

# Fort Ellis Fire Service Area

## **Public Meeting**

### **Fort Ellis Fire Service Area Board of Trustees**

Date: Thursday, March 16, 2023

Time: 7:00 PM

Place: Fort Ellis Fire Department

## **Officers Present:**

Vice President Norbert Hackl, Treasurer Gerald Groggel

## **Members Present**

Jaclyn Liebscher, Graham Goff

## **Chief Present**

Chief Mike Cech

## **Guests**

Lola Dunmire & Ben Kauffman (via Zoom), Kate Dinwiddie

## **Call to Order 7:23pm**

## **Public Comment**

No public comments.

## **Consent Agenda**

### ***Secretary Report***

The minutes from the February Board meeting were issued via email and each board member acknowledged receipt. Gerry requested a change the Regular Agenda section to include - the Long-Range Planning Committee meeting is scheduled for March 9, 2023, not the Building Committee. Gerry, Mike Buck, Norbert, and Frank will attend this meeting. Gerry made a motion to approve the minutes. Graham seconded. Motion carried.

### ***Financial Report***

The February 2023 YTD financial report was issued via email and presented at the meeting. Graham moved to approve the Financial Report for the Fire Service Area. Norbert seconded the motion. 3 yeas and 1 abstained their vote due to not having adequate time for review. Motion approved.

The January 2023 YTD financial report was issued via email but was tabled until February for the Board to look over. Jacklyn moved to approve the January financials for the Fire Service Area. Graham seconded the motion. Motion approved 3 yeas and 1 abstained their vote.

Lola reported the Annual Budget and the tax amount expected. Expenses are in-line.

Lola has not seen the signed budget from Steve. Mike is sending it to Lola now and she will confirm and correct any discrepancies.

There was discussion on Reserve account activity for the current fiscal year.

Discussion on the Reserve activity for new station.

Discussion on the reports showing transfers in and costs for the new building and what was budgeted to go into the Building Reserves for current fiscal year.

There was discussion on what was budgeted for the station and for vehicles.

Discussion on a possible delay on the Intercap draw for another month.

Discussion on funds in the Operating account and the annual expenses. There was more discussion on the tracking sheet.

Discussion on the contingency based on approval of the change order, if approved tonight. More discussion on contingency and the previously approved amount. More discussion to come on this later in the agenda.

Gerry made a motion to transfer \$307,000 from the Operating account into the Building Reserve. Graham seconded the motion. Motion carried.

More discussion on the budget and the Intercap loan. Norbert updated the spreadsheet and discussed the Board approved budget, construction utilities, and cost of construction paid.

Graham made a motion to move \$60,000 from the General fund to Apparatus reserve for fiscal year 22/23. Gerry seconded the motion. Motion carried.

Discussion on why the Board is getting the budget 48 hours before the Board Meeting. Gerry thought it was agreed that they'd get the budget a week before the meeting. Lola will review the minutes to verify.

Will do the new budgets in April. Budget discussions to start this month and be ready in April.

Danielle will mail R&R Taylor checks as needed.

Discussion on the cost of accounting. Gerry will contact Lola to discuss accounting expenses.

## ***Regular Agenda***

### **Annual Events Calendar- February**

The Annual Banquet will be on April 6th at the Elks Club

## ***Chief's Report***

Matters for the Board:

Intercap loan discussion- We missed having the closing documents tonight and would like to see if we can do it by April. Kate reported that we will need paid invoices for them to refund us. Discussion on what invoices they will refund.

More discussion on amount to be drawn. Discussion on the March pay application being submitted and what amount to get refunded in April, and then submit the April pay application.

Discussion on asking Bill for some forecasting on the finishing costs.

Kate needs to send the invoices in by March 30<sup>th</sup>. Discussion on the February invoice for R&R Taylor will be submitted to Intercap. Kate will check on the timeframe for the second draw. It can be decided at the next Board meeting which invoice to use on second draw.

Discussion on invoicing from the subcontractor. Kate thinks we can ask for less, she will check. Closing at the end of the month.

Gerry made the motion to approve and submit the February pay application for R&R Taylor to Intercap. Graham seconded the motion. Motion carried.

Discussion on new a Board member to replace Jaclyn.

Discussion on the County Commissioner or website for advertising. The Board will reach out to any prospects and discuss more at the next Board meeting.

Capitol Campaign- Vanessa sent out an email that Mike forwarded to the Board members.

Another mailer is scheduled to go out in April and working on Give Big match. Working on some grants also.

