

**Regular Meeting of the North Blaine County Fire District in the Council
Chambers – 81 Elkhorn Road, Sun Valley, ID
September 13th, 2023, at 10:15 AM.**

1. Call to Order.

Chairman Gray called the meeting to order at 10:16 a.m.

2. Public Comment.

None.

3. Approval of the September 2023 Claims*.

Chairman Gray would like Chief Bauer to review two items on the claims; line 10-425-575 Non-Capital Equipment Purchase for \$5,645.20, and line 10-425-576 Personal Protection Equipment for \$6,120.00. Chief Bauer answers that for line 10-425-575, we purchased new fire hose through SeaWestern, after fire hose testing last month showed that we had some outdated hose. Chairman Gray asked how the useful life of the hose is determined, and Chief Bauer answered that the hose gets naturally degraded over time, and is not necessarily related to times used. The second item Chairman Gray asked about, line 10-425-575, is for turnouts, the safety gear the firefighters wear. These also need to be replaced regularly for safety, and it is part of our plan to buy two new pairs every year.

Commissioner Michael comments that after this round of payments, we will have approximately \$2,000 left in the budget at the end of the fiscal year.

Commissioner Engelmann asked how often we replace the tires on our engines, as we are also paying for new tires on Engine 2 with these claims. Chief Robrahn answered that it is suggested that tires be replaced every 10 years on the engines, for safety reasons. Lt Slater Storey noted that our tires were passed this timeline, and that is why we purchased new tires for Engine 2.

Commissioner Michael commented that other local entities, such as Carey Fire, do not have the funding to keep up with these standards. Is there a way to donate our old equipment that might be newer than theirs, such as turnouts or hose? Chief Robrahn answered that when we get City Council approval to dispose of old equipment, we do reach out to other local entities that might want the equipment as is. There is also an organization called Care Convoy, that takes some older fire and medical supplies down to Mexico.

MOTION:

Commissioner Michael moved to approve the September 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 August 9, 2023, Regular Meeting Minutes*.

MOTION:

Commissioner Engelmann moved to approve the August 9, 2023, Regular Meeting and Budget Hearing 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 had a meeting with Sally Gillespie of the Spur Foundation a couple of weeks ago, and we have put together a timeline of marketing and fundraising for the Greenhorn Housing Project. A hard copy of the document has been handed out to everyone. Chief Bauer presented the proposed timeline, which included getting signs put out at the Greenhorn Fire Station; Commissioner Michael is still waiting to hear from the County in regards to permit approval for placing the sign. Chairman Gray asked if the units are currently locked, he has a potential donor is going to meet with and might want to bring him to see the units. Chief Bauer answered that they are locked, we can arrange to unlock them as needed.

Jim Keating, City Administrator of the City of Sun Valley, says that a general strategy of this timeline was to put together a two-pronged approach to this. Do press releases for the paper and general public, followed up by a targeted mailer to our selected donors. The overall storyline is that we are making great progress on the project, while creating a great living experience for the residents. Following the mailers would be direct contacts by calling donors. The owner of ZipKit has agreed to stage one of the units in the second half of October, and Jim suggests that we wait for that staging to do tours of the units. He would suggest we change some of the dates on the draft timeline a bit. Chairman Gray is thinking that some potential donors only live here part time, and he finds that the units are impressive enough without the furnishing; would it be possible to give tours on a select basis to some of the potential donors? Jim thinks this is easily accommodated. Commissioner Michael asked when we will send out the hand written thank you letters; is this just for high priority donors? Jim said we should re-evaluate at the end of January after having reached out to donors directly.

Commissioner Michael said that we will need to review our most current flier and update the ask that we are still working to raise. Jim will have the remaining funds to raise number sent to the Commissioners in the next couple of weeks. Chairman Gray comments that any extra money we bring in could potentially be used for landscaping. Jim says that we have hired Ashley Bowen as a landscape architect helping to create an optimized landscaping plan around the units. He should have another update about this with the next meeting.

We will get this timeline updated and sent back out to the Commissioners, and everyone can take action. Commissioner Michael asked about when we can do a tour with the Women's Foundation. Jim recommends that we keep tours to smaller groups of people at this time, especially while it remains an active construction area and we are waiting to stage a unit. He thinks that having Karen Bossick tour the units earlier on is a good idea.

Chief Bauer wanted to say thank you to Jim for presenting this timeline for us.

As an update on fire/EMS consolidation talks, Chiefs Bauer and Robrahn met with the consultants and the other departments. They clarified our response area and standards and reviewed all of the department assets, including stations and apparatus. The consultants plan to have some recommendations in October. The next technical committee meeting is Oct 10, and the first steering committee meeting, which includes elected officials, is scheduled for Oct 11 at 10 am. This happens to be the same as our next scheduled Commissioners meeting, and Chief Bauer will be out of town on that date. He requests that we move the scheduled Commissioners meeting to either of the 4th or the 18th of the month. The Commissioners decide to move the next District meeting to October 18th at 10 am.

