

Missoula Rural Fire District
Board of Trustees
Missoula, Montana 59804

June 13th, 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, June 13th, 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, Secretary Dick Mangan, and Trustee Jeff Merritt. Absent: Trustee Dan Corti.

NEW BUSINESS:

1. **New MRFD Resident Firefighter (RFF) and Volunteer Firefighter (VFF) Introduction and Oath of Office RFF Patrick Hammond, RFF Eric Wilson, RFF Avi Goodin, VFF John Mills, VFF Ryan Kirk, VFF Vincent Thompson:** Chief Newman read the Oath of Office to RFF Eric Wilson, RFF Avi Goodin, RFF Patrick Hammond, and VFF Ryan Kirk. VFF John Mills and VFF Vincent Thompson were absent from the meeting.

READING OF THE MINUTES: Trustee Merritt 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: Chairman Murphy asked if Station Alerting was a monthly expense or if the claims were from the initial purchase. Chief Newman responded that Station Alerting is not a monthly expense; the claims were from the original purchase. Chairman Murphy asked why there were two different vendors for Station Alerting. Chief Newman stated that one was for the installer and the other was for equipment. Trustee Merritt 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 letter from the County Commissioners approving an annexation, several thank you cards including drawings from Hellgate Elementary School, a resolution to annex property from MRFD to the Missoula Fire Department (MFD), 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 that the negotiation team started preparing for negotiations that are coming up in August. Lieutenant Kottwitz and four other members attended the Montana State Firefighter's Association (MSFA) conference in Bozeman. Battalion Chief (BC) Orr also attended as the State District Representative with retired member BC Cowan, who served his last convention as MSFA Secretary-Treasurer. BC Cowan received a leadership award for his continued membership as an MSFA Board member. Lieutenant McDermott also received a leadership award for continued stewardship with the Union. While at the conference, they heard from several guest speakers, including companies for early

detection cancer screening, MRFD's pension system, Senator Steve Daines, Senator Jon Tester, and leadership members from the International Association of Fire Fighters (IAFF). They also heard from their lobbyist group, who reported that it was a good session. There were wins and losses, but the most positive win that came from it was that the right-to-work bills were not passed into law. Another bill that did not pass was preventing the firefighters from doing union work when on the clock, which would greatly slow progress. BC Lubke and Engineer Beers are serving as counselors at a Colorado Muscular Dystrophy Association Summer Camp for kids. MRFD is Montana's only Local fire department to send members this year. Lieutenant Kottwitz reported that the IAFF asked Local 2457 to host a response to the Interface class in the spring of 2024. This will also include Local 271, MFD, other wildland stakeholders from the Missoula area, and potentially others in the State of Montana. This group also hosted a class in 2018 that focused on structure protection in a wildland fire affecting neighborhoods. Lastly, the interview panel was formed, and they are preparing for the first round of interviews in July.

Battalion Chief (BC): BC Bowman reported that in May 2023, MRFD responded to 311 incidents, a 26% increase from last year. Year-to-date, MRFD is just under a 7% increase from last year.

Finance and Human Resources (HR): Melissa Schnee reported they have been working on the budget and resolutions in May. She also reported attending the Candidate Physical Agility Test (CPAT) with Chief Finlay and Chief Newman. MRFD received applications and is in the process of reviewing them. Melissa reported that they have been updating MRFD's annual AFLAC, Mutual of Omaha, and the Missoula County Medical Benefits (MCMB). ~~MCMB had a 10% increase, the most significant increase in many years.~~ Because of this, MRFD will request a permissive mil levy. Lastly, Melissa reported that she attended Government Finance Officers Association webinars.

