

Missoula Rural Fire District  
Board of Trustees  
Missoula, Montana 59804

August 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2023

The Missoula Rural Fire District (MRFD) Board of Trustees (BOT) met in special session at the Station 1 Headquarters meeting room and via a "Zoom" video conference on **Wednesday, August 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2023.**

**CALL TO ORDER:** Chairman Murphy called the meeting to order at 17:00 hours.

**PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

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

**PUBLIC COMMENT:** A member of the public was present but didn't have anything to comment.

**NEW BUSINESS:**

1. **Discussion and Decision on Additional Firefighters and Deputy Chief Positions:** Chief Newman explained that one of MRFD's shifts has been short a firefighter since creating the Accreditation Manager position. They have been able to maintain operational staffing but at a significant increase in overtime. The administration has been overwhelmed with additional responsibilities, and they have realized that the workload is too much for just two administrative Chiefs. After conducting thorough budget reviews, the ideal timing to add two new positions would be during FY24, given the increase in revenue. Chief Newman asked for the BOT's approval on moving forward with the additional firefighter and Deputy Chief positions. Chief Newman stated that hiring an additional firefighter would cost approximately \$108,000, including benefits, in response to Trustee Corti's inquiry about the financial impact. During the meeting, Trustee Corti inquired about the potential savings in overtime for MRFD. Chief Newman responded that it would not eliminate overtime, but it would help. Chief Finlay stated that having the same number of staff on each shift is beneficial. They have observed the advantages of having full staffing on two shifts compared to the current understaffed shift. According to Chief Newman, there are two shifts with 16 staff members and another with 15. Having a shift of 16 provides the benefit of having a higher than minimum staffing number per day more frequently than the shift with 15. Trustee Merritt asked if this would move MRFD closer to accreditation goals. Chief Newman explained that increasing staffing numbers per call for each type of emergency response will positively impact accreditation. For instance, a medical aid call may require three people, while a structure fire may need 16. As these numbers increase, we expect to see benefits on the accreditation side. Whenever staffing improves, it increases the chance of MRFD's ISO rating going up. During the meeting, Trustee Corti inquired about the mills for the upcoming year. In response, Melissa Schnee clarified that the number of non-voted mills will automatically decrease with the increase in mill value. However, the number of voted mills will remain unchanged. Trustee Corti asked if the Deputy Chief position would come out of that increase. Chief Newman confirmed that it would. Vice-Chairman Hanson made a motion to approve the two additional positions. Trustee Merritt seconded the motion. The motion was voted on and passed.

**EXECUTIVE MEETING:** 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 18:23 hours.

Respectfully submitted,



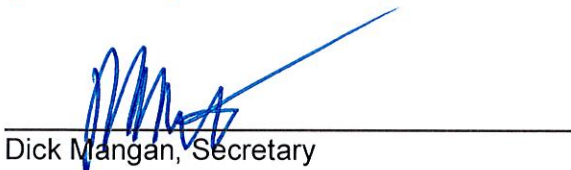
Jenn Culp, Administrative Assistant  
Missoula Rural Fire District



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John (Ben) Murphy, Chairman

9/12/23  
Date



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Dick Mangan, Secretary

9/13/23  
Date