

Minutes

Board meeting of Park County Rural Fire District #1

February 14, 2022

The Board of Trustees of Park County Rural Fire District #1 met on February 14th, 2022 for their regular meeting at 304 East Park Street, Livingston MT.

Trustees Present: Chairperson Lawellin, Trustee Fee, Trustee Donovan in at 6:21

Also Present: Chief Babcox, Captain Anderson, Vickie Jo Shipley, Torston Prah, Ashley Sites, Chase Phillips, Jordan Caoile, Lauren Anderson, Dane Hancock

Call to Order: Meeting called to order at 6:23 p.m.

Public Comment: No general public comment. Captain Prah from Livingston Fire and Rescue presented to the board a different retirement program that is different from the current retirement program the department has, PERS. The retirement plan presented is called FERS. With FERS, the retirement time frame takes into consideration the wear and tear the firefighters go through during their career and the age that most people are no longer able to be a firefighter. The time frame with FERS retirement is after 20 years on the job enrolled in the program, you would be able to retire, or at age 50 you would be able to retire. It does take five years to be vested into the program. The FERS program would cost more than the current PERS program for the employee but for the department as well as the department matches a percent invested by the employee. If the department wanted to switch over to FERS from PERS, and get more information on what the potential cost would be and what the numbers would look like for those with time already invested in PERS to switch over to FERS if possible, the department would just need to submit a letter for that information to FERS.

Minutes: Minutes were read from the January meeting by Chairperson Lawellin. Motion was made to approve minutes as amended by Trustee Fee. Second by Trustee Donovan. Motion passed unanimously.

Sign Claims and Warrants, Financial Report: See Attached. No financials were presented for the month of December at this time. The Park County Finance office sent in reports three weeks late, not leaving enough time to have them prepared for the board meeting. Signed and approved January 11th-31st 2022 warrants and claims #14035-14051 and 14053= \$35,242.55. Void check

14052. Approved February warrants and claims 1st-16th 2022 warrants and claims #14054-14084= \$60,300.74. Void check 14080. The current bank balance is \$201,686.55.

A motion was made to approve the warrants and claims for January 11th-31st and February 1st-16th by Trustee Fee. Second by Trustee Donovan. Motion passed unanimously.

Chiefs Report: [See Attached.](#)

Maintenance Report: The total fleet expense report for the month of January was \$10,946. Including vehicles 452, 453, 460, and 461, all of which are in service.

Association Update: Ashley Sites gave an association update on the last meeting the association held during the first week of February. The association as a total balance of \$6,400 in the bank, and working on even more transparency for the association members on the financials. The association currently has 8 events tentatively scheduled so far. The office at station 2 was finished and storage for Santa on The Fire Truck supplies will be stored there. The association by laws were also updated and the association board has changed the terms for holding office, having a two year term for every position and alternating schedule for reelection. President and secretary one year and Vice President and Treasurer the next. The association is also looking at opening up membership to the association to the community to have more community involvement.

Old Business: - Audit Findings: [See Attached.](#) Dane Hancock from Rudd and Company presented the audit findings from the 2021 audit. Nothing out of the ordinary was found in the audit, and the numbers reported followed on track from the previous years of the department. Motion was made to approve the audit findings presented by Trustee Fee. Second by Chairperson Lawellin. Trustee Donovan opposed. Motion passed.

New Business: Discussion/decision on unused vacation time for Chief Babcox. Chief Babcox has reached the cap amount of vacation time he can accrue and is no longer able to accrue anymore time since he has reached the cap of time that can be saved, with another three weeks meant to be given this year as well. The total hours Chief Babcox has maxed out on is 336 hours. Chief Babcox asked the board if there was a possibility for payout of the hours and to leave one month's worth of hours in the vacation time bank. Chairperson Lawellin stated that time off is important and that it should be taken, and instead of a total payout, have a potential change in policy to allow to be paid back a weeks' worth of time off every year and attempt to take at least two weeks off. To fix the current problem of the capped out time bank of Chief Babcox, have a onetime pay out of 4 to 5 weeks of time spread out over two pay checks, 2 ½ in one check and in July the last 2 1/2. In the future the Chief's time won't be as built up and the standard would be put into place for current and future employees to be able to be paid out for one weeks' worth of

time a year given around Christmas time. Motion was made to change to the standard to current and future employees to be able to be paid out for one week's worth of time a year given around Christmas time by Chairperson Lawellin. Second by Trustee Fee. Trustee Donovan abstained. Motion Passed. The next board meeting in March will have a decision on pay out for 4 to 5 weeks of Chief Babcox's vacation time after being able to see the financial to possibly make a decision.

Public Comment: Ashley Sites on the status of the new SOP and SOG of the department. Captain Anderson answered that the SOP's and SOG's were being slowly updated and almost done waiting on final approval, as well as the volunteer and employee handbook that have been updated and submitted to the board for review that was tabled to the March 2022 board meeting. Captain Anderson also stated to the board that he would be attending a staff and command training on March 11th and 12th in Great Falls and also invited the board members if any would like to attend.

Adjournment: Motion was made to adjourn the meeting by Trustee Donovan. Second by Trustee Fee. Motion passed unanimously.

Chairperson Lawellin

Secretary Gilbert