**SEELEY LAKE RURAL FIRE DISTRICT**

**REGULAR BOARD MEETING 6:00PM FIRE HALL**

**MEETING DATE:** March 15, 2022

**MINUTES FOR:** February 15, 2022

**MINUTES OF THE BOARD MEETING**

**PRESENT ABSENT**

John Kimble Scott Kennedy, Chair

Connie Clark

Rita Rossi Secretary

Gary Lewis, Vice Chair

Dave Lane, Fire Chief

Lakaya Lemons, Administrative Assistant

**I. PLEDGE OF ALEGIANCE:**

Chief Lane led everyone in the Pledge of Allegiance.

**II. REGULAR MEETING CALL TO ORDER/ROLL CALL:**  Gary Lewis called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m. Four trustees were present along with the Fire Chief and Administrative Assistant.

In attendance were John Baker; Michelle Baker; Shirley Goudzwaard; John Homen; Nathan & Tabitha Bailey; Kristy Pohlman; Alysa Mclean; Susan Monahan. Also present was Andi Bourne with the *Pathfinder.*

**III. MINUTES:**

Rita Rossi made a motion to approve the January 2022 minutes; John Kimble seconded the motion.

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

**Kristy Pohlman** “Good evening and thank you for allowing public comment, first let me start by thanking Gary Lewis for acting as the board chair last month and running a very smooth meeting, I greatly appreciate the kindness and genuine concern you showed I hope you see that carry forth again here tonight it was refreshing to not have to worry about repercussions but instead in understanding that agreeing to disagree is ok and yes while the meeting was only like Twenty Six Minutes I felt that you did two months’ worth of business very well I still feel it was more than thorough than typical meetings has been and thank you for your transparent leadership. I do have a question about tonight’s agenda, according to MCA 23103 the amount of notice given for a meeting should be sufficiently in advance given the public enough notice to attend with ultimate goal of encouraging in assisting the citizens participation the attorney generals state has gone a step further to state that Forty Eight Hours of advance notice should generally be concerned to sufficient to notify the public of a contemplated action it also states the amount of notice required should increase with a relevant of significance of the decisions to be made and further research this is not only for the public to receive an adequate notice so for you as a board in general to receive adequate time in order for you to become fully educated and prepared on everything necessary for the meeting, I bring this up because in the past your meetings have been posted online by the end of the business day by the Friday prior to the meeting, I have seen notices posted at the fire hall on their board as well unfortunately this meeting was not posted by Sunday evening by 18:34 on the fire hall board nor was it posted online until sometime between 1pm and 2pm on Monday I am making this assumption that the meeting was posted at the fire hall at the same time this gave not only the public but also your board nearly Twenty Eight Hours to adequately prepare for this meeting which appears that the agenda didn’t have some major significances to our community and speaking with other board secretaries in the community that also receive public funding they post a minimum of Forty Eight Hours in advance and they post in three locations, I feel that this is potentially transparency issue so I just wanted to let you guys know of my opinion thank you.”

**Gary Lewis**” So this Agenda didn’t get posted last week?”

**Lakaya Lemons**” I do apologize about that I’ve been pretty busy with the EMT course, so I totally forgot about this on Friday.”

**Kristy Pohlman**” I understand I’m not blaming you I’m just saying the legalities of it, it becomes a fuzzy question here”

**Gary Lewis**” I apologize for that, but at this time I think we will continue unless someone else has something”

**V. FINANCIAL REPORT AND APPROVAL OF WARRANTS:**

Connie Clark made a motion to approve the January 2022financial report in the amount of $16,775.83; John Kimble Second the motion.

**VI. REPORTS:**

1. **Call Volume** – **Chief Lave** “So in January 2021 we had 26 Calls, January 2022 we had 18 calls. Volume of 2021 ended at 307 so obviously we are only at 18 at the end of this year”
2. **Recruitment –** **Chief Lane**” So we currently have 3 people working on the task books, one will be starting their task books tomorrow there’s one that will be completing it very shortly so we will be seeing him on the pining ceremony next month, I currently have two applications out, we handed out two on Friday so hopefully something will come out of that.

