

The Board of: Riceville Volunteer Fire Department
Met at: 6:30PM
On: Monday, August 19, 2024
For: Regular Board Meeting
Moderator: Dan Little (Chairperson)
Members Present: Lee Barrett, Kent Creasman, Kathy Higdon, Merel Johnson, Butch Laughter, Lisa McCallister, Carla McLendon and Steve Wickham
Not Present:
Guest(s):

1. **Call the Meeting to Order:** Dan Little called the meeting to order at 6:34PM.
2. **Pledge of Allegiance and Prayer:** Dan Little opened the meeting in prayer and then asked everyone to stand if able and join him in the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag.
3. **Board Member's Attendance:** Dan Little relayed Steve Wickham is currently on a gas leak call and will join the meeting afterwards if at all possible. (Steve joined the meeting at 7:07PM.)
4. **Approval of Minutes:** Draft minutes for the July 15 Regular and Executive Session meetings were emailed to the Board on July 23. Kent Creasman made a motion to accept the Regular and Executive Session minutes as written. Merel Johnson seconded the motion, which carried unanimously.

The Board clarified last month that the Transparency Policy was adopted and incorporated into the Bylaws on January 15, 2024. Lisa McCallister asked if this needed to be communicated to the County. Katie Payne responded she would confirm with Keith Bost, Management Solutions for Emergency Services (MSFES). However, it is her understanding Keith saw this as an internal document/Board policy, which could be made available as/if needed.
5. **Treasurer's Report:** Financial reports for the month ending July 2024 were emailed to the Board on August 14. Katie Payne relayed there was nothing major to note other than the Fire Tax income for July. Departments did not receive their payments in July as expected. July's normal monthly payment was received on August 6 (\$144,495.42), and the same amount was received for August on the 9th. Carla McLendon made a motion to approve the July financials as presented. Kent Creasman seconded the motion, which carried unanimously.
6. **Fire Chief's Report:** The monthly Chief's and Training reports were emailed to the Board on August 14.

A. Chief's Report – Kent Creasman provided an overview of this report in the Chief's absence. At 5:52 and 5:04 minutes, the Average Response Times (ART) for Fire and EMS were way down from previous months and remain below the National benchmark. Over-Lapping Incidents were up from 23/20% in June to 32/23%. IV

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Attempts/Success % was down at 75/93%. EMS Out-of-District calls were down by almost half (28 in June to 15). 1110 was out of service for two days.

B. Training Report – Division Chief McEntire gave an overview of the Training Report, to include total training hours through July (2071.75); EMS CE offerings starting this Friday, August 23; completion by all three shifts of strut training with Swannanoa; completion of foam training by vendor on F500 to replace AFFF foam; two Members in Paramedic program; one Member attending Firefighter classes at Skyland and two completing classes at McDowell; one Member started AB Tech Fire Academy today; and upcoming NFPA 1006 (Technical Rescue Standards) changes.

7. Old Business:

A. Administrative Policies Committee – As Chair of this Committee, Kent Creasman relayed he has met with Allen Blount and needs to meet with Steve Wickham. He has spoken with Chief Kelly and is aware of what he and Keith Bost, Management Solutions for Emergency Services (MSFES), would like to see. Kent will continue to try and coordinate a time for the Committee to come together and develop a recommendation.

B. Community Room Use Committee – Dan Little relayed the need for this Committee to reconvene and include the VFIS recommendations (liability insurance by those using the room), political gatherings (clearly communicating that as a 501(c)(3), the Department is not allowed to and does not endorse or support political events); and monetary gain from use of the room in their review. As Chair of this Committee, Lee Barrett would like to review the VFIS recommendations and the Department's insurance policy. He will email the Committee members tomorrow to determine their interest in continuing to serve.

Note – during discussion on this topic, Katie Payne was asked to edit the Department's Facebook page to send messages to an email managed by her. She would then determine and disseminate the message to whoever needs to respond to the inquiry.

C. New Ambulance – Dan Little noted the new ambulance was delivered to the Station on August 10. The Department is still waiting on the vehicle tag; supplies and equipment are being stocked; and employee training will take place prior to placing in service. In response to a question, Katie Payne relayed the loan closed on August 9, and payments are due the 1st of each month.

D. County Contract – As previously mentioned, the contract has been processed, and the Department has received their July and August Fire Tax income payments.

8. New Business:

A. 1110 Review Committee – Dan Little recommended a review be conducted of maintenance records associated with 1110 to determine the cost to keep this vehicle in service after 1120 is placed in operation. Lee Barrett made a motion to form a Committee comprised of Dan Little, Lee Barrett, Lisa McCallister, Katie Payne, Allen

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Blount and Mary Brown to look at what is needed financially to keep 1110 in service. Steve Wickham seconded the motion, which carried unanimously.

B. Annual Audit – Katie Payne relayed the annual audit started last week. Typically, one Auditor is assigned to the Department, working daily the first week and then sporadically until November. This year two Auditors have been assigned and both worked all of last week. Katie received feedback from them on Friday evening that they had gotten a lot accomplished and are on target to present the results at the November Board meeting.

C. Board Interest Form – Lisa McCallister updated the Board Interest Form in accordance with the January 15, 2024, changes made to Section 3.4 of the Bylaws. She emailed the revised form to the Board on August 13 for their review. Revisions made to Section 3.4 negate the need to change the date of the September Regular Board meeting, as Board Interest Forms may now be submitted by email. (Katie Payne has established the mail group as outlined in the Bylaws and will forward Interest Forms received to Chairman Dan Little.) Based on Board calculations using guidelines in the Bylaws, Interest Forms need to be received starting Friday, August 30, through Saturday, September 14. Lisa McCallister made a motion to approve the updated form that complies with the latest version of our Bylaws on how and who and when to apply for an open Board seat. Kent Creasman seconded the motion. Lee Barrett requested the revision date (8/19/24) be noted at the bottom of the Interest Form. The motion passed unanimously.

Logistics of the Annual Meeting, to include the proposed newspaper notice and vetting of candidates, will be discussed at next month's meeting.

9. Announcements: Dan Little announced the next Regular Meeting of the Board will be held on Monday, September 16, 2024 at 6:30PM.

10. Public Comment: There was no public comment.

11. Move to Executive Session: Merel Johnson made a motion to move to Executive Session for legal matters at 7:40PM. Lisa McCallister seconded the motion, which carried unanimously. The Board returned from Executive Session at 8:17PM.

12. Adjournment: Steve Wickham made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 8:18PM. Merel Johnson seconded the motion, which carried unanimously.

Note: Chairman Dan Little only votes in the event of a tie.