

**Ridgway Fire Protection District**  
**Regular Meeting**  
**February 1, 2023**

**CALL TO ORDER**

Meeting called to order at 5:44 pm by Board Chair, Christen Williams, at the Ridgway Fire Department located at 251 N. Railroad Street, Ridgway, Colorado. Also, in attendance were RFPD Board Members Pam Kraft, Mary Reinhardt, Steve Duce, and Adam Johnson; RFPD interim Fire Chief Chris Miller, RFPD Legal Counsel Bo Nerlin (zoom), District Administrator Katy LaSala, and FPPA Representative Beth Hemenway (zoom).

**FINANCIALS**

Chief Miller stated that he is having several different apparatus either repaired or modified, and the District should be seeing that reflected in the upcoming financial statements.

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

**MINUTES**

❖ MOTION by Reinhardt to approve the 1/4/23 regular minutes and 1/18/23 workshop minutes as presented. SECOND by Johnson. ALL IN FAVOR.

**OLD BUSINESS**

**Health Insurance**

Discussion ensued regarding offering the District's current and future full-time employees health insurance under the Public Service Healthcare Group (PSHCG). Kraft noted her support of using the PSHCG and suggested purchasing Plan A 1500 with dental and vision options for the two current full-time employees. Williams said that she would like to have more information concerning the cost to the District. LaSala and Kraft noted that the Board did put \$50,000 in the 2023 budget for health insurance, and that would cover the applicable premiums. No action was taken at this time, and further discussion was postponed to the next regular district meeting.

**New Staff Positions – FLSA Regulations & Use of a Professional Employment Agreement**

Board members were advised by RFPD legal representative, Bo Nerlin, that the Fire Chief and District Administrator positions would be considered FLSA Exempt, whereas all hired first responders would be considered FLSA Non-Exempt.

Board members also discussed in depth the need for an employment contract for new employees. Nerlin advised that it would be in the best interest of all parties to have an employment agreement for any professional and management employees, such as the Fire Chief, that would be renewed on an annual basis but not for any career firefighters. Kraft asked if policies need to be put in place before entering into an employment agreement to which Nerlin said, "No." Further, Kraft questioned if the District needs to have performance standards and personnel regulations in place before hiring full-time employees. Nerlin advised the Board to create a clear job description for all positions that are planning to be hired before advertising for any position and hiring any personnel, but the performance standards and personnel regulations could be created after. Williams suggested the Board first create a job description and employment contract for the Fire Chief and then work on other positions with the input of the newly hired Fire Chief.

When discussing advertising for the Chief's position, Kraft asked if the Board is required to publicize externally and internally. Nerlin noted that the District is required to advertise internally and suggested posting a job announcement at the firehouse and email it to all members. He also stated that the District has the option to post externally. Williams asked the Board if it would be a good idea to post externally as well as internally for transparency purposes.

- ❖ MOTION by Duce to advertise for the position of the Fire Chief internally and not externally. SECOND by Reinhardt. ALL IN FAVOR.

In regard to hiring other personnel, Nerlin stated that the Board needs to first create policies for hiring, and the Fire Chief would be required to adhere to those policies when hiring. Both Kraft and Johnson expressed their concern that the Board is going to shortchange any opportunity for volunteers to apply for any career positions.

Finally, Kraft noted that that when creating staffing structure, she would like the District Administrator position to continue to be held responsible under the Board. Johnson agreed with Kraft. Williams disagreed by stating that she would like the position to answer to the Fire Chief. Williams suggested discussing the topic at a workshop. Reinhardt agreed that both the Fire Chief and District Administrator position descriptions should be discussed there. LaSala noted the District has a very clear cut position description for the District Administrator. Workshops to discuss and create a position description and job posting for the Fire Chief were set to be held at the Ridgway Fire Station for February 4<sup>th</sup>, 2023 at 2 pm and February 9<sup>th</sup>, 2023 at 5 pm.

### **Revised Policies Update Discussion – Lexipol Proposal**

LaSala presented a proposal from Lexipol and, along with Nerlin, suggested that the Board utilizing their services.

- ❖ MOTION by Kraft to enter into an agreement with Lexipol to purchase the Annual Policy and GrantFinder Subscriptions as well as the implementation of all five One-Time Cost Tiers; not to exceed \$22,000. SECOND by Johnson. ALL IN FAVOR.

### **Building Repairs Update**

Chief Miller stated that we are getting bids from Dave Dorr for both the flood repairs and for the garage door extension. He and LaSala both noted that, after our insurance company is finished negotiating with Serve Pro regarding the cost of their part of the flood repairs, the District will receive a lump sum payment from our insurance company, to which we can use to pay our contractor for the remainder of the flood damage repairs.

### **CHIEF'S REPORT**

Chief Miller reported that three firefighters recently went to a training in St. George, UT. He also noted that the District's ISO score has been upgraded by three points. Finally, our firefighters responded to a chimney fire yesterday in which they were able to extinguish within 4.5 hours.

### **NEW BUSINESS**

#### **FPPA Explanation of Contribution Requirements & Benefits with FPPA Director of Relationship Manager**

Due to internet technical difficulties, discussion was moved to a later District Board meeting.

#### **Appointment of 2023 Designated Election Official**

- ❖ MOTION by Kraft to elect Katy LaSala as the Designated Election Official for the 2023 Special District Election. SECOND by Reinhardt. ALL IN FAVOR.

#### **Designation of Public Meeting Posting Place**

- ❖ MOTION by Kraft to designate the Ridgway Fire Protection District Public Meeting Posting Place on the District's online website at <https://ridgwayfire.org/district/public-notices/>. SECOND by Reinhardt. ALL IN FAVOR.

### **OTHER NON-AGENDA BUSINESS**

Chief Miller requested the regularly scheduled District meeting dates be changed to always follow the Ridgway Volunteer Fire Department meeting dates. LaSala noted that Mondays would work best for her schedule. The discussion will be put on the next regular District meeting agenda.

### **ADJOURNMENT**

The next RFPD Board meeting is scheduled to be held on March 1, 2023.

❖ MOTION by Reinhardt to Adjourn. Second by Johnson. ALL IN FAVOR

Meeting Adjourn at 7:29 pm.

Respectively Submitted,  
-Katy LaSala