ben) Murphy, Chairman

8/19/22  
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Date

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Dick Mangan, Secretary

8/10/22  
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Date