**Connie Clark**” so we have three on their task books and starting tomorrow so four?”

**Chief Lane**” Yes”

**Kirsty Pohlman**” How long does it take to complete a task book average?”

**Chief Lane**” Between a week and Six Months”

**Kirsty Pohlman**” Oh Ok”

**3. Grants –** **Chief Lane**” We have received our RFC Reimbursement for 2,800.00 other than that we don’t have any other grant information”

**4. Updates /Actions** – **Chief Lave**” We are in the process of renewing our Ambulance permit, the check has been sent the permit has been submitted the medical director has signed off on our insurances, so we are waiting for the state to do the process before get our actual permit. The covid test that has been sent to us by emergency management we have quite a few of them so if people are still looking for covid test, the test we have on the box it says the are expired however we have received notice and some stickers that say the expiration date has been extended so we got about 300 boxes left, so we need to let the community know that we have them available.”

**Jon Kimble**” is that on your website as well?”

**Chief Lane**” That is not on the website”

**John Kimble**” Is that something that we should post on there?”

**Chief Lane**” I believe it’s on there that we have them available, and I know we are on the county website as well as a location. So another action I have is going to take a few minutes I need to respond to some stuff that was said in the last months board meeting there was some inaccurate information that I’d like to correct, So Kristy made a statement last month that was quite long so there’s some parts that I need to correct, It starts off in the very begging that it was discussed that the district was looking at a potential Levy to ask the community of a Levy increase, Part of that process we talked about hiring an outside company and we went through a couple steps with the potential progression might be approaching the community about a Levy increase. We did have a meeting in June We had a workshop, and we involved an outside company to speak with us to see how they might be able to help us to guide us down a path to work the easiest and one of their initial steps to find out what it will cost the community to go after the amount of money that we need to hire Six people. In that meeting we talked about a couple of different things that was one of the big takes away as I started this. After the meeting we spoke with the county determined that the amount of that we need the Levy increased to the community would not be feasible for us to ask the community to support, the amount varies based on the value of your home most of our money comes from homes it varied between three to four hundred dollars per home. That’s significant to ask the community for Six people. So, the group decided again that this was not going to be fair to ask the community and it was not going to be feasible to ask for such a Levy increase, So the process did not go further there was no approval to hire a company there was no money spent on a company or going through any of this process contrary to what was said at last month’s meeting. We did not get it approved there was no money spent so it was discontinued at that point so we will not be asking for a Levy as we were discussing before. It doesn’t mean not in the future there might be something that changes but as of right now we are not pursuing it”

**Kirsty Pohlman**” Thank you on that info”

**Chief Lane”** There is more. Some of the statements that were made referenced to transparency. Transparency for the district is how we share information as it relates to the community as the things, are we sharing everything we do that we can share with the community, and we make sure that we are doing that as much as possible. Transparency is not opening the door for criticism or attacks on the district to call us out on an error That’s not what transparency is. So, we have improved our transparency and how we give information to the community we have improved that greatly over the past couple years including the packets you’re looking at now, those didn’t happen a few months ago so we have really improved our transparency and I want to make sure that people understand this is the district sharing information. The last thing there was a statement about the budget increasing over the last seven years exponentially, so we ran some copies of the budget over the past seven years 2014-2015 the budget was $394,048.00 in 2017-2018 the budget was $441,414.00 I think people understand where that extra money came from the Rice Ridge Fire since then the budget has actually gone down we are now at 372,663.00 so the budget has really not increased at all let alone exponentially.”

**Kristy Pohlman**” I guess I’m confused to the grants then”

**Chief Lane**” So the budget has not increased exponentially as it was stated and with that statement because we were not showing certain expeditors, we were not being honest about being transparent enough, this is total transparent I’m telling you pulling it from past budgets we have not increased our budget exponentially or at all we actually decreased our budget, I believe is the last part of that one.”

