

SEELEY LAKE RURAL FIRE DISTRICT
REGULAR BOARD MEETING 6:00PM FIRE HALL
MEETING DATE: June 19, 2018
MINUTES FOR: May 15, 2018

MINUTES OF THE BOARD MEETING

PRESENT

Gary Lewis, Vice Chair
Rachel Jennings, Secretary
Connie Clark

Michael Greer, Fire Chief
Dave Lane, Fire Chief
Lynn Richards, District Administrator

ABSENT

Scott Kennedy, Chair

Rita Rossi

I. REGULAR MEETING CALL TO ORDER/ROLL CALL:

Gary Lewis called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m. Three trustees were present along with the Fire Chiefs and District Administrator.

II. MINUTES:

Connie Clark made a motion to approve the March 29, 2018 special board minutes. Gary Lewis seconded the motion. Voting by voice, motion carried with Rachel Jennings abstaining as she wasn't present at the meeting.

Rachel Jennings made a motion to approve the April 17, 2018 board meeting minutes. Gary Lewis seconded the motion. Voting by voice, motion carried with none opposed or abstaining.

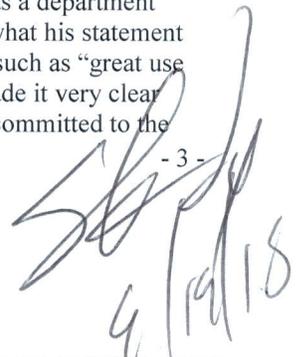
III. VISIT WITH GUESTS/PUBLIC COMMENT FOR MATTERS NOT ON THE AGENDA/CORRESPONDENCE:

Community members present were: Shirley Goudzwaard. Department volunteer present was Kody Kelley. Also present was Andi Bourne with the *Pathfinder*.

Correspondence included a letter of concern from Kristy Pohlman. (See attached). Kristy handed out the letter prior to the meeting being called to order and then left.

There was no public comment.

Chief Greer asked to address and respond to Kristy Pohlman's correspondence since she mentions the use of tax payers' dollars. Chief Greer stated Ms. Pohlman has taken the opportunity to once again provide only half the relevant information and facts and the whole thing is out of context to make an accusation in trying to disparage Chief Greer personally; to disparage the department; to make Chief Greer look bad and unprofessional and to make the department look bad and unprofessional which has been the case since Chief Greer has been here. Chief Greer stated on the back of the letter are screen shots of a Facebook post but pointed out what wasn't included are the posts made by Mark Kues to which Chief Greer was responding to. Mark's comments were that our department didn't have time to fill sand bags for people but if you need a wide load moved, then they're the people to help you do it. Chief Greer stated he felt compelled to address Mark's statement. Chief Greer stated there are several things that are simply not true in Kristy's correspondence. Chief Greer stated he was requested by a member of the department to help him out that day, on a weekend with moving a trailer house. It was not done as a department function nor done in uniform. Chief Greer stated he did not say he wasn't part of the operation, what his statement did say was that he never was dedicated to the operation. There were other Facebook comments such as "great use of taxpayers' dollars" and "what would happen if there was a 911 call." Chief Greer stated he made it very clear beforehand should there be a 911 call, he would leave to respond so again, he was not dedicated/committed to the



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operation. Chief Greer stated he did not use emergency lights as he put duct tape over the red lights on 710 so the only lights showing were the rear facing ambers. Chief Greer stated "papa" Jim (Sackett) was the other person helping with this operation and he used his privately owned fire truck which is not licensed as a fire truck. They discussed it ahead of time to not use the emergency light bar, just the yellow flashers but Chief Greer was in the back and couldn't say for sure if Jim ever used red lights but again, no tax payers' dollars was used and it wasn't done on department time. In regard to the permit issue, Kody Kelley stated he acquired the proper permits.

There also have been past Facebook posts made by Mark Kues stating how Missoula Rural Fire Department is helping to fill sand bags and other fire departments should take note. Chief Greer stated with his coordination, both the high school Leo Club and Team Rubicon has been helping our fire department prepare to help the community with flooding. The Disaster and Emergency Services (DES) has made it very clear that the department cannot fill sand bags. As a governmental agency, we cannot compete with private enterprise. It has been a problem in the past and there have been lawsuits about this in the past. Through Chief Greer's efforts, empty bags have been received through DES and generous, local businesses have donated sand to fill the bags. To date, 500 sand bags have been filled with more to come in the next week.

