

Ridgway Fire Protection District
Regular Meeting
16th October 2023

CALL TO ORDER

Meeting called to order at 5:00 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, Jamie Gomez, and Adam Johnson; District Fire Chief Chris Miller; District Administrator Katy LaSala; and RFPD Captain Bumper Williams.

MINUTES

❖ MOTION by Johnson to approve the 9/18/23 minutes as presented. SECOND by Gomez. ALL IN FAVOR.

FINANCIALS

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

OLD BUSINESS

Resolution to Oppose Proposition HH

LaSala presented a resolution for the Board to sign opposing Proposition HH as drafted by legal representative, Bo Nerlin.

❖ MOTION by Kraft to approve the amended resolution of the Ridgway Fire Protection District opposing Proposition HH. SECOND by Reinhardt. ALL IN FAVOR.

TCR Training Tower

Chief Miller presented a purchase agreement (attached) of the training tower as drafted by the Technical College of the Rockies' Board of Directors. Nerlin was called via phone and asked to review the document and emailed it back to the board with his recommended changes.

❖ MOTION by Reinhardt to enter into the drafted purchase agreement from the Technical College of the Rockies with RFPD legal representative's edits. SECOND by Gomez. ALL IN FAVOR.

2024 Budget Discussion

Before reviewing the 2024 Budget, Board members added a special meeting date of October 23rd, 2023, at 5:00 pm to further discuss the budget.

An in-depth discussion was held regarding the 2024 Budget. Each line item was reviewed and amended as necessary. As such, Volunteer Stipends were evaluated with Kraft suggesting that the board increase the amount allocated to encourage more incident response. Reinhardt, LaSala, and Miller all suggested that increasing the stipend amount will not necessarily encourage our volunteers to attend more calls. Gomez and Johnson suggested increasing the incentives during the evening and late-night hours. Miller noted that he is working on a plan to encourage more response.

Chief Miller also requested a Cost of Living Adjustment (COLA) to staff wages citing the increased cost of living in our area and to ensure that our paid employees stay with Ridgway Fire as they all have a second job. Kraft wholeheartedly disagreed with Chief Miller's reasoning and suggested completing a salary survey before increasing staff wages, also citing the District's responsibility to its taxpayers. Gomez recognized both opinions and stated that he believes it is reasonable to complete a survey with numbers from other Western Slope fire districts so that we can balance our available funds with the increased cost of living in the area. Williams reiterated that it is a delicate balance to do "right" by the District's staff and constituents.

CHIEF'S REPORT

- Chief Miller noted that the Captains will attend the Colorado Fire Chief's Conference in Keystone this month.
- Miller stated that the RFD has several donation burns and extrication trainings scheduled for November, all of which will be taught by the Captains.
- Johnson wanted to readdress the quarterly evaluations that were discussed earlier in the year. Williams suggested the need for several items including an officer component in which they can give their opinions of the efficacy of the Chief, an evaluation on the readiness of teams, the availability of the Chief to the Board, firefighters, calls, etc. a budget component, scheduling, and the timeliness of reporting. She tasked Miller with gathering the aforementioned information.

NEW BUSINESS

Horsefly Fire Association Donation

Miller noted that the RVFD agreed to donate \$5,000.

- ❖ MOTION by Reinhardt to match the RVFD \$5,000 donation with a donation of \$5,000 to the Horsefly Fire Association to be used towards their new apparatus. SECOND by Gomez. ALL IN FAVOR.

PHSCG Insurance Renewal

LaSala mentioned that the District has the option to offer up to six different plans for our employees to choose from and asked if we want to add any plans to our current one?

Current plan - United Healthcare Plan A 1500 (company paid) & Employee Paid Dental & Vision

2023 Monthly Medical Rates

- \$733 (employee only)

2024 Monthly Medical rates

- \$756.46

2023 Vision Rates (employee paid)

- \$7.79

2024 Vision Rates

- \$7.79

2023 Dental Rates (employee paid)

- \$31.71

2024 Dental Rates

- \$31.71

The Board clarified the District will contribute up to \$756.46 for any offered 2024 health insurance plan per employee per month. Any additional costs, including Vision and Dental plans, will be covered at the employees' expense.

Board Member Resignation

Reinhardt presented a letter of resignation effective November 1st, 2023. Williams stated that she and the other members of the RFPD Board thank Reinhardt for her services both as a Board member and 26-year RFD firefighter and send her many well wishes on her new adventures on the East Coast.

OTHER NON-AGENDA BUSINESS

ADJOURNMENT

- ❖ MOTION by Gomez to Adjourn until the 10/23/23 Special Meeting. Second by Reinhardt. ALL IN FAVOR.

Meeting Adjourned at 7:11

Respectively Submitted,
-Katy LaSala