

**Regular Meeting of the North Blaine County Fire District in the Council
Chambers – 81 Elkhorn Road, Sun Valley, ID
December 14th, 2022, at 10:00 AM.**

Chairman Gray – Present in person.

Commissioner Michael – Present in person

Commissioner Engelmann – Remote – present via phone.

1. Call to Order.

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

2. Public Comment.

None.

3. Approval of the December 2022 Claims*.

Commissioner Michael explained that our billing this month from the Spur Foundation is high due to our fundraising mailer that was sent out. All other bills are within normal limits.

MOTION:

Commissioner Michael moved to approve the December 14, 2022, claims; seconded by Commissioner Engelmann. A roll call vote was taken.

AYES: Chairman Gray, Commissioner Michael, Commissioner Engelmann

NAYS: None

4. Approval of the November 9, 2022, Regular Meeting Minutes*.

MOTION:

Commissioner Engelmann moved to approve the November 9, 2022, Regular Meeting Minutes; seconded by Commissioner Michael. A roll call vote was taken.

AYES: Commissioner Michael, Commissioner Engelmann

NAYS: None

ABSTAINED: Chairman Gray

5. Discussion and possible approval of Resolution 2022-03 – 2023 Recurring Expenses*.

MOTION:

Commissioner Michael moved to approve and adopt Resolution 2022-03 – 2023 Recurring Expenses; the expenses being Century Link, Clear Creek Disposal, Idaho Power, Intermountain Gas, and United Oil. seconded by Commissioner Engelmann. A roll call vote was taken.

AYES: Chairman Gray, Commissioner Engelmann, Commissioner Michael

Nays: None.

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

There were numerous avalanches that hit structures with the winter storm over the past weekend. With these big storms we see a lot of car accidents, gas and fire alarms, and avalanches. We had a lot of calls and good responses from both of the District Fire Stations.

Theo Rich has resigned from our fire department, and is moving to work with the Caldwell Fire Department. He was a great asset to us and took on a leadership role at the Greenhorn Fire Station. He and his wife will be officially moved out at the end of January. We plan to do some updating to the unit once they are moved out.

We had a meeting with the live-in firefighters last Wednesday, and Nate Galpin has offered to take on the leadership role at Greenhorn. He is already a squad leader and lives very close by. We are working to put into place new processes of keeping our rigs and stations in great shape. We want to have everything going as smoothly as possible for when we have additional people living there soon. We are very thankful to Nate for his initiative, passion, and dedication to the Greenhorn Fire Station and the North Blaine County Fire District.

Chief Bauer would like to congratulate Greenhorn live-in Connor Lohke, a full time Wood River firefighter that has just completed his paramedic training. We now have two paramedics living at Greenhorn. Our most recent hire Sarah Driggs, who also lives at Greenhorn, will be starting her paramedic training in the spring. Commissioner Michael asked how long it takes to complete paramedic training, as well as how the staff can keep up with their training if we do not have an ambulance with the ambulance district. Chief Bauer answered the training takes about two years, including pre-recs, online schooling, and in person training. Connor is a full time FF with Wood River, and Ricky Williams and Sarah Driggs are full time FF with the City of Sun Valley and respond to all medical calls for the City, allowing them to stay current on their training. As we have more paramedic certified staff at Greenhorn, it will make more sense for the Ambulance District to include the Fire District in their contract and place an ambulance back at Greenhorn.

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

Chief Robrahn echoes what Chief Bauer said, that Theo was an incredible asset for the District and City. It is always bittersweet when a firefighter moves on to a new position. We are very happy to see him move onto a larger and busier department like he wants to do.

We have two new full time additions to the department now. Sarah Driggs who lives at Greenhorn, and Tim Hanna, who has been hired to fill the vacancy left by Theo. He will also be going through the paramedic program. He has been with the department as a volunteer before and has lived at Greenhorn in the past.

Like Chief Bauer said, we have been busier lately with fires, avalanches, and car accidents. We have worked closely with our neighboring departments and have had good staff responses to calls. We expect a busy holiday period with visitors to the Valley. We have already had our City and Firefighter Christmas parties for this season. At the firefighter party, we announce the Firefighter of the Year award, which is voted on by their own peers. This Year Ricky Williams was voted FF of the Year, one of our full time staff,

and a live-in at Greenhorn. He has really excelled in the last year, showing great dedication and leadership skills.

