

**SEELEY LAKE RURAL FIRE DISTRICT
SEELEY LAKE, MT 59868
REGULAR BOARD MEETING AGENDA
For July 20, 2**

021

FIRE HALL

6 P.M.

PRESENT

ABSENT

Scott Kennedy, Chair

Gary Lewis, Vice Chair

Rita Rossi, Secretary

Connie Clark

Jon Kimble

Dave, Lane Fire Chief

Dee Johnson, Administrative Assistant

I. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Chief Lane led everyone in the pledge of Allegiance

II. CALL TO ORDER/ROLL CALL

Vice chairman 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 Tabitha Bailey; Nathan Bailey; John Baker; Shawn Ellinghouse; Kristy Pohlman; Austin Binder; Shirley Goudzwaard; Also present was Andi Bourne with the pathfinder.

III. CORRECTION AND/OR APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Rita Rossi made a motion to approve the July 20, 2021

Minutes; Connie seconded the motion. Motion carried? Yes

IV. VISIT WITH GUESTS/PUBLIC COMMENTS FOR ITEMS NOT ON THE AGENDA/CORRESPONDENCE

Kristy Pohlman proceeds to hand out a print out in regards to Willie Bernstraugh email. Also informs it is not my words I am just the messenger. Chief Lane then reads a card that was written out to Nathan, Bailey from Shawna (Please also see attached).

V. FINANCIAL REPORT AND APPROVAL OF CHECKS AND WARRANTS

Connie Clark Made a motion to approve the June 2021 financial report in the amount of

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\$31,065.31 __ Jon Kimble _____ seconded the motion. Motion carried? Yes

VI. REPORTS

1. **Call Volume** - Chief, Lane reported there were 22 calls in June of 2020 as of June 2021 64 calls. This is the most calls we have ever received in one month by June of 2020 we had 120 as of June of 2021 we are up to 164 calls
2. **Recruitment** – We have a new Cadet, He will be old enough to be a full member in the middle of August. We have more applications out also have a couple interviews coming up they have turned their applications in. We have a couple more out but they have not been turned in. it's starting to pick up.
3. **Grants Update** – Chief, Lane would like to move that to business for discussion.
4. **Updates/Actions** – We have received our new turnouts that we purchased about five months ago. The floor out in the bays have been completed. This is all money we received from fires last year and has all been approved by the board for expense this year. We are also having a couple meetings with the state training with MSU to get some more firefighter training so we are going to utilize all the training resources we can - the sooner the better. Gary asked if it is for new members that haven't had the training yet? Correct responds Chief Lane. Kristy responds to nice job because that is an amazing training program.
5. **Membership Report** – John Homan is not here to speak about it at this time.

VII. OLD BUSINESS

1. **District Operations Manual/SOPs Approval** – We do not have any at this time.
2. **Pancake Breakfast** – Rita Rossi as the treasurer I haven't got the report quite together yet but we made close to 6,000.00 still have some bills to pay. Shawn Ellinghouse asked how many people you think showed up. (Rita) Close to 450 to 500 people.
3. **Purchase of fire engine** - Chief, Lane would like to remove the fire engine from the agenda at this time. As it is a really good idea and a great benefit but there is a couple of issues first of all it has not come up for sale yet, we also have a couple other priority's coming up later in this agenda. Gary asked if we would like to table this for a bit. Chief responds to I would like to get this back on here at some point.

VIII. NEW BUSINESS: (BRIEF MEMBER/PUBLIC COMMENTS AFTER TOPICS AS NECESSARY)

1. **Acceptance of Town Pump Grant** – I was unaware of the Town Pump Grant only being a 50/50 grant. They will only pay half and I will have to pay the other half that the grant was intended for. Chief Lane explains that he applied for the grant thinking all would be paid just under 20,000.00 and they wrote us a check for 10,000.00. I have not accepted this yet, due to needing board approval for the other half. It is going to be just over 9,000.00 to complete the purchase and this is up to the board. This will be for a Lucas device. This device is a mechanical CPR machine which is recognized by the American Heart Association to improve CPR. It also will relieve hands so that we can do other things during cardiac arrest. Jon Kimble asked if it has a lot of benefit. Chief Lane responds that there is we have a lucas machine on our first out and I would like to add one to the second out. As our call volume increases which it is we are going to see more potential to use this machine. Like I said it has been approved by the American heart association to improve the outcome to CPR patients that is why this is being approached.(JON) Do we have equipment carry over. Chief Lane says we have an equipment carry over but it is not designated for anything specific. Jon says no because it is for new aspirations. Connie then asks so this thing does mechanical CPR as oppose to? Shawn responds with it is a very impressive piece of equipment very violent but very impressive. Kristy says it is violent but it's awesome. Rita responds to make the motion to match the grant. Jon speaks about the extra EMS equipment funds. Chief responds with it's in the budget, the budget we have is a guideline so depending on how we manage the budget it will come out of capital acquisitions carry over from last year. Gary questioned if it

