**Umatilla County Fire District #1**

**BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

**Regular Board Meeting Minutes**

**January 10, 2024**

***Present:***

The meeting was called to order at 1859, January 10, 2024, in the meeting room at Station 23, 78760 Westland Road, Hermiston, Oregon by Board Vice President Mike Hawman. Those present included board members Jim Whelan, Eldon Marcum, Spike Piersol, Fire Chief Scott Stanton, Deputy Chief of Strategic Services Richard Cearns, David Hansen and Clerk Reta Larson.

***Pledge of Allegiance:***

Director Marcum led the pledge of allegiance.

***Guests:***

None.

***Minutes of December 13, 2023, Board Meeting***

Director Marcum moved to approve the December 13, 2023, board meeting minutes. Director Piersol seconded the motion. Motion passed.

***Financial Report:***

The bond debt balance sheet shows $657,122.13 in bond taxes LGIP, $36,074.24 in bond debt services, $5,393.22 in bond debt services checking and $-412.00 due from other accounts for a balance of $698,177.59. The bond capital outlay balance sheet shows $4,081,160.23 in the Bond LGIP account, $25,849.23 in the bond account and $-806,878.64 due from other accounts for a balance of $3,300,130.82. The bond transaction report shows nine transactions totaling $623,704.33. Director Marcum moved to pay the December bond expenses in the amount of $623,704.33. This was seconded by Director Piersol. Motion passed. The balance sheet for the General Fund shows a balance in LGIP of $4,262,972.05, $500.00 in petty cash, $128,056.78 in the Banner Bank checking account, $-1,737.29 in unapplied credits/overpayments and $160,659.02 due from other accounts for a balance of $4,550,450.56. The budget report was then reviewed showing taxes collected during December total $428,675.73. Ambulance Service Fee Revenue total $256,292.53. Maintenance Service Fees collected in December total $2,596.00. Grants collected in December total $134,971.00. Intergovernmental agreement funds in the amount of $372,139.82 were collected in December. Fire Suppression Fees of $2,156.15 were collected during December. Miscellaneous Revenue of -$,1,839.19 was recorded in December. No other revenue was received during the month. Total revenue collected during the month of December was $1,194,992.04. Chief Stanton pointed out that the revenue received from intergovernmental agreements is up due to an increase of approximately $80,000 from payments received from the Amazon sites. Chief is going to inquire if this can be expected in future payments from them. Chief pointed out that the first two years the payments were approximately $159,000.00 then the next two years payments were approximately $273,000.00. This is the fifth year of payments that came in at $273,123.00. The state of Oregon sets the value of these sites, and no one knows from year to year what that value will be. Chief Stanton also reported that things have been settled with the Hat Rock fire and the district should be receiving a check for approximately $42,000.00. Chief Stanton also reported that the overtime budget has been completely spent so the Peak activity unit hires that were planned will not be hired. The overtime budget has been spent on many things including minimum staffing due to personnel leaving, enhanced sick leave use, family leave, workers compensation claims, etc. For expenses, $656,032.23 was spent on Personal Services. Materials and Services expended during the month of December totaled $115,153.95. $104,010.06 was spent from the General Fund Capital Outlay fund during December. The final report reviewed was the bank transaction report. Multiple transactions were reviewed with December expenses totaling $971,891.21. With no questions regarding the financial report, Director Whelan moved to pay December general fund expenses in the amount of $971,891.21. Director Piersol seconded this. Motion passed.

***Communications:***

Volunteer Association: Director Whelan reported that the third weekend of the POC academy is coming up next weekend, and things are going well.

***Chief’s Report:***

See attached report. Chief noted that there was a decrease in calls for both November and December. The district was on pace to reach the 6500-call mark but with the decline in calls for the past two months the total calls for 2023 was 6301. Firefighter/EMT and Paramedic hiring is in the beginning stages. So far 30 applicants have shown interest with 16 of those 30 applicants completing part of the hiring requirements. This is exciting because past testing has not had this kind of interest.

***Old Business:***

Capital Improvements

And Purchases:

Station work: Chief reported that the punch list has gone out for Station 24. He does not think that the certificate of occupancy will be issued next week with the long list of items that still need to be completed but is hopeful that the contractors will be quick to complete the items. Station 22 is moving along the same timeline. Chief expects approximately $600,000 in bond reimbursement when he completes the paperwork. Work continues Station 21 & 23 planning. The septic system has been approved.

Apparatus status: The ladder truck will be coming home next week and still needs to be lettered. It will be several months before it is in service.

Grants – SAFER, AFG, et

al The SAFER grant opens at the end of March. Chief has been working with the grant writers to justify the need for the additional fire fighters. The grant for the new engine opens possibly by the end of January so Nick is busy gathering data for this grant.

Dispatch Cost Report: Chief Stanton presented a graph showing the costs of dispatching by year for the past 8 years. The cost has remained steady at $22.00 - $26.00 per call. The costs flattened out on the graph when the legislature passed an increase in funding in 911 fees. The cost did not increase that significantly this year. Chief assured the board that compared to other districts/departments we do not pay that much. The bigger concern is the performance that we receive from our dispatch.

Letter of Support: Chief reported that he has received letters of support from Good Shepherd Medical Center, City of Hermiston, City of Stanfield, City of Echo, Umatilla County Commissioners, Hermiston Generating, Umatilla Electric Cooperative, Tribal, and Hermiston School District.

***New Business:***

Resolution to move

Contingency funds: This resolution is to move funds from the contingency fund to the Personnel wages – Overtime and Insurance – Workers Comp categories due to the high cost of overtime the fund is completely spent and the increase in the workers compensation premium. After Clerk Larson read Resolution 2023 – 2024 #1, Director Whelan moved to adopt the resolution. This was seconded by Director Piersol. A roll call vote revealed 4 yeas and 0 nays. Resolution 2023 – 2024 #1 was unanimously adopted.

Billing for MVA’s and

Vehicle fires: Chief said that traditionally UCFD1 has billed only out of district people for costs associated with the expenses from car fires and motor vehicle accidents. Chief Stanton suggested that insurance companies have this cost built into their policies. Most people will not ever see the bill since the bill goes directly to the insurance company. This is just a way to recoup costs that we have when responding to these types of calls. Director Piersol moved that the district start billing insurance companies for car fires and motor vehicle accidents. This was seconded by Director Marcum. Motion passed.

Letter to County Dispatch: Chief Stanton presented a draft letter that would come from the board of directors of the district. This letter addressed the board’s concern for the lack of adequate performance from dispatch. Chief is not completely satisfied with the letter yet and wanted to know who the letter should be directed to; i. e. commissioners, sheriff, dispatch manager, etc. Chief also wants to include data that supports the concerns that are pointed out in the letter. Chief also wants to make sure that the letter expresses the board’s concerns and not just Chief Stanton’s. Chief would like any input from the board that they have concerns about. Chief would like to have a final copy ready to present at the next board meeting.

Insurance: Our Agent of record for our property liability and vehicle insurance is Swanson Insurance Group with Joshua Burns being our contact with them. Chief is recommending that due to Josh taking employment elsewhere that we move our insurance to WHA Insurance. They are the largest agent of fire districts/departments in the State of Oregon. Director Marcum moved to go with Chief Stanton’s recommendation and move our insurance to WHA insurance. This was seconded by Director Piersol. Motion passed.

**Adjournment:**

There being no further business before the board, the meeting was adjourned at 1951.