Chairman Gray asked what a response looks like for an avalanche call. Chief Robrahn answered that the first priority is life safety, getting anybody that might be inside the home safely outside. Then they try to check for any possible gas leaks, etc, and get out of the area quickly in case of further avalanche activity. The houses hit this weekend were in avalanche prone areas, and are generally built to a higher level. Avalanches are considered a high risk/low frequency event, because they usually only happen during large storm events like last weekend. The ones over the weekend happened at night, which create an even higher risk.

Chief Bauer adds that last week there was the Annual Winter Rescue Meeting, which includes all emergency response services, guide services, Sun Valley Heliski, and Air St Luke's. One of the world's foremost avalanche rescue experts is in the Valley this winter working with the Sawtooth Avalanche Center, and we are looking to utilize them to create a county wide training on structure related avalanche response. Fatalities with these events don't happen often, but they do happen.

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

Chief Robrahn started the updates on this topic and stated that we are now going to try and open bidding for the project in January, so we can hopefully award the project to a contractor in February, and then the contractor can be ready for spring.

Chairman Gray announced that he signed documents for Idaho Power to move forward on power infrastructure for the project. Sun Valley City Council will review the documents at their January meeting. Commissioner Michael asked if all the soil and grading studies have been completed so that contractors have a good idea of what they are bidding on. Chief Robrahn said yes, they have all the soil, grading, and water information they need. Sarah Michael said that she is going to Driggs in April with a group of people and asked if maybe they could go visit the units while they are there, and Chief Robrahn answered that they should be able to set that up.

Mike Matthias, project architect, met with two landscape architects last month, and they were wondering how much water there is for irrigation. It was determined the project doesn't have any water rights, just our well permit. We have called a water rights attorney and are waiting to hear back from them. Chairman Gray explained that water rights are allotted according to land space, so he thinks that we should be able to have water rights in the area. Mike says he is hoping to get insight from the lawyer in Boise. Chairman Gray said there's also ways to get revegetation water rights, for the area that Galena is grading. Mike will also get in contact with Idaho Department of Water Resources to discuss all of this. He has submitted out building permits, and Galena Engineering is working on making some requested changes from the Blaine County building department. The Commissioners all thanked Mike for his work on this project.

Mary Austin Crofts, our marketing consultant, said that about 2,000 fundraising letters were sent out by mail. According to our donor reports, Commissioner Michael announces that we have had 133 individual donations so far. We have had \$343K donated, with an additional \$350K pledged. That leaves us with

another \$1.7 million to raise to meet our goal. Commissioner Michael would like to authorize the expenditure of funds to pay Mary to create a mail merge system and send out thank you letters with envelopes for an additional donation. Perhaps the Chiefs can make personal thank you phone calls. Mary said that the thank you portion of a fundraising campaign is very important. She has already made some thank you phone calls, and the Spur Foundation sends out thank you letters to each of the donors. Commissioner Engelmann is sending out thank you emails. We should speak with the Spur Foundation regarding the process they have in place process before we add in more steps. Commissioner Michael thinks that all the Commissioners should donate to the project personally, and having staff contribute as well would look good.

Chairman asked what amount of money Commissioner Michael is asking to approve. Commissioner Michael is referring to the cost of a mail merge, mailing costs, and Mary's labor costs, and supplies, so that an additional thank you letter can be sent from the District in addition to the Spur Foundation's thank you letters. She will talk with Spur about if they think that this would be a good use of resources. She is excited that we have had 133 donors to date and thanks Chairman Gray for bringing in many of these donors.

Mary asked about expenses for this campaign, referring to her original proposal that the Commissioners signed in September. The proposal included putting out newspaper ads, which are expensive. Is the District still okay spending this money since there was a high expense to putting out the mailer? Would it make sense to wait until spring to do the newspaper ads? Commissioner Michael thinks we should take advantage of making a press release about Firefighter of the Year Ricky Williams. He is a Greenhorn live-in, and without this housing, he likely would not have been able to relocate back to this Valley and work here. The Commissioners are comfortable with Mary continuing her proposed marketing plan.

9. Discussion: Old Business.

None.

10. Public Comment.

None.

11. 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 10:50 a.m.

Sarah Michael

Sarah Michael, Treasurer

Remote

Earl Engelmann, Secretary