



# SHERIDAN FIRE DISTRICT

## REGULAR BOARD MEETING MINUTES

February 8, 2022 6:30pm VIRITUAL ONLY

Board meeting called to order by President Cooley.

**Roll-call:** Board attendance: President Harry Cooley, Vice-President Tammy Heidt, Secretary Ray Bottenberg, Director Pete Gutbord, Absent: Director Carol Harlan  
Staff Attendance: Chief Les Thomas, Deputy Chief Larry Wooldridge, Office Admin. Susan Shepard

### **Approval of Previous minutes:**

01/11/22 Regular Board Meeting minutes

**Vice-Pres. Tammy Heidt** - motion to approve all minutes

**Director Bottenberg** - second

**All in favor, minutes approved**

**Approval of Financials:** Discussion – Chief Thomas said Susan is finally on US Bank acct.

**Director Bottenberg** - motion to approve financial reports

**Vice-Pres. Tammy Heidt** - second

**All in favor, financials approved**

### **OLD BUSINESS:**

#### **A. Seismic Update – DC Wooldridge**

The project is moving along well, waiting for some supplies, ahead of schedule on the roof, getting payments out, sprinkler system approx. 174K, additional drywall repairs. Final is set for 1<sup>st</sup> week of May per punch list.

#### **B. Levy – DC Wooldridge**

The levy committee has met and looked at needs versus levy revenue and levy will be .53 cents more than the current levy amount of .35 cents, total of 88 cents. This will get us three full-time line staff, PPE and equipment. Need to have the board approval to move forward and get the forms submitted.

Director Gutbord – (on seismic committee) Stated that the committee discussed every scenario possible and at the end decided that we need to be able to staff a 2<sup>nd</sup> ambulance to be able to cover the community successfully. When the 1<sup>st</sup> ambulance is out it leaves a gap for coverage. If it fails we will have to go back to the public and see what they want. All on the committee felt this was the best decision.

President Coley stated that he agrees with Pete. Asked what was the estimate this levy will keep us in good condition.

DC Wooldridge – the levy is for five-years so approx. six years. We are also applying for a Safer Grant so that will get us more years.

Director Heidt – stated for clarification, 2<sup>nd</sup> medic 12 hrs if get Safer Grant, levy would get two 24/7 medic units, three full-time employees, new PPE. Current \$0.35 plus \$0.53 equals \$0.88 new levy amount. Asked if the committee has a plan to educate the community?

Answer – have volunteers ready to help, will have signs and pamphlets, going to speak at city hall, school, chamber, etc.

**Director Ray Bottenberg** - Motion to move forward with putting \$0.88 cent levy on the May 2022 ballot.

**Director Pete Gutbrod** – Second

Call for discussion - none

**All in favor – motion passes.**

**C. Staffing** - Chief Thomas:

\*We have a resignation, they're going to McMinnville, will be doing an exit interview and wish him well. We have a FF/P ready to go temporary position.

\*Have Civil Service applications, one member-Amber, Mike Kissell as the examiner, and will be getting the committee together.

\*We have done great without staffing so far, have part-time people but the levy will allow us 2<sup>nd</sup> ambulance 12/hrs. and long term employees, daytime EMS and training.

\*Addition to old business; talked to Susan Shepard regarding contract for pay and will be submitting something for payment, all know that without Susan we would not be successful.

Gutbrod – thanks Susan

Cooley – Susan started long before we took over and need to get this taken care of.

Heidt – thanks Susan and let's get moving on this. Carol (absent) is also okay with this.

\*Attorney made us aware of a potential issue for a volunteer in a position that would be paid. So we will be going down to one person in the office, thanks Amber for all she has done, much appreciated and don't have payment fix, owe her a lot. Still need her on our Civil Service Committee.

Heidt stated that she wanted to clarify for the board that using a volunteer in a paid position is a labor law violation.

Chief stated that we have a job description for Office Administrator and will be advertising for qualified person.

**NEW BUSINESS**

**A. New ambulance is in service:**

Chief Thomas - Thanks to the crew our new ambulance was placed in service 01-18-2022. We still do not have our stickers but OHA says we are good to go, they have it in the system. Stickers were mailed some time ago but we still don't have them. We don't have a monitor, we're working on that, so the ambulance will be placed in rotation to conserve miles and help with wear and tear.

