

Ridgway Fire Protection District
Regular Meeting
October 21, 2024

CALL TO ORDER & ROLL CALL

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 Pam Kraft, Jamie Gomez, and Terry Schuyler; District Chief Miller; District Administrator Katy LaSala; Legal Counsel Bo Nerlin; and Employer's Council Representative Diana Portillo-Burger; and Lia Salvatierra from the Ouray County Plaindealer.

CHANGES TO THE AGENDA INCLUDING ADDITIONS & DELETIONS

The presentation by Diana Portillo-Burger was moved to the beginning of the meeting.

Presentation by Diana Portillo-Burger, consultant with the Employer's Council, regarding the recently completed compensation study for RFPD employees.

Miss Portillo-Burger presented her findings from the compensation study for RFPD employees. She stated that the market data used was based on Telluride and Western Colorado, and she also pulled data from pay factors and Peer Global Network surveys. The data was aged to January 1 with 3.9% aging factor. She then reviewed job matching process and market data for the positions to come up with the recommended average hourly rates within three increasing percentiles (25th, 50th, & 75th) for each position.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Board consideration of the minutes of the 9/9/24 Special Meeting and 9/16/24 Monthly Meetings.

- ❖ MOTION by Schuyler to approve the 9/9/24 special meeting minutes as presented. SECOND by Gomez. ALL IN FAVOR.
- ❖ MOTION by Schuyler to approve the 9/16/24 meeting minutes as mended to correct the spelling of "*Schuyler*." SECOND by Kraft. Gomez abstained as he was not present at that meeting. MOTION PASSED.

APPROVAL OF FINANCIAL REPORT

Board discussion of the 2024 August/September financial report.

- ❖ MOTION by Schuyler to approve the 2024 August/September financial report as presented. SECOND by Gomez. ALL IN FAVOR.

OLD BUSINESS

Board discussion regarding sale options for RFPD property - Lot 26-B1, Trail Town Subdivision – that is currently listed as for sale.

Williams noted that the property listing agreement with Todd Schroeder has expired and questioned the rest of the board how they would like to proceed. It was decided to have LaSala and Nerlin coordinate and reach out to several local realtors, including Mr. Schroeder, requesting them to send us a listing proposal before the next regular meeting.

Board discussion of financing the 22327 Highway 550 Training and Maintenance Center with Community Leasing Partners.

Nerlin noted that Community Leasing Partners ran into a financing issue on their end that had nothing to do with the RFPD. As such, Nerlin presented a document as written by Blake Klaus at Community Leasing. Two options were proposed:

finance the full amount (\$1,350,000) on a 20-year term or split it into two loans. One loan would be for \$400,000 on a two-year term and a second loan with the remaining \$950,000 for a 20-year term. So those are his proposals.

Kraft expressed her concern for the District to purchase the property before selling the lots located in Trail Town as it was originally discussed that money from the sale of the Trail Town lots would be used to help purchase the 22327 Highway 550 property. Without that money, she is concerned that the payments will be too high and put more constraints on the District's budget. Williams noted that, once the Trail Town lots do sell, the District will be able to use that money to refinance the 22327 Highway 550 loan, making the payments lower.

The Board directed Mr. Nerlin to have Community Leasing Partners create a lease purchase agreement with financing of the full amount of the purchase price (\$1,350,000) to be presented at a November 4, 2024 Special Meeting at 5:00 pm.

Board discussion of the 2025 Budget, allocation of a 2025 Budget sub-committee members, and creation of sub-committee meeting date.

It was decided by the Board to hold a Work Session on November 9, 2024 at 9:00 am to discuss the 2025 Budget.

Board discussion regarding any updates on the possible merging of Ouray County Fire and EMS agencies.

This discussion was pushed to the next Regular Meeting on November 18, 2024.

CHIEF'S REPORT

Chief Miller presented his Chief's report by stating that he is working on a new training schedule for the members. He discussed the call volume for October, noting an increase in extrication calls with limited call attendance from the volunteers. However, he did state that, because we now have full-time officers, our response time has increased significantly. Williams noted that several members of the community have reached out to her to "check in" and "say thank you for the resources we provide and for the professionalism" and expedited scene response. Chief Miller also noted that although the volunteer call response is low, he is still very happy with the volunteers we have as they do put in a huge effort.

NEW BUSINESS

Board discussion regarding the possible release of the 7/22/24 special meeting draft notes to the Ouray County Plaindealer.

Nerlin stated that the Ouray County Plaindealer made a records request for LaSala's handwritten notes from the 7/22/24 meeting because, unfortunately, there was no recording of that meeting. After evaluating the records request, Nerlin initially spoke to RFPD staff, and we deemed that that is work product. We received a response from outside council working with the Plaindealer, arguing that it's not work products. Nerlin takes the position that it is work product but has conferred with LaSala and Williams, and we are recommended that there be a release of those notes. Kraft disagreed with the suggestion that we release the notes because we should exercise the protections that are in place. Nerlin stated that we are asking to release them because, at the end of the day, we would like to view the newspaper as a partner and it is also in the best interest of our constituents to be so.

❖ MOTION by Schuyler to release the drafted notes from the 7/22/24 special meeting to the Ouray County Plaindealer.
SECOND by Gomez. OPPOSED by Kraft. MOTION PASSED.

MOTION TO ADJOURN

❖ MOTION by Gomez to adjourn to the November 4, 2024 Special Meeting. Second by Kraft. ALL IN FAVOR

Meeting Adjourned at 6:25.

Respectively Submitted,
-Katy LaSala