

Mosier Fire District

Board Meeting Minutes

Thursday, November 14th, 2024 at 6:00 p.m.

Held as in-person and Zoom Meeting

Attendance:

Board Members: Carol Goter, Rob Miller, Todd Reeves, Joann Rubin

Staff: Chief Michael Carlson

Call to order at 1804

Agenda additions or corrections: Chief Carlson requested discussion during Financials regarding an old Norco bill and reviewing a sample invoice from Early Bird for grantwriting services.

Comments from the public: None

Consent agenda - Miller requested correction on October 22 special meeting minutes to reflect his pursuing info from Boardman, not Badger Mountain. Goter requested explanation of the SAIF bill and noted that the monthly charge is increasing by \$200; explanation provided by Chief Carlson (SAIF adjusts for the past year, amount also affected by the seasonal firefighters). Goter questioned whether fingerprinting for volunteers should go in a different category; there isn't one and Chief will make a note of it for next year. Miller asked about the various donations made during the Mosier Fire fundraiser at The Wagon. Reeves made a **motion** to approve the consent agenda with minutes correction; seconded by Rubin; approved by Goter, Miller, Reeves, and Rubin.

Business:

1. **Volunteer Report** - None.

2. **Board**

a. **Board Representative to December drill:** Miller will go to the remaining November drill; Reeves will go in December.

b. **Update on Volunteer Appreciation Dinner Scheduling:** Now scheduled for Monday, December 16. 5pm-9pm. Expects cost to be under \$1,000.

3. **Financials**

Chief Carlson reported that the Norco bill, due to being lost in the mail, ended up being late and there is a late fee.

Chief Carlson talked about the sample invoice provided by the grantwriter in response to the Board's questions regarding her revised pricing schedule. He explained how the revised pricing would list a cost for each activity based on estimated number of hours to prepare, plus an extra charge for each additional line item. Miller questioned why she made some of the changes since there was no objection from the board on that. He also asked the Chief if he was confident in her estimated number of hours required for each grant item. Chief stated that he does have confidence in that.

Chief Carlson also stated that he'd like to stick with getting a grant written only for the SCBAs until we have had some experience with the grantwriter. Additionally, he states that it could take up to two years to get a new vehicle since all the manufacturing companies are backlogged.

Reeves questioned whether our district having a recent fire might prioritize our district for an engine, but Chief Carlson explained it's typically based on age of existing equipment, although the grantwriter could include that information in the application. Chief heard from a manufacturing source that we'd be more successful getting a grant for equipment other than an engine (e.g., PPE, SCBAs, turnouts, etc.). Goter suggested that there wouldn't be harm in asking for the vehicle as well since the grantwriter had stated that if a grant request was not funded, she would rework it for the next grant period at no extra cost. Chief was asked if each request, vehicle and SCBAs, would require the \$1500 fee, or if both would be covered under the same application fee. He said it would be two different fees and would confirm that with the grantwriter.

Goter asked for followup from Reeves on First Interstate Bank's suggestion that we switch accounts to an interest-bearing account. A different source from FIB said that was not correct so no action is needed.

Chief Carlson reported that all but \$918.75 of the wildland seasonal firefighter grant was spent. He will apply for it again next year and if we get it, the \$918.75 from this year will be deducted from it and we do not need to send a check for this year's unexpended grant money.

4. JUF Update

Reeves reported that he spoke with Mosier City Council President, Brenna Campbell, about a joint meeting between the City Council and the MFD Board to discuss the JUF. She was in favor of it and said she would run it by the rest of the Council. Reeves also spoke with Mayor Anderson and he is also on board with it. Mayor Anderson also mentioned an email from the staff of State Representative Helfrich that there may be money from a new state program. This will be pursued, but Miller stated that even if there is money from the state, depending on how long it would take to get to its destination, there is still an urgency to look at the JUF design and see if it can be reevaluated.

Chief Carlson added that the state did not budget for the wildland seasonal firefighting for next year, although he's heard that the state is going to try to find money to fund it as many departments received and relied on those funds. This represents further pressure on the state for various funding needs.

Since the Mayor agreed with the idea of a joint City/MFD meeting, a scheduling poll will be sent out. Andrea Rogers is the acting City Manager at this time.

Chief Carlson does not think a JUF meeting will be scheduled until Mayor Anderson's return to Mosier in early December.

5. Chief's report: Chief Carlson reported on calls for October and the missed calls. The Chief was asked if he could provide more data on the missed calls so that we can understand why they're happening. Discussed the decline in texts received for calls in recent weeks. Chief explained that MCFR, who is responsible for setting up responses to medical calls, installed a new system. Chief clarified with the person in charge of dispatch which medical calls should include Mosier, even though MCFR has the ASA (Ambulance Service Area). Chief explained the mutual aid agreement that has been in place for years and how it's determined who gets called to medical and non-medical calls.

Chief stated that there's been a decline in volunteers showing up for calls. There were mutual aid calls that Mosier could not go to because we didn't have enough people to send (minimum of 2 for MCFR and 3 for Hood River calls). Chief Carlson said that other chiefs in the community are reporting a similar decline in responses from volunteers.

Chief reiterated that the texts through Everbridge have not been consistently sent/received. The volunteers do not rely on Everbridge. They receive calls and respond via an app called First Due, so they are not reliant on Everbridge.

Three volunteers are enrolled in the driver operator course taught by Chief McCafferty in Parkdale.

Three volunteers are scheduled to attend the Firefighter I course starting in January.

Since the Chief's report (available in the packet) for this meeting was written:

- Brush 12 is now out of service.
- FEMA grant for winter weather losses was denied due to losses being covered by vehicle insurance. However, vehicle insurance will not cover it so he will appeal the FEMA grant.
- Redesign of Station 12 will likely be closer to \$100K. Gathering more info on that.
- Reimbursement claim for Microwave Tower Fire cleanup has been adjusted to \$85K and submitted.

a. Discussion on ISO rating and importance to the community: Chief Carlson presented an ISO document explaining how ratings are derived. This is used by insurance companies to determine risk. Insurance companies are also using a wildfire map for that as well. When we get our new ISO rating he will make it public on our webpage and Facebook.

b. Discussion and possible action regarding change to our SDIS insurance company (for vehicle Insurance): Chief explained that he would like to go to a different company. The current company is very unresponsive. There will be no increase in cost. Miller made a **motion** to approve the Chief's plan to change insurance companies, seconded by Reeves, approved by Goter, Miller, Reeves, Rubin.

c. Discussion and approval of District Procurement policy: We currently don't have a policy and it was requested by a current user of a district credit card. Chief took information from the SDAO handbook, made a few adjustments, and would like to use this as the policy. **Motion** to approve this policy made by Reeves, seconded by Goter, approved by Goter, Miller, Reeves, and Rubin.

d. Discussion and approval for purchase of Firefighter Turnout: Reviewed as part of bills and approved with bills.

6. Correspondence: Received a plaque of appreciation from SDAO for being with them for 25 years.

Comments from the public: None

Adjournment at 1924

Next month's board meeting is scheduled for December 12, 2024.