

**Regular Meeting of the North Blaine County Fire District in the Council  
Chambers – 81 Elkhorn Road, Sun Valley, ID  
December 11, 2024, at 10:00 AM.**

1. Call to Order.

Commissioner Gray called the meeting to order at 10:02 am.

2. Public Comment.

Chairman Gray states that he's never had so much fun reading the minutes as the ones from the November meeting, and he's excited about all of the progress reported. He thanks everyone for everything that has been accomplished.

3. Approval of the December 2024 Claims\*.

Commissioner Michael notes that there is a typo in the date on the claims that Jocelin will correct. She also notes that the Verizon bills the District is reimbursing the City this month are actually from Fiscal Year 2024; do we pay this every six months? Jocelin says we usually pay quarterly once invoiced from the City, we just got behind on getting this latest invoice.

Looking at our expenditures to date sheet, Commissioner Michael shows that we spent more than our budgeted amounts on our Engine 3 Lease and 5B Appropriations Lease. Chairman Gray adds that this is because of the \$1 million donation we received specifically to pay down those leases. Because of this overpayment we will save over \$100,000 per year going forward. Jocelin says that the expenditures worksheets presents as it does because the donation was made after we approved our Fiscal Year 2025 budget. We will do an amended budget at the end of the fiscal year.

**MOTION:**

Commissioner Michael moved to approve the December 11<sup>th</sup> 2024 claims; seconded by Commissioner Engelmann. A roll call vote was taken.

AYES: Chairman Gray, Commissioner Michael, Commissioner Engelmann

NAYS: None

Commissioner Michael says that looking at our bank statements, we currently have a balance of \$80,000 in our Zions account, which has a 0.19% interest rate. Our LGIP account rates are over 4%; would it be possible to move funds to the LGIP to increase our interest earned? Chairman Gray asked Jocelin how much money she thinks we need to have in our Zions account on a day to day basis? Jocelin says that most months our bills are not more than \$25K; she likes to have more than enough money in the account each month to ensure we always have enough funds as vendors cash checks. January is a very large spending month, and we will probably have to move money from LGIP to Zions to cover those expenses. Commissioner Michael asks how long it takes transfers to go through, and can we anticipate our bills each month and move the appropriate amount of money back and forth? Chairman Gray suggests we try and keep a balance of approximately \$50K in Zions and transfer extra funds to the LGIP. Jocelin says the \$50K should be a high enough balance to keep. Commissioner Engelmann says that we can move funds to try and maximize our interest, but that takes more time to manage, and if our expenses are staying the same probably would not result in significantly higher interest income, but he does appreciate Commissioner

Michael's diligence in looking at this. Jocelin will look into this more and discussion will continue at the next meeting.

#### 4. Approval of the November 13th 2024, Regular Meeting Minutes\*

**MOTION:**

Commissioner Sarah Michael moved to approve the November 13<sup>th</sup>, 2024 Regular Meeting Minutes; seconded by Commissioner Earl Engelmann. A roll call vote was taken.

AYES: Commissioner Engelmann, Commissioner Michael

NAYS: None

ABSTAIN: Chairman Gray

#### 5. Discussion and possible approval of Resolution 2024-01 – 2025 Meeting Schedule\*

The Commissioners are all comfortable continuing to meet on the second Wednesday of each month at 10 am.

**MOTION:**

Commissioner Sarah Michael moved to approve Resolution 2024-01, adopting a meeting schedule for the 2025 calendar year; seconded by Commissioner Earl Engelmann. A roll call vote was taken.

AYES: Chairman Gray Commissioner Engelmann, Commissioner Michael

NAYS: None

#### 6. Discussion and possible approval of Resolution 2024-02 – Recurring Expenses\*

Commissioner Michael says this is consistent to what we approve each year, authorizing staff to pay recurring expenses in between monthly meetings.

**MOTION:**

Commissioner Sarah Michael moved to approve Resolution 2024-02, relating to certain recurring payments prior to approval of the board of commissioners; seconded by Commissioner Engelmann. Chairman Gray states that Jocelin notifies him when checks are ready for signatures, and he reviews them again before signing them. A roll call vote was taken.

AYES: Chairman Gray Commissioner Engelmann, Commissioner Michael

NAYS: None

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

Chief Bauer mentions that he has moved his primary office to Greenhorn now. He thanked the mayor, as on Friday the Community Development team will be going down there to help him redesign the office. They recently redid their own and it looks great.

Chief Bauer says that he has been very busy doing 6 month reviews with all of the live-ins. Based on feedback he has gotten, he thinks that we should try and focus on creating a community space at Greenhorn, such as a paved patio or a movie space. Chairman Gray asked him to put together an estimate for these projects, an enhancement study, for the Commissioners to review next month.

City Administrator Jim Keating introduced himself at the podium; he thinks that there are a lot of

opportunities to continue to investing in our Greenhorn facilities. As part of the strategic plans the Chiefs, Jim, and the Mayor are working on, they are looking at opportunities and creating a list of ways to invest in the Greenhorn facility and our other facilities. One such opportunity is the current work on updating the Greenhorn office.

Jim hopes to have a near final reconciliation of all bills related to the Greenhorn Housing Project next month to present to the Commissioners. There may be funds leftover that we can reinvest in the project in new ways based on the strategic plans currently being worked on. Chairman Gray looks forward to hearing a more final financial statement on the project next month, as well as some ideas for future enhancements.

