

The Board of: Riceville Volunteer Fire Department
Met at: 6:30PM
On: Monday, May 16, 2022
For: Regular Board Meeting
Moderator: Mark Curran (Chairperson)
Members Present: Paul Campbell, Dan Friday, Kathy Higdon, Dan Little,
Lisa McCallister and Carla McLendon
Not Present: Kent Creasman and Judy Dillingham

1. Call the Meeting to Order: Mark Curran called the meeting to order at 6:36PM. He shared that both Kent Creasman and Judy Dillingham had relayed they would not be in attendance tonight, and Paul Campbell would be a little late. (Note – Paul arrived during discussion of the Women’s Shower Repair.)

2. Treasurer’s Report: Financial reports for the month ending April 2022 were emailed to the Board on May 14. Katie Payne relayed the sales tax income for this month is for collections in January and is down quite a bit. The previous month would have been December collections, and there were a lot of holiday activities. Historically, this is how it happens each year. Otherwise, we seem to be in line on each major line item. Carla McLendon made a motion to accept the financial reports. Dan Little seconded the motion, which carried unanimously.

3. Approval of Minutes: Draft minutes for the April 18 Regular and Executive Session meetings were emailed to the Board on May 5. Dan Friday made a motion the minutes be accepted as written. Lisa McCallister seconded the motion, which carried unanimously.

4. Fire Chief’s Report: Chief Kelly relayed a 40-hour hazardous material class was just completed on site for the academy conducted by AB Tech. Such academies are a great source for recruitment; however, the low number of participants also makes recruitment difficult. Of the seven AB Tech graduates, all but two already had a job/promise of a job. Chief Kelly will attend the upcoming Blue Ridge Academy graduation, evaluating candidates for employment.

Chief Kelly provided an overview of the Chief’s report, noting Overlapping Calls had decreased substantially from previous months. The Average Response Time (ART) continues to be adversely affected by long turnover times at Mission, resulting in the ambulance responding from the hospital to the scene. Mission relays the turnover time is due to shortages in their staffing levels. In response to inquiries from the Board, Chief Kelly relayed that the National Fire Incident Reporting System (NFIRS) does not track refusals and provided an example/explanation of a refusal.

Division Chief McEntire provided an overview of the Training Division Report. In response to a Board inquiry, he relayed Buncombe Rescue is just a transport service and has been for about 10 years. Search for a lost hiker, for example, falls back to the specific fire district.

5. Old Business:

A. Community Center Committee – The Committee currently consists of Chief Kelly, Division Chief McEntire and community member Ruth Raifsnider. Katie Payne had asked Paul Campbell for advice on the contract from a security perspective, to include enforcement. He has provided some written feedback.

B. Women’s Shower Repair – Mark Curran reported the work done by a subcontractor of Phillip Gee (of Phil’s Tile and Stone) is not acceptable. He spoke with Mr. Gee, who stated he would be tearing out and redoing the work. Unfortunately, he has yet to show to conduct the work, nor has Mark or Chief Kelly heard from him. The Board discussed options from a legal perspective, but the amount Mr. Gee has been paid exceeds the upper limit for Small Claims Court. Mark will attempt to speak with him again to see how this situation can be resolved.

C. Concrete Pad – The Contractor (Travis of Countryside Landscaping) has relayed to Dan Friday he plans to pour the concrete on May 23 at 11AM.

D. Ambulance Purchase – Chief Kelly heard back from Select Custom, who advises the few requested change orders are doable. With the changes, the price of the ambulance will be just under \$275,000. Per Select Custom, the Department does not become financially responsible for the order until the acceptance letter is signed, nor can the vehicle be sold to someone else. Chief Kelly will call Select Custom tomorrow to move this project forward. The packet will be available in his office for Board review.

6. New Business:

A. Chief 11 Vehicle Purchase – The need for a replacement vehicle for the Chief was approved and budgeted for in the budget year that is coming to a close. As a result of that approval, \$12,000 was budgeted starting this year and for a total of 5 years (72 months), none of which has been expended.

A 2022 Chevrolet 1500 Silverado (4 door, white, gasoline, 4WD) has been found at Sunshine Chevrolet. With the rise in interest rates and to save approximately \$5,000 in interest, the Board was asked to consider purchase rather than finance of this vehicle, using Vehicle Funds. (The current Vehicle Funds balance is \$175,000. Purchase of this vehicle would leave a balance of \$121,800.) This vehicle is not equipped as a Command vehicle (i.e., lights, marking). Funds from the already approved/budgeted \$12,000 will be used to purchase the needed apparatus/equipment.

Dan Little made a motion to spend \$54,000 out of the Vehicle Fund to purchase this vehicle. Kathy Higdon seconded the motion, which carried unanimously.

Discussion took place about use of the current Chief’s vehicle (2008 Chevy Tahoe). It was relayed this vehicle will be used as a “runner” for Volunteers to attend training, etc.

B. Ambulance Financing – Katie Payne shared past loans have been with Local Government Federal Credit Union, who needed to stop servicing government loans. As a result, Civic Federal Credit Union (CFCU), which is a nonprofit organization, was

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created to service local government loans. Their current interest rate is 1.99% but is expected to rise by 1% any day now. Katie checked the interest rates of First Bank (5-6%); First Citizen (5-6%) and First Horizon (4-5%).

The Department cannot pursue a loan now, as it has to be within 90 days of receipt of the vehicle. CFCU recommends a Document of Resolution (DOR) from the Board, indicating intent to finance with them, and they will attempt to honor the current rate. The Department would not be bound to finance with CFCU if able to find a better interest rate at time of purchase. If the Department did proceed with financing through CFCU, a checking and share account would need to be opened. There would also be the option of saving an additional .25% by having the payment automatically deducted from the Department's account with them.

Dan Friday made a motion to seek financing up to the amount of \$300,000 through CFCU for the purpose of purchasing a new ambulance. Be it further resolved the following representatives are hereby authorized to sign all documents necessary to execute this transaction: Mark Curran, Dan Little, Lisa McCallister or Tom Kelly. Dan Little seconded the motion, which carried unanimously.

As the Secretary, Carla McLendon was asked to sign the DOR and based on the document language, was instructed by Katie to line through the name of any Board member not present tonight.

C. Bereavement Policy – Chief Kelly provided a draft Bereavement Policy to the Board, asking they review and discuss at next month's meeting. He was asked to email the policy to all Board members so those not present tonight would have access to the document. (Note – following Executive Session, the Board briefly discussed this topic. No decisions were made as a result of this general discussion.)

7. Public Comment: There was no public comment.

8. Adjournment to Executive Session: Mark Curran thanked everyone for coming and relayed the Board would be moving into Executive Session to discuss a personnel evaluation. Dan Friday made a motion for the Board to adjourn to Executive Session at 7:19PM. Kathy Higdon seconded the motion, which carried unanimously. The Board returned from Executive Session at 7:50PM and moved back into the Regular meeting.

9. Personnel Evaluation: Dan Friday made a motion that Katie Payne be given a bonus as discussed during Executive Session. Lisa McCallister seconded the motion, which carried unanimously.

10. Adjournment: Mark Curran made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 8:14PM. Lisa McCallister seconded the motion, which carried unanimously.