

Ridgway Fire Protection District
Special Meeting
November 10th, 2022

CALL TO ORDER

Meeting called to order at 5:30 pm by Board Chair Christen Williams, at the Ridgway Fire Department located at 251 N. Railroad Street, Ridgway, Colorado. Also, in attendance were Board Vice-Chair Pam Kraft, Board Treasurer Mary Reinhardt, Board members Adam Johnson and Steve Duce, RFPD Administrator Katy LaSala, RVFD Fire Chief Chris Miller, RVFD Fire Captain Tom Sisler, RVFD Firefighter Mike Trahan, Telluride FPD Chief Bennett, Executive Director Jamie Gomez and Aaron Johnson from the West Region Wildfire Council, and Ouray Plaindealer Reporter Kaylea Henseler.

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

West Region Wildfire Council Presentation

Gomez, A. Johnson, and Chief Bennett, who is also a board member on the Council's Board, requested the help of the Ridgway Fire Protection District's firefighters to complete the second half of the District's rapid assessments in 2023. The Council members explained that the West Region Wildfire Council is a non-profit organization, primarily funded by state and federal grants, that partners with twenty-three special districts within the state of Colorado as well as the USFS, BLM, and the DFPC to provide outreach, education, and technical and financial wildfire mitigation services to our Colorado communities. They described in detail their Wildfire Risk Assessment Program in which members of the local fire departments help to complete "curbside" (no trespassing) rapid assessments on residences within their districts. The results of the assessments are then examined by the West Region Wildfire Council and made available for each property owner to securely review so that the property owners can better understand their wildfire risk and then decide if they would like to complete the suggested mitigation actions. Duce inquired to whether the results are shared with insurance companies, to which the Council members denied stating that only the Wildfire Council and local fire departments have access to the private information. Bennett reiterated the benefit of developing relationships between our firefighter and the community members as well as getting to know our district's area and developing more accurate preplans. Furthermore, by partnering with the Wildfire Council, everyone benefits from their knowledge and resources. Finally, A. Johnson stated that the value of the program is in the outreach and getting the conversation out about "our very real wildfire risk."

Captain Sisler and FF Trahan, acknowledged the benefits of the program but, as they helped complete 30 assessments earlier this year, they felt like they were "creeping around on people's properties." They also questioned the assessment's scoring system as a property will receive an "F" if one cannot see the home from the driveway entrance. A. Johnson explained that once the homeowners receive their results, they are encouraged to call the Council with any questions or explanations concerning their assessment, which also, in turn, opens a conversation.

Duce acknowledged the benefit of "speaking with people who come out to talk to you," while Kraft and Johnson stated they believe the program to be very valuable. Williams committed to providing Ridgway Firefighters in 2023 to help complete the assessments.

FINANCIALS

LaSala noted that we are still waiting on payment from the most recent wildland assignment but that it should be here by the end of November.

❖ MOTION by Reinhardt to approve financials as presented. SECOND by Kraft. ALL IN FAVOR.

MINUTES

❖ MOTION by Kraft to approve the 10/5/22 minutes as presented. SECOND by Johnson. ALL IN FAVOR.

OLD BUSINESS

2022 Election

- ❖ MOTION by Kraft to authorize LaSala to certify the election 2022 election results should it be required by the Board. SECOND by Johnson. ALL IN FAVOR.

2023 Budget Discussion

Restricted Funds

LaSala explained the funds are reserved for equipment, trucks, scbas, and turnouts. She said that it is her belief that these reserved funds have become redundant in the District's budget and suggested that they be reallocated for a more specific item, such as only trucks, or put into unrestricted funds.

- ❖ MOTION by Kraft to move the \$312,500 from Board Designated Restricted Funds to Unrestricted Funds. SECOND by Duce. ALL IN FAVOR.

Rather than having a long budget discussion during this meeting, it was decided to hold a Special Meeting on Saturday, November 12th at 8:30 am.

Chief's Salary Request

Discussion regarding the Chief's Salary Request was moved to the November 12th Special Meeting. No action was taken at this time.

CHIEF'S REPORT

Chief Miller reported that we will be having B1211 repaired and painted and having the blue brush truck wrapped and stickered. He further stated that FF Nathan Judd is servicing and repairing all our trucks. He noted that we have two more planned trainings for the year. However, four or five of our members are very low on training hours and will not receive their pension for 2022. Further, their status on the department will be discussed in January. Finally, Chief Miller stated that the Open House went very well and would like to hold it annually.

NEW BUSINESS

District Administrator Salary Increase Request

Williams acknowledged that the Board has received the request but suggested pursuing the discussion with the Chief's Salary discussion during an executive session at the November 12th Special Meeting. Kraft stated that we need to be able to act soon on both requests. No action was taken at this time.

Employee Insurance Options

LaSala presented a health insurance quote package from PHSCG and noted that she is still waiting for a quote from CEBT but has not received anything yet. No action was taken at this time as this discussion was also moved to the November 12th Special Meeting.

OTHER NON-AGENDA BUSINESS

ADJOURNMENT

- ❖ MOTION Johnson to adjourn. Second by Reinhardt. ALL IN FAVOR

Meeting Adjourned at 7:15 p.

Respectively Submitted,
-Katy LaSala