

**Regular Meeting of the North Blaine County Fire District
In the Council Chambers – 81 Elkhorn Road, Sun Valley, ID
June 09, 2021, at 10:00 AM**

1. Call to Order.

Chairman Gray called the meeting to order at 10:07 a.m.

2. Public Comment.

None.

3. Approval of the June 2021 Claims.

MOTION

Commissioner Michael moved to approve the June 2021 claims, seconded by Commissioner Engelmann. A roll call vote was taken.

AYES: Chairman Gray, Commissioner Engelmann, and Commissioner Michael.

NAYS: None.

4. Discussion and possible approval of the May 12, 2021, Regular Meeting Minutes.

Commissioner Engelmann moved to approve the May 12, 2021 Regular Meeting Minutes, seconded by Commissioner Michael. A roll call vote was taken.

AYES: Chairman Gray, Commissioner Engelmann, and Commissioner Michael.

NAYS: None.

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

Chief Bauer reported on the Deer Creek Ranch Fire, in the Wood River jurisdiction that had 48 personnel respond. The after-action review will take place at the Greenhorn Station on Monday June 14, 2021. Lieutenant Slater Storey and Chief Bauer went to Appleton, Wisconsin to review the new pumper tender. They spent two days verifying over 600 items of the engine. The pumper tender will have an enforcer cab and will seat six people. All six seats will be up to NFPA (National Fire Protection Association) standards, which require roll protection and airbags for all seats. We did go over budget due to new NFPA standards for the fifth and sixth seats, which is a small price to pay for fire-fighter safety. The new pumper tender has a 2,400-gallon tank with a 30-gallon foam tank. It also has a 1,500 GPM (gallons per minute) pump, which is the fire power we would have to put out a fire. This will be the largest pump we have in the District. That is one of the reasons we asked for this engine because it is likened to a Swiss Army Knife, that does everything very well. It will have a lot of water and a lot of fire power to put out fires in these large homes. Other great features are the 1,500-gallon monitor which is the deck gun that shoots off the top, the hydraulic ladder rack, 12-volt LED lighting that requires no generator, automatic on spot tire change for bad road conditions. We will no longer need to chain up on snowy days.

Trish will be transitioning to the Community Development Department full time. The plan is to hire someone as soon as possible so Trish can train them and will only be a phone call away. The job

description will be posted in the newspaper and on the City of Sun Valley website, hopefully next week. We hope to hire someone part time, either 3 eight-hour days per week or 3 ten-hour days per week, with full benefits. We will discuss further under the budget item of today's agenda.

Chief Bauer broached the subject of sending the old tanker 3 (that the new pumper tender will be replacing) to Boise for repairs with a cap of \$7,000.00 to Hughes Fire, and then have them sell it for us for approximately \$60,000.00. These funds can assist us in buying any necessary equipment that we might need for the new engine, and to do equipment upgrades on our existing engines. This is a suggestion from Lieutenant Slater Storey. He thinks we can make a decent amount of money by sending it out to be repaired.

Commissioner Michael mentioned in the past, when Blaine County had old ambulances that are retired, the County has given those ambulances to communities that may not be able not afford a \$60,000.00 or \$20,000.00 price tag. Chairman Gray believes the last time we sold a piece of our equipment was sold to Stanley for about \$10,000.00 with no repairs. It is currently one of their primary defense engines. It was still very serviceable when we sold it to them. Chairman Gray would love to see this stay within our region. He asked that we inquire within our region first, then if there is no interest, have Hughes Fire sell it outright. Commissioners Michael and Engelmann support that idea. Chief Robrahn stated we will reach out to surrounding departments and report back to the commission.

Chief Bauer asked to add "update of the fee schedule" as an action item on the August Agenda.

Chief Bauer will be out of town on the date of the July regular meeting. He will be attending a leadership and supervision course at the National Fire Academy 7/10/2021-7/17/2021. A discussion was had, and a decision made to cancel the regular meeting scheduled for July 14, 2021, and hold a special meeting on July 21st at 10:00a.m.

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

Chief Robrahn thanked Trish for all her hard work. This will be hard of all of us as she moves over to the building department, but in the long run it will be good to have Trish available still to assist with the new administrative assistant. He thanked Chief Bauer for all his work, it is amazing to still see all the new plans arriving that he is processing. Our community is changing, we are expecting to have a lot more new residents. Our focus is on being prepared for the future. It is important for the fire department and fire district to have responders, and for those responders to have a place to live. Chief Robrahn thanked Commissioner Engelmann for his support in keeping the housing project moving along. We have made some good headway.