**5. Membership Report –** **John Homen**” there’s nothing to report on membership we are waiting for more people, and we are still continuing our training with the Paulson group we had a great turn out on this last month, and we are continuing that training”

**Chief Lane**” We also have two other people in an EMT class they just took there midterms so there right on schedule to graduating”

**VII. OLD BUSINESS:**

1. **District Operations Manual/SOPs Approval**- Nothing new to report

**VIII. NEW BUSINESS: Chief Lane**” They kind of coincide, we need to look at our ambulance fees first, so our billing company ran a survey for us for about 340 companies I believe 354 services throughout the country, and these are the average rates the very last page down at the very bottom of the averages, the average rate for a ALS call is $1,338.00 we don’t do just ALS those are mostly ALS transfers from interfacility transfer’s excuses me that’s BLS ok so ALS is limited ALS skills with medications one or two skill whether it’s a twelve lead or something like that then we charge a ALS rate, the ALS2 is our emergency ALS where we give two or more ALS drugs and skills the average net through the survey is an average of $1,442.32.

**Alyssa Mclean**” Can I ask a quick question so who determines on scene when a call is BLS versus ALS?”

**Chief Lane**” CMS”

**Alyssa Mclean**” So like on scene how do you guys decide how to send a patient or does like one person make a decision?”

**Chief Lane**” Not necessary it’s the level of care that’s required whether it’s on scene or when we are out”

**Alyssa Mclean**” Oh ok”

**Chief Lane**” For BLS the average is $1,177.00 and mileage averages $16.99, so when you look at Seeley Lake which I highlighted on page 3 second to last page our ALS rate is$700 which is little more than half of the average $750.00 is our ALS2 which again is almost half the average. The BLS rate we charge $600.00 Which is again is about half out mileage is a little bit more than the average, so what I am requesting Is that we raise our base rates to the average to the survey average. Our billing company ran some other number s for me to show that in 2020 94.8% of our patient’s health, motor vehicle, or some sort of insurance which left eight patients out of 145 that did not have health insurance. So, to raise our base rate would affect essentially eight people, there is some insurance things we can’t negotiate we can’t work with because its Medicare and Medicaid. We have contractional agreements that they will only pay a certain amount. The health insurance and automobile insurance company’s some of those we have contractional rates, so they reduce the amount that they would pay. Some we don’t have agreements with and most of the time they pay the full amount, so its hard for us to get a grip on exactly what we are going to get But with these numbers for 2020 we were looking at eight people that did not have health insurance In 2021 when the time this report was printed we didn’t have all of our numbers for the end of this year, the last two months so in 2021 they were seventeen people that were outstanding that had not been processed to find out if they have insurance or not. So, at that point we’ll say that those seventeen people did not have health insurance and that’s out of 143 patients. So again, those are the people we can potentially help maybe they didn’t have insurance, or it was a different insurance that was submitted. There are different circumstances for this stuff the bottom line is if we raise our rates to the average of what was surveyed that would give us a net of about $72,500.00 a year excuse me gross. So, for 2020 that would have brought our gross to $283,922.00, so roughly 62% is what we get paid, so out of Medicare Medicaid other insurances we get about 62% of the gross, so our net would be $176,031.00 for 2020. Giving us an increase on or net at about $45,000.00 in 2021. Again, remember we don’t have the last couple months of data, so our gross at that time was $234,294.00 billed add the $72,500.00 which gives us a gross of $306,794.00. 62% of that puts a net right around $190,212.00. Again, not having all the months together that still puts us a little more than $16,000.00 increase over our net.”

**Gary Lewis**” So if we go with the average, we would be basically doubling all our rates except for mileage”

**Chief Lane**” Close”

**John Kimble**” Are there any qualifiers in the survey you know population side”

**Chief Lane**” This is every company; so, you’re going to see fire departments that are subsidized by tax money some have subscription programs, so they charge less rates”

**John Kimble**” What I’m getting at there is several oF these districts that don’t charge the average either”

**Chief Lane**” Right”

**John Kimble**” Well I was aiming at getting more of an apples to apples like community comparison if you can do something like that”

