

The Board of: Riceville Volunteer Fire Department
Met at: 6:30PM
On: Monday, September 5, 2023
For: Regular Board Meeting
Moderator: Dan Little (Chairperson)
Members Present: Lee Barrett, Kent Creasman, Kathy Higdon, Butch Laughter, Lisa McCallister and Carla McLendon
Not Present:
Guest(s):

1. **Call the Meeting to Order:** Dan Little called the meeting to order at 6:31PM.
2. **Pledge of Allegiance and Moment of Silence:** Dan Little asked everyone to stand if able and join him in the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag.
3. **Approval of Minutes:** Draft minutes for the August 21 Regular and Executive Session meetings were emailed to the Board on August 30 and 31, respectively. Lisa McCallister made a motion to accept the August 21 Regular minutes as written. Kathy Higdon seconded the motion, which carried unanimously. Kent Creasman made a motion to accept the August 21 Executive Session minutes as written. Lee Barrett seconded the motion, which carried unanimously.
4. **Treasurer's Report:** Due to the shortened time between the August and September meetings, financial reports are not yet finalized. These reports will be reviewed at the October Regular Meeting of the Board.
5. **Fire Chief's Report:** The monthly Chief's and Training Reports were emailed to the Board on September 4, with a hardcopy provided tonight. Division Chief McEntire provided an overview of the Training Report, to include total training hours for January 1 through August 31, 2023 (2,048.75); completion of quarterly AB Tech EMS CE training the week of August 14; and completion of a multi-agency training with Swannanoa on Water Supply/Master Streams. Dates are being coordinated for the MES and Hurst tool in-service, which will also be multi-agency. (A community member donated two cars to the Department for use with this training. Associated paperwork has been completed, and the cars are expected on Friday.) Training opportunities/completions include one member each registered for the Fall Driver/Operator and Fire Officer I Programs. One member is in the Fall Fire Academy and is doing well.

Chief Kelly provided the Fire Life Safety Event (FLSE) Report, relaying there were two car seat checks last month.

Chief Kelly provided an overview of his report, noting Total Calls were down slightly in August (145). Over-Lapping Incidents were down slightly (31/20%), with 14 In District and 17 Out-of-District. At 8:35 and 9:30 minutes, the Average Response Times (ART) for Fire and EMS were below the Department's benchmark of 10 minutes. Ambulance 1110 continued to have exhaust issues. Chief Kelly invited Board members to attend the Hurst tool demonstrations and will let them know when the dates have been determined.

6. Old Business:

A. Community Member Donation Follow Up – Division Chief McEntire relayed follow up will take place with the community member once he is provided her name.

B. Ambulance 1110 Repair Update – The parts to repair the particulate filter issue came in this morning at a cost of \$3,500 rather than the previously estimated \$3,000. The ambulance is scheduled to go to Triangle Automotive Repair in Waynesville in the morning and could be returned as soon as tomorrow evening.

C. Ambulance Purchase Update – Chief Kelly received an email this evening relaying there is no update on the status of the chassis. Based on the manufacturing start date (August 14), it is possible the chassis is awaiting transport. Once the chassis is received, it is normally a 150 days until the box gets built and the Department receives the vehicle.

D. Community Center Rental Committee – As Chair of this Committee, Lee Barrett emailed its members today, asking for feedback on how the process had worked under the current policy. No negative feedback was received from those who responded to the email or were present at tonight's meeting. Division Chief McEntire noted the only requests that had been denied were from non-community members. Lee Barrett made a motion to continue with the policy that is in place. Kent Creasman seconded the motion, which carried unanimously.

