

Ridgway Fire Protection District
Regular Meeting
August 21, 2023

CALL TO ORDER

Meeting called to order at 5:02 pm by Board Chair, Christen Williams, at the Ridgway Fire Department located at 251 N. Railroad Street, Ridgway, Colorado. Also in attendance were Board Members Pam Kraft, Mary Reinhardt, and Jamie Gomez as well as District Fire Chief Chris Miller and Ouray Plaindealer reporter Dan Schmidt.

MINUTES

❖ MOTION by Kraft to approve the 7/17/23 minutes as presented. SECOND by Gomez. ALL IN FAVOR.

FINANCIALS

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

OLD BUSINESS

ServePro Payment Dispute

Chief Miller reported that RFPD legal representative, Bo Nerlin, relayed to him that the judge dismissed the case because the name on was incorrect. Servepro has said that they will refile but has not done so yet. Nerlin asked Miller to reach out to Servepro and once again offer them the board approved \$14,000 settlement. He will do that next week.

CHIEF'S REPORT

Chief Miller reported that the Wildland Team is currently on a 21-day assignment in California. Brush 1211 has several mechanical issues that are threatening their stay on the assignment. This is the second time this has happened with this truck. Miller reiterated the need for a new wildland brush truck to continue the wildland program. He would like to order a new type 6 brush truck (\$200,000) as soon as possible as we wouldn't receive it until 2024. One option would be to trade or sell B1211 to help provide money for a new truck. Kraft does not think we need to sell a truck to help buy a truck as we have the money to purchase one. Williams asked Miller to get the board the specs and estimates for a new truck.

Williams mentioned that Horsefly is trying to purchase a new fire truck and has recently received donations from Telluride Fire Protection District and Log Hill Fire Protection District. She would like to know if we would like to give them a donation as well as it would be in everyone's best interest as we are one of their backups. Kraft tasked Miller with speaking with the Horsefly Fire Chief to see what exactly they need and bring the issue back to the next District meeting. Miller will do so as he feels obligated to "pay it forward" as Telluride FPD donated their ladder truck to us.

NEW BUSINESS

2024 Budget

- **Discussion**
Williams suggested postponing the budget discussion until the next District meeting.
- **Planning Committee**
Williams and Kraft would also like to create a planning a capital improvement planning committee. This will also be further discussed at the next District meeting.

Mill Levy Increase Discussion w/ Ouray County Plaindealer

Mr. Schmidt asked how the inclusion of paid personnel benefits the fire department. Chief Miller responded by saying that it will increase the quality of our training, safety, vehicle maintenance, and "all of the routines we get to get to that point." We have broken down our firefighters into groups with a paid captain as their leader. These groups will receive more customized training to benefit their skill sets. This will also help build team morale and skills through smaller group trainings.

Mr. Schmidt then asked if the department plans on hiring more paid personnel in the future. Williams said that, at this moment, the District has no immediate plans to hire more paid staff, but as time goes on and other paid positions may be warranted, the District will hire as needed if it falls within the budget. Chief Miller would like to eventually hire our Wildland Program's engine bosses as year-round employees. Currently they are only paid as seasonal personnel.

Lastly, Mr. Schmidt asked how the paid personnel and different training options will further help to decrease response times and the quality of our responses to emergencies. Miller stated that we will be doing more training with other agencies such as OCEMS on a quarterly basis, if not more. This will allow fire to better help OCEMS if they need.

Williams wanted to ensure that Mr. Schmidt and all our constituents know how appreciative the Ridgway Fire Protection District for our community's support and that they allowed the mill levy to pass so that we could hire paid personnel and provided better service to our community in the future as service is the "whole heart of it."

OTHER NON-AGENDA BUSINESS

Chief Miller noted that he is looking into starting a Junior Firefighter program after he finishes with Lexipol as we have had several teenagers that are interested. Currently, we do have one junior "trainee" who trains with us and goes on ride-alongs. No action on the topic was taken at this time.

Williams mentioned that several people have asked her why the RVFD isn't hosting the silent auction anymore. Chief Miller noted that there is a lot of effort involved, and our members do not want to do it anymore. Kraft also suggested that the businesses may be burnt out on donating to so many different charities. Miller suggested hosting a dinner with a gun raffle sponsored by Area Best Pawn, to which all the board members, apart for Reinhardt, thought was a great idea. No action on the topic was taken at this time.

ADJOURNMENT

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

Meeting Adjourned until the next RFPD Board on 9/18/23 at 5:50 pm.

Respectively Submitted,

-Katy LaSala (notes taken by Mary Reinhardt)