

**The Board of:** Riceville Volunteer Fire Department  
**Met at:** 6:30PM  
**On:** Monday, July 18, 2022  
**For:** Regular Board Meeting  
**Moderator:** Dan Little (Vice Chairperson)  
**Members Present:** Kent Creasman, Judy Dillingham, Dan Friday, Kathy Higdon, Lisa McCallister and Carla McLendon  
**Not Present:** Paul Campbell and Mark Curran

**1. Call the Meeting to Order:** Dan Little called the meeting to order at 6:32PM. He shared that Mark Curran had a family emergency and might not be able to attend tonight. Paul Campbell will not be in attendance due to illness.

**2. Treasurer's Report:** Year-end financial reports for the month ending June 2022 were emailed to the Board on July 15. Major categories were highlighted, with only one being above budgeted (Insurance, Line Item 5404). This has been addressed in next year's budget, so is not expected to be an issue. All other categories were below budget, resulting in the Department remaining well under (82%) budget for the fiscal year (Budgeted Expenses - \$1,975,883.88; Actual Expenses - \$1,618,133.47).

Lisa McCallister provided a comparison of the Department's current assets using the Balance Sheets from June 30, 2021 and 2022. Current Assets for 2022 were \$1,583,589; for 2021 - \$1,117,872. Total Current Assets for 2022 were \$1,410,016.98; for 2021 - \$976,933.10, demonstrating we are steadily improving our total assets. Accounts Payable for 2022 were \$81,265; for 2021 - \$82,344. Accrued Liabilities for 2022 were \$46,467.60; for 2021 - \$52,699, demonstrating we are bringing our debt down. Total Assets and Liabilities for 2022 were \$2,836,819.66, which is an overall better year-end position compared to 2021.

Dan Little asked if the fixed assets reflect the recently purchased Chief's vehicle. Katie Payne responded that information could be found on the budget sheet as a fixed asset but not on the balance sheet yet, as it would be reconciled after year end.

Dan Friday asked the balance of the Department's reserve accounts. Katie Payne explained those accounts are only updated at year end, as we wait to see how we ended the year, so the balances as presented in the budget have not changed. She explained we try to keep three months of expenses in the operating reserve, with average monthly expenses being \$140,000 to \$150,000.

Kent Creasman made a motion to accept the Treasurer's Report. Judy Dillingham seconded the motion, which carried.

**B. Budget Amendments** – referencing the Budget Performance Sheet handout, Katie explained supply chain issues had interfered with receipt of turn-out gear. She requested \$7,000 be moved from FY22 Line Item 5505, Turn-Out Gear, to FY23 Line Item 5505, to be used for the same purpose. Dan Friday made a motion to amend the budget item named Turn-Out Gear (Line 5505) with an additional \$7,000 from FY22. Kent Creasman seconded the motion, which carried unanimously.

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Katie explained Line 6007, Building, used to be for when we had a building payment. It was left in the budget to establish a building fund. She requested \$14,500 be moved from FY22 Line Item 6007, Building, to FY23 Line Item 6007, Building, to continue repairs to the dormitories. Discussion included other projects for which these funds had been/could be used (HVAC, concrete repair, sound proofing Community Center). Dan Friday made a motion to move \$14,500 from FY22 Line 6007 to FY23 Line 6007. Lisa McCallister seconded the motion, which carried unanimously.

**3. Approval of Minutes:** Draft minutes for the June 20 Regular and Executive Session meetings were emailed to the Board on July 11. Draft minutes for the July 11 Special Board meeting were emailed to the Board on July 14.

Lisa McCallister asked if references to “bids” in the Treasurer’s Report of the Regular Board Meeting minutes could be changed to “quotes” or “estimates” to differentiate from the sealed bid process. Board members who made those references were agreeable to using “quotes” or “bids/quotes.” Dan Friday made a motion to accept the minutes with this recommended change. Kathy Higdon seconded the motion, which carried unanimously.

Dan Friday made a motion to accept the Executive Session minutes as written. Kent Creasman seconded the motion, which carried unanimously.

Dan Friday voiced his opinion that the Special Meeting held on July 11 was not called in accordance with the County contract and asked Katie Payne for her input. Katie felt the meeting was not in violation of the contract and could serve as one of two consecutive meetings required in accordance with Section 8.11 of the Department’s Bylaws.

Lisa McCallister shared she had reached out to Keith Bost, Management Solutions for Emergency Services (MSFES), for his opinion but has not heard back from him. Discussion included the fact it was not the Board’s intent to do anything that was not appropriate; the Special Meeting was talked about/announced/voted on at the June 20 Regular meeting; there was no discussion at that time that the Board was proceeding incorrectly; and the Special Meeting notice was placed on the Department sign and website. Lisa suggested discussion on the proposed amendments take place tonight, using the minutes from the July 11 meeting, and then again at next month’s Regular meeting. Lisa McCallister made a motion to accept the Special Meeting minutes as written. Kent Creasman seconded the motion, which carried unanimously.

**4. Fire Chief’s Report:** Division Chief McEntire provided an overview of the Training Division Report emailed to the Board on July 14, noting the need to look into new positive pressure ventilation (PPV) fans, as two of the old, gas-powered fans are out-of-service. Katie Payne added the PPV fans were budgeted last year and again this year, showing the Department’s intent to purchase fans designed to reduce cancer exposure.