Chief Bauer continues his report; him and Chief Robrahn have been continuing to work on the Greenhorn readiness plan. We want to continue growing an even more synergistic relationship between the City and District with this plan. Chief Bauer says that he has mentioned the idea of hiring a property management team at Greenhorn, and he is meeting with a property management company on Friday.

Chief Bauer says the County has updated their plan review process with a paperless system through a software called Blue Beam. The process is more efficient for planners and reviewers. He says to date this calendar year he has reviewed 49 plan sets, which is the same as last year. He has done 44 final inspections this year. He thought building in the District was slowing down, but it does not look like it. Commissioner Michael asked what he thinks the average square footage of each home is, and Chairman Gray asked how many bedrooms. Chief Bauer will see if he can get that information from the County. It does not impact our levy rate for property tax income very much, but we do get a good deal of income from the plan reviews themselves.

#### 8. Report: Monthly Update – Sun Valley Fire Chief, Tean Robrahn.

Chief Robrahn would like to add to the square footage conversation. The homes in this valley are closer to traditional commercial structures than residential, due to their size. One of our primary tasks when going to fires is getting through all the bedrooms and checking for people that may be stuck in there. This process brings him to the strategic plan both chiefs have been working on. They are looking for efficiencies, and how to provide our citizens with the highest level of service while keeping our firefighters safe. Chairman Gray asks Chief Robrahn if he thinks we have enough full time and on call staff to provide this level of service. Chief Robrahn answers no, and that is something they are looking at very carefully. They are also looking at how we can have full-time staffing at Greenhorn. He is very excited about creating this plan, because they can look at increasing well-trained staff in a planned way. It takes a lot of time to develop skilled and safe firefighters, and we want to make sure we are doing it in a smart way.

Commissioner Michael comments that a new fire district is being created in the Valley, and we are right between Wood River Fire and Rescue's and Ketchum's current property boundaries. While creating these new strategic plans, she wants to know if the Chiefs see opportunity for closer collaboration with the new District, such as if they want to put an ambulance back at Greenhorn? Chief Robrahn answers that ambulance locations are a decision of the Ambulance District rather

than a Fire District, but it is certainly something being considered in their strategic planning. Collaboration with the other departments has always been a priority for the City.

Mayor of the City of Sun Valley Peter Hendricks comes to the podium to say that strategic plans serve as aspirational plans for the City. They are created by the Fire Chiefs as the experts on these subjects, but decisions such as where an ambulance may be housed lay with the elected officials of the City and the District. We will observe how things with the new District unfold. We are always wanting to collaborate with other entities in a fair and equitable way.

Commissioner Michael also asks of the strategic plan; are the Chiefs looking at opportunities in trainings? Chief Robrahn says that is a great segway. Training is very important for all our staff, and we recently had a promotional ceremony for all of our recent staffing changes. More than 50 people came to the ceremony and it was very well received. Ricky Williams, among many others, was recognized for his promotion from Captain to Chief of Training and Operations. As we discussed at our last meeting, the department has recently adopted the program Blue Card for incident command communications, and we sent Chief Williams and Captain Hansen to become instructors for this program in Arizona. Now anyone else who does the training can be certified locally. This is an example of how we are trying to be proactive and not reactive in getting better with our incident communications. We have reached out to all agencies in the Valley inviting them to participate in the program. Hailey Fire has shown the most interest, and the Wood River Fire Chief is speaking with their Operations Chief to see if they might participate. Chief Bauer says that one of Wood River's captains attended our weekly blue card training a couple of weeks ago, and they are interested in the program. Wood River, Hailey, and Sun Valley also recently all sent staff to live fire instructor training, and that training referenced the Blue Card communications system.

Commissioner Michael comments that she does feel that communications between entities is a political issue, and elected officials should be talking to elected officials. She feels as political leaders they all need to have their staff participate in these national programs. Mayor Hendricks comes back to the podium to say that here at the City, his door is always open for speaking with other elected officials. We urge and push forward as we can, but we cannot force other departments to do what we think they should do. The Ketchum Fire Chief has retired and the Chief from Wood River is retiring, and we are waiting to see their new leadership. We are doing everything we can to make our departments the best that they can be, other departments are not our responsibility. Chairman Gray says that he agrees these are political issues, but as representatives of the NBCFD and City of Sun Valley we must stay representing our people.

Chief Robrahn's last update is that the Sun Valley City Council recently approved the \$302,000 purchase of 34 new radios for the fire department, using a grant we have been awarded. These are going to be excellent new radios for our department. They are multiband radios that will be an asset for our firefighters and our community.

Chairman Gray asked how he thinks the morale of the Department is? Chief Robrahn says that we have a really great team that all has each other's backs. The energy at the promotional ceremony was great, and we extended our thanks to all the family members and supporters that make our successes possible. Chairman Gray thinks that morale is the heart of the department, and he wants

to be kept informed on how it is ongoing, because he wants to provide whatever support we can give. Commissioner Michael says that seems we have adopted staff from other departments, which may be indicative of the quality of leadership, training, and morale that we are offering.

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

Chief Bauer says that last Thursday we did the last of our final inspections to inspect the detached garages. This truly rounds out the Greenhorn Housing project, and he suggests we no longer need to have this agenda item on future agendas. They agree, and we can keep any further updates in the Chiefs reports.

10. Discussion: Old Business.

None.

11. 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 Engelmann, Commissioner Michael

NAYS: None.

Chairman adjourned the meeting at 10:57 a.m.

  
Jed Gray, Chairman  
Earl Engelmann, Secretary