was in there. Dave responds I don't have the budget in front of me but I think we are close to \$170,000.00 without last years but we are at 200,000.00 in the bank. Jon asked if anyone wants to entertain a motion. Gary asks with this piece of equipment would this be first on the list of items to buy. Dave speaks about having another wish list item to purchase. It's much smaller and its only 6,000.00 and the last application I had from town pump. I applied for the grant and it was discontinued because the money was being directed to covid so because I was approached by the town pump to update my grant application information that's why I went for the bigger ticket. Gary then says out of curiosity what is that equipment? Dave it's called a RAD57. (GARY) What is it? Dave It's like an advanced pulse ox unit that measures the amount of oxygen in your blood. The RAD57 measures the carbon monoxide in your blood. Gary Do we have that kind of need with smoke inhalation? Dave says absolutely, every structure, every house where there is multiple patients it's a consideration. The lifepack 15 is for a separate unit to put on the two ambulances about \$6,000.00 a piece (Gary?) is it the case that we would use that more than CPR unit? Chief says we may use it more frequently but I think the CPR unit equipment would be used much more. Gary says is this higher priority Gary asks do you think that CPR equipment is a higher priority. Dave responds absolutely we can treat carbon monoxide. There is carbon monoxide in the air we breathe. When we see people on scene we can treat them appropriately. Life pack 15 has detection in there so we can verify the other signs and symptoms. Kristy says just random question cause I have been teaching CPR classes lately do you guys utilize the CPR? Dave says we do which is pretty essential. Jon made a motion with all in favor.

2. New Hire- Chief Lane explains in my job description, it allows me to hire or fire people assigned in your bi-laws. However this is a new position and it's not in my job description to hire for a new position. This is why I'm asking the board. Our call volume is going through the roof, we have only a very few active EMT'S. We have a few members coming on board that will be going to EMT classes in the near future however even bringing them on board is going to take several months to get them certified and put into the process. If I can hire one EMT position whether it be a fire fighter EMT or a firefighter paramedic it will be a dual roll position then we would get more money for our buck. If there is a fire I could use that person to fight fires as well as being an EMT. The cost of our wage scale has a base rate of 28,000.00 for fire fighter- EMT. Our base rate for a paramedic is 39,000.00. Then you have to figure in benefits all the roll ups that come in with that so you figure about a third more than our base pay so roughly 38,000.00 to 48,000.00 to hire one person that would cover wages, benefit training uniforms, whatever it takes to employ this person. Jon so we currently according to what I was reading on the board workshop. we currently have someone doing a survey or something. Dave nothing has happened with that yet. We still haven't had our first meeting due to one of the member's on the committee have not been around. When they come back we will be having a meeting to put together a better team for those workshops. However that is going to be several months out. So at that we would just need one person that we need to get on board. It has to post, we have to go through the process and all that stuff so it's going to take about a month and half to get this person fully on board. They will already be certified and trained we just have to train them into our system. We are short on not so much on medical it's both. We have a very few EMTs, I am the only paramedic so this is why I gave you a range of salaries and the two positions because if I can get a paramedic and I realize the wage is low, but if I can get a paramedic that would be a benefit to the community. If I cannot then I would like the option to try and get an EMT. Connie says we need to shoot for a paramedic. Chief responds that is my intent but depending on the wage it is not competitive with the other departments so it's going to have to be someone that will be coming close to retirement. Someone new in the area, I don't know someone who is not going to be raising a family and have all those major expenses because this wage will be difficult to get someone but I'm going to do my best depending on what the board says. Connie says will this provide a possibility to have a day off (Dave) potentially my intent is to put this person on Wednesday through Sunday because those are our busiest times and the hardest times to get our volunteers in for coverage so if we can get Wednesday through Sunday I don't have to be first out I can take one of the weekends off. I would be a second out instead of the first out all the time. (Connie Wednesday through Sunday there is 24 hours in a day. (Dave) all I can do is schedule one person however with one person turning the schedule right now it's really tough just to cover the nights and weekends because we do not have on call during the day. (Kristy) Have you thought about housing we have lost two teachers because they cannot find housing here .Dave there is different options we can discuss with people should they become potential employees. Maybe they already have housing I don't know