Assistant Chief of Operations: Chief Finlay stated that Secretary Mangan asked about MRFD's response to active attack situations last month and informed the BOT that the Active Attack Integrated Response team was conducting a hands-on two-day training event June 13th and 15th that will include several law enforcement agencies and fire departments. It would simulate an active shooter at the Frenchtown Intermediate School. As Melissa mentioned, Chief Finlay took part in the CPAT at Billings and continues to work with the end-of-year and upcoming fiscal-year budget. Chief Finlay informed the BOT that MRFD would no longer deal with Rosenbauer as there was a severe lack of communication, follow-through, and quality in the last two engine purchases. Trustee Merritt asked what the extra cost MRFD incurred in travel expenses and time spent dealing with them. Chief Newman stated that they are working on figuring out the numbers and plan to take them to the District's attorney for her advice on handling the situation. The numbers will include the extra time spent on this project; much work went into fixing, removing, and reassembling parts because Rosenbauer had not followed the detailed specifications as written.

Fire Chief: Chief Newman reported that MRFD is in its final testing stage with Station Alerting, which is running parallel with the old system to ensure there aren't any issues. So far, everything is running as expected. Lieutenant Hollenbeck put a great deal of work into Station Alerting before he took his leave of absence and left Engineer Paulsen to take over the completion of the project. Chief Newman communicated that they are currently finishing negotiations with a consulting firm that does station location studies. MRFD is ready to look at station locations in the next fiscal year and will have a third-party verification to ensure the District's best locations. Lastly, MRFD is looking at the possibility of moving towards Auto Vehicle Locating in the dispatch process, which will dispatch the closest vehicle location rather than the closest station. Chief Newman gave an example: if an MFD engine were closer to an MRFD location, MFD would be dispatched. It dispatches the needs of the call rather than the run card engine tied to it.

OLD BUSINESS:

NEW BUSINESS (Continued):

2. **Opening of Responses to Requests for Proposals for Station 6 Roof Replacement and Selection of Evaluation Committee:** Chief Newman stated that MRFD didn't get any bids for the Station 6 roof. The attorney revised the Request for Bid (RFB) and suggested MRFD search out contractors instead of having them come to MRFD. Trustee Merritt motioned to readvertise for the RFB Station 6's roof replacement. Vice-Chairman Hanson seconded the motion. The motion was voted on and passed.
3. **Public Hearing and Decision Resolution 2023-7 Adopting Fees for Copies and Employee Time to Fulfill Public Information Requests:** Melissa Schnee explained that the resolution is an update to a previous fee schedule, which had specific dollar amounts that are now outdated. The update would increase the copier cost and stated that MRFD would charge the actual cost of an item rather than give a dollar amount. Trustee Merritt made a motion to adopt the resolution. Vice-Chairman Hanson seconded the motion. The motion was voted on and passed.
4. **Public Hearing and Decision Resolution 2023-8 Establishing Fees for Goods and Services Provided by Missoula Rural Fire District:** Melissa stated that the fees for goods and services are for address signs, lock boxes, and fuel mitigation. This resolution also includes language like "current rates" instead of listing a dollar amount that could change from year to year. Chief Newman stated that mitigation services outside of the grant's process were added to this resolution. This surfaced recently when a homeowner could not meet the criteria due to the property being too small but still wanted the work done at his cost. MRFD didn't have a policy that allowed them to do that, and adding mitigation services would make it possible. Trustee Merritt moved to adopt the resolution. Vice-Chairman Hanson seconded the motion. The motion was voted on and passed.
5. **Public Hearing and Decision Resolution 2023-9 Setting Fees for Response Outside the Jurisdictional Boundaries of the Fire District Not Covered by Mutual or Automatic Aid Agreements:** Melissa Schnee stated that the resolution would supersede the previous resolution and the most significant change was rather than referencing the actual dollar amount, it would include language for the current rates of a specific document. Chief Newman said that the resolution summarizes the cost of responding to an incident when a homeowner refuses to annex into the District. Secretary Mangan asked if they've contacted the other departments to check if they do something similar in their jurisdiction. Chief Newman stated that they have not. Secretary Mangan commented that he would hate to see MRFD not get called out to help someone because of the cost concerns. Chief Finlay stated that MRFD has a duty to its residents and taxpayers, who should not be responsible for subsidizing the cost to those properties that have chosen not to annex into the District. Chief Newman stated they would always respond to a life safety incident, even if they are not annexed into the District. Trustee Merritt moved to adopt the resolution. Vice-Chairman Hanson seconded the motion. The motion was voted on and passed.
6. **Discussion and Decision on Resolution on Resolution 2023-6 Authorizing Participation in the INTERCAP Program:** Melissa Schnee explained that the resolution is for the loan that MRFD received from the Montana Board of Investments for the new equipment totaling \$678,065, which was paid. MRFD now seeks to draw on that loan. Trustee Merritt moved to adopt the resolution. Vice-Chairman Hanson seconded the motion. The motion was voted on and passed.
7. **Discussion and Decision on Resolution 2023-10 Equipment Surplus Sale:** Chief Finlay stated that the resolution is a result of retiring three Type I engines, a Type 6 engine, and a semitrailer where lifespan is expiring. MRFD deemed they would have value to other agencies. Trustee Merritt moved to adopt the resolution. Vice-Chairman Hanson seconded the motion. The motion was voted on and passed.

