

# FLORISSANT FIRE PROTECTION DISTRICT



2606 W. HIGHWAY 24 / P.O. BOX 502  
FLORISSANT, CO 80816-0502  
Board of Directors Meeting

Minutes of a regular meeting Sept 28, 2022 - held via zoom

## CALL TO ORDER

President Starla Thompson called to order the regular meeting of the Board of Directors of the Florissant Fire Protection District (FFPD) at 5:10 pm.

### Board members present:

Starla Thompson – President  
Justin Snare – Vice President  
Jim McGovern - Treasurer

## PUBLIC COMMENT

- Jim volunteered to monitor chat functions going forward
- Enabling chat function was unsuccessful
- No public comments

## OPEN DISCUSSION OF FINALIST FOR CHIEF POSITION

- Robert Herpel/John Sherman/Erik Holt
- Starla had put out a STAR ranking system with seven scenarios thus allowing each candidate to be interviewed in the same format. Each candidate was to be graded on the ability to listen to the scenario or task, follow direction on responding to the scenario in formulating an action as described and report the results of those actions. Systematically the grading system ranks the candidates on their respective interviews.
- Justin's Ranking, opened by stating he was very appreciative of the ranking system, finding it be a fair approach.
  - Erik Holt - answered all questions, good overview of the next 5 year, had focus on the job at hand. Ranked at 34 points.
  - John Shearman – liked his overall terminology. Did not answer all questions ranked second with 27 points,
  - Robert Herpel – Did not answer questions and did not think he would be a good fit. Ranked lowest but did not state the rank number.
- Jim's ranking, did not use ranking system, reviewed application, interview notes and the answers to the questionnaire. Used a 1,2, 3 ranking system.
  - 1. John Shearman - tremendous experience in executive positions and emergency management. He has rebuilt teams.
  - 2. Robert Herpel - does not have the leadership experience or experience we need for the job.
  - 3. Erik Holt - This isn't going to surprise anyone; I have significant issues with Erik. Although, he interviewed very well, has not demonstrated he can lead this department or lead volunteers in a way that we need.

- Starla's ranking, all three candidates meet the minimum qualifications of the posting. All three candidates had a desire to hold the chief's position.
  - Robert Herpel – perceived a more administrative position and was hopeful in managing something that was already built. Ranked 24 points.
  - Erik Holt - Strong interview, answered all questions in relation to scenarios correlating each answer to his professional experiences. Ranked 30 points.
  - John Shearman – Interviewed strongly from a policy and procedures prospective, however, could not follow directions in drawing from personal experiences in responding to questions. Ranked 25 points.

Starla continued with Holt being her recommendation due in part to how he has performed for the past six months in the interim position in a very tumultuous environment. Justin stated he was impressed with a portion of Holt's interview where he persevered to overcome hurdles in accomplishing a task for children. Justin continued that Sherman had some similar experience but was concerned with a comment Shearman mad about maybe wanting additional compensation. Jim responded with the fact that candidates applying for the position should be aware of the salary range and should be willing to take the job accordingly. Jim believes Shearman has the most experience by far although he did not interview well. Jim wanted to put more weight in a person's experience. Also stating that Holt in 5 months had not demonstrated the ability to get the volunteers to follow his leadership. Continuing with the fact that the volunteers are the heart of FFPD and that we should not be considering a candidate that has been unable to win over the volunteers. Starla stated that she had spoken to some of the volunteers and there is a high level of respect for Holt's knowledge base. So, she cannot agree that volunteers do not support Holt. Starla stated all three candidates had discussed that they would create a high level of professionalism and hold volunteers accountable. If would not be appropriate to hold one candidate accountable to a scenario that we have not been able to get to the bottom of for lack of appeals and just statements on social media. Starla stated we took input from the community, from volunteers and other professionals in the industry and they all indicated they are looking for someone qualified to do the job with leadership. The tumultuous situation with the prior chief has created a horrible situation to walk in to however, Holt has been showing up for the job for six months, building the volunteer base, training and all while under attack from multiple directions. Holt is hands above the other two candidates for desire to serve in the community where he lives and is willing to build from the ground up. Jim stated that he did not believe he was going to be able to change anyone mind on the candidates.

- Justin motioned to begin contractual contingent employment negotiations with Erik Holt. Starla seconded. Justin - Y Jim - N Starla - Y vote passed 2-1.

## **APPROVE MINUTES**

- Aug 3 Special meeting/Aug 24 Regular meeting/Sept 9 Special Meeting
- No changes to meetings. Jim motioned to approve all 3 meetings. Justin seconded. Motion passed unanimously

## **FINANCIALS**

- YTD financials through 09.27.22
  - Revenue \$501K - . No additional revenue expected through end of year
  - Expenses \$411K - Working with Erik to put together a plan to finish up the year within the available funds if possible
- August numbers
  - Expenses \$38K
    - Legal \$15K
    - Payroll \$9K
    - Insurance \$4K
    - Fuel \$3K
    - Misc/Other \$7K

- Starla has spoken to legal and the legal team has hired a defense attorney for prior legal issues. We should not be seeing the large legal bills going forward.
- Jim's updated information on the