

**Ridgway Fire Protection District**  
**Special Meeting**  
**August 18, 2020**

**CALL TO ORDER**

Meeting called to order at 5:36 p.m. by Board Chair, Charles Mueller, at the Ridgway Volunteer Fire Department located at 251 N. Railroad Street, Ridgway Colorado. Other Board Directors in attendance were Ned Bosworth, Eric Dickerson, and Mary Reinhardt (Zoom). Chief Chris Miller, Administrator Katy LaSala, and RFPD Legal Representative Bo Nerlin were also present.

Agenda amended for New Business items to be moved to the top of the agenda:

**RFPD Legal Representation Move**

Bo Nerlin appeared to explain his move from the office of JD Reed P.C. to Devor and Plumhoff LLC as well as the options for retaining him as our lawyer through his new firm or remaining with JD Reed.

- ❖ MOTION by Mueller to retain Bo Nerlin and Devor and Plumhoff LLC as the legal representation for the Ridgway Fire Protection District. SECOND by Dickerson. ALL IN FAVOR.

**Equal Pay Act/Employee Status Options**

Nerlin presented his thoughts regarding the District's options concerning the Equal Pay Act and Miller and Katy LaSala's employment status. He suggested that both Miller and Katy LaSala's working relationships for the RFPD are representative of employer/employee positions rather than contractor relationships, and as such, they should become W2 employees for the District rather than 1099 contractors.

Nerlin also suggested that the District entertain merging the Ridgway Volunteer Fire Department (RVFD) into the RFPD as many other fire districts have done in the past and which would incorporate the RVFD volunteers and provide them more protection as they would be under the District's "umbrella". Finally, it would lessen the liability of both the District and the volunteers. Miller stressed preserving the independence of the RVFD volunteers and their choice to elect officers because, with this type of merge, the Special District would have an employed Chief. The Board questioned whether all the fire department members would need to become employees with this merge. Nerlin stated that he believed the fire members would still be able to be 1099ed for their call hours rather than become employees. Dickerson expressed interest in the merge. Nerlin will follow up with LaSala and Miller. No action was taken at this time.

**FINANCIALS**

Mueller noted that fuel expenses are almost over budget. LaSala and Miller explained that most of the costs are from Command 1210 and the purchase of an ethanol fuel drum and pump from Atlas Mining as well as fuel that will provide for our smaller equipment.

- ❖ MOTION by Mueller to move \$100,000 from the Alpine Bank checking account into one of the District's savings accounts. SECOND by Reinhardt. ALL IN FAVOR.

**BILLS**

- MOTION by Mueller to approve the bills as presented. SECOND by Dickerson. ALL IN FAVOR.

**MINUTES**

- MOTION by Bosworth to approve the 6/8/20 minutes as presented. SECOND by Mueller. ALL IN FAVOR.

## **OLD BUSINESS**

### **Safety Deposit Box Update**

LaSala explained that the box was drilled, and a new key was made for it. The cost for services is estimated at \$100. We have not received a bill yet.

### **Communications Van Update**

Chief Miller stated that it is now parked outside of the fire station. While we will be sharing it with Ouray Fire and possibly Ouray Mountain Rescue, we want to use it as a wildland command and drone vehicle. We want to change the decals on it to say, "Ouray County Communications," but are waiting for approval from Sheriff Perry. We also would like to put a mobile repeater in it. It is also not insured yet. However, all costs will be split between sharing entities.

### **Ladder Truck Update**

Chief Miller explained that the truck is in Grand Junction awaiting repairs.

## **CHIEF'S REPORT**

Chief Miller reported that everyone has high training and call hours apart from the four members that are on Covid-19 leave. He also stated that car accidents are still our predominant call types.

Chief Miller stated that the RVFD members participated in several trainings last month. The DFPC brought their Driver Simulator trailer to our Firehouse, and 69 people took a three-hour training course. The DFPC will also be bringing their live fire burn trailer here in October. Four RVFD members attended a Forcible Entry/Hoseline Advancement class at the Hotchkiss Fire Department at the beginning of August, which was presented by Canvas Corners. As a result of that class, Canvas Corners will be bringing that same training to us in September. Also, Halmotro will be doing an extrication training for us in September.

Mueller suggested that Chief Miller about publishing a monthly "Chief's Report" in the Ouray County Plaindealer as well as other social media outlets. Reinhardt will speak to the newspaper about our options.

Miller informed the Board that Jack Young built a wall that impedes fire access to a hydrant at the Chipeta Sun Lodge. Miller attempted to negotiate with him, to no avail. He will be delivering Mr. Young a "Release of Liability" waiver soon.

Lastly, Miller explained that Ridgway and Ouray Fire have hired Danika Gilbert to write a grant proposal for 50 new MSA G1 SCBA packs and masks; 30 of which will go to us.

## **NEW BUSINESS**

### **Wildland Team Opportunity**

Chief Miller and LaSala are working with Steve Menz to create a Wildland Team in which we can deploy during each year's fire season. Miller will have a presentation together by the RFPD September meeting.

### **Designation of Budget Officer**

❖ MOTION by Mueller to appoint Katy LaSala as the 2021 budget officer. SECOND by Redmond. ALL IN FAVOR.

### **2021 Budget Discussion**

Discussion of the budget ensued with emphasis on being frugal with additional planned spending due to possible decreases in future revenue. Dialogue will continue at the next RFPD Board meeting.

**ADJOURNMENT**

❖ MOTION by Mueller to Adjourn. Second by Dickerson. ALL IN FAVOR

Meeting Adjourned at 6:40 p.m.

Respectively Submitted,  
-Katy LaSala