

Missoula Rural Fire District
Board of Trustees
Missoula, Montana 59804

March 14th, 2023

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, March 14th, 2023.

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, and Secretary Dick Mangan. Absent: Trustee Jeff Merritt and Trustee Dan Corti.

READING OF THE MINUTES: Secretary Mangan moved to accept the minutes as written. Vice-Chairman Hanson seconded the motion. The motion was voted on and passed.

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

CLAIMS: Secretary Mangan moved to accept the claims as submitted. Vice-Chairman Hanson seconded the motion. The motion was voted on and passed.

COMMUNICATIONS: Raquel Wilkinson conveyed that the communications consisted of a few Valentine's Day cards, a thank-you card from a Lolo resident, a thank-you letter to Bolt and Bruizers, two DFM Reports, an IT Report, a Public Relations Outreach Breakdown, and a Calls for Service Report.

TRUSTEE REPORTS:

STAFF REPORTS:

Local 2457: Lieutenant Kottwitz reported a few positive outcomes in the legislative session. The elimination of the Firefighters' Unified Retirement System Guaranteed Annual Benefit Adjustment and a couple of right-to-work bills failed to pass. Two new types of cancer were added to the Presumptive Illness: cervical and testicular. The bill requiring a Mill Levy to be voted on every five years did not pass. The Local expected to see a couple of bills on the committee floor: the Community Paramedicine and Regional Fire Authority, but the timber industry shot them down. Lieutenant Loterbauer and Lieutenant Harris attended the Affiliate Leadership Training conference, which was informative. The highlight of that conference was the topic of Perfluorooctane Sulfonate (PFOS), a cancer-causing agent that companies knowingly use in turnout gear. When in manufacturing, the workers wear PPE to work with the turnouts containing PFOS. The International Association of Fire Fighters is spearheading research to uncover these chemicals. Chief Newman added that a \$25,000,000 grant was awarded for this research. He also said that MRFD has started using an alternative set of turnouts that do not have the PFOS for non-fire emergencies. However, they still use the other firefighting gear as nothing is available without PFOS. Lieutenant Kottwitz also stated that BC Orr attended the National Legislative Conference as the Vice-President of the Montana State Council of Professional Firefighters. He had productive meetings with Montana State Senators John Tester, Steve Daines, and Congressman Ryan Zinke. Lieutenant Kottwitz reported that he and Engineer Paulsen attended a few funerals for fire service-related cancer deaths in the last few months as part of their Montana State Fire Honor Guard duty. They have another one coming up, which MRFD's retired BC Cowan will attend with them.

Battalion Chief (BC): BC Bowman reported that February had one more call than February 2022. There weren't any significant incidents to report, but several minor accidents due to the icy conditions. For 2023, MRFD is 5% over where it was at that time last year. Chairman Murphy asked if MRFD could determine the kind of incidents and locations the increases are coming from. Chief Newman responded that they are coming up on a year of using Image Trend and should be able to pull that data from there.

Finance and Human Resources (HR): Melissa Schnee reported that she had an opportunity to meet with Captain Burgess, Grail, and the Missoula County Medical Benefits Team about the possibility of our insurance covering the cost of testing for multiple types of cancer under MRFD's benefit plan. Melissa attended the Center for Public Safety Excellence Conference (CPSE), an excellent opportunity to better understand the accreditation process. While there, Melissa met the Administrative Chief for Renton Fire Authority, who introduced her to a Government Finance Group that will have many budgeting and accounting benefits for MRFD. Melissa reported working on the budget, meeting with program managers, getting individual budgets lined out, and meeting with the Chiefs. MRFD is balanced with Missoula County through January.

Assistant Chief of Operations: Chief Finlay also attended CPSE Conference and said that it affirmed MRFD's decision to seek accreditation. Chief Finlay reported working with several local leaders and state leaders in February for hazmat responses. He mentioned that MRFD is struggling to get reimbursement back from a Hazmat Team's deployment for an oil spill on Highway 200 in the Bonner area but will continue to work on getting it. Chief Finlay met with the Office of Emergency Management about Active Attack Integrated Response needs and obtaining additional participation from other agencies. Chief Finlay reported that MRFD implemented a new evaluation system this year and is working a fair amount on that. He has also been working on EMT recertification and received his CPR Card. Chief Finlay worked with Chief Newman and Melissa Schnee on the budget. He is also working on Auto Aid/Mutual Aid Agreements. The Auto Aid/Mutual Aid agreement with MFD was last updated in 1996. Chief Finlay provided input to MRFD's attorney to get it up to date. Chief Newman added that the accreditation process recommends that Auto Aid/Mutual Aid Agreements are reviewed every 2-3 years.

Fire Chief: Chief Newman reported that Station Alerting should go live at the month's end. The project managers from the company stated that they had never seen a project move as quickly as MRFDs has, which was due to Lieutenant Hollenbeck's diligence and hard work. Chief Newman reported that they have been meeting with the architects about Station 5. There are discussions about remodeling the old station or building a new one and the cost difference. They are also assessing whether to move locations or stay where we are. Station 5 is in a great location, but the parcel is small. Chief Newman reported a meeting with MFD and was interviewed by a consulting firm they brought in. They are commissioning an Emergency Medical Services study for Missoula County on the transport situation. Chief Newman reminded the Board that the MRFD Annual Dinner is on April 29th. Chief Newman stated that MRFD is in the process of getting its new logo implemented, which Lieutenant Kottwitz designed. Chief Newman said he would be interviewing at the airport on April 6th.

OLD BUSINESS:

NEW BUSINESS:

1. **Discussion and Decision on Adoption of Procurement Policy:** Chief Newman stated that, for the most part, this is what MRFD has been doing regarding procuring apparatus, station construction, and services such as architectural and surveying. Melissa Schee added that the most significant benefit of the policy is that it does not require MRFD to take the lowest bid in all situations. In addition to considering the cost, they will be looking at a list of criteria. The criteria can include checking references, whether the vendor has done that job before, if the project can be completed by a specific date, and other data. Chief Newman added that it also breaks down the price point of where we must go to that next level. This policy also protects MRFD if someone

challenges the decision of not taking the lowest bid. Secretary Mangan asked if MRFD plans to spend \$150,000 at a public auction and, if so, what for. Chief Newman said that it could be used to bid on a used apparatus. Chief Finlay added that we could bid at an auction for a property. Secretary Mangan asked how they came up with that number. Chief Newman responded that, according to the attorney, that is the standard number for public auctions. Melissa added that this is a policy, not necessarily a how-to. The how-to part would be discussed among the chiefs and attorney on how the process would proceed. Secretary Mangan moved to adopt the policy. Vice-Chairman Hanson seconded the motion. The motion was voted on and passed.

ADJOURNMENT: Secretary Mangan made a motion to adjourn. Vice-Chairman Hanson seconded the motion. Chairman Murphy adjourned the meeting at 16:45 hours.

Respectfully submitted,



Jenn Culp, Administrative Assistant
Missoula Rural Fire District



John (Ben) Murphy, Chairman

4/11/23

Date



Dick Mangan, Secretary

4/13/23

Date