County Open Lands Grant discussion.

Gerry will check on getting Mike an interview with a radio show. Mike is willing to go on any show and do anything to help.

Social Media discussion.

There was discussion on Danielle's Performance Review.

### **Call Report for February 2023**

Total Monthly Calls- 29

Last Year- 33

YTD Total Calls 51 - Last year 49

### **Long Range Planning Committee**

Gerry Reported- Buck, Mike Frank & Gerry met a week ago. They didn't discuss anything with the apparatus. The Apparatus Committee will submit a long-range plan for that. It was broken down into short-term (1-3 years) and long-term (6-10 years). Discussion on the short-term need and fees.

There was discussion on the findings from untaxed units in the FSA. Will try to wrap this up by next month. Norbert has talked to the county Treasurer about this project. Discussion on DNRC leases.

Discussion on expenses for the new station. Expenses will probably go up and the need to budget for utilities. We will have two loan payments per year, and an Intercap loan payment.

Discussion on next year's budget with a fee increase and without. Discussion on what funds can be put away in the reserves. Discussion on estimated funds needed per year added to the apparatus reserve, PPE reserve, and the balloon payment at the end of 15 years.

Significant expenses coming up are:

- 1-Possibly increasing the fees
- 2-Purchasing new radios
- 3-Moving the training building
- 4-Training yard
- 5-Ventilation system

6-Administrative Assistant hours increase

7-Budget for snow removal

8-Well installation

Some of these could be grants. Planning expenses with the possibility of no grants.

Long-Term Expenses include:

1-New paid chief position

2-Coming up with a system for transferring information

3-Phase 2 on the new building

4-Decrease our ISO rating

5-Second station

There was discussion on moving to a District from a Fire Service Area and what the steps could look like.

Discussion on a fee increase before moving to a District and a mill levy with Kate.

Discussion on execution of an increase versus other districts. We are less than everyone else. More was discussed for the increase and the effect financially.

Discussion on the process of a fee increase.

Discussion on moving to a District and low-income residents.

There was discussion on the petition, properties, and the process.

Kate answered the Board's questions on the process.

Discussion on the petitions. Can send out a petition in mail. Mill value established by MT. Department of Revenue. More discussion on the process.

Discussion on the transfer on the building loan will have to be explored.

Discussion on whether to go forward with the mailer or refocus our efforts.

Discussion on how long we can wait for the increase. Will table the discussion and decision until the next Board meeting in April. Need to work to decide so the preliminary budget will reflect the increase.

Norbert will add his notes to Google Drive for the continued Long-Range budget discussion in April.

Discussion on the Administrative Assistant's Annual Review.

Discussion on the building and contingency. Discussion on the project.

### **Training/Members Report**

Continue focus on EMS and FF1.

We lost a firefighter unexpectedly, had Bozeman Fire and Hyalite cover our calls during the service. We will cover Bozeman Fire Station 1 calls, due to the loss of one of their firefighters.

### **Subdivision Activity**

Nothing to report.

### **Public Service Outreach Activities**

Nothing to report.

### **Gallatin County Fire Council Activities**

Scott Fosdal is on the SOG committee- nothing new to report.

There was a Fire Council Meeting on March 2nd- nothing to report.

### **Update on New Recruits**

2 new recruits doing well. Focused on recruit training with an additional training plan once a month to get them up to speed. Will be issued pagers and radios in mid-May.

We've been thin on response due to spring break but should be up to full strength around the 1<sup>st</sup> of April.

We have one firefighter on light duty.

### **Outreach Update**

Nothing new.

### **Old Business**

Discussion on the change order for R&R Taylor and the contract.

Norbert made motion a to pay the proposed change order to R&R Taylor. There are 2 yea-2 nays on the motion. Motion failed.

Norbert can discuss with Ben and get his recommendation. For now, we will need to have a new check made for R&R Taylor, minus the change order amount to pay for now. Will table the discussion on the change order and review the contract.

Discussion on the possibly of talking to Bill about funds left over at the end.

Discussion on the change order for the windows. Delivery is 27 weeks out.

### **New Business**

Thank you, Jaclyn, for your service to Fort Ellis Fire. Thank you for all you have done on the committees and all the energy you have given.

### **Meeting Adjourned at 9:24 pm**

Next board meeting Thursday, April 20, 2023 @ 7:00 pm at the station with the option to join via zoom. A Zoom link will be added to the website for Public Comments, and all are free to join in person as well.

Certified by: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_