E. Bylaws Review Committee Report – As Chair of this Committee, Lisa McCallister relayed she, Lee Barrett and Kent Creasman met last Wednesday. She provided a handout to Board members outlining the proposed amendments from the Committee. One change for the Board's consideration is specific to Section 3.4, Election of Board of Directors, and would allow Board Interest Forms to be emailed. This revision could negate the need to change the date of the September meeting, which is now necessary in keeping with the current wording of that Section. A second recommendation was the addition of a section speaking to the requirement for Board members to annually sign a Conflict of Interest and Confidentiality form, as well as the potential repercussions for violation of the contents of the agreement. Lisa further noted that Section 8.11, Amendment or Repeal of Bylaws, speaks to the process for making changes and that tonight's discussion would count as one of the two consecutive meetings. She asked Board members to email any issues pertaining to the Bylaws to the Committee to allow for a comprehensive review to be conducted.

F. Department Vehicle Branding Options – Chief Kelly relayed this project has been assigned to Captain Blount, who is awaiting feedback from vendors.

7. New Business:

A. Board Resignation - Dan Little received an email from Judy Dillingham on August 23, 2023, announcing her resignation from the Board, effective immediately. She cited personal reasons.

B. Annual Meeting (Logistics and Newspaper Notice) - Carla McLendon read the proposed newspaper notice, which was the same as used last year, except for the change in meeting date. Dan Little asked that a statement be added that anyone in line as of 7:00PM will be allowed to register. This edit will be made and the notice emailed to the Board for their consideration prior to submission to the newspaper. The Board agreed to have the notice run in the Asheville Citizen Times on Sunday, September 24, Thursday, September 28, and Friday, September 29.

Discussion took place about the voter registration process and the need to establish a committee to oversee the logistics. Lisa McCallister and Kathy Higdon volunteered to serve on the committee. Community members Terry Duckworth, Connie Creasman and Jane Little also agreed to serve. Kent Creasman made a motion to form a committee to include Board members Lisa McCallister and Kathy Higdon. Lee Barrett seconded the motion, which carried unanimously.

C. Equipment Surplus – Chief Kelly requested permission to surplus the 26-year old hydraulic tool/pump. He noted the equipment would be removed by employees, so no cost to the Department and that another Department has expressed interest in purchasing this equipment. Lee Barrett made a motion to remove the tool, pump and all attachments; install the new one; and give the Chief authority to dispose of the old equipment in the best way he sees fit. Lisa McCallister seconded the motion, which carried unanimously.

8. Announcements: Dan Little announced the Annual Meeting of the Corporation will be held on Monday, October 9, 2023 at 7:00PM. He encouraged Community members to submit/let others know to submit an application if interested in serving on the Board. The deadline for submitting applications is Saturday, September 9, at 5:00PM. The Regular Meeting of the Board will immediately follow the Annual Meeting.

9. Board One-Year Term : Dan Little explained Butch Laughter is currently filling a seat that has one year remaining in its term. In accordance with the Bylaws, the Community will vote to determine who completes this term. Discussion took place as to how it would be determined which of the four candidates receiving the highest number of votes would fill the one-year term. It was decided that seat would go to the person receiving the lowest number of votes out of the top four candidates. Lee Barrett made a motion that the top four vote getters fill the four seats, with spot number four going to the one-year term. Kent Creasman seconded the motion, which carried unanimously. (The Bylaws Review Committee was asked to consider whether the issue of having more than three vacant seats and how to proceed needs to be included in the Bylaws.)

Chief Kelly projected to the screen, showing those in attendance where to find the Board Interest Form on the Department website, should they want to print and bring it by. He also relayed that hardcopies of the form and Bylaws are available outside his office.

10. Public Comment: The meeting was opened for public comment after Kent Creasman read the associated guidelines.

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Dan Friday requested the proposed changes to the Bylaws be posted on the Department website for Community awareness. He also encouraged all Board members to read the forensic audit associated with the lawsuit recently mentioned in the newspaper.

Jane Little announced and handed out flyers regarding the Boy Scouts Annual BBQ Fundraiser scheduled for Saturday, September 23.

11. Move to Executive Session: Lisa McCallister made a motion to adjourn to Executive Session for personnel and legal matters at 7:24PM. Kent Creasman seconded the motion, which carried unanimously. The Board returned from Executive Session at 8:22PM.

12. Adjournment: Lisa McCallister made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 8:22PM. Kathy Higdon seconded the motion, which carried unanimously.