

**Regular Meeting of the North Blaine County Fire District in the  
Council Chambers – 81 Elkhorn Road, Sun Valley, ID  
February 8<sup>th</sup>, 2023, at 10:00 AM.**

Chairman Gray - Present in Person  
Commissioner Michael – Present in person  
Commissioner Engelmann – Absent

1. Call to Order.

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

2. Public Comment.

Mayor Peter Hendricks of Sun Valley gave a quick review of a 1% LOT tax proposal change within the City of Sun Valley, discussed at the February 2, 2023 City Council Meeting. The Council spoke about their feelings on splitting the LOT tax, 0.5% for Housing and 0.5% for Air, as well as how to best set up the ballot for success based on their opinion. It was generally determined that they agreed on 0.5% for Housing and 0.5% for Air. Discussion was held and they decided on the general way of phrasing on the ballot, having two separate yes or no questions for each 0.5%. They had the first readings of the preliminary ballot language and still need readings 2 and 3 in March and April. We want to continue supporting the air part of the lot tax that supports the airport. Nancy and other City staff are working on the specific language for the ballot that they will present at the next meeting.

The Commissioners thanked the Mayor for this update.

3. Approval of the February 2023 Claims\*.

Commissioner Michael appreciates the spreadsheets that show our Greenhorn Housing Project expenses paid by the District and City.

She commented that we have begun buying supplies on Amazon, and generally thinks that we should be buying locally and supporting local businesses. Chairman agrees that generally yes, we should try and buy things locally as possible. Chief Bauer said that it can be difficult to find these items at local business sometimes, but we do have accounts with many of the local businesses and can put extra effort into buying local. Chairman Gray thinks that as long as it does not jeopardize the District's budget, which he would find unlikely, we should be buying locally and supporting those local businesses.

We are making our first bi-annual payment this month to paying off our lease with 5B First Responders LLC.

**MOTION:**

Commissioner Michael moved to approve the February 2023, claims; seconded by Commissioner Gray. A roll call vote was taken.

AYES: Chairman Gray, Commissioner Michael

NAYS: None

ABSENT: Commissioner Engelmann

#### 4. Approval of the January 11, 2023, Regular Meeting Minutes\*.

Chairman Gray commented that he thinks that the Minutes and the Claims are presented very well, and thanked Administrative Assistant Jocelin for her work on them.

#### **MOTION:**

Commissioner Michael moved to approve the January 11, 2023, Regular Meeting Minutes; seconded by Chairman Gray. A roll call vote was taken.

AYES: Chairman Gray, Commissioner Michael

NAYS: None

ABSENT: Commissioner Engelmann

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

Chief Bauer added onto Chairman Gray's comments, saying that he and Jocelin work together really well, and she's a great part of the team with him and Chief Robrahn. He'd also like to thank Jocelin for her work. Chairman Gray said that the thanks are well deserved; Jocelin jumped right into the position and has produced great work. Jocelin commented that she got great support and knowledge from training with the previous Admin Trish, and continues to get excellent support from the City staff.

Ricky Williams and Chief Bauer met with Eye on Sun Valley last week and they developed a plan to run a couple of news stories. The first will be an educational piece about a day in the life of a firefighter; it will have a focus on Ricky, our firefighter of the year that was able to move back home and work for his local fire department because of the affordable housing we currently provide. The second piece will be about donations, the housing project, and developing the new first responder housing.

Commissioner Michael asked for Chief Bauer to take some video when him and Chief Robrahn go to visit the housing, that could go into these news pieces.

Per the Commissioners request, Chief Bauer did some research on the cost of a pickup truck fitted with a plow. With the government bid and all of the add-ons such as the lights, a radio, and plow, he thinks it will be about \$70K. This vehicle can be used to respond to emergencies, and dig out cisterns, in addition to its use for plowing the District fire stations. Chairman Gray asked if this includes a plow and blower, so we can get closer to cisterns to uncover them. Chief Bauer says this cost would not include a blower, but he can look into it. Chairman Gray thinks that cost sounds very reasonable.

The Blaine County Ambulance District has been having conversations regarding countywide consolidation of fire services of lately and met again last month. The next meeting is at 10 am on February 15th. It will be with only Commissioner McCleary. Chief Bauer will send the link for the video meeting to the Commissioners so they can attend if they are able. The state of Idaho has hired EMS planners to assist with all of the state's EMS agencies. Blaine County has two planners assigned to us, and we will meet online with them at 9:30 am before the 10 am meeting on the 15<sup>th</sup>.

Commissioner Michael says that Blaine County has their audit presentation for FY 2022 on their agenda this week, and it should be posted online for everyone to see. It will show how much money the County has in the reserves for the Ambulance District. The County is claiming that they are spending these reserves down and the current financial structure is not sustainable and their reserves will be depleted in three years; the audit will show what their balances look like. Mayor Hendricks has emailed Commissioner McCleary regarding an agenda for the upcoming meeting. At the last meeting, they mostly went through the line items of the Ambulance District budget and checked on the status of various tasks of the Ambulance District, and there was not much purpose in the Mayor, Chief Bauer, or Chairman Gray being present.

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

Chief Robrahn was absent from the meeting due to a pre-contract conference meeting at Greenhorn Station for the Greenhorn Housing Project. Chief Bauer stopped by on his way in and there were quite a few contractors present, which we see as a positive sign.

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

Commissioner Michael asked about the status of the water rights for landscaping at Greenhorn. Mike Matthias just finished the initial landscape design. There will only be native grasses to begin with, and we will not be putting in an irrigation system. We have gotten approval for the water rights from the County for this. Chairman Gray stated that the Idaho Department of Water Resources is in charge of Water Rights. They can give a temporary revegetation water permit for half an acre to start soon after disturbing the ground there. The County does not have power over our water resources. We should be working with IDWR, to ensure that we have all of the water rights we are entitled to. We do not want a dust bowl for our new residences.

Commissioner Michael commented that IDWR has given us some permits, and wants to know if there are trees planned to screen the units from the highway. Chief Bauer said that there should be some natural visual barriers to the new units, since they are planned to be below highway level. The current vegetation plan is pretty minimal, but aesthetically pleasing. We think we will be going to Idaho Falls in the next couple of weeks to look at the units in person.

Idaho Power is currently scheduled to start work for our power infrastructure on June 7th, which is a moveable date depending on the work that has been done by other contractors at that time.

Chairman Gray says we are at about \$900K for our fundraising efforts with the Spur Foundation. We are probably in a slack for donations now, but can likely expect another good push in the spring after the snow melts and the tax season is over. He may want us to reach back out to some of our donors from 2022 and see if they'd also like to contribute in 2023.

Commissioner Michael should hear back from the Wood River Women's foundation in the next week or two. She submitted a grant proposal to them for \$20K. Chief Bauer has the zoom presentation date for this grant on his calendar. He thanks Commissioner Michael for her work on getting this grant proposal submitted.

#### 8. Discussion: Old Business.

None.

9. Public Comment.

None.

10. Adjournment\*.

**MOTION**

Commissioner Michael moved to adjourn the meeting; seconded by Chairman Gray.

A roll call vote was taken.

AYES: Chairman Gray, Commissioner Michael.

NAYS: None.

ABSENT: Commissioner Engelmann.

Chairman Gray declared the meeting adjourned at 10:34 a.m.



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Jed Gray, Chairman



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Sarah Michael, Treasurer