

The Board of: Riceville Volunteer Fire Department
Met at: 6:30PM
On: Monday, April 17, 2023
For: Regular Board Meeting
Moderator: Mark Curran (Chairperson)
Members Present: Lee Barrett, Kent Creasman, Judy Dillingham, Dan Friday, Kathy Higdon, Dan Little, Lisa McCallister and Carla McLendon

Not Present:

1. **Call the Meeting to Order:** Mark Curran called the meeting to order at 6:32PM.

2. **Approval of Minutes:** Draft minutes for the March 20 Regular and Executive Session and April 10 Special meetings were emailed to the Board on April 11. Dan Little made a motion to accept the minutes as written. Lee Barrett seconded the motion. Dan Friday abstained; all other Board members voted in favor of the motion, which carried.

3. **Treasurer's Report:** Financial reports for the month ending March 2023 were emailed to the Board on April 14. Katie Payne relayed an increase in Sales Tax collections had been realized, which was a reflection of December economic activity. Vehicle Maintenance is currently at 93%, so the Board will be presented with a budget amendment next month, asking for funds to be pulled from another area to cover this line item. Lisa McCallister relayed EMS income is up "a good bit" from last month. Kent Creasman made a motion to accept the Treasurer's Reports. Dan Little seconded the motion, which carried unanimously.

Dan Friday was not present at last month's meeting, so expressed his discontent with and posed several questions about the need to request an increase in Fire Tax and the timeline associated with this topic. Katie Payne and several Board members responded with information provided/shared at last month's meeting in way of addressing his questions.

4. **Fire Chief's Report:** The monthly Chief's and Training Reports were emailed to the Board on April 14, with a hardcopy provided tonight. Division Chief McEntire provided an overview of the Training Report, to include total training hours for January 1 through March 31, 2023 (713.5); training opportunities/completions in coordination with AB Tech (Flashover Simulator); and training opportunities/completions in regard to Fire/Rescue.

Captain Redden provided a Fire Life Safety Event (FLSE) Report, which includes a Blood Drive in coordination with The Blood Connection on Saturday, April 28, and a smoke alarm event, in which the Scenic Mobile Home Park will be canvassed.

Chief Kelly provided an overview of his report, noting Total Calls and Over-Lapping Incidents were both up slightly in March. Of the Over-Lapping Incidents (35/25%), 15 were In District and 20 were Out-of-District. At 8:38, the EMS Average Response Time (ART) remained under the Department's benchmark of 10 minutes. The Fire ART was 17:22, which represents several weather-related event (downed trees) calls being received at the same time, delaying arrival at the third and fourth calls.

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Two volunteer letters of interest have been received. After applying for a state-wide grant (SAFER) to assist with volunteer recruitment, Chief Kelly was approached by Buncombe County EMS, asking he consider participating at the County level, to which he has agreed. Seven Buncombe County Departments are participating in this two-year program, to include Black Mountain and Swannanoa.

Four (4) staff applications were received for the Captain position. All withdrew, noting they did not want to go to school to obtain their Intermediate. One part-time employee (EMS) will transition to full time effective April 29th. One interview has taken place for a part-time firefighter, and two more are scheduled. There was one loss of a part-time employee to another Department.

Chief Kelly gave an overview of his 3rd Quarter Report, which included the status of annual federal inspections, preventative maintenance, grants, PPE inventory and inspection, surplus equipment and DEA license application.

Dan Friday requested the Agenda, Chief's Report and Financial Reports be sent to the Board no later than the Wednesday before the meeting and as had been previously agreed upon. Both Chief Kelly and Katie Pressley relayed every attempt would be made for this to happen, although Katie relayed not all reports are always available to complete the Financial Reports by that timeframe. Mark Curran relayed the Agenda is often not finalized until the day of the meeting. Dan responded a draft Agenda would be acceptable.

5. Old Business:

A. Budget Draft Approval – Katie Pressley relayed she met with the County Manager on April 10th. The County Manager was in agreement with our proposed budget and asked if we were preparing for a building payment. (Katie relayed that based on research an annual estimated payment of \$280,000 would be needed. We currently are able to set aside \$80,000.) Final tax rate request and budget submission are due to the County by April 20th. A work session to justify our budget request will take place with the County Commissioners on May 9th. The County budget meeting date is yet to be determined, but will most likely take place mid-June.

After much discussion, Kent Creasman made a motion to approve \$2,259,855 in the proposed budget, pending County approval. Dan Little seconded the motion. Judy Dillingham, Dan Friday and Kathy Higdon voted No. All other Board members voted Yes, so the motion carried. (The dollar amount in the motion represents 16.6 cents, per the County's estimate at this moment.)

Lisa McCallister made a motion to approve the budget pending County approval as presented in the handout tonight. Lee Barrett seconded the motion. Judy Dillingham, Dan Friday and Kathy Higdon voted No. All other Board members voted Yes, so the motion carried.

B. Bid Award Update – Chief Kelly relayed the process at this point is that a transport will be sent to pick up the truck (Ambulance 1120). Funds will be wire transferred to the Department before the title changes hands. Dan Friday was not

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present at last month's meeting, and expressed his concern about this vehicle being sold. Board members and Department staff reiterated the justification as discussed at last month's meeting in way of addressing his questions.

C. Ambulance Purchase Update – No update, as Chief Kelly has not heard from Mr. Hadley (vendor representative).

6. New Business:

FDIC Coverage Recommendations – Katie Payne included detailed information on this topic in the March Financials email to the Board on April 14. Over the last couple of years, our Auditors have suggested we look at protecting our cash account with FDIC coverage. Any amount with one bank over \$250,000 is usually not protected by FDIC. As a result, Katie shared a recommendation that we protect our cash assets at First Bank with FDIC coverage through the IntraFi network and open a Money Market at Civic Federal Credit Union to take advantage of the interest paid on the Money Market account.

After much discussion, Dan Friday made a motion to keep our account balances at First Bank below \$250,000 and move the remaining amount into the IntraFi Money Market system. Dan Little seconded the motion, which carried unanimously.

Dan Friday made a motion the Department open a Shares account and a Money Market account at Civic Federal Credit Union, with the signers to be Mark Curran, Dan Little, Lisa McCallister and Chief Tom Kelly and for this motion to be revisited in three months. Kent Creasman seconded the motion, which carried unanimously.

7. Announcements: Mark Curran announced the next Regular Meeting of the Board will be held on Monday, May 15, 2023 at 6:30PM.

8. Public Comment: There was no public comment.

9. Move to Executive Session: Kent Creasman made a motion to move to Executive Session at 7:51PM to discuss legal matters. Dan Little seconded the motion, which carried unanimously. The Board returned from Executive Session at 9:05PM.

10. Adjournment: Kent Creasman made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 9:06PM. Lisa McCallister seconded the motion, which carried unanimously.