In regard to using 710, Chief Greer stated it is part of his contract that he use 710 as he is on call 24/7 and has been that way for the past Chief as well. Chief Greer stated he does not use 710 to visit his family in Hamilton; nor does he use 710 out of town on personal excursions so no gas is used either. Yes, he used 710 on this occasion to help a friend and has also used 710 to drive to another department member's house this winter who was running out of firewood and helped them dig the wood out from under the snow. Would this also be considered misuse of tax payer's dollars? Chief Greer stated this letter by Kristy is ridiculous; it's skewed; it's out of context; flat out lies and if doing things in 710 on his own time for community members and other members of the department is inappropriate then maybe Chief Greer misunderstood what this job and this department is supposed to be about.

Gary Lewis stated 710 is supposed to be used and the board understands that incidental errands will and can be done with its use and this letter of concern is really just a dig.

Andi Bourne stated the overhead red lights were used on Jim's fire truck as she and other people saw them and was concerned as well. Chief Greer stated he discussed not using the red lights with Jim beforehand so Jim must have misunderstood but if Chief Greer would have seen the red lights being used, he would have said something. Gary Lewis suggested for Chief Greer to have a discussion with Jim about this. Chief Lane stated he will also send an email out to the members to reinforce what our responsibilities are and the expectations of emergency light use and will have a separate conversation with Jim.

Rachel Jennings questioned the permit process. Kody Kelley stated it required using a dually pick-up with at least 100 inches from wheel to wheel; certain hours; not on Sunday; using signs etc. Connie Clark questioned if the letter needed a reply. Gary stated he didn't think so.

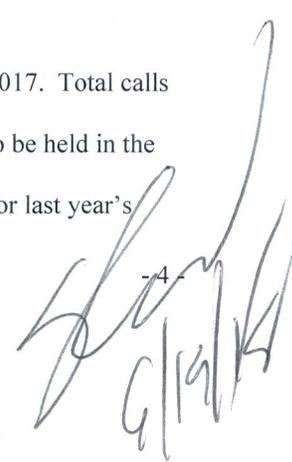
IV. FINANCIAL REPORT AND APPROVAL OF WARRANTS:

Chief Lane stated he's been really looking at the budget details and noticed the district has not received rent or utility reimbursement payments for the county building at station #2 for the entire fiscal year. Emails have been sent with no replies which is causing quite an impact on the district. Gary stated Scott was involved with the county contract and in the past has had to deal with non-payments and suggests to have Scott deal with it when he gets back. After discussion, Connie Clark made a motion to approve the April 2018 financial report in the amount of \$41,755.32. Gary Lewis seconded the motion. Voting by voice, motion carried with Rachel Jennings abstaining; no reason was given for her abstention.

V. REPORTS:

- 1. Call Volume** – Chief Greer reported there were 16 calls in April 2018 compared to 25 in April 2017. Total calls for 2018 is 65 compared to 73 in 2017.
- 2. Recruitment** – Chief Greer reported he's received a couple more applications with interviews to be held in the near future.
- 3. Grants** – Chief Greer reported there's nothing new to report except waiting on reimbursement for last year's VFA Wildland Grant through the MCFPA and has submitted on next year's cycle.

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4. SCBA Update – Chief Greer reported he picked up the six used tanks from Spirit Lake and has further researched the life extension process and it's all been NFPA and NIOSH approved to recertify the tanks for another 15 years; cost is \$300 per tanks vs. \$1100 plus roughly \$75 per tank every five years as it's required to use their system to test them every five years. Chief Lane stated using this process is a financially good decision and the system is warranted as well. No decisions have been made in regard to the PASS devices which need to be either repaired or replaced on a couple of masks; maybe a grant could help with that.

5. Membership Report – Volunteer member Kody Kelley presented each board member with a new jacket purchased by the Firefighter Foundation to show their appreciation to the trustees as they volunteer a lot of their time to the district.

