

**The Board of:** Riceville Volunteer Fire Department  
**Met at:** 6:30PM  
**On:** Monday, January 20, 2025  
**For:** Regular Board Meeting  
**Moderator:** Dan Little (Chairperson)  
**Members Present:** Lee Barrett, Kathy Higdon, Merel Johnson, Lisa McCallister, Carla McLendon and Steve Wickham  
**Not Present:** Kent Creasman (Family Medical) and Butch Laughter (Medical)  
**Guest(s):**

1. **Call the Meeting to Order:** Dan Little called the meeting to order at 6:31PM.
2. **Pledge of Allegiance and Prayer:** Dan Little asked those present to keep Former Fire Chief Roy Creasman and Reverend Terry Duckworth and his wife (Jan) in their prayers (medical reasons). After opening the meeting in prayer, he 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 December 16 Regular and Executive Session meetings were emailed to the Board on January 9. Lee Barrett made a motion to accept the December Regular and Executive Session minutes as written. Merel Johnson seconded the motion, which carried unanimously.
4. **Treasurer's Report:** Financial reports for the month ending December 2024 were emailed to the Board on January 15. Katie Payne relayed expenses are on track with the budget. A noticeable decrease in EMS income was realized. (December's reports reflect September activity.) This decrease (from an average of \$20,000 to \$25,000 to \$7,000) is a direct result of Hurricane Helene. It is expected EMS income will drop even lower for the next two months before increasing.

Katie relayed the County is estimating a 20% decrease in Sales Tax, and an 11% decrease in Fire Tax. The County will provide an update once more specifics are known.

In response to questions, Katie responded FEMA does not replace income (i.e., EMS), only expenses. She also responded an increase in fuel (propane) has been realized and will be reflected in next month's financial reports.

Steve Wickham made a motion to accept the December financials. Lee Barrett seconded the motion, which carried unanimously.

5. **Fire Chief's Report:** Division Chief McEntire gave an overview of the Training Report, which was mailed to the Board on January 16. His reported included 5,286.15 total training hours for calendar year 2024; Rapid Intervention and Driver Training programs for those who need them; annual equipment testing completed; and two Members in Paramedic Programs.

Chief Kelly gave an overview of the Chief's Report, which was mailed to the Board on January 15. At 1,633, calls for calendar year 2024 were down 98. At 7:49 and 8:00

minutes, the Average Response Times (ART) for Fire and EMS remain below the National benchmark. Over-Lapping Incidents averaged 26% for the year. EMS In-District calls (for the year) were 538; Out-of-District calls were 318. (In response to a question, it was noted the increase from November to December for EMS In-District, Out-of-District and Refusals was in part due to the on-site assistance of other Departments following Hurricane Helene.) The Department currently has two applications for Part-Time Paramedics, with testing to take place over the next two days. Montana McFadden recently passed her Advanced EMT Oral Boards.

## **6. Old Business:**

**A. Administrative Policies Review Committee** – Tabled until February.

**B. 1110 Review Committee** – Dan Little relayed the Committee has met twice, discussing such items as cost of known repairs (i.e., drug refrigerator); when 1110 would be used over 1120 (i.e., during inclement weather); overall cost to ensure a dependable/reliable ambulance; purpose of second ambulance (i.e., not for convalescence calls); and where to keep 1110 (i.e., need to build a shed to keep out of the weather). The Committee is scheduled to meet again on February 3.

**C. Building Repairs Update** – In regard to the kitchen located next to the administrative offices, Chief Kelly relayed measurements for cabinets were taken today, with an expected delivery date of February 6. Appliances have been on site for about a month. Plans for the Staff Kitchen include three separate pantries (one for each shift) and one conventional oven/glass cooktop to replace the two stoves. (Chief Kelly was asked to follow up with the staff about the need for three basic refrigerators.)

Abatement in the Community Center and Staff Kitchen began today and is estimated to take four days to complete. There will be a 24-hour rest period afterwards, with air monitoring to take place before and after. The current plan is to unseal the area on Saturday. Two decontamination stations are in place and will be for the duration of this work.

The Board discussed options for flooring in the Community Center, as well as acoustics. As representatives of the Community Center Committee, Lee Barrett, Lisa McCallister and Jason McEntire will obtain quotes for flooring options as soon as possible. Their findings will be communicated to Chairman Little, Chief Kelly and Katie Payne, so they may follow up with the Contractor.

Dan Little relayed removal of insulation from the metal building began today. That building took on approximately four feet of water, necessitating replacement of the affected insulation.

**D. Tanker Donation** – Steve Wickham relayed a Department in Madison County is very interested in the tanker. (He needs to determine pump capacity and relay that to his contact before a decision can be made.) He also has a contact within OSFM as a backup. Dan Little asked if the tanker could serve as a resource to the County in the event of a water outage. Chief Kelly responded the Chiefs' Association is looking into

developing a Tanker Task Force to consider such ideas. Katie Payne relayed Broad River is also interested in the tanker; point of contact is Bruce Clark.

**7. New Business:**

**A. Demobilizing Process** - Chief Kelly relayed a couple of staff continue to use the shower trailer. Removal of the bathroom and cooking trailers, as well as the generators is pending completion of remediation in the Community Center and Staff Kitchen. The new washer/dryer are expected between February 6 and 8, at which time the laundry trailer can be removed. Administrative staff have provided input in regard to office furniture. The Insurance Adjuster allowed for the purchase of 18 filing cabinets. The Board discussed the need for this many filing cabinets, voicing consideration should be given to digitizing documents.

**B. Representative Eric Ager** – Chief Kelly shared a message received this afternoon from Representative Ager in regard to his support of additional funding for recovery efforts. Private roads/bridges and revenue replacement for Fire Departments were included in the areas for which additional funding is being sought. Chief Kelly will follow up with Representative Ager regarding lost EMS revenue.

**8. Announcements:** Dan Little announced the next Regular Meeting of the Board will be held on Monday, February 17, 2025 at 6:30PM.

**9. Public Comment:** There was no public comment.

**10. Adjournment:** Lee Barrett made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 7:38PM. Lisa McCallister seconded the motion, which carried unanimously.