

**Regular Meeting of the North Blaine County Fire District in the Council  
Chambers – 81 Elkhorn Road, Sun Valley, ID  
July 13<sup>th</sup>, 2022, at 10:00 AM.**

Chairman Gray – Present in person.

Commissioner Michael – Present in person.

Commissioner Engelmann – Present via telephone.

1. Call to Order.

Chairman Gray called the meeting to order at 10:01 a.m.

2. Public Comment.

None.

3. Approval of the July 2022 Claims\*.

We have spent \$3,350 with Butler Associates for the soil investigation and foundation work at the new Greenhorn housing sites. We are also making our first payment to the Spur Foundation. Additionally, we are paying for architectural services for drawings of the new Greenhorn housing power and septic drawings.

**MOTION:**

Commissioner Michael moved to approve the July 13, 2022, claims; seconded by Commissioner Engelman. A roll call vote was taken.

AYES: Chairman Gray, Commissioner Michael, Commissioner Engelmann

NAYS: None

4. Approval of the June 08, 2022, Regular Meeting Minutes\*.

**MOTION:**

Commissioner Engelmann moved to approve the June 08<sup>th</sup>, 2022, Regular Meeting Minutes; seconded by Commissioner Michael. A roll call vote was taken.

AYES: Chairman Gray, Commissioner Michael, Commissioner Engelmann

NAYS: None

5. Discussion and possible approval regarding bank account changes\*.

**MOTION:**

Commissioner Michael moved to remove previous Administrative Assistant Patricia Smith from the North Blaine County Fire Districts' Local Government Investment Pool accounts. These accounts being the operating account and the replacement account located with the Idaho State Treasurer; seconded by Commissioner Engelmann. A roll call vote was taken.

AYES: Chairman Gray, Commissioner Michael, Commissioner Engelmann

NAYS: None

**MOTION:**

Commissioner Michael moved to remove previous Administrative Assistant Patricia Smith from the North Blaine County Fire Districts' Zions Bank account located with Zions Bank, seconded by Commissioner Engelmann. A roll call vote was taken.

AYES: Chairman Gray, Commissioner Michael, Commissioner Engelmann

NAYS: None

6. Discussion and possible tentative approval of the Fiscal Year 2023 Budget\*.

Chief Bauer presents the changes to our previous draft budget. Line 10-425-631 - one sum for \$300K for our line item for Greenhorn Housing Project, as this is how much the District has committed to the project. This will include our \$67K for annual payment to the City for our loan with Zions Bank. You'll notice that our total budget cost now is \$957K, with forecasted revenue of \$655K, creating a fairly balanced budget considering we planned to use excess funds for the \$300K going towards Greenhorn. With our fundraising campaign for the housing project beginning, we may not have to use all of those reserves. We have omitted the request addition of a line item of \$38K for ALS equipment; we do not have the forecasted revenue for this at this time, and should wait to hear from the Ambulance District if they approve the City's request. We also reduced our capital expenses by \$10,000, for our annual loan payment for the new Fire Engine. Jocelin said that we have looked at revised expenditure expectation for the remainder of this year, expecting to spend about \$50K less than budgeted. That \$50K was really from our reserves for the Greenhorn project, so balances nicely. We are conservative on what revenue we expect to gain from rents next year, not including rent collection from the new units. Perhaps this is something that we can add in. Commissioner Michael asked what our cost of living salary increase is, and Jocelin answered that it is 8%, matching what the City of Sun Valley is doing, and taking into consideration the drastic increases to cost of living. Commissioner Michael said that seems high, and is a big, permanent increase to salaries, not quite in line with what she has seen other entities doing. Typically she has seen cost of living increases at about 2-3% year to year. Commissioner Engelmann commented that he is fine with the 8%, as he does not think current levels of inflation are going down any time soon. Chairman Gray added that in taking into consideration inflation over 5%, it's really only a 3% increase in salary. Gray and Engelmann are okay with the 8% increase, to maintain the personnel that we have, and keep up with cost of living.

**MOTION:**

Commissioner Michael moved to tentatively approve the Fiscal Year 2023 Budget, with the addition of \$300,000 to line item 10-425-631 – Greenhorn New Housing, and have a tentative overall budget of \$957,990; seconded by Commissioner Engelmann. A roll call vote was taken.

AYES: Chairman Gray, Commissioner Michael, Commissioner Engelmann

NAYS: None

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

Our new engine should come into service in the next couple of weeks. New hose order is 16-18 weeks out. For now we will load it with the hose we have. The engine will be at Greenhorn Station for the first six months of being in service, and staff will get trained on it. We are lucky to have Lt Slater Storey making sure all of our apparatus are in great operating condition.

Live-In FF Ricky Williams brought up the idea of having an Open House at Greenhorn -we could tie in a dedication ceremony for the new engine, bbq, tours, volunteer firefighter recruitment, and fundraising. Chief Bauer really likes this idea, and would like this to happen mid to late August - expenses would be for some food and an informational booth. All of the Commissioners think this is a great idea and support making it happen.