**B. Grants:**

Chief Thomas stated he enjoys writing grants, currently we have three grants submitted. AFG for turnouts – micro grant for 10 sets which will help bring us up. Will be budgeting for five sets every year. Safer grant for staffing – will know late Aug, Sept, Oct. Rural Oregon recruitment/retention

coordinator for three years. Will keep planning but this will help take volunteers up to EMT or Paramedic status.

**C. Reimbursements:**

Chief Thomas reported that this is a large daunting task of reviewing monies each organization has paid to the others, reviewing pages of reports, trying to match with actual invoices paid, finding the backup to them, etc. In trying to come up with what is owed to Sheridan Fire. We engaged our attorney on the 40-40-20 splits and the employee buyout check that SFD pd to SW Polk when hosting agency moved to them. Director Heidt put together a worksheet showing how Sheridan Fire has overpaid. Attorney requested that Chief Thomas write a letter, as one more attempt at diplomacy, and if unsuccessful will evaluate the cost to the tax payers vs recovery.

Vice-President Heidt stated that after meeting with attorney for two hours, it's frustrating to find out that logic sense doesn't always make sense in the legal world, and may be forced to do a forensic audit. The 40-40-20 splits were correct up to Judy Breeden's departure, so have a clean place to start. For the forensic we could begin with last quarter of 2020 thru all of 2021. Hopefully this will reduce the cost and tell the board what they need to know.

**Director Heidt** made motion for authorizing Chief Thomas to get CPA for forensic audit October 2020 thru December 2021.

**Director Bottenberg** – Second  
**All in favor – motion approved**

**D. Legal – letter:**

Billing for our work on the IGA with West Valley Fire. Chief Thomas shared the invoice from attorney Eileen Eakins, Chief Thomas' time (more time was invested but this he has proof of) all totaled was \$2933.48. Chief Thomas asked if this meets the board's needs.

President Cooley responded that it did. Board would like to get this submitted and get reimbursed.

Chief Thomas stated that Mike Alger's is the acting fire chief for West Valley now and he will send it to the West Valley board and to the city of Willamina since they are taking care of financials.

**Director Heidt** made motion for Chief Thomas to forward the invoice to WVF and City of Willamina.

**Director Gutbrod** – Second  
**All in favor – motion approved**

**E. FF Austin Smith Memorial Update:**

Chief Thomas reviewed the incident that took the life of St. Paul FF Austin Smith, there are no words. We sent a crew to cover St. Paul station, family appreciated all the help from fire departments – family is family. We have also signed up for casket watch, never left alone until ending, will also be sending Engine 9 to the memorial service held at the St. Paul rodeo grounds.

Director Gutbrod stated that he is personal friends with the St. Paul Fire Chief and wanted to say thanks to the chief's for helping out immediately, his friend, family, community and crew.

All the board resounded the thanks in honoring Austin's life.

Vice-President Heidt said she is friends with Austin's mother and she had received a thank you from the family to Sheridan Fire for their help.

**Correspondence:** Deputy Chief Wooldridge was interviewed and did a great job representing the fire department – a good interview.

Chief Thomas had personally received thanks from the community for all we're doing. Had a meeting with the city manager and we are going to move forward and do better.

**Fire Chief' Report:** There are lots of moving parts in this, lots of rumors, but we are moving forward. There is leadership conference next month he is attending, and education will increase at all levels. Appreciates the support.

**Audience Participation:** none

Vice-president Heidt – added a Good of the Order; she wanted on public record that on 02-24-2022 she received an email from Kenna West, city manager of Willamina, requesting to have conference with Tammy and talk about things with WVF. Tammy responded to her stating that she needed clarification as to what. Tammy received a very lengthy email back to which Tammy responded with; she didn't see how she could help regarding documents and that Rick Mishler or Roy Whitman had all the 190 documents or Fred Hertel. Told her that she should speak to Chief Thomas or if she wanted she could request to be up on our agenda for transparency. Vice-President Heidt wanted to report this for clarity and for the people to know that she would not be meeting behind the scenes with anybody.

**Agenda items for next month:**

- \*updates on Levy
- \*Seismic updated
- \*Grants status
- \*Forensic auditor
- \*admin position
- \*Susan's contract

President Cooley stated that he would like to request that 'Board Comments/Concerns' be put on Agenda between audience participation and agenda items.

Next Regular Board Meeting March 8<sup>th</sup>, 2022 at 6:30 pm - Location TBA.

**Director Bottenberg** – Motion to adjourn

**Vice-President Heidt** – Second

**Meeting adjourned at 7:33pm**

Minutes by Susan Shepard