because I don't know what or who is available. Rita In that workshop wasn't there a fee that we were going to hire someone to come in and that was a little over 1200.00. Gary Why don't we put it in the pathfinder would you like real live service here that's why we need to get this community together. To find out what the community wants. (GARY) cause this is a funny little town the dynamics have changed a lot. It's going nuts people are changing the benefit of hiring. Dave That Company is what they do. They do all the research all of the data collection all of the reports to determine what is the best path to follow. From there the committee has to make those things happen. We are nowhere close to that we don't even have a committee put together yet. (Gary) do we put an ad in the paper to ask for opinion or ask for correspondence (Dave) we need help we need coverage Gary I know we do but so to ask the community if they want care do they want to pay for it. (Dave) well that is part of being part of a fire department you must establish an ambulance service here that is we have to provide the care. The level of the care is what is going to come up with the community and how to pay for it that is why we need to go through that process. I'm sure the community wants it it's just how we going to pay for it (Connie) so with this proposal where would that come from for one person (Dave) that is also going come out of the wages and benefits for the district in the budget it will be over spending however it will be in our carry over to cover that. Plus we are not making the big expenditures like I was hoping to do because our call volume the way it is, we need to make some adjustments. Rita makes a motion to hire a paramedic (Connie) where do you go for advertising for that (Dave) it will be nationwide there are two large websites that are very busy with job posting specifically fire departments there may be other website as well as the local paper and these are free of charge. (Gary) speaks about having someone come in and there on call and go out to assignments and go there on temporary basis (Dave) for our type of need, no there is not. For wildland fires and things like that you can contract with company to bring in people but as far as contracting EMS I know there is special event contract but that is a whole other deal. But if we could get immediate cover until the activities and such you mean until winter shows up in our region they are in the same boat we are. An article in the newspaper I think it was Great Falls had two position open and they could only fill one. Billings or Bozeman had a couple positions and they had hundreds of applications. And that is the problem we are going to have because our wages are not competitive with those bigger departments. There are options and things I can do to try to entice them to come in but I would like the opportunity to be able to do that if we are fortunate to get a paramedic that is the best for everybody. If I can't get a paramedic I need at least an EMT so I can have someone during the day for coverage. (Kristy) do you see volunteers this is what I have been listening to some of these fire chief when they start to bring in those paid people is the volunteers they start to back off cause I don't have to respond because these guys are getting paid for this do you see this happening?? Dave it depends on the relationship you have with your staff. I came from a very large department with 180 active volunteers and we had 30 paramedics and what you are saying did happen. Then we had a chief and a couple BC's get together to become more inclusive for the volunteers and have guidelines for response so that the volunteers were not fazed out. But do the volunteers want to work. (Kristy) Validation for the volunteers is what my concern is. (Dave) my intent is to not replace the volunteers but to supplement the volunteers. I expect the on call sign up to be the same and as we recruit more people and get more of those shifts filled. We have many open shifts currently we have very few people that are filling those shifts along with me and it is taxing. We are going to do the best we can to supplement the volunteers right now. It's with one person hopefully in the future then we can get 2 people 24/7 that will change the dynamics of how we respond to on calls. I do not want the volunteers taken out of the mix because we cannot survive without them. Gary that is my only concern it could force us in to a paid right away. Dave we don't have any way to become a paid department. Gary I know and that could be the problem so it's a slippery slope. Dave if you treat the volunteers properly and your procedures are in place you could put two people in here and say ok these two people are our primary response. Volunteers pick up the next ones, well that is kind of a rotten thing to do because the volunteers need to be appreciated and need to keep up their skills just as much as anybody else. So how we respond to calls is going to have to change from the way we do it today. It's the procedures that have to change to guarantee the volunteers the chance to grow. (Kristy) if I were you I would look into providing that validation budget. So say the volunteers with the most calls this month gets a gift certificate or suggest family dinner. (Dave) we do have a new line item budget for recruitment and retention. That is part of it but you have to be careful with fair labor and tax people we cannot give tax payer money out as a bonus. There is ways to do things. I cannot just give Nathan 100 buck and say thanks. We do have a new line item recruitment and retention. I think there is 3000.00 in there and that is the plan to show appreciation and validation why they are here. (Kristy) I did a bunch of work up in big fork when I was completing my EMT license. What they

would do is give us a 75.00 p.c.o.c. check but we literally stayed in the fire hall for that whole twelve hours. We had internet, kitchen and they provided us with amazing things but that was our validation because we were volunteers, but they also had paid paramedics that got full time pay. (Gary) if you got 75.00 a shift you were a paid employee (Kristy) it was 1099 so it was a little different. Dave Resident staff is what you are talking about and we don't have the budget for that. But there are ways. Gary well let's get back on track we have a motion but we don't have a second motion someone want to second it or we table this wait for more information. (Dave) can you give me permission to research and see if I can get somebody. (Gary) I think that is realistic and we don't really need a motion for that probably. Dave If I do get interest we can have a special meeting to address the hiring of that person because if people start to apply, then I have to be able to tell them that we have to have the position approved. Motion to give permission to research and post for the position is approved.

IX. NEXT MONTH AGENDA ITEMS

X. ADJOURNMENT/NEXT MEETING: September 21, 2021

