

Ridgway Fire Protection District
Regular Meeting
September 18th, 2023

CALL TO ORDER

Meeting called to order at 5:11 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 Jamie Gomez and Adam Johnson; RFPD Chief Chris Miller; and District Administrator Katy LaSala.

MINUTES

❖ MOTION by Gomez to approve the 8/21/23 minutes as presented. SECOND by Johnson. ALL IN FAVOR.

FINANCIALS

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

OLD BUSINESS

ServePro Update

Chief Miller negotiated a settlement in which the Ridgway Fire Protection District will pay ServePro a sum of \$14,000, and the case will be dismissed. Miller will bring ServePro the payment tomorrow. Gomez suggested that we do not use ServePro's services again, while all members suggested doing more research if a similar situation occurs in the future. Johnson suggested creating a "pre-plan" with a list of contractors that we can call during emergency situations such as this. No further action was taken.

CHIEF'S REPORT

Chief Miller reported that Truck1211 is in Grand Junction getting necessary repairs. Chief Miller will be driving B1214 over the next week to diagnose why it occasionally will not start. Williams and the other board members requested that Chief Miller and his officers provide maintenance reports from the District's reporting software.

Chief Miller stated that FF Soderquist will be teaching a low angle rope class on Saturday 9/21 and Sunday 9/22. We will also be holding several extrication trainings in October.

NEW BUSINESS

2024 Budget Discussion

An extensive discussion between board members and Chief Miller proceeded. Chief Miller explained that he would like to purchase a training draft commander for \$100,000 by splitting the cost with the Ouray Fire Department. The total cost of the equipment is \$200,000. Williams questioned where the training equipment would be stored, to which Miller noted that it would be housed our storage unit at the bottom of town. Miller also noted that the training equipment has potential to generate income for the District.

Chief Miller also noted that he would like to spend \$35,000 to upgrade T1212 in 2024 with a new automatic transmission, rather than the double clutch transmission it currently has, so that all the RFD members can drive it. Currently, only 4 members are trained to drive it.

Chief Miller requested that the board increase the three captains' and the district administrator's salaries from grossing \$55,000 to netting an average of \$55,000. LaSala noted that to net \$55,000, the gross amount would be around \$72,000.

Chief Miller would like to sell B1212 and Ranger1211 in 2024. He believes we can sell them for a combined total of \$10,000.

Chief Miller suggested leaving \$15,000 in the Volunteer Officer Duty Pay budget category for the two officers that are still classified as volunteers but can cover shifts in the event that a full-time officer needs time off.

Further discussion of the 2024 budget will ensue at the next District meeting.

TCR Training Building

Chief Miller explained that the Technical College of the Rockies (TCR) has a Conex container training tower that they would like to sell us. Their asking price is \$60,000. But they are willing to take three installments of \$20,000 each. Chief Miller believes that the tower would be of great value to not only Ridgway Fire but also surrounding fire departments, law enforcement agencies, and OCEMS for training purposes. Miller noted that there would be an estimated \$20,000 in additional expenses, including the purchase of a generator, deconstruction, transportation, and reconstruction of the building, and completing the groundwork. Johnson inquired as to where we would put the building. Miller noted that he is working on creating a lease agreement with a local landowner to put the training center on a piece of land on County Road 23, but that is not set in stone. Miller noted that the building is not currently set up for live fire scenarios but could be retrofitted in the future if needed. Currently, it has an extensive fog machine setup. Williams noted that having a building like this could open up many training opportunities. Gomez expressed concerns over the reasoning behind why TCR is wanting to sell it and the viability of us being able to utilize it as an income resource for the District. Williams and Johnson stated that they feel like having this building would be of great benefit to the advancement of our training program, a commitment to our firefighting team, and a benefit to our community, while the possibility of creating an income revenue would simply be a "cherry on top." Johnson asked Miller what the associated insurance costs would be. Miller stated that he has reached out to our insurance company and will bring an estimate to the next District meeting. While Gomez noted that he recognizes the potential to the District's training program and is in support of it, he wants to ensure that the RFPD is being diligent and responsible with its money.

- ❖ MOTION by Johnson to authorize a \$30,000 down payment as a commitment to purchase a training tower from the Technical College of the Rockies. SECOND by Gomez. ALL IN FAVOR.

OTHER NON-AGENDA BUSINESS

Structure Turnouts

Johnson relayed to the board his concerns regarding carcinogens in firefighting turnouts and their increasing direct link to cancer. He suggested that the fire district keep it in the forefront of our minds when deciding on purchasing more turnouts in the future.

Horsefly Donation

Williams mentioned that the Horsefly Fire Association is trying to purchase a new fire truck, and she recommended that the RFPD give them a donation. Chief Miller suggested having the Ridgway Volunteer Fire Department (RVFD) match a \$5,000 donation with the Ridgway Fire Protection District. He will discuss it with the RVFD at the 10/2/23 meeting and bring their decision back to the Board for a vote at our next meeting.

ADJOURNMENT

- ❖ MOTION by Williams to Adjourn. Second by Johnson. ALL IN FAVOR

Meeting Adjourned until 10/16/23 at 6:51 pm.

Respectively Submitted,
-Katy LaSala