

The Board of: Riceville Volunteer Fire Department
Met at: 6:30PM
On: Monday, June 20, 2022
For: Regular Board Meeting
Moderator: Dan Little (Vice Chairperson)
Members Present: Paul Campbell, Kent Creasman, Judy Dillingham,
Dan Friday, Kathy Higdon, Lisa McCallister and
Carla McLendon
Not Present: Mark Curran

1. **Call the Meeting to Order:** Dan Little called the meeting to order at 6:33PM. He shared that Mark Curran would not be in attendance tonight due to illness.

2. **Treasurer's Report:** Financial reports for the month ending May 2022 were emailed to the Board on June 17. Katie Payne relayed two large purchases were made (Zoll monitor and Chief's vehicle), but we are still looking good. We budgeted conservatively last year for the sales tax, so are over received in that category. We are getting ready to close out the year and are getting close to audit time. Lisa McCallister clarified with Katie that even though the report for May looks like we are in a negative position, we are not. Referencing Katie's June 17th email to the Board, she relayed it appears this way because funds for big purchases came out of designated funds.

In regard to the truck air tank repair, Dan Friday asked if we are no longer obtaining three bids/quotes. Chief Kelly responded this was an emergency repair, since the truck was out of service, adding C. W. Williams sold us the truck, so has the schematics for it. Dan commented it appeared to be a simple tank, similar to that found on a dump truck, and asked about a couple of other service providers specifically. Chief Kelly responded that Valley is three weeks out. He, Jason McEntire and Dan Little all commented/ explained this is a custom built fire truck, which is why repair is not as simple as obtaining/installing standard parts.

Judy Dillingham asked if bids/quotes were obtained on the pick-up truck. Katie responded that 12 quotes had been obtained. Dan Friday asked why we couldn't go through the State purchase process, and Katie responded because of availability. Lisa McCallister clarified with Katie that while the Department does obtain quotes, it is her understanding the Bylaws do not require this action for budgeted items. Dan Friday said he thought the County contract required bids/quotes to be obtained. Katie responded it does not. Dan commented, "We have in the past, and we were doing good at saving money for the taxpayers." Lisa responded, "We do, but it [obtaining quotes] is not required [for budgeted items], but it is done."

Dan Friday made a motion to approve the Treasurer's report. Kent Creasman seconded the motion, which carried unanimously.

3. **Approval of Minutes:** Draft minutes for the May 16 Regular and Executive Session meetings were emailed to the Board on June 13. Lisa McCallister made a motion the minutes be accepted as written. Dan Friday seconded the motion, which carried unanimously.

4. Fire Chief's Report: Division Chief McEntire provided an overview of the Training Division Report handout, noting multiple members have completed certification programs (Certified FF, EMT Class, Paramedic Class and EMS Instructor). Dan Friday asked if an increase in pressure had been noticed with the hydrant testing. Division Chief McEntire responded the Department no longer has to pressure test hydrants, as it now uses the Water Department's hydraulic monitoring system. The Department only has to ensure the hydrants are opened/closed as needed for the hydraulic system monitoring.

Division Chief McEntire also provided an overview of the handout outlining the results of the recent inspection and rating by the Office of State Fire Marshall/NC Department of Insurance (OSFM/DOI). The Department achieved a Class 3/9E rating, which is an improvement over the previous rating of 4/9E. The new rating will take effect September 1, 2022. Homeowners are encouraged to check with their insurance carriers, as the new rating may decrease their homeowners insurance.

Chief Kelly provided an overview of the Monthly Fire Life Safety Events (FLSE) report prepared by Captain Redden. In the absence of a school in our District, he has asked Captain Redden to reach out to Swannanoa (Owen) and the City (Bell Elementary) to see if the Department can have some involvement with those schools starting this fall.

Chief Kelly also provided an overview of the Chief's Report handout, noting an increase in Total Calls, Overlapping Calls, EMS Out of District and Auto and Mutual Given All Calls. Chief Kelly speculated one reason for an increase in some of the numbers could be because Buncombe County's staffing levels results in two to three trucks being out of service daily. The Average Response Time (ART) is down and is under 10 minutes, which is the benchmark used by the Department, starting at the time the call is placed.