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

Chief Robrahn does not have an update today.

7. Discussion and possible action regarding proposed rents for Griffin Butte and Greenhorn Housing Units*.

Chief Bauer goes over the spreadsheet that Jim put together for rent proposals for a new rent structure for the current and new units. There are three proposed rent structures, and he is going over the 3rd proposal. First, the base rent of Griffin Butte would be raised from \$400 to \$525, in addition to paying their approximately \$150 in monthly utilities, a total of \$675 per month. Right now we pay the Griffin Butte utilities and the residents pay us back each month. We plan to change that to a more traditional rent system where they pay their own utilities directly. The current Greenhorn 1 -bedroom units would be raised from a base rent of \$450/month to \$525 month, with utilities included. The Greenhorn duplexes all share utility meters, which is why their utility cost is estimated and included in the rent. The current Greenhorn 2-bedroom units would go from \$475/month to \$600/month. For the new Greenhorn units, the 1-BR units would be \$600 plus utilities, and the 2-BR for \$650 plus utilities. All new units are individually metered so residents will pay their own utilities. Chief Bauer explained that our goal is to fill these units with qualified first responders at a very reasonable cost to them; with all of this housing we will practically have a fully staffed station with an almost guaranteed response. Looking at the sheet and based on our calculations of maintenance costs, we predict that with this pricing we will have a net revenue of over \$20,000 a year.

Chief Bauer suggests that these rent prices should be reviewed annually so that we are on a sustainable path. Revenue from the units could go to renovating the current Greenhorn 100 units into a Duty Quarters, repaving the asphalt in between the stations at Greenhorn, and/or updating old appliances in the residences. Chairman Gray applauds the committee for putting these numbers together, keeping the rent well below market rates. These affordable rates should attract people to fulfill our need for first responders.

Chairman Gray wanted to confirm that residents are required to respond to a certain number of calls when living in the housing? Chief Bauer answered yes, as well as attend drills and work shifts; we have much higher expectations of our resident firefighters than our regular on-call firefighters.

Commissioner Michael previously spoke with Jim and Chiefs Bauer and Robrahn about these rent rates, and knows these numbers have been put together with a lot of thought, and thinks we have come to a

good sweet spot with them. Commissioner Engelmann agrees that the numbers look good, and likes the suggestion of reviewing the rates each year.

MOTION:

Commissioner Michael moved to approve the monthly rent rates as presented in Scenario 3, to be the rents for our first responder housing; seconded by Commissioner Engelmann.

A roll call vote was taken.

AYES: Chairman Gray, Commissioner Michael, Commissioner Engelmann.

NAYS: None.

Commissioner Michael asked about hearing from an East Fork resident that Wood River Fire and Rescue was the responding party to a fire out East Fork. Chiefs Bauer and Robrahn say that it was in fact North Blaine County Fire District that responded to that fire, which was a transformer fire. Commissioner Michael said that she has talked to someone who has heard from employers that there are employees reluctant to move into employer owned housing, which she found interesting.

It is decided that January 1 will be when we implement new rent rates for current units, and the new unit rates will go into effect when they are occupied.

[8. Updates, discussion, and possible action regarding Greenhorn Housing Project*.](#)

Chief Robrahn greets the Commissioners and says that it has been an exciting month for the project, and he expects that the Commissioners have received similar positive feedback to what he has heard. It has been a long road getting to this point. He has a quick video showing the delivery of the first four units. He reiterates that we anticipate the next four units to arrive sometime in November, as well as having the garages installed before the first snow falls, before the end of October. They will not be fully complete yet, but will be usable for the residents for the winter. He reminds everyone that this is still an active work site, please coordinate with the Chiefs about when you might be going onto the property. Chairman Gray suggests we have booties and door mats at the units so we can keep them as clean as possible when showing them off. He thinks that this housing gives us the opportunity to bring talented people into our community.

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

None.

[10. Public Comment.](#)

None.

[11. Adjournment*.](#)

MOTION

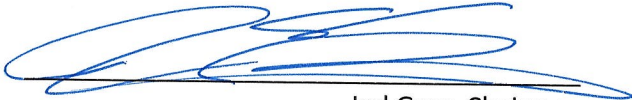
Commissioner Michael moved to adjourn the meeting; seconded by Commissioner Engelmann.

A roll call vote was taken.

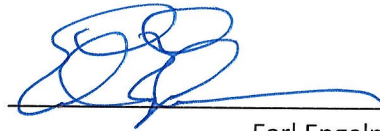
AYES: Chairman Gray, Commissioner Michael, Commissioner Engelmann.

NAYS: None.

Chairman Gray declared the meeting adjourned at 11:09 a.m.



Jed Gray, Chairman



Earl Engelmann, Secretary

