

Missoula Rural Fire District  
Board of Trustees  
Missoula, Montana 59804

September 13<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, September 13<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, 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.

#### **NEW BUSINESS:**

1. **Introduction and Oath of Office for the new residents: Nick Kunz, Mathew McIntyre, Conner Unterseher, Mackay Whiting, and Matthew Wilkinson.**

**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:** Raquel Wilkinson conveyed that the communications consisted of a few thank-you cards, an Incident Personnel Performance Rating Sheet on Eng. Nathan Lapinski from the Sutton fire, a Record of Exceptional Performance for Eng. Bergbower and one for Lt. Reed, an approval letter of annexation from the Board of County Commissioners for five properties, two DFM Reports, an IT Report, a Calls for Service Report, and a Public Relations Outreach Breakdown.

**TRUSTEE REPORTS:** Trustee Corti thanked MRFD on behalf of the University of Montana for donating the RAD Monitors. He reported that several were calibrated and are being used in their labs.

#### **STAFF REPORTS:**

**Local 2457:** Eng. Kottwitz reported that the Local has been in negotiations with the Board and will continue with those on September 15<sup>th</sup>. The four new probationary firefighters were sworn in at the last meeting and are now fully fledged members of the Local 2457. The Fill the Boot drive on September 10<sup>th</sup> successfully raised over \$12,890. The final tally is not in yet. September 24<sup>th</sup> is the National Car Seat Check Saturday, where they will hold their monthly car seat check event. Lastly, MRFD was asked to help promote an event by First Interstate Bank and the Red Cross, who are teaming up together to install smoke detectors within the community on September 14<sup>th</sup>.

**Finance and Human Resources (HR):** Melissa Schnee reported that they finalized the Budget and the Capital Improvement Plan. Administration also completed the onboarding paperwork for the four new hires. Administration continues to move forward with the new budgeting forms and getting them ready to go out

for the new purchase orders that will allow those with budget lines to have a more accurate and timely account of their budget record balance.

**Battalion Chief (BC):** BC Orr reported that it had been a busy month with wildland assignments. A significant incident was a gas line rupture by a car that had crashed into a house and folded over a gas meter, leaving no way to shut it off. The surrounding homes were evacuated as a precaution while MRFD was on scene for 8 hours while the gas company worked to shut it off and air out the house. There was another significant incident on C-Shift involving an explosion in a home.

**Assistant Chief of Operations:** Chief Finlay reported that a considerable amount of time was spent finalizing the budget. As Chairman of Active Attack Integrated Response (AAIR), much behind-the-scenes work has been done with the Missoula Police Department and Missoula City Fire Department for planning and training. MRFD will send two folks out for training to the Advanced Law Enforcement Rapid Response Training conference in Maryland for active shooter incidents. Another focus this month was on the accreditation process. Chief Finlay also participated in a Spill Response Meeting due to a significant fuel spill near The Home Depot parking lot. The fear was that the fuel would run into the stormwater drains. The meeting focused on how to best respond, and it was determined that they would continue with the current response plan. Lastly, Chief Finlay and Resource Manager LaForest inspected a staff vehicle and rescue vehicle, which will be ready to be picked up by the end of the week.

**Fire Chief:** Chief Newman reported that if it weren't for Chief Finlay, there wouldn't be an AAIR team in Missoula. He commended Chief Finlay for the great work that he's been doing with that team. Chief Newman met with Bryce at the Montana Department of Revenue to better understand how MRFD's revenue is derived and will have more information at the next Board Meeting. He also reported that he met with the architects at the new station 4 with a final punch item list of things that have not been completed and will contact the contractor to get those finished. Chief Newman also shared that the administration negotiations were completed, but the union negotiations are ongoing. The new hires started on September 6<sup>th</sup>, and he received a detailed report from Lt. Crocker on each new hire. Lastly, as part of the accreditation process, they are in the self-assessment stage and trying to allocate as much time as possible.

## OLD BUSINESS:

### CLOSED THE OPEN MEETING

**CALL TO ORDER THE PUBLIC MEETING:** Chairman Murphy called the public meeting to order at 16:18 hours.

1. **MRFD Budget Amendment FY21:** Melissa reported that this was on last month's agenda but needed to be discussed in a public hearing. The amounts being adjusted are because of the Governmental Accounting Standards Board Statement Number 85.. The State can pass down a portion of their pension liability even though the money was already passed to them. This is more for government-wide statements saying they are holding it on behalf of MRFD. The other item is the capital outlay expenditures that exceeded the budgeted amount in 2021 due to the start of the Station 4 build. MRFD had construction expenses earlier than expected. MRFD was collecting draws, so the funds were in and out at a larger amount than we had budgeted for.
2. **MRFD FY23 Budget:** Melissa explained that included with the budget is the max mill's letter to go to Missoula County to levy max mills this year. Which includes our Certified Taxable Valuation Information along with our Determination of Tax revenue. We were also able to Levy Permissive Mil for the increase in our benefits. Presented in the budget is the General Fund budget plus the Capital Improvement budget and the Total budget that calculates the two. Trustee Corti asked why line 5 was blank on the Certified Taxable Evaluation Information page. Melissa answered that it was supposed to be blank because MRFD doesn't have Class 1 and Class 2 properties. Trustee

Corti also asked how much the tax revenue had increased. Melissa answered that it was \$279,000, which included taxes and state entitlement. It's a 3.004% increase from last year.