Dan Friday asked if a trend had been noticed in regard to when the calls are received. Chief Kelly responded one had not. However, in speaking with the Officers recently, the decision had been made to pilot an 8A-8P shift on Saturday and Sunday, starting in July. This plan will allow an EMT Basic to work with advanced crew and will be evaluated for its effectiveness.

Lisa McCallister asked how long the overlapping calls had been tracked and if they are anything new. Chief Kelly responded he began tracking in September when he noticed the situation and commented he could pull numbers prior to that time if needed.

5. Old Business:

A. Bylaw Committee Update – Lisa McCallister reported very little response has been received from Board members to the Committee's email sent in April, requesting feedback on the Bylaws. She compiled what was received and sent it to the Board and Keith Bost, Management Solutions for Emergency Services (MSFES). The Committee has not met, and Lisa suggested a separate, public meeting for the entire Board to discuss the Bylaws. Paul Campbell said feedback was needed from all Board members, even if they had no comments/anything to add. Dan Friday requested the proposed changes also be sent to Attorney Perry Fisher for his review. Lisa made a motion for the full Board to meet on Monday, July 11, at 6:30PM to discuss

RVFD Regular Board Meeting (June 20, 2022)

amendments to the Bylaws. Kathy Higdon seconded the motion, which carried unanimously. Lisa and Dan Little asked Board members to send their comments to her in advance of the meeting, so they could be added to the Word document and facilitate review.

B. Community Center Committee – The Committee currently consists of Chief Kelly, Division Chief McEntire and community members Terry Duckworth and Ruth Raifsnider. Chief Kelly reported the Committee has not met yet, but he did send a questionnaire to each member to gauge status.

C. Women’s Shower Repair – Phillip Gee (of Phil’s Tile and Stone) was contacted last week and asked to provide receipts for materials purchased and itemized services provided from the money paid to him by the Department. He texted this morning that a check for \$1,610 for materials reimbursement will be placed in the mail on July 1.

Victor Penley will now be performing the work. Chief Kelly has his certificate of liability in hand and is awaiting his W-9 and a written contract. Lowe’s has donated close to three-fourths of the supplies needed for this project. Lisa McCallister worked with an Assistant Manager who was very helpful in facilitating the donations and has a thank-you card should Board members like to sign.

Discussion took place regarding whether Mr. Penley would also be replacing the toilet and vanity and if a motion could be made to change the scope of work. Katie Payne felt a motion could be made if it included the previously approved \$6,500. Lisa McCallister made a motion that we reclassify the total approved \$6,500 to include the shower and rest of the bathroom, if funds are available and work is acceptable. Judy Dillingham seconded the motion, which carried unanimously. (Dan Friday asked if a permit had been pulled. Chief Kelly responded one was not needed since the footprint did not change.)

D. Concrete Pad – The Contractor (Travis of Countryside Landscaping) poured the concrete on May 23. Chief Kelly reported relief cuts were not made (Contractor said he would be back in two days); there are cracks in the newly poured concrete, which surfaced fairly soon after pouring; and the wooden forms were to have been removed by the Contractor within two weeks, but this did not happen. Chief Kelly has tried calling the Contractor, but has not received a response. Dan Friday will follow up with the Contractor.

E. Ambulance Purchase – Chief Kelly had a conference call with the Salesman last week, and everything was still on track. He requested an every-other-week progress report until October (mid-build), with a weekly report thereafter, to which the Salesman agreed. They do not yet have the chassis, but there is a VIN, so this is not expected to be a problem.

6. New Business:

A. Policy Changes (Recommended) – A document containing proposed changes to existing (Vacation and Sick Leave) and the introduction of two new (Bereavement and Flex Time) policies were emailed to the Board on June 17. This document

contained a cover page, outlining the proposed changes, and those changes were also highlighted on the documents. The recommended changes are the result of feedback from the employees, as well as research into what other Departments and employers in the area provide. Administration feels these recommendations are best for the employees and the Department, allowing it to become more attractive to prospective employees.