Taan and Rich have a Blaine County Ambulance District meeting with the County Commissioners this

afternoon at 2 pm. Chairman Gray met with Gimlet Homeowners Association yesterday to speak with them regarding our fundraising for the Greenhorn Housing. People were supportive and inquired about making contributions to the project. However, people were very concerned upon hearing about the move of the ambulance from Greenhorn Station. There will likely be letters and/or a petition going to the County Commissioners, requesting that the ambulance be placed back in the district, and the District/City is given a contract with the Ambulance District. These residents want EMS services responding out of Greenhorn Station, close to where they live. He has not been able to meet with Golden Eagle yet, but he suspects the residents there will have a similar response. Commissioner Engelmann asked if the petition will be a form letter that can be shared for other citizens to submit, and Chairman Gray answered that he will share the letter once it is written. These letters will not be getting to the Ambulance District for this afternoon, but it will be getting to them.

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

Chairman Gray welcomed Chief Robrahn back from his trip to Australia.

Chief Robrahn would like to thank the whole team for covering while he was away. There was a lot of progress made on the housing project while he was gone, and now they are preparing for the Allen and Company conference. He had a great trip; it was his sons' first plane trip, and first time meeting a lot of his family.

9. Update, discussion, and possible action regarding Greenhorn Housing Project\*.

Chief Robrahn started the update, saying that we received approval from South Central Health District regarding our septic system plans for the project. This is a big hurdle we are happy to be past. Wood River Drilling completed our well test, and they said that based on the required flows for the additional unit, our current well should be able to handle those flows without a problem. This means we should not need an additional well, but may need to get a larger pump. This is additional good news.

Chairman Gray wants to announce that we have signed the contract for Zipkit for the first four units to be delivered this fall, as well as signing a contract with the Spur Foundation, which is partnering with us for to run our fundraising efforts. Chief Robrahn wants to thank Commissioner Michael and Chairman Gray for their involvement with the Spur Foundation on this part of the project. Donating to this project is a way that citizens can directly help their community and first responders.

Chairman Grays says that this project and fundraising effort will also educate our community on who and what the North Blaine County Fire District is. At his meeting in Gimlet, many people were still unaware of the NBCFD. It is important that we gain name recognition with our constituents. Mike Matthias, our project architect, has been working to select a general contractor to oversee this project. He has spoken with the Conrad Brothers, who are interested. We need County approval for our different applications with them. We need plumbing, electrical, and excavation sub-contractors.

Chief Robrahn has spoken to Lunceford excavation to get an estimate for excavation. We need to start working on scope of work and bid documents as next steps.

Commissioner Michael spoke with County P&Z staff, who said August 28<sup>th</sup> or first week of September is when we will get ahead with P&Z. We do not need to go to the Blaine County Commissioners after

passing P&Z. If they approve our requests, then we can start work immediately after they write up their reports.

Walt Femling, City Administrator, said we have been very busy with Zions Bank. We have been getting closing documents, and hopefully we will officially close on the loan within two weeks. Good timing -the City has received the first invoice of \$298,320 from Mountain Pre-Fab (ZipKit). The Mayor has approved the City paying the invoice right away, and the City will get reimbursed from the bank loan.

**MOTION:**

Commissioner Michael moved to support the financial commitments of the City and District, for the City of Sun Valley to pay Mountain Pre-Fab \$298,320.

AYES: Chairman Gray, Commissioner Michael, Commissioner Engelmann

NAYS: None

Chairman Gray said that we need to determine how we are going to combine and distribute the total \$600K in funds that the District and City have committed to for this project. Administrator Femling explained his plan for the money. There is no pre-payment penalty on the loan, so we should use the loan first because we have it, and leave our \$600K on the sidelines for now. We have four additional units to order, and need to see how much money we raise with the fundraising campaign. The City's Finance Manager is putting a sheet together that is tracking all costs associated with the project. Any money the District has already put toward the project will be reimbursable through the Zion's loan.

Walt continued to explain that what we really need is a contractor, now. We need to have somebody ready to start work in September. We should be able to hire a contractor that takes us through getting any needed bid or RFP process. Mike Matthias will talk to Conrad, Lunceford, and Butler about getting contractors or subcontractors. Chairman Gray thanked Mike for reaching out to these contractors, and said he is happy to talk to anybody and pitch them our project.

Commissioner Michael asked what our infrastructure cost estimates came out to for our ARPA grant request that will be discussed on July 27<sup>th</sup>. Chief Robrahn explained that the original estimate was \$313K. He spoke to Mandy Pomeroy, the County Administrator, and said we are still requesting \$400K, because estimate did not include electric or water.