6. Updates /Actions – Chief Greer & Lane reported on the following:

- Chief Lane stated he's been doing a lot of things to make sure we're safe and compliant with OSHA. One of things that he has completed is replacing all the exit signs as none of them worked.
- Chief Lane has also made some safety improvements to the Type 1 Engine. It and one of the tenders will have to be replaced in the next three to five years as they both are 1995 vehicles and hope to use a grant for those replacements.
- Engine 716, the Type 6 wildland truck has been taken out of service as Chief Lane and Jim discovered there are several fractures in the frame plus the bracket that holds the shackles to the frame are broken away so as far as emergency response goes, that vehicle is done as it is not safe. Chief Lane distributed pictures showing the cracks in the frame. The Type 6 is a very important part of the department. It's a community and a financial resource. Chief Lane distributed information on three different used Type 6's which he found for sale in the mid \$40,000 range. The acquisition of a Type 6 will be put on the next agenda. For future use, Chief Lane would like to repair 716 and use it for plowing snow as the district has spent \$5,000 for snow plowing this last winter.
- Chief Greer stated at the last membership meeting, he and Chief Lane brought up the idea for everyone to receive a turnout bag to keep their gear in and store the bags in cubby shelves instead of lockers. The members voted on going with the cubby shelves. A local craftsman submitted a bid of \$3,000 to build the shelves saving the district approximately \$2,100. Keeping the gear in a bag, in the cubby will protect the gear from the UV light and will be more aesthetic looking.
- Chief Greer stated the bay floors are being painted and restriped.
- There will be an open house held on Saturday, June 2 to formally introduce and welcome Chief Lane and also will have a pinning ceremony for officers.

VI. OLD BUSINESS:

1. Mill Levy Rate Increase – This item was tabled.

2. 61 Lot Subdivision – This item was tabled.

3. Narcotics Follow- Up – Chief Greer stated he's been in contact with Dr. Gee and its being dealt with. It has been turned over to Dr. Gee as it falls under his DEA's license and it's his to decision to formally decide what to do with it, so it's in a holding pattern for now. Dr. Gee is going to talk to Bob (Vanden Heuvel) in regard to missing documentation and other things.

4. District Operations Manual/SOPs – Chief Lane stated when he first started he wanted to review the policies and SOG's to get a feel of the board's direction to see where the district is and where it can possibly go and how quickly it can get there. Upon reviewing the policy manual, it's a mess; it's hard to find anything; a lot of things are missing; a lot of things are in the works but it's in different places. Some of the new guidelines should have been policies so that is being corrected. Chief Lane has been working on a brand new manual and it's going to have the SOG's, SOP's, job descriptions and all the things that we do and how to function in one location along with an index. Chief Lane has started with the SOPs which need board approval, so maybe at the next meeting they can be signed and in place. At each board meeting, Chief Lane will be giving the board two or three new policies and will provide the SOGs as well for transparency. Two binders will be kept; one in the front office and one for the membership.

Chief Lane stated in regard to OSHA compliance, one of the things the district doesn't have in place is a Respiratory Protection Program and an ambulance service was fined \$238,000 for not having the program. In putting this together, there will be a large expense as the members will have to be fit tested properly and the people conducting

the tests have to be certified which would cost approximately \$12,000 to \$13,000. In visiting with Missoula Rural personnel, they have offered to send their people and equipment to conduct our testing. Chief Lane offered to reimburse them or whatever to guarantee this will happen. Missoula Rural's response was, they're happy to get out of the office. Chief Lane stated Missoula Rural has a program in place but they're unsure it's adequate, so they want to look at our program to see if they are complaint as well.

VII. NEW BUSINESS:

1. Chief Lane's Moving Expenses – Chief Lane stated this was never discussed before but it cost him approximately \$5,000 to move here and was wondering if he could get reimbursed for half the cost. Chief Lane submitted receipts for \$2,500. Kody Kelley questioned if it was included in the job offer. Board and Chief Lane answered, "No." Chief Greer stated for a professional job it is not uncommon to offer moving expense coverage up to a certain amount. Rachel Jennings stated she's not against it but using tax payer's money is a consideration to think about. Gary stated this should be tabled until the entire board is present. Connie stated she too thinks it should be tabled. After further discussion it was decided to table this item until the next meeting.

2. Oath of Office – Gary Lewis administered the Oath of Office to Connie Clark and Rachel Jennings administered the Oath of Office to Gary Lewis. Board officer elections will be on the agenda for the next meeting.

III. NEXT MONTH AGENDA ITEMS:

Reports; Mill Levey Rate Increase; 61 Lot Subdivision; Narcotics Follow Up; District Operations Manual/SOPs Approval; Chief Lane's Moving Expenses; Trustee Officer Election; County Payments; Type 6 Acquisition

VIX. ADJOURNMENT/NEXT MEETING:

Upon motion duly seconded, the meeting adjourned at approximately 7:10 p.m. The next regularly scheduled monthly meeting will be held on Tuesday, June 19, 2018.

Approved:


Chair of the Board


Clerk of the Board


6/19/18

Dear Seeley Lake Fire District Board,

I am coming to you today (via letter) with a HUGE concern and as taxpayer of this community!