Chief Robrahn stated that we are expecting a busy tourist and event season this summer. It looks like a lot of the major events will be returning this year. We are concerned with our water levels, and the influx into the area. We have a lot of first-time campers, and travelers passing through our state. We want to remind everyone; do not drag your chains, whether it be recreational campers or construction trailers. We are already seeing unattended campfires, Wood River has had quite a few. It is on our radar, that this will be a busy summer.

Commissioner Michael proposed sending an email or letter to the County Commissioners and ask them to contact the forest service and BLM (Bureau of Land Management) regarding burn bans. Chairman Gray stated he will send the email to the County Commissioners.

7. Discussion: Ambulance District.

Chairman Gray stated that he and Chief Bauer have attended the Ambulance District meetings as representatives of the North Blaine County Fire District, and that Chief Robrahn and Mayor Hendricks

have attended these meetings as representatives of the City of Sun Valley. Chairman Gray stated an RFP (Request for Proposal) has been sent out, in search of someone to come in and develop a master plan for the ambulance district. Chairman Gray wants to work on this collaboratively with the City of Sun Valley. It is important for us to be the strongest voice we can be. Chairman Gray asked the ambulance district to determine the amount of funds that are generated by the City of Sun Valley, and the North Blaine County Fire District citizens. The ambulance district has not provided that information yet. However, Chief Robrahn and Chief Bauer have been working on gathering this information and the amount is approximately \$1.2 million a year. When asked of the ambulance district the amount of funds received by the City of Sun Valley and North Blaine County Fire District, the answer is zero. Chairman Gray suggested that he and Chief Bauer meet with the City of Sun Valley to ascertain the collective needs and take those to the County prior to the next budgeting approval, to determine if we can enact change and gain support for the citizens in our jurisdictions.

Chief Bauer spoke about the first 2 ambulance meetings which were a bit frustrating. One frustration was when the medical director stated that response times do not matter that much anymore. While at the Idaho Fire Chiefs' Conference it was reiterated that response times are very important. On a positive note, Chief Bauer is hopeful that the City and the District now have a seat at the table. The ambulance district needs to change because the current model is unsustainable. To serve the citizens in our communities we all need to step up. He is confident that the consultants, when hired, will agree with a lot of our plans because the Greenhorn Fire Station is pivotal to the service that we can deliver in this county.

Chairman Gray requested authorization from the commissioners for he and Chief Bauer to continue the work forward with the City of Sun Valley to develop a collaborative plan and submit it to the ambulance district. He would like us to be prepared to move forward. Commissioner Engelmann stated that it is time for a major overhaul even though change is not always welcome. He agrees that we need to keep moving forward with what we are planning regardless of the outcome of the study. Commissioner Michael supports the plan of moving forward.

[8. Discussion and possible approval of the Greenhorn Station Lease Agreement between North Blaine County Fire District and Idaho Transportation Department.](#)

Commissioner Engelmann stated Chief Robrahn has worked very hard to get this lease and he is excited to see such a favorable lease. We will need to define the land we want by means of a survey. ITD (Idaho Transportation Department) will lease us the land for \$1.00 a year for 100 years.

Chief Robrahn and Commissioner Engelmann have been working together on this, they have a red-lined version that will be sent out. Moving forward we will need to provide an exhibit in the form of a map of the exact boundaries that we would like to lease from ITD (Idaho Transportation Department).

Commissioner Engelmann stated the lease requires a legal description of the land. We need to hire an engineer to survey the land and create the legal description. He would also like to proceed with an RFP (request for proposal) for a design build proposal and get that out within the next few months.

Chairman Gray stated we should also have soil tests completed at the same time, so we can be as ready as possible. The need for housing is now, and he does not want to delay.

Commissioner Michael asked how this property relates to the sheep easement.

Chief Robrahn replied that it is his understanding that the sheep easement is between the bike path and the old rail line.

Commissioner Engelmann doesn't see how this would interfere with the sheep easement.

Chairman Gray opened public comment.

John Peavey who lives up Indian Creek and is in the sheep business addressed the commission. He would like to see what we are working on, on a map, to ensure they are able to trail the sheep up and down the valley. He stated the area near East Fork is a choke point, where the river and the highway come together close to the property in question. The sheep herders would be supportive of housing for first responders, but they would like to see the plans before giving their approval. John further noted that they would also prefer deciduous trees because of the space that the evergreen trees take up. The sheep herders would like to be included in this project. Chairman Gray stated it is not our intention to interfere with the sheep easement at all. He appreciated John's comment regarding the landscaping, at informed we can be mindful of that. Chairman Gray stated once we have the area mapped out, all can collectively see the land we are speaking of, and then we can have a better conversation. Jim Phillips is also here at the meeting, who has no comment other than keeping them in the loop as the plan develops so they can comment on it.

