

The Board of: Riceville Volunteer Fire Department
Met at: 7:00PM
On: Monday, October 9, 2023
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 8:20PM.
- 2. Approval of Minutes:** Draft minutes for the September 5 Regular and Executive Session meetings and the September 18 Special Executive meeting were emailed to the Board on October 3. Kent Creasman made a motion to accept all three sets of minutes as written. Lee Barrett seconded the motion. All Board members voted Yes, with the exception of two. Merel Johnson and Steve Wickham abstained, as they are new to the Board effective this evening and were not in receipt of the documents.
- 3. Treasurer's Report:** Financial reports for the months ending August and September 2023 were emailed to the Board on October 6. Due to the shortened time between the August and September meetings, the August financial reports were not finalized prior to September's meeting. The September report is in draft form, pending receipt of the First Bank ICS statement and interest earned information. The finalized September and October reports will be reviewed at the November Regular Meeting of the Board.

Katie Payne relayed the Department is on track with the budget and is doing well with the Civic money market interest income, which is not part of the projected budget. She also explained Line Item 4104 represents Ad Valorem Fire Tax monies received from the County. The County makes equal payments each month based on projections. Once they reconcile at the end of the fiscal year, the Department may receive additional monies or may have to give back overpayment. In the past several years, to include this year, the Department has received additional monies. This year's amount, which was received in August, was \$23,331.

Kent Creasman made a motion to accept the August financial reports. Butch Laughter seconded the motion, which carried unanimously.

- 4. Fire Chief's Report:** The monthly Chief's and Training Reports were emailed to the Board on October 4, with a revised Chief's Report emailed on October 8. Chief Kelly provided an overview of his report, noting Total Calls were down in September (102). Over-Lapping Incidents were down slightly (27/27%), with 14 In District and 13 Out-of-District. At 5:09 and 8:28 minutes, the Average Response Times (ART) for Fire and EMS were below the Department's benchmark of 10 minutes. Average Time on Scene for September was 22:56 minutes. Two applications have been received for PRN Paramedics, and a third person has expressed interest in becoming a part-time Paramedic.

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Chief Kelly recognized Volunteer Fire Fighter Devin Ball, who has been with the Department for about three months, for assistance provided during a recent cardiac arrest call that came in as a fall.

5. Election of Board Officers: Dan Little relayed election needed to take place for the Officer positions of Chairperson, Vice Chairperson, Treasurer and Secretary. Merel Johnson made a motion to leave the Board Officers as currently assigned. Kathy Higdon seconded the motion, which carried unanimously. Dan Little remains Chairperson, Kent Creasman Vice Chairperson, Lisa McCallister Treasurer and Carla McLendon Secretary.

6. Old Business:

A. Ambulance Purchase Update – Chief Kelly relayed the new ambulance is at the facility in Iowa. Once it gets in the production line, it is normally 150 days until the box gets built. He is awaiting feedback to his inquiry of how long before it gets in the production line.

B. Bylaws Review Committee Report – As Chair of this Committee, Lisa McCallister brought the new Board Members up-to-date, relaying the Committee (Lisa, Lee and Kent) did some preliminary work; had some discussion and presented a few things at the September meeting. Further discussion was tabled for this meeting, with the Committee planning to regroup and have a better comprehensive recommendation hopefully for the November meeting.

C. Department Vehicle Branding Options – Chief Kelly will follow up with Captain Blount to obtain an update on this issue.

D. Engine Committee Update – Division Chief McEntire gave an update from the Committee, noting a 4% to 5% price increase is expected across the board in the near future. Based on the current average cost of an engine (\$1,000,000), this would equate to about \$45,000. (Twenty seven new emission standards go into effect on January 1, 2024, which will add approximately \$50,000 to the cost of a motor.) Communication has taken place with four manufacturers to see if they can meet the Department needs. (Due to the size of the bays and some of the geography in the District, a custom truck is required versus a line truck.) The minimum requirements are being requested for this truck, ensuring it meets the needs of the employees and the community. Build time is currently at 18 to 24 months.

E. Community Member Donation Follow Up – Division Chief McEntire relayed follow up will take place with the community member alluded to by former Board Member Judy Dillingham during the August Regular Board meeting, once a name is provided. In response to a question, it was noted donations for use of the Community Center are not received on a regular basis. There have been a few times when a thank you note and associated donation have been received for a one-time event.

F. Ambulance 1110 Particulate Filter – Dan Little relayed removal of the particulate filter seems to have solved the major problems being experienced with this vehicle. The truck experienced low power issues, which is often associated with the

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fuel filter, so that has been replaced. The truck, its fuel and associated additive are being monitored closely.

7. New Business:

A. Community Events - Chief Kelly announced a Pancake Breakfast will be held on Saturday, October 21, in support of the Auxiliary. The annual Halloween Social will take place on Tuesday, October 31. Anyone interested in helping should contact Mary Brown, who is heading up this event.

B. Board Response to Communication from the Public – Discussion took place about the need to inform the Community of expected response times for questions posed to/requests made of the Board outside of the Regular Monthly Meeting. Katie Payne noted the Public Comment guidelines contained in the meeting agenda may need to be edited based on the Board's decision. Lisa McCallister and Carla McLendon offered to work on an acknowledgement statement for consideration by the Board at next month's meeting.

C. Equipment Surplus – Chief Kelly will send a list of equipment for surplus to the Board to allow time for review prior to discussion at the next meeting. The new extrication tool is on the truck, in service and has been used twice. Another Department is interested in the old tool, offering to pay fair market value. That transaction is in process.

D. Response to Reporter – A request received from Asheville Citizen-Times Reporter Mitchell Black was referred to Management Solutions for Emergency Services (MSFES) for their consideration. Their recommended response was forwarded to the Board on September 29. Lee Barrett made a motion to send the recommended response to Mr. Black. Kent Creasman seconded the motion, which carried unanimously.

8. Announcements: Dan Little announced the next Regular Meeting of the Board will be held on Monday, November 20, 2023 at 6:30PM.

9. Public Comment: The meeting was opened for public comment. Terry Duckworth shared that several people have said they like the reinstatement of the Pledge of Allegiance and have asked if prayer can also be reinstated.

Kent Creasman made a motion to open meetings with the Pledge of Allegiance and a non-denominational prayer. Kathy Higdon seconded the motion, which carried unanimously.

10. Adjournment: Kent Creasman made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 9:23PM. Lee Barrett seconded the motion, which carried unanimously.