(1) Bereavement Policy - The Board discussed the new bereavement policy at length, to include the definition of Immediate Family Member; comparison to State and MSFES policies; difference in content based on nonprofit status; and the fact an employee may request to use a different category of leave for deaths not covered under the Immediate Family Member definition. Kent Creasman made a motion to define Immediate Family Member as “spouse, child, parent or step-parent, brother, sister, grandparent and grandchild,” removing the remainder of the sentence found in the proposed policy. Lisa McCallister seconded the motion, which carried unanimously. Dan Friday requested the policy be sent to Keith Bost, MSFES, and Attorney Perry Fisher for their review. Carla McLendon asked about the proposed effective date of May 1, 2022. Katie asked for the date to be discussed during Executive Session, as it relates to a personnel matter.

(2) Vacation Policy – the Board discussed the proposed vacation policy, which included moving to an accrual method (easier for administrative staff to monitor; for employees to track their leave; and facilitates annual audit) and advantage of allowing employees to take leave during first year of employment (competitive; employee recruitment and retention). Katie explained the checks and balances process she uses regarding leave balances and relayed proposed changes fit within the current budget. Dan Friday made a motion to accept the proposed vacation policy, which is to be sent to Attorney Perry Fisher and Keith Bost (MSFES) for their review, as written. Paul Campbell seconded the motion, which carried unanimously.

(3) Sick Leave Policy – the Board discussed the proposed sick leave policy, which included current level of sick leave not comparable to other Departments (Riceville estimated to be about 100 hours below others); sick leave is not payable, so is not a liability; the Department is not susceptible to FMLA but follows that guidance; sick leave can be used for bereavement purposes; and the definition of Immediate Family Member. Dan Friday made a motion to accept the proposed sick leave policy, which is to be sent to Attorney Perry Fisher and Keith Bost (MSFES) for their review, as written. Kent Creasman seconded the motion, which carried unanimously.

(4) Flex Time – Katie Payne requested discussion on this policy take place after the Board returned from Executive Session.

B. Board of Directors (BOD) Manual – Katie Payne provided each Board member a proposed BOD Manual and reviewed its current content. This manual is in support of the County contract requirement for Board member orientation and recurring review of certain documents. She asked the manual be brought to future meetings, as she will be providing copies of documents from time-to-time to be added to the manual. The manual will be updated annually, so does not need to be turned in when a Director rotates off/leaves the Board. Katie will send an email to the Board and asked each

Director respond, confirming receipt of and orientation to the manual. Dan Friday made a motion to accept the BOD Manual and schedule of review for bylaws, employee policies and this manual. Judy Dillingham seconded the motion, which carried unanimously.

C. Leak in Main Common Area – Chief Kelly has reached out to Warren Restoration and Service Master to obtain proposals for repair due to water damage caused by a leaking water heater. Service Master has not responded; however, Warren Restoration has provided two proposals, with the difference in scope (painting and flooring) equating to about \$2,000. The Department has enough flooring on hand to address the area, but is considering vinyl rather than carpet in the hallway and rubber treads on the stairs and landing. This will allow for easier cleaning and disinfecting of these areas. Leicester Carpet estimates \$60 per step (of which there are 19) installed. Chief Kelly plans to contact Wright's Carpet tomorrow to obtain a quote. Lisa McCallister clarified the quotes were needed from the restoration companies for insurance collection purposes; that we are not bound to use their services. Katie responded this is correct and that there is no regulation on how the Department chooses to repair the damage.

7. Public Comment: There was no public comment.

8. Adjournment to Executive Session: Dan Little relayed the Board would be moving into Executive Session to discuss personnel matters. Dan Friday made a motion for the Board to adjourn to Executive Session at 8:47PM to discuss personnel matters. Kent Creasman seconded the motion, which carried unanimously. The Board returned from Executive Session at 9:22PM and moved back into the Regular meeting.

9. Policy Changes (Recommended): Dan Friday made a motion that the four proposed policies be approved with an effective date of July 1, 2022, pending approval of legal Counsel and MSFES. Judy Dillingham seconded the motion, which carried unanimously.

10. Adjournment: Paul Campbell made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 9:23PM. Dan Friday seconded the motion, which carried unanimously.