On Saturday, May 12th, around 10 am, 710 was witnessed, and photographed, as the rear pilot car in a house moving operation. This operation began down on highway 200, west of the junction. (OUT OF 710's JURISDICTION!)

It was witnessed using red lights, and the back direction lights. This was a concern, as many wanted to know what the emergency was.

Now, Mr. Greer claims to have not used emergency lights, nor be a part of the operation. Their pictures are clear that Greer WAS a part of the operation in the Seeley Lake Rural Fire Districts command vehicle. It is also evident in the pictures that lights were used on BOTH vehicles. According to Montana Law, this is illegal! The lights are only to be amber. It is also illegal to be moving something like this without permits, or on a weekend! There are laws that need to be followed, especially by a fire chief!

Greer followed these bad choices as a chief, and a role model for our community up with more bad choices as he plastered Facebook. A concerned citizen posted pictures on their PERSONAL page on Facebook, and Greer chose to not only slam that person, but he also went even further as to drag other peoples' names into his posts. He stated that "I am on call 24/7, (did you catch that TWENTY FOUR SEVEN)... The only way I can ever do anything of a personal nature to help a friend is to drive 710. I was never dedicated to this...." This was only one of the many that he put on there! (I have provided the rest as screenshots.)

THAT IS EXTREMELY CONCERNING!!!! I was an officer on the department, and worked very closely with the past chief! Rather than pull something as ludicrous as this, he would make sure that he had town covered, and he would have used his personal rig. He had officers in place that were able to take charge of a scene, instead of him saying his was on call 24/7... Effective leaders put officers in place when the need to take time and moments for themselves!

I ask this, when Mr. Greer goes to visit his family in Hamilton, does he also take 710? This leaves our community with a chief that claims to respond to everything nearly 2 hours away. This is NOT SAFE!!! I also ask, who pays for the gas on these personal excursions! I as a tax payer am NOT okay with wasting money on his personal jaunts so that he can claim to be on call 24/7 and always in charge! That is not how an effective fire department is run!

I ask that you, as a district, re-evaluate Mr. Greer using 710 as his personal vehicle, as I DO NOT feel he is deserving of the use of 710 for personal things! Especially when they are to be paid for by taxpayer dollars!

~ Kristy Pohlman



A handwritten signature in black ink, followed by the date 4/19/19.

LIKE

People do, but, Pictures don't lie

20m Like Reply

Michael Greer

Don't you people ever get tired of looking for ways to disparage the department? Get over your loss a move on. That is not a seeley lake truck. That is a personal vehicle a a penny of taxpayer money was s Yes, the truck in the rear is 710. S as I am on call 24/7, (did you catc that? TWENTY FOUR SEVEN...) th way I can ever do anything of a p nature to help... See More

28m Like Reply

Michael Greer

Pictures don't lie...people do. Or a jump to conclusions without kno the whole story.

25m Like Reply

Michael Greer

Oh, and to respond to not filling s bags, we HAVE taken steps to fill

whole story.

26m Like Reply

Michael Greer

Oh, and to respond to not filling s bags, we HAVE taken steps to fill bags. Over 600 filled last weekend thanks to the help of multiple volu But make sure you continue to sp your lies and misinformation. Oh a have a LARGE group coming this v fill more. There are specific reaso fire department CAN NOT provide bags to the public. But you would this if you were in daily communic with Missoula County Disaster an Emergency Services like I am. It is through the efforts of the Seeley L Rural Fire District, DES and the generosity of several local busine that there are thousands of sand l available AND the material to fill tl free! As for not actually filling san Shawn looked pretty good in your standing there with his hands in h pockets watching people work as usual...

24m Like Reply

for ways to disparage the fire department? Get over your loss a move on. That is not a seeley lake truck. That is a personal vehicle a a penny of taxpayer money was s Yes, the truck in the rear is 710. S as I am on call 24/7, (did you catc TWENTY FOUR SEVEN...) the only can ever do anything of a persona nature to help a friend is to drive 7 was never dedicated to this and w have left at any time a 911 call ca If you have a problem with fire department peraonell helping mer of the community then I suppose drove 710 up to help someone dig firewood when they were running winter was also a waste of tax pa money. Or when I do something p such as run to the grocery store fr wife while driving 710 so I can drc everything at any second and resp a call is a waste of tax payer mon could have driven my POV and th to take the time to respond home get 710 which would delay my res by a significant ount of time. Or I c just take time off like every other r

Handwritten signature
6/19/18