**Chief Lane**” I don’t personally have the information to do that”

**John Kimble**” No, somebody ran this survey for you?”

**Chief Lane**” Our billing company”

**John Kimble**” Would they be able to do that?”

**Chief Lane**” I don’t know if it was population based or volume based, I don’t know”

**John Kimble**” Well they might do a survey maybe 25% of them see how they can compare I guess”

**Rita Rossi**” The fees would mainly be covered by insurance, right?”

**Chief Lane**” Yes”

**Chief Lane**” The Medicare and Medicaid will not change because we have that agreement”

**Rita Rossi**” Right, we have more of that population here right”

**Chief Lane**” We do have a large percentage of our patients have Medicare and Medicaid”

**Kristy Pohlman**” But the insurance could potentially change as far as, because insurance Montana has available versus other states, we don’t have the same insurance companies as a lot of these states have available to them so there’s potential in pay out normal differences there to correct”

**Chief Lane**” I don’t speak for the insurance companies”

**Kristy Pohlman**” Working on the insurance side each company sets there own yes we will pay out this much out of this so you don’t get the same pay out as Blue Cross Blue Shield that you would get from Medicare or anything else everything has its own fee scale; you would be an expert on this”

**Susan Monahan**” I’m not an expert but I have insurance background and a different life experience, I think you want to be careful about raising them so much without doing a little more research check with Blue Cross Blue Shield, Allegiants which are some of the larger insures in Montana what are they willing to pay because you can stick families with a large bill. In my example I was going to use is I saw a family in a situation when we ended up in Spokane were they worked changed insurance companies if they have been with Blue Cross Blue Shield there cost of transporting there child from Helena Montana to Spokane would have been covered with Blue Cross Blue Shield but they had changes to Allegiance, Allegiance had a different limit they ended up with a $30,000.00 bill so I just say be careful. I’m not saying don’t raise your rates because it does look like there low but make sure that people even with insurance aren’t going to get stuck with a huge bill that there insurance couldn’t cover.”

**Connie Clark**” That’s a good point”

**Andi Bourne**” So question other than it is looking low what would be the reason for raising rates from the chief’s prospected”

**Gary Lewis**” That’s the next line item on the agenda”

**Andi Bourne**” Ok but is that the main reason that this would fall for those positions? And just one other comment towards John’s question. I can tell you we have paid staff so we are different but Condon does not charge anything for ambulance to roll and Greenough Potomic doesn’t have an ambulance but they have an EMT’s and they also do not charge, MESI different story again different departments, but if your going to do that comparison are you going to factor the departments that do not charge for anything and they just go on the fee schedule or whatever they base it? I understand there’s a lot of differences but its something else to consider.”

**John Kimble**” Is that what’s reflected in these blanks we the don’t ever charge at all”

**Chief Lane**” Yes”

**Rita Rossi**” Do you want to talk about the paramedic position first”

**John Kimble**” I think the reason why we are doing this is because the two topics are combined right”

**Chief Lane**” Yes, this needs to go first before I get into the paramedic position”

**John Kimble**” If I was following you correctly, we would have a net increase of $15,000.00 or $45,000.00 I wasn’t clear on that.”

**Chief Lane**” The data that I have puts us between $16,000.00 and $45,000.00”

**John Kimble**” And that’s the average rate had been applied all of last year correct”

**Chief Lane**” That’s minus the last two months, so the average increase will be I’m guessing somewhere around $30,000.00 to $35,000.00 over the average”

**Rita Rossi**” Well I have gone over it pretty good and I think we should do it, so I’d like to make a motion to raise our rates”

**John Kimble**” I would rather here the follow-up presentation”

**Gary Lewis**” Ok if its alright with you we are going to hold off on your motion and then we will let him talk about the paramedic position discussion”

**Chief Lane**” Right now we are posting a firefight paramedic position for $40,000.00 a year, we are not getting any applications. I looked at the state average firefighter paramedic which comes out to be $47,000.00 a year to start. So, keeping that in mind I’m trying to find qualified applicants, but we also need people that are going to stay here so my hope Is if we pass the other part to increase our ambulances fees it will bring us that extra revenue, we will basically pay for an increase in an offer for that base rate. So, my plan would be to offer $50,000.00 a year staring wage and we would adjust our pay scale for the increases in the future. That would leave about $25,000.00 average left over after the increase so that’s why this kind of play together is because we are offering $40,000.00 right now with our current rates. If we raise our rates and get that extra revenue and raise up to $50,000.00 that would still leave us a surplus on the ambulance revenue increase to do other things but additionally hopefully, we can get some interest in what we are offering here”