8. **Presentation of BOT Requested Image Trend Calls for Service Report:** Chief Finlay stated that the report was conducted out of Secretary Mangan's request last month for call types increasing in nature. Their issue is that they cannot go back before May 2022. The previous record management system could only track some of the information requested for the report; they knew the number of calls ran but not the most common types, as the other reporting software provided. Chief Finlay also stated that they have heat maps revealing where they respond most. Chairman Murphy questioned the meaning of "MRFD did not respond" from the report. Chief Finlay answered that most of the time, it would have been MFD responding within MRFD's District; other times, MRFD couldn't get to the location, and another agency had proceeded. Chairman Murphy also mentioned that he didn't see wildland fire as part of the report. Chief Finlay said he would investigate further and find out why it didn't pull up on the report.
9. **Discussion and Decision on the BOT Negotiation Committee:** The BOT decided that Trustee Merritt and Chairman Murphy would be on the contract negotiation committee.
10. **Discussion and Decision on the Petition of Annexation of 4195 Snowdrift Lane, Missoula, and 22050 Hwy 12 West, Lolo:** Chief Newman recommended annexing these properties into the District. Trustee Merritt moved to approve the annexation of 4195 Snowdrive Lane. Vice-Chairman Hanson seconded the motion. The motion was voted on and passed. Trustee Merritt moved to approve the annexation of 22050 Hwy 12 West. Vice-Chairman Hanson seconded the motion. The motion was voted on and passed.
11. **Discussion and Decision on Moving the October BOT Meeting from 10/10/23 to 10/3/23:** Chief Newman explained that he, Chief Finlay, and Melissa Schnee would be at CPAT the week of the regular BOT meeting and asked the Board to consider changing the date to the Tuesday before. The BOT agreed that the meeting would be changed from October 10th, 2023, to October 3rd, 2023.

EXECUTIVE SESSION: Chairman Murphy determined the next matter to be a matter of individual privacy, and the individual's privacy considerably outweighs the public's right to know. He closed the meeting to the public to hold an executive session.

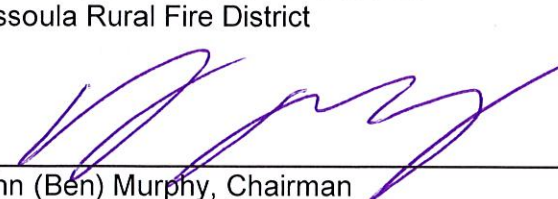
Chairman Murphy closed the executive session and opened the public meeting.

ADJOURNMENT: Trustee Merritt made a motion to adjourn. Vice-Chairman Hanson seconded the motion. Chairman Murphy adjourned the meeting at 18:15 hours.

Respectfully submitted,



Jenn Culp, Administrative Assistant
Missoula Rural Fire District



John (Ben) Murphy, Chairman

7/11/23
Date



Dick Mangan, Secretary

7/12/23
Date