



# SHERIDAN FIRE DISTRICT

## REGULAR BOARD MEETING MINUTES

April 12, 2022 6:00pm – followed by Levy Info Mtg.

The Monroe Center, SW Monroe Street, Sheridan, OR 97378

6:00pm - Meeting called to order by President Cooley, followed by flag salute.

Roll-call: President Harry Cooley, Vice-President Tammy Heidt, Secretary Ray Bottenberg, Director Pete Gutbord, Director Carol Harlan-virtual

Staff Attendance: Chief Les Thomas, Deputy Chief Larry Wooldridge, Office Admin. Susan Shepard

### Approval of Previous minutes:

\*06/12/2022 Regular Board Meeting minutes

### Approval of Financials

**Vice-Pres. Tammy Heidt** – postpone until next meeting, due to not having enough time to review.

### OLD BUSINESS:

#### A. Seismic Update-State Correspondence and Sprinkler System:

Two schedules – A and B. A is grant work and B is what district pays for. Sprinkler, dorms, and kitchen schedule B. Projects maybe ahead – might be done by June. Roof is almost done.

#### B. Levy – this will be moved to end of meeting.

#### C. Pre-Audit Update:

The forensic audit firm hired was Freedom Group. Choose someone with neutral eyes who didn't know the 40-40-20, non-partial viewpoint. They looked at the districts quick books and reported that there was no documentation on the payable entries by previous admin, so there was nothing to review so therefore no need for a forensic.

#### D. 40-40-20:

Chief Thomas stated that Susan has done an incredible amount of work and we would like to validate further before presenting to the public. Phase 2 will be more work.

Chief Thomas had Good of the Order – The invoice for attorney fees to West Valley Fire still has had no response.

President Cooley clarified that it was the West Valley board who agreed to reimburse Sheridan Fire for the attorney expenses for the proposal to assist them.

Director Gutbrod – what's the next step. The taxpayers and Sheridan Fire just keep taking hits like this.

Vice-President Heidt – stated to contact attorney.

Board discussion on the cost of contacting attorney. Decided to call the City of Willamina first, since they are doing the financials now, and relay that it was approved by the WVF board to reimburse Sheridan Fire.

#### E. Volunteer and Subcommittee Minutes – Update:

Minutes are included in the board packet. Chief Thomas stated that he attended the volunteer meeting in March, there wasn't one this month. No subcommittee meetings and the negotiations are in progress so can't share yet.

## **NEW BUSINESS:**

- F. Service Agreements** - Blake Jamison is online so we are moving him first out of courtesy to him. Chief Thomas introduced Blake and turned it over to him to explain/review his proposed service agreements for billing services for increasing our revenue.

**Blake Jamison:** He has done GEMT for Sheridan Fire for seven years. He used to work for OHA and has now started his own business, Tactical Business Group. Stated the contracts that are already in place with Sheridan Fire will not change, these contracts are for new billing services. Has seven employees and services are able to go further to bill. They will work with current biller, also do MVA's. Work with clients to expand revenue streams, which have increased revenue significantly for clients. They discuss with districts to not add burden to their taxpayers, these services are often paid for by insurance companies.

With the two pieces to GEMT. His company has software that is able to pull documentation down to minute detail needed for reports with data to maximize potential government reimbursements. Currently GEMT for Sheridan Fire is approximately 50k but is held up due to current biller not able to provide information with accuracy.

Chief Thomas stated that 50k is the base amount and with more data numbers will increase revenue.

Blake added that they are a full-service public safety firm, have licensed investigator – so one-stop shop per say! Asked for questions – none. He thanked the board for the time.

Board thanked Blake and stated they will be discussing. Chief Thomas told board that changes wouldn't happen until July.

### **A. (back to start) Cash Capital Loan Discussion – Needs for Capital Expenditures**

Chief Thomas stated that Sheridan Fire does not currently have any debt but with the failure of the sprinkler system, and wanting to stay financially solvent, the capital loan would be beneficial. He's been working with David Ulbricht from SDAO to find us a good prospect for a potential loan. First Federal is looking the best, 5,7 or 10/yr. Proposals are in packet, interest rate around 3.15%. He reviewed the worksheet with the financial and seismic goals; sprinkler, dorms, etc.