9. Discussion and possible approval regarding pre-construction development.

Commissioner Engelmann stated that we need to identify the parcel, get a legal description and a topographical survey, and site design. It would be great to have a map that we can attach to a request for proposal. We do not need septic right now. Commissioner Engelmann stated we should move forward with phases 1, 2, and 3 on the proposal that was provided by Galena Engineering. The proposal was received in the fall of 2020, so the prices may differ a bit.

MOTION

Commissioner Engelmann moved to approve funding of the survey work at Greenhorn Station in association with the ITD (Idaho Transportation Department) lease, and we allocate up to \$12,000.00, seconded by Commissioner Engelmann. A roll call vote was taken.

AYES: Chairman Gray, Commissioner Engelmann, and Commissioner Michael.

NAYS: None.

10. Discussion: Fiscal Year 2022 Budget.

Chief Bauer stated we wanted to create a line item for housing and asked Commissioner Engelmann for a dollar amount to list. Commissioner Engelmann suggested they sit down and ascertain an amount that would cover the initial expenses in the fiscal year 2022. Chairman Gray would like to have the housing units completed by the end of summer 2022.

Chief Bauer cited a list of items on the budget which have changes from the FY 2021 budget.

The District is looking to hiring a part time employee to take over Trish's role as administrative assistant. This will be a permanent position with benefits. There will be new costs associated with this hire, because currently the District is paying for half of these benefits. The new hire, the District will pay for the entirety of the benefits. This position will be 30 hours per week. Chief Robrahn interjected that the roles and responsibilities of this position have changed since inception. The major role change being accounting. The District previously paid about \$18,000.00 per year to an accounting firm. This position manages the accounting now. With the new housing project and the potential of staffing Greenhorn Station in the future, the workload of this position will increase. Chief Bauer suggested the best way to manage the increase of the new position in the FY 2022 Budget is to increase the amount of the contract for services with the City of Sun Valley since the District has no employees, it relies on the City to handle

the employees. Chairman Gray requested the new contract with the City to be listed on the agenda for the July 21, 2021 Special Meeting.

Commissioner Michael asked what is planned for merit or cost of living increases in the FY 2022 Budget. Chief Robrahn replied a five percent (5%) increase was requested and is awaiting City Council and Mayoral approval.

Walt Femling said they have reached out to the benefits provider; and we expect to see increases in the medical insurance possibly twelve to fifteen percent (12-15%). Until the insurance carrier does their analysis, we will not have exact numbers.

Commissioner Michael appreciates Mayor Hendricks' approach that when you have good employees, it is good to make them feel appreciated and well compensated.

Commissioner Engelmann agrees in compensating people well. We want to get the best people we can, and we want to keep them. The demand on our services is increasing, and we need to get ahead of it with personnel, equipment, and housing.

Chairman Gray agrees one hundred percent (100%). We do not know when or where this growth will stop.

Commissioner Michael would like to review our revenue projections during the next meeting. We have a healthy fund balance, but some of it will be spent on our new apparatus.

Commissioner Engelmann stated we should investigate the levy rates. The Wood River levy rate is five times (5X) as much as the North Blaine County Fire District levy rate. There is no reason we shouldn't be able to raise our mill levy rate.

Chief Robrahn spoke of House Bill 389. He does not anticipate it having too much of a direct impact on us this year. Some of the bigger cities like Nampa and Caldwell have imposed moratoriums on building because of House Bill 389. This will place pressure on some of the Senators to make changes. It does have a direct effect on emergency services which they say it was not supposed to.

Walt Femling stated another possible source of revenue for the District is impact fees. A rural fire district can charge impact fees as long as they are associated with a city. A consultant will be in Sun Valley next week regarding impact fees. Walt Femling will complete more research and report on that later.

11. Discussion: Best practices for pest control.

Commissioner Michael spoke with AK Pest Control, all the poison is inside so that is fine. She also spoke with the humane society who suggested the stations are as weather tight as possible.

12. Discussion: Old Business.

None.

13. Public Comment.

None

14. Adjournment*.

MOTION

Commissioner Michael moved to adjourn the meeting, seconded by Commissioner Engelmann. A roll call vote was taken.

AYES: Chairman Gray, Commissioner Engelmann, and Commissioner Michael.

NAYS: None.

Chairman Gray declared the meeting adjourned at 11:49 AM.



James E. Gray, Commissioner/Chairman



Sarah Michael, Commissioner/Treasurer