Chief Kelly provided an overview of the Chief’s Report emailed to the Board on July 14, with an amendment emailed on July 18. The amended report reflects a correction in calculation of YTD Total Calls, and a more accurate reflection of Over-Lapping Incidents. (Chief Kelly was able to find a report that tracks all calls received during a

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dispatch period, as opposed to just the first two calls.) Chief Kelly noted the Average Response Time (ART) could be affected by the mutual aid calls.

Dan Friday asked for clarification on what is included in Mutual Aid Given calls and if the stats include the number of times Buncombe County comes into our district. Chief Kelly provided the clarification and relayed we have no way of tracking when Buncombe County comes into our district but felt most of those instances would be found in the overlapping calls stats.

Chief Kelly spoke last Thursday with the Derrick Ruble, County Communications Director, about the Department not being dispatched on routine EMS calls if 1110 is out on another call. A Buncombe County ambulance is being sent into our district, and this has been happening since January. Mr. Ruble has agreed to look into this issue.

**5. Old Business:** The Board agreed to modify the order of business on the agenda, discussing the proposed Bylaws amendments last.

**A. Flooring Upstairs** – The ladies are fully moved back into their dorm. Money from the insurance company was used to cover removal of the damaged carpet, and laminate flooring the Department had on hand was installed in its place. Flooring in the men's dorm was previously updated with this same flooring, and the Department still has three boxes remaining.

**B. Ambulance Purchase** – Select Customs relays Ford has moved the timeframe for receipt of the chassis from “this month” to “to be announced.” The vendor explained this is something Ford does frequently. However, he has reached out to his competitors to see if they may have a unit coming in that we might consider, which would mean an ambulance from a different vendor. In response to a question from Lisa McCallister, Chief Kelly said it is too soon to know if we need to rebid. In response to a question from Dan Friday, Chief Kelly said he has asked the vendor to confirm the VIN number with Ford and will copy Dan on the email.

**C. Board of Directors Manual** – Katie Payne provided a copy of the 2022-2023 budget approved by the Board on April 18, 2022, to be added to the BOD Manual provided to Board members at the June meeting.

**6. New Business:** There was no New Business.

**7. Announcements:** Dan Little announced the next Regular Meeting of the Board is scheduled for Monday, August 15, 2022, at 6:30PM.

**8. Old Business (continued):**

**D. Continuation of Bylaws Discussion** – The Board reviewed the amendments proposed during the Special Meeting held of July 11. (The Bylaws and proposed changes were again projected on a screen, to facilitate the review process.)

In regard to Section 3.8, Vacancies, Kent Creasman made a motion that if a vacancy or vacancies occurs six months or more from the date of the Annual Meeting, a Special

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Meeting of the members will be called to elect directors to fill the vacancy or vacancies. Those elected by the membership will serve the remainder of the term vacated. If the vacancy or vacancies occur less than six months from the Annual Meeting, the vacancy or vacancies shall be elected by the remaining Board of Directors to serve until the Annual Meeting, at which time the members shall vote to fill the vacancy or vacancies for the remainder of the term vacated. Carla McLendon seconded the motion. Kent and Carla voted “yes.” All other Board members voted “no,” so the motion did not carry.

Discussion included the length of time it takes to call a Special Meeting of the Members and how best to allow for community involvement filling vacancies. Dan Friday made a motion that any vacancy occurring on the Board shall be filled by a majority vote of the Directors. If a Director is appointed by the Board to fill a vacancy, then that person or persons filling the vacancy shall serve only until the following Annual Meeting, at which time they will need to run and the membership of the community will elect a Board member to fill the remaining term vacated. Judy Dillingham seconded the motion. Kent Creasman voted “no.” All other Board members voted “yes,” so the motion carried.

Dan Little questioned if Section 3.8 might be in conflict with Section 3.3, Terms of the Members of the Board of Directors, specifically in regard to the number of Directors who are to be elected each year. Section 3.3 states, “Terms of the members of the Board shall be staggered so that ordinarily, one-third of the directors will be elected each year.” It was felt the word “ordinarily” addresses those situations when more than three Directors need to be elected at the Annual Meeting. Carla McLendon made a motion the last sentence of Section 3.3 be edited to read, “Any person who replaces a Board Member shall serve until the date of the Annual Meeting, at which time the membership of the community will vote to fill the remainder of that term.” Dan Friday seconded the motion, which carried unanimously.

**9. Public Comment:** Dan Little opened the floor for public comment after Carla McLendon read the guidelines.

Based on community members who have spoken with him, Terry Duckworth expressed his concern that they feel their voice has been silenced by not being able to vote on all Board members being elected. He further expressed his personal concern as to how this could allow the Board to use the “long-standing good old boy system” to fill vacancies.

Thad Lewis expressed his personal opinion that the community should have a say in electing Directors, cautioning the Board against personal agendas. He reiterated and agreed with comments made by Terry Duckworth and [earlier in the meeting] Kent Creasman.

Harold Parker expressed his personal concerns and opinions about treatment of the Fire Chief by community members, asking why they Board allows it to happen.

Frances Schaeffer stated it is her understanding from speaking with folks from the community that this Fire Department has been unkind to all its Chiefs. She does not know if this is true, but if it is, wonders why this is the case.

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**10. Adjournment:** Dan Friday made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 7:57PM. Lisa McCallister seconded the motion, which carried unanimously. The Board did not adjourn to Executive Session, as there was no business necessitating this action.