Commissioner Michael explained that there is confusion amongst the County Commissioners regarding this project. They seem to be confused about who the housing is for, thinking it is only for full time City of Sun Valley employees. Perhaps we give profile of who is currently in the housing, showing that it is for non-full time Sun Valley staff. Walt replied that they only have to be volunteers with the Sun Valley Fire Department, which puts them in our records as being employees. Because our loan with Zions requires the those in the housing be government, they have to be on the books as employees. Chairman Gray added that they can be volunteers or staff with Ketchum, Wood River, etc, as well. They are not solely Sun Valley.

Chief Robrahn responded this was all spelled out very clearly in our original ARPA request. He is happy write up a letter discussing current residents. Chief Bauer said we can also explain our selection process for live-ins, and Commissioner McCleary can call us with questions any time. She may be getting her

information from sources outside of Sun Valley and the District. Commissioners and chiefs can sign the letter Chief Robrahn will write. Commissioner Michael added that we need to make sure continue to explain ourselves as much as it takes for the Commissioners to understand the project.

Commissioner Michael said that she was able to go door to door and speak with residents of Audubon Place (the road behind Greenhorn Station), and one of the residents was recently helped by a firefighter from Greenhorn jumped over the berm separating the properties, when there was a call with no ambulance at Greenhorn. A couple of residents may be ready for a donation.

Commenting on the fact that there was not an ambulance to respond with in that story, Chairman Gray said there are many people outraged about the movement of the ambulance. It is frankly difficult to talk about all this without being disparaging about the Ambulance District and the City of Ketchum. He assumes that people have seen the letter from firefighter Casey Finnegan. In this letter he points out many of the issues we have discussed in our District meetings. With more housing at Greenhorn we will be able to have addition medical and fire protection personnel.

Chief Robrahn said that the meeting of the Ambulance District this afternoon is not a full meeting, but is just with Commissioner McCleary.

In closing this conversation Commissioner Engelmann reiterates that we just need to get a contractor on board for the project. Mike confirmed he will reach out to Conrad Brothers today.

Chairman Gray said that we have received contributions already through the SPUR campaign, and we now have a link on our website about the project and fundraiser.

#### 10. Discussion: Old Business.

None.

#### 11. Public Comment.

City of Sun Valley Mayor Hendricks would like to make a couple of comments on the District's budget. It looks conservative, realistic, and well put together.

He noticed that the snow removal budget has been increased significantly. He also wants to comment that we have \$20,000 set aside for contingency funds, and wonders if that it enough. He suggests raising that as rampant inflation continues. He assumes we have taken into consideration inflation for utilities and fuel costs. He noticed that the advertising budget has gone up a lot, which is in line with the public outreach efforts we are expecting next year.

He noted that we are only budgeting a revenue of approximately \$51K for rent revenues next year, and agrees with our thought of raising rents again next year since they are still so low.

Commenting on Commissioner Michael's statement that our staff raises seem quite high, the Mayor stated that 8-9%, even 10% raises are consistent across organizations throughout the Valley right now, based on his own experience on many Boards. These increases always center on keeping staff around that we do not want to lose.

Remarking on the ambulance district - four people overheard a conversation the Mayor was having out at dinner about the AD, and all were very upset about hearing about the ambulance movement from Greenhorn Station. He told them to reach out to their County Commissioners. In his Letter from the Mayor to the citizens of Sun Valley last week, a couple of topics related to the county, referring to our ARPA funds request with the County, and the movement of the ambulance.

The Mayor reached out to Commissioner McCleary in reference to today's ambulance meeting several days ago, asking for an agenda so we can be prepared. He only got an email this morning with a couple of bullet points. It's not an official meeting, it is not noticed, no action can be taken. Chairman Gray will attend the meeting this afternoon, and he asked the Mayor, would it be useful or detrimental to bring up the voices of the people of the Gimlet Homeowners Association? There was anger in this meeting. It's not just about the ambulance, but also about the contract, and the fact that we do not have one. Mayor says the Chairman can say what he wants, it is hard to imagine things could be made worse.

Commissioner Michael says that she does not know why a meeting as important as this one would not be noticed or public. There is precedence even with meetings with only one commissioner.

Jocelin spoke to the mayor's comments on our increased line items, including the advertising budget. The snow removal budget was increased with the assumption that we will have more road at Greenhorn with increased rental units. There is the possibility that the new rental units will have individual power meters and the tenants can then directly pay for their power. Commissioners asked for the Chiefs to look at the contingency number, and come back with suggestions next month. Commissioner Michael comments that right now the contingency funds looks like it in the Capital budget items, and it should be with the operational line items.

Commissioners Michael and Gray commented that we can get mailing information for our constituents from the County Assessor, using our increased advertising budget.

12. Adjournment\*.

**MOTION**


Commissioner Michael moved to adjourn the meeting; seconded by Commissioner Engelmann.

A roll call vote was taken.

AYES: Chairman Gray, Commissioner Michael, Commissioner Engelmann

NAYS: None.

Chairman Gray declared the meeting adjourned at 11:21 a.m.

  
James E. Gray, Commissioner/Chairman

  
Earl Engelmann, Secretary/Chairman