Board discussion: Fixed interest rate, possible seismic expenses for district – not 100% sure due to previous change-overs and some wording that made the state consider them disallowed. Chief Thomas stated that there are discussions going on between the district and the architect regarding wording and previous approvals prior to this administration. It has come down from 360k to approx. 225k, but still have a ways to go. 43k for kitchen remodel, approx. 100k for dorms-were told bedrooms would be covered-not true. They are making some changes and updates to save the district some money. Chief Thomas has consulted with his advisors, and they have told him that it is always best to stay financially solvent.

Board wants people to know that the current dorms were not permitted by the county when they were installed and not fire safe, thus needed to be redone for the safety of employees.

Loan will cover equipment for ambulance, sprinkler system, dorms, kitchen. The skid unit was going to be paid for with conflagration money but that is not being released to us by SW Polk. The two vehicles (72k and all furnished) will be here soon, but we have money in the equipment reserve fund to cover.

Chief Thomas said he is not a fan of debt, but this is small debt and will enhance the district.

Further discussion by board.

### **Vice-President Heidt - Motion to give Chief Thomas direction to move forward to secure the capital loan. Director Harlan – Second**

Question by Director Bottenberg – if state doesn't approve some of the other seismic expenses is 300k enough?

Chief Thomas answered that with the fess and this possibility he has asked for 350k.

## **Vote – All in favor – Motion passes**

### **B. Office Administrator Applicant Update:**

33 applicants, narrowed down to 15 then 5 and will interview 3 tomorrow. Tammy, Carol, and Susan will be on the interview panel and then the selections will have a chief's interview. If don't feel they can get the right person we'll go out again, but these are good candidates; qualified, personable – will let the board know the outcome.

### **C. Civil Service Board:**

Chief Thomas stated that with the candidates chosen they are working on the Civil Service Rules, policies for Sheridan Fire. Other Rules were for the joint districts. The first meeting will be the first part of next month and then will begin testing,

### **D. Single Role Paramedic/FF-Paramedic Advertisement Status:**

Chief Thomas stated that he has talked about this already, we have position open and appreciates the shifts helping cover, we have good folks. He talked to a possible candidate today. His goal is to continue the positive work force we have to meet the needs of the community, and we will continue to.

President Cooley thanked the shifts and volunteers.

Chief Thomas stated that due to time constraints the other agreements in the board packets will be discussed next month.

## **LEVY INFORMATION**

Chief Thomas reviewed the levy and the ways to reach the community. Handouts going out this week, signs going up. On the Agenda is some of the explanations. He said he always starts with an apology and will promise to be transparent. Motto 'Others Before Self' and 'Do The Right Thing'.

Discussed permanent rate of 1.11, 2017 levy .35 cents = \$1.46

Proposed Levy .88 cents and with current levy going away the increase to taxpayers is .53 cents = \$1.99

Director Gutbrod discussed the levy committee and all the scenarios they ran through to come up with levy rate. Basically came down to staffing and community needs covered and where the district is going in 5 years. The committee tried to make the best decision and didn't take the decision lightly. With the current levy ending they had to make a decision.

(handout provided different scenarios and cost to taxpayer)

Chief Thomas reviewed the yes vote and no vote points on the measure, for information.

Info sheets handed out: Comparison's from 2000 to 2020, Cost of Living, home values, inflation rates, equipment increases, fire truck cost, cost to equip a firefighter, wildland equipment cost, cost of doing business for a fire dept., cost to taxpayer from 500k to 5 million assessed value properties.

The board has been very careful with the public's money and will continue to do so!

Questions: Asked about ISO rating. Lower the number the better the rate. ISO sets parameters on how they calculate it. The grading has many factors, water, response, etc. Sheridan is currently a 4, will be working on trying to get a lower rate.

Next townhall levy meeting will be Tuesday, April 19<sup>th</sup> at 6:00pm at the Buell Station. This will be an information only meeting to get the public informed and answer any questions they may have.

Chief Thomas stated that he appreciates everyone's time and when we get back in the station we will be bringing back the traditions – pancake feed, awards, etc.

**Audience Participation** - none

**Board Comments:** Vice-President Heidt stated she has talked to Chief Thomas and other people – a couple years ago they were encouraged to charge for life assists – she would like to re-evaluate this.

President Cooley – will add to next month Agenda

**Correspondence** – in packet

**Agenda Items:** Life-Assists

**Director Gutbrod** – Motion to adjourn meeting.

**Director Bottenberg** - Second

**Meeting adjourned at 8:16pm**

Minutes by Susan Shepard