**John Kimble**” All employers across the nation is facing that right now, what brought in employees before doesn’t bring them in anymore”

**Chief Lane**” Well in offering $50,000.00 that’s where I started here, so that kind of lets you know where wages are going all over the place, I’m not asking for anything for me, just putting it in perspective that its doable”

**John Kimble**” Will your presentation included $51,000.00 in the national average”

**Chief Lane**” No its $47,000.00”

**Jon Kimble**” $47,000.00 in the State of Montana”

**Chief Lane**” So like you said apples to apples, some of the bigger cities pay more some of the other cities not really to much less but the average came out to $47,000.00”

**Connie Clark**” A wage even at $47,000.00 your paying insurance on top of that”

**Chief Lane**” It’s going to cost us about a 1/3 more than what the base rate is, so its going to cost us close to 70,000.00 total for wages and benefits”

**John Kimble**” So what your proposing is we need to make up $30 because we are already offering $40 to get to $70,000.00 to pay for the entire package”

**Chief Lane**” We were going to pay $60 if we were offering $40 so if we bump it up to a thousand just rough numbers saying bump the wages and benefits up $10,000.00 probably not going to be that much but I’m just looking at general number”

**Rita Rossi**” So we need to approve one thing before we approve the other”

**John Kimble**” We have got to approve the rate increase in the fees to aim at supporting the job offer for the paramedic position”

**Gary Lewis**” Do you want more discussion or are we going to table it until our fearless leader comes back”

**John Kimble**” I would like some more detail in this, I can table it until we get a little more detail”

**Gary Lewis**” I don’t like the idea about doubling it I’m sorry but that’s a huge impact”

**John Kimble**” And that is not a no cost option, it will get back to us in premiums”

**Gary Lewis**” And community input that is something I think in this particular thing, nobody wants to pay anything if they don’t have to, but if you want a service that is going to take care of our community the way it needs to be taken care of there’s got to be pay for that unless we do the Levy”

**John Kimble**” With the budget and the funds we are dealing with right now”

**Chief Lane**” So you would like a population base comparison”

**John Kimble**” I would like a population base comparison because in the average if you do it that way 2,500 to 3,000 people”

**Gary Lewis**” That would tighten it up a little”

**John Kimble**” That might change the average”

**Gary Lewis**” So that kind of puts the other discussion on hold until we figure this out”

**Chief Lane**” So I think I can contact some insurance companies and see if there would be a rate”

**John Kimble**” Actually would you start here and see if they can refine this a little to population”

**Rita Ross**i” Because I would rather not see a Levy on everyone this is impacting people that use the service”

**Chief Lane**” The Levy was not going to work”

**Gary Lewis**” It can still be put in on a less extreme amount at some point to help with this to”

**Chief Lane**” So let’s say we hire somebody this person is not going to be on shift 24/7 I have a schedule planned during our busy times and what that would do it would give us basically two ALS ambulances during that time. While that person is off duty, I will be the coverage. As we progress into our next fiscal year, we will have a better understanding of how our budget is working that may open a better opportunity to hire a part time paramedic. To cover the other two shifts or maybe some other hours. I haven’t gotten into that much I’m going first things first. But it opens opportunities to maybe hire a full-time paramedic and potentially a part time or two part time paramedics so we may have enough ALS coverage that time where our budget is continuing to grow and we will maybe be able to hire and EMT, part time or full time or something instead of going for everything all at once. Which was what our Levy was going to do. Like you said we may be able to spread out the expenditures throughout time as long as continue to have active EMTS and our call volume doesn’t go through the roof. Because right now we have a couple active EMTS that are running the majority of the calls. Fortunately, this past month wasn’t our busiest month, but I think our busiest months are coming, so we are getting people through school. We are trying to get staffed up well enough to be prepared but still looking into the future. I think ALS is a good thing for the community it’s a win win for everybody the department and the community. I’ll do what you’re requesting, and I’ll have all the information for you at the next meeting.”

**Chief Lane**” In the December meeting on the 14th Mrs. Goudzwaard has asked some questions that she wanted a response during a board meeting. The questions were basically clarifications questions. So, after that bord meeting we sat down, I and another board member, Scott Kennedy. The three of us talked about her questions to find out, and to make sure everything there was understood and no misunderstandings. The questions mostly had to do with my responsibilities and the fire boards responsibilities, we have discussed those at length during meetings and we just went through a couple examples and some details to clarify my responsibilities being operational, and the fire board responsibilities being administrative, and what does that mean. I had the impression at the end of that meeting those questions were answered”

**Gary Lewis**” And this is just a carry over from last months meeting”

**Chief Lane** “This is from December’s meeting, so it was not on the agenda for January’s meetings it got on this month’s agenda. So, the other question was Do we communicate with each other? Absolutely, we cannot communicate three board members at a time, but two board members can talk, or I can talk to anybody if we have questions about something or I need more direction. Mr. Kimble gave me direction here tonight and if there is something that I’m finding might be a good something to add to what I’m doing I can call up and say is it ok to do that? is that your intent where the three board members cannot call each other they cannot meet and discuss business. There are some things that are different in this community we are very small in this community with very limited businesses. You may see three board members in the same business might even see a couple of them sitting next to each other however they cannot speak of board issues. If you want to talk about you fishing trip or vacations that’s fine but you cannot bring board stuff into a meeting because know your violation open meeting laws, that was pretty much the jist of the discussion. We had, I felt pretty good at the end, and we had answered our discussion questions. That’s kind of why it didn’t get on last month’s agenda. I realized because she requested to be put on the agenda regardless of our meeting, we should have put it on the agenda. That won’t happen again in the future”

**Susan Monahan**” So what I’m here to talk about is fire hazards in the community, and the main one I see every single day is at the corner of Redwood and Tamarack. There is a cab over camper, camper, and a mobile home they have crammed in there. There are extension cords running from that are fire hazards and they can be addressed by the fire chief. If you see something from the road you do have the right to go to the homeowner or tenant and say that this is a hazard and needs to come down. If they don’t do it then you involve law enforcement. Other things that could happen is the fire chief could, and you guys as a board have more clout than us as private citizens so you can advise them of the hazard if there is no change you can involve law enforcement. You can also go to the building directors of the county would be another way to address issues like that. This mobile home that I’m talking about I know that they have been advised in the past there’s no one living in it, interesting enough there is now a wood stove in this mobile home and there was smoke coming out of it yesterday so there’s obviously someone living in there. So, I think that’s something it’s not the only fire hazards in the community, but we had what happened on juniper and we lost two homes. Prevailing winds it’s not an if that’ll catch on fire its when will it catch on fire, and then the prevailing winds how many homes can we loose because that will go to whitetail. In the right situations that can be huge. So, the gentlemen that I talked to him is a long-time fire chief, and I’ve known him for many years. He is now just administrative he retired as the fire chief. He advised what they did in his community, and this is in Lincoln County. The fire chief saw fire hazard properties, they formed a committee that is made up of a fire chief, a law enforcement person a county commissioner, someone from the planning department, and someone from the sanitation department. They meet monthly to address concerns from the community, and they have cleaned up 116 properties in that area. And Libby is not big but is bigger than Seeley Lake. It is an incorporated city, but this is all getting done by the county. We need to involve Missoula County in that because it involves planning department, sanitary department, law enforcement because someone is living in that mobile home”

**Gary Lewis**” Well that’s the one you can go to is environmental health”

**Susan Monahan**” Right, we as I know Missoula County, we all learned that they don’t care about the grey water but what about the black stuff, that’s a septic tank how many people are living on that property? I mean that again is sanitation but first thing we can look at those extension cords, and there was laundry hanging from them that at one point. So, I think its something we can start here. We start kind of at the bottom and we go upward, and I do think that’s something that the fire chief, as a paid position, should be helping the community to address”

**Chief Lane**” So again this is an operational issue. Connie Clark came to my office and asked for it to be put on the agenda, this is enlarging a part of code enforcement, so I have made some calls to the appropriate people for code enforcement. I didn’t know the whole story so I will pursue it farther, but when you say to get everyone involved, I need to know because you’re basically stepping over me to talk to the board without me knowing about all what’s happening. I appreciate you speaking up and allowing me to hear what you have to say. But if you have more to let me know please do let me know before a board meeting.”

**Susan Monahan**” I felt addressing in a public forum was a good way to do it because I don’t think that this is the only location that’s a problem in Seeley Lake. It’s the one I see every day and I think that everyone should know”

**Chief Lane**” But if you are requestioning service from me then I’m probably the one to talk to”

**Susan Monahan**” But the Board give you direction”

**Chief Lane**” They don’t give me so much of Operational direction as much of as administrative”

**Susan Monahan**” Oh ok”

**Chief Lane**” So if you have a problem with a sewer issue you call the sewer department or a water issue you call the water department you don’t go to there board to bring up the issue. That’s what I’ve been trying to do this past several months to get people pointed in the right direction, if it doesn’t bring up to your satisfaction then bring it up to the board “hey he’s not doing his job.” That’s probably more appropriate and I guarantee you ill be doing my job because I now know the story better and I know better on how to approach this, so I thank you”

**Andi Bourne**” I have a question I thought maybe it would be answered so I didn’t ask it immediately but when was the decision made to not run the Levy? Because that was the first time, I heard an updated on that and hiring so I was just curious when that decision was made or if you just made that chief?”

**Chief Lane**” I didn’t make the decision alone, me and a couple board members spoke after the workshop because the information that came through the finance department for the county was almost overwhelming, it wasn’t what I expected when I looked at previous Levy attempts at other parts of the county. It opened my eyes and we talked after the meeting. At that point we wanted to go to another approach and not to ask the community to ask for such a larger amount”

**Andi Bourne**” So just a comment from a member of the public I think as far as transparency goes to make that decision with just two board members and you is fine but the community I know running the paper, we had this out there as a possibility and its never printed that it wasn’t and so bringing that up in the board meeting and having that discussion publicly I think maybe that would make that whole idea of transparency and letting people know where it stands as it’s just very valuable”

**Gary Lewis**” Probably should have noted everybody, that a decision was made but was made by the committee and the chief”

**Andi Bourne**” And that’s fine again but just to let it be out there and that’s ok”

**Chief Lane**” There was no intent to hide anything”

**Andi Bourne**” No but it appears that way from the public, there has just been no discussion about it, till your updated which I very much appreciate and so now we know where that’s at so thank you for that”

**Shirley Goudzwaard**” I want to tell you that the last two board meetings you’ve done an awesome job, and it has been more open, and people are having an open discussion and it’s actually been longer than ten minutes, and we should have all board meetings like this”

**Chief Lane**” So can I say one last thing”

**Gary Lewis**” Sure”

**Chief Lane**” The length of the meeting doesn’t dictate the quality of the meeting”

**Alyssa Mclean**” Yea we were unhappy with the quality too and that was kind of the complaint of both”

**Chief Lane**” So I think the longer meeting doesn’t mean it’s a better meeting”

**Shirley Goudzwaard**” No but that’s not the point. The whole point is we had a lot of discussion”

**Gary Lewis**” Well there is a lot of stuff we need to discuss, that’s why these meetings have been longer”

**Shirley Goudzwaard**” It’s the quality of the discussion the quality has been good”

**Kristy Pohlman**” It’s refreshing, it is its refreshing to know that we are not going to get reprimanded, and we agree to disagree and leave this meeting and crack jokes with Gary or whoever cause I’m a smart ass and you know that”

**IX. NEXT MONTH AGENDA ITEMS**:

February Financial Reports

Updated Fee Survey Results

Membership Pining Ceremony

**X. ADJOURNMENT/NEXT MEETING:**

Upon motion John seconded, the meeting adjourned at approximately 7:00 p.m. The next regularly scheduled monthly meeting will be held on Tuesday, March 15, 2022.

Approved:

Chair of the Board Clerk of the Board