## CLOSED THE PUBLIC MEETING

## CHAIRMAN MURPHY RECALLED TO ORDER THE OPEN MEETING

### NEW BUSINESS (Cont.):

2. **Resolution #2022-7 Resolution to amend FY21 Budget:** Trustee Corti moved to amend the FY21 Budget. Trustee Merritt seconded the motion. The motion was voted on and passed.
3. **Resolution #2022-9 Capital Improvement Plan:** Chief Newman explained that the Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) includes the new Station 1 building for FY23/24, a new BC vehicle for FY23/24, two new water tenders for FY24/25, Alumapro Water Rescue Craft for FY24/25, SCBA's for FY31/32, and radios for FY36/37. Chairman Murphy asked for clarification regarding the CIP. Chief Newman explained that MRFD sets aside money every year to go into the CIP for anticipated capital expenditures and costs will be monitored over time and adjusted if needed. Trustee Merritt moved to approve the Capital Improvement Plan. Vice-Chairman Hanson seconded the motion. The motion was voted on and passed.
4. **Resolution #2022-10 FY23 Final Budget:** Melissa added that this budget includes all of the budget requests that have come in, an increase in cost of expenditures, everything in the CIP and the current apparatus replacement expenditures. Chief Newman explained what they did differently for the budget request forms this year, where program managers with a budget could request a permanent or temporary change to each budget. He also explained that they are doing Career Track Training for the first time. Chairman Murphy asked if each employee had a personalized training plan. Chief Finlay responded that they identified the idea of Career Track Training through the Training Committee and Training Officer. The Career Track Training is a personalized training plan that considers the District's needs and where each individual wants to focus their training. They have received Career Track Training forms from about 70% of MRFD employees that are legitimate requests for urban interface needs, wildland needs, extrication, and other needs. Melissa added that a few years ago, they received the mill levy increase and SAFER grant and explained that the SAFER grant ends at the end of September. Under the Board's direction, the grant was allocated to the Apparatus Replacement Plan and to build up MRFD's cash reserve. Melissa pointed out that MRFD's bank balance are currently significantly high due to COVID, which made things take twice as long to replace that set them behind schedule. Once the Apparatus Replacement Plan is back on schedule, the balance will be lowered and MRFD will be back into a pattern of sustainability based on the mill levy funding without SAFER grants. Trustee Merritt moved to accept the final budget. Vice-Chairman Hanson seconded the motion. The motion was voted on and passed.
5. **Administration Contracts:** Trustee Merritt moved to approve the administrative contracts. Vice Chairman Hanson seconded the motion. The motion was voted on and passed.
6. **Annexation: 21830 Highway 12 W, Lolo, MT 59847:** Chief Newman took a moment to commend the DFMs on the depth of the work they put into their inspections. He agreed with the recommendation of DFM McDermott to annex this property. Trustee Merritt moved to annex the property. Vice-Chairman Hanson seconded the motion. The motion was voted on and passed.

**EXECUTIVE SESSION:** Chairman Murphy determined the next matter to be a matter of individual personnel privacy and the individual's privacy outweighs considerably the public's right to know. Chairman Murphy closed the meeting to the public for an Executive Session.

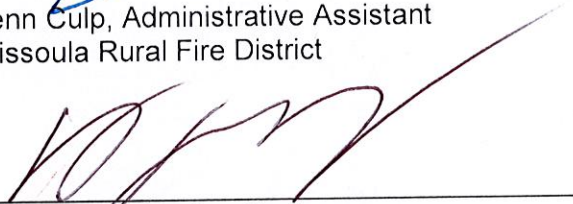
Board decided to modify the relief requested in the grievance submitted to the Board on September 7, 2022.

**ADJOURNMENT:** Vice-Chairman Hanson made a motion to adjourn. Trustee Corti seconded the motion. The meeting adjourned at 18:45 hours.

Respectfully submitted,



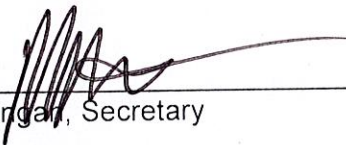
Jenn Culp, Administrative Assistant  
Missoula Rural Fire District



John (Ben) Murphy, Chairman

10/11/22

Date



Dick Margat, Secretary

10/11/22

Date