

# Mosier Fire District Budget Committee Meeting

Wednesday, May 22, 2024 at 6:45 pm  
Held as in-person and Zoom Meeting

## Attendance

**Board Members:** Carol Goter, Kris McNall, Rob Miller, Todd Reeves, Joanne Rubin

**Budget Committee Members from the Community:** Barb Ayers, Craig Funk, Tim Hudson, Al Sorestad

**Staff:** Chief Michael Carlson

## Call to order 1850 by Kris McNall

### Business:

**Presentation of Revised Budget by Chief Carlson:** Changes to LB-30: Part time firefighters have been added to Personnel; number of personnel increased to 1.75. Workman's comp increased to reflect part time staff. Salary increased to reflect raise for the Chief. McNall added that the Board voted to approve a 3% raise effective July 1, 2024. Corrections to calculations in the LB-20 have been made. Reeves asked if the addition of part time staff will effect budget due to increases in other expenses, e.g., fuel costs due to more use of vehicles. Chief Carlson said that we would stay within budget. Budget message will be updated to correspond to the updated LB-30/LB-20 regarding the part time staff.

**Presentation and discussion regarding ATV with Ultra High Pressure:** Chief presented a PowerPoint to support his recommendation for purchase of ATV/UTV. Chief advocates purchase of UTV which, unlike an ATV, can carry 2-6 people, greater load capacity, decreased chance of rollover due to wider wheelbase and lower center of gravity, versatility of use (can carry a skid or patient). It can be used to carry water, get into inaccessible places, provides better opportunity to fight fires while they're small. Chief provided examples of situations in the last year where a UTV could have been used and several districts that currently have ATVs/UTVs in service. Chief showed a video describing specs of the unit he's recommending. He's no longer recommending the ultra high pressure; cost (\$12K) and does not offer the EMS package. Chief explained his plan for storage and is exploring the possibility of a donated trailer.

Extensive discussion followed with these highlights:

Rubin expressed appreciation for the value of a UTV and the work that Chief put into his presentation, but is reluctant to go forward at this time when JUF funding is not at 100%, considering all the money that the City has put toward the JUF. She believes that funds should go to the JUF rather than a UTV at this time.

McNall shared that she recently learned that there are grants available for vehicles like this and Gilliam County has acquired an ATV/UTV using a grant, including Homeland Security grants. MFD may have to provide some matching funds.

Committee Member Ayers suggested looking into Community Wild Fire Protection Plan, adding that there should be funding available through them during the next few years. She also added that she is aware of some other funding sources and would share that information. Ayers suggested allocating a portion of the cost as seed money.

Reeves offered his opinion that this is not the year to buy this apparatus with the JUF funding not complete.

McNall expressed desire to fund building improvement/maintenance over purchase of UTV, but could

envision putting some money toward the eventual UTV purchase, hopefully with addition of grant money.

Funk suggested that the decision to purchase a UTV should be based on risk assessment for the district, provided by Chief Carlson with Board input/oversight. He asked for information about current responses to the Twin Tunnels. Chief replied that while the Type 6 vehicle would be able to go in, it could not be used to get a patient on a stretcher out (patients have to be rolled out on a gurney), and local ambulances will not go in, making the UTV the first out for medical emergencies in the Tunnels.

Reeves asked if this couldn't be funded by a state parks since the people needing services just described often end up being visitors, not Mosier residents. Chief: State grants are available for this, but those grants are closed now.

Funk suggested earmarking some money for this vehicle while grants continue to be pursued.

Reeves stated that the JUF bids were going out the following day, and when they come back (July 2), that knowledge will help us determine whether we can put money toward the UTV.

Committee Member Hudson voiced concern over the time lost to get the unit on a trailer and to the desired destination. Chief explained it would be stored off of the trailer, and the trailer would be used to return the unit to the station if necessary. Chief also explained that while a minimum of two people have to be deployed to an incident, they can travel in different vehicles. A nearby water tender can refill the UTV water supply.

McNall asked for **Comments from the public:** Dawn Koenig spoke to the importance of earmarking a percentage of the grants to be pursued; grantors are often asking applicants to provide some of the funding.

**Vote on Budget:** To be decided: 1) No money toward the UTV; 2) earmarking \$8500 toward the UTV; 3) allocating full \$35K to UTV. Seeing that there wasn't a majority to support the full \$35K, but there was wider support for setting aside \$8500, McNall made a **motion** to approve budget as presented with a change to \$8500 for the fire equipment on the LB-30, along with change to budget letter to reflect the increase in personnel budget due to the hire of part-time firefighters. Seconded by Ayers. Discussion: Rubin asked where the other \$26.5K would go and McNall answered it would go to the Unappropriated Ending Fund Balance. Rubin sought clarification that nothing more than the committed \$1.8M from MFD was offered at this time toward JUF. Budget Committee approved with the exception of Rubin (abstained) and Reeves (opposed).

**Comments from the public:** None

**Vote on tax rate approval- Motion** made by McNall to approve tax rate of \$2/\$1000 assessed value (same as last year). Seconded by Reeves. Budget Committee approved with exception of Ayers (abstained).

McNall expressed thanks to the Budget Committee. Next step is the Budget Hearing to adopt the budget. Only the Board needs to attend and vote, but all are welcome to attend. This will happen immediately before the next Board meeting, June 13, 2024. All agreed to this.

Meeting adjourned at 2017.

