

**Regular Meeting of the North Blaine County Fire District in the Council
Chambers – 81 Elkhorn Road, Sun Valley, ID
October 18th, 2023, at 10:00 AM.**

1. Call to Order.

Chairman Gray called the meeting to order at 10:00 a.m.

Chairman Gray commented that he is wearing a mask this morning because his office manager has Covid; he is not sick and has not seen her for several days and is wearing the mask to be cautious.

2. Public Comment.

None.

3. Approval of the October 2023 Claims*.

Chairman Gray has a couple of questions. Why is the Clear Creek Disposal invoice \$974 this month? Jocelin explains that they billed us for three quarters at once, when they usually bill quarterly. She is waiting to hear back from them for why they billed that way this time. Chairman Gray also asked what DC Family Services are? They are the cleaning company that cleaned Greenhorn Unit 200A between tenants. Chairman Gray's final question is what did Rob Beck do for us? He trimmed and cut down some trees at Greenhorn. Commissioner Michael asked why the windshield on Engine 3 was replaced, and Chief Bauer answered that the windshield has gotten a crack that was too big to be repaired without replacing the windshield.

MOTION:

Commissioner Michael moved to approve the October 2023 claims; seconded by Commissioner Engelmann. A roll call vote was taken.

AYES: Chairman Gray, Commissioner Michael, Commissioner Engelmann

NAYS: None

4. Approval of the September 13, 2023, Regular Meeting Minutes*.

MOTION:

Commissioner Engelmann moved to approve the September 13, 2023, Regular Meeting Minutes; seconded by Commissioner Michael. A roll call vote was taken.

AYES: Chairman Gray, Commissioner Michael, Commissioner Engelmann

NAYS: None

5. Report: Monthly Update – North Blaine County Fire District Chief, Rich Bauer.

Chief Bauer would like to ask the Commissioners about Engine 20. It has been used mostly as a utility truck the past several years after we took the pumper of it. It is 30 years old and we do not have much use for it anymore, and would like to donate it to Smiley Creek Fire District. They have a need for it and a pump they can put in it for firefighting. Chairman Gray is very in favor of donating our old equipment to other local departments, and comments that there are District donated apparatus in Stanley and Carey

already. Commissioners Michael and Engelmann agree to donate the Engine. The Commissioners will make a motion on this next month.

6. Report: Monthly Update – Sun Valley Fire Chief, Taan Robrahn.

Sun Valley is getting ready to take delivery of a new engine, hopefully next month. Lt Slater Storey will be going to do a final inspection before we take delivery. It is a multi-purpose vehicle that's main purpose is to be used in an urban-wildland interface. It is a smaller engine with a larger pump, and can also be used on structure and wildland fires. It is 4-wheel drive, so safer for the duty staff to drive in the winter, and has been designed to hold medical gear as we work on getting out ALS license. It will stay at Elkhorn for the first year while under warranty.

Full time firefighter Katelyn Berman is finishing up her paramedic training after about two years of training. She has been in the Boston area doing ride-alongs out there, averaging 12-15 patients a day. She has put a lot of work into this program, and we are excited for her to finish it up. While Katelyn finishes her program, full time firefighter Sarah Driggs is just starting the same program. Staggering it this way will allow Katelyn to be a great mentor for Sarah as she goes through the training. Commissioner Michael asked if Katelyn will be paid more once she is a paramedic, and how many calls will she respond to, to be able to use these skills? Chief Robrahn answered that yes she will be paid more, and it is hard to predict how many calls she will work on. Her and Sarah have both been doing shifts with Wood River Fire and Rescue and responding with them, getting more experience on longer ambulance rides. Commissioner Michael asked about working in a similar way with Ketchum, and Chief answered that because of the longer ambulance rides with WRFR, they get more time to practice their skills, and therefore it is better for their training. Chief Bauer would like to add, in terms of the paramedic certifications, having the paramedic training itself is very valuable. Their knowledge and ability to quickly assess a situation are of great value. We will have 4 paramedics on staff once Katelyn completes her certifications. One of our new on-call firefighters is a paramedic too, adds Chief Robrahn.

We noticed that the Idaho Power bill for Griffin Butte Station was high, and when we looked into it noticed that the water tank in the station was constantly running. The only pipe next to the well pump station was rusting out and constantly leaking water, leading to the tank running. We expect that this was the cause of the higher power usage, and maybe even the septic problems we've had the past couple of winters. Wood River Drilling replaced the rusted pipe, and hopefully this helps with both issues.

7. Discussion and possible action regarding signs relating to the North Blaine County Fire District*.

Commissioner Michael and Matt Gorby have put together two proposed signs we could put at our Greenhorn Station, and received approval from the County to place up to 20 sq feet sign at Greenhorn. The signs will have to be set back from the highway and scenic corridor. The idea is that when people are driving or stopping by the site, they can see that these homes are for the Greenhorn workforce housing. We have created a scannable QR code that can be used to get to our website and fundraising pages.

Commissioner Engelmann has concerns that a sign set back from the highway might not be legible from a driver point of view. He thinks we should be more concerned about placing general signage at our Fire Stations, since right now there is not an identifiable sign at either station. He and Chairman Gray agree that most people still do not know about NBCFD and its Stations and having entry signs at the highway

turnoffs would be good. Commissioner Engelmann thinks that while an ITD sign might be good, a business sign at the entrance would be great. He reached out to a company in Twin Falls that gave him some quotes on signage at a much more reasonable rate of \$400/sign than a local company bid for \$1,100 that we got. Chairman Gray is supportive about these ideas, and asked Commissioner Michael to look into what the County might consider acceptable for an entry sign, as well as ITD and what signs they might be able to put up. Commissioner Michael will reach out to the County and ITD, and comments that ITD signs are not subject to the highway easements as other signs.

There are a couple of action items here. 1 – talk to the County about an entry sign for each station, 2-talk to ITD about placing one of their signs at each station. Commissioner Michael will work on each of these.

Commissioner Michael would also like feedback on the signs that she has presented. Do we want a QR code on the sign. Commissioner Engelmann likes the sign, but thinks that if the signs are not placed properly, then people will not be able to scan the QR code on the sign, making it less useful; where would we place the sign? Chief Robrahn answered they have identified south of the South Fire Bay as a possible stop. Chairman Gray thinks the sign should be double sided, so it can be seen from north and southbound drivers.

MOTION:

Commissioner Michael moves that the District proceeds with having a 2-sided metal sign with a QR code developed in Twin Falls, based upon the schematic that Matt Gorby developed; seconded by Commissioner Engelmann. A roll call vote was taken.

AYES: Chairman Gray, Commissioner Michael, Commissioner Engelmann

NAYS: None

Chairman Gray asked if we want to also design and get quotes on station entry signs, marking that they are North Blaine County Fire District stations? Commissioner Michael would like to first contact ITD about signage, and work on the previously approved sign for the housing units. Commissioner Engelmann is concerned an ITD sign would probably be small and generic. Chief Robrahns and Bauer would like to suggest that, since we now have a landscape architect with the Greenhorn project, maybe we see if she can incorporate a sign into the landscaping design. Chairman Gray and Commissioner Engelmann would like to move forward on getting station signs designed and estimated, and look at where they might go. The same place in Twin Falls can do these designs and estimate.

MOTION:

Commissioner Engelmann moved that the District gets pricing and design for sign that would identify our stations as North Blaine County Fire District stations; seconded by Commissioner Michael. A roll call vote was taken.

AYES: Chairman Gray, Commissioner Michael, Commissioner Engelmann

NAYS: None

8. Updates, discussion, and possible action regarding Greenhorn Housing Project*.

Chief Robrahn says that the shells of the garages have been completed on the outside. It took them about a week from getting the product on-site to getting the shells built. We are really happy with how they look. They are meeting with the landscape architect and Matt Smithman from Galena Engineering this afternoon to look at the draft landscaping plan.

Chairman Gray asked what the total cost per unit is looking like on the units, including foundations, infrastructure, etc. Chief Bauer answered that they are about \$400K per unit at this time, after doing some quick math. They will get a more specific number to the Commissioners. Chairman Gray has people stopping and asking him all the time about the per unit costs, as they consider trying to develop their own affordable workforce housing. He'd like to be able to tell people the cost per square foot for the unit, as well as cost per square foot for the unit with the land development costs. To Chairman Gray, one of the goals of this entire project was to bring public awareness that if you really work on something, such as this housing, you *can* get it done. Chief Robrahn said that in his meeting with the Idaho Fire Chiefs, the Idaho Fire Chiefs President says that he sees this project as a model to be used throughout Idaho.

We have updated the timeline for our next phase of fundraising, and Chief Bauer has a list from Sally Gillespie of high priority donors. The list is about 50 people, and we have it on our timeline to try and get appeal letters out this week. Chief Bauer thanked Commissioner Michael for all of her work on putting together a fundraising appeal letter. He would like the Commissioners to approve the letter, and his recommendation is that we update the requested still to raise amount from \$1.2M, to \$1.1, according to his calculations and the original fundraising goal. Commissioner Michael read the letter out loud. Chairman Gray thinks the letter is very well written, and his only suggestion is that in the closing of the paragraph we add another 'thank you for your previous generosity'. Jim Keating, City Administrator of Sun Valley, joined the conversation. There is further discussion on letter edits, what to send out with the letter, and a timeline on when to get them out by. A strong call to action will be added to the end of the letter.

MOTION:

Commissioner Michael moved to approve the outreach letter for the Greenhorn Fire Station funding, with the modifications that have been discussed today; seconded by Commissioner Engelmann. A roll call vote was taken.

AYES: Chairman Gray, Commissioner Michael, Commissioner Engelmann

NAYS: None

The Commissioners discuss their schedules for getting these letters signed, with the Commissioners and Jocelin all going out of town in the next month. Commissioner Michael will be out of town for our next meeting, but both Chairman Gray and Commissioner Engelmann can make it on for our meeting on 11/8. It is decided to have the letters ready for Commissioner signatures by next Wednesday 10/25.

[9. Discussion: Old Business.](#)

Chairman Gray attended the latest consolidation meeting on 10/11. Elected officials and fire chiefs were present, and it was open to the public. No decisions were made, but there was a lot of information given. The consultants gave a synopsis of things that fire departments and emergency services should be doing. One example in the synopsis said that for a cardiac arrest call, they need a response within 7 minutes to be effective in saving a life. This is more evidence to him that we need an ambulance at Greenhorn, as right now we cannot get an ambulance from either direction to the Greenhorn area in 7 minutes.

Legal counsel from Hawley Troxell also attended. They talked about the mechanisms for consolidation within Idaho law. Chairman Gray thinks the meeting was time well spent, given what he learned. He thinks that the consultation team knew what they were doing, and it sounds like if consolidation were to happen, it would be about 3-5 years. If consolidation were to happen, it would not necessarily cut costs. Commissioner Engelmann would like to know if anyone walked out of the meeting with an increased sense of optimism? Jim thinks that everyone came out of the meeting with a better understanding of what options there are for consolidation; there are many ways it could be done. Chairman Gray agrees, the consultants were clear that there are a number of options, without identifying a best option. He says that the next meeting is scheduled tentatively for January. It is a meeting for the members of the steering committee, not necessarily a public meeting.

Chairman Gray comments that he thinks there are two separate discussions to be had, about fire protection and EMS. At the next meeting, he would like to address these topics. This whole process started because the Ambulance District says that their current fiscal model is not sustainable, and he thinks this needs to be addressed. Commissioner Engelmann is concerned that to wait five years to put an ambulance at Greenhorn or Elkhorn is too long to wait. Chairman Gray strongly agrees, and would like these consolidation discussions to separate a bit more into medical versus fire response. He also added that the Medical Director for the Ambulance District has resigned.

Commissioner Michael would like to comment that with our LGIP account, we are earning an interest rate of 5.3%, and have \$972K in the account. She would like to have some sort of logo on the mailer we send out, and will discuss it with Jim.

10. Public Comment.

None.

11. Adjournment*.


MOTION

Commissioner Engelmann moved to adjourn the meeting; seconded by Commissioner Michael. A roll call vote was taken.

AYES: Chairman Gray, Commissioner Michael, Commissioner Engelmann.

NAYS: None.

Chairman Gray declared the meeting adjourned at 11:14 a.m.



Jed Gray, Chairman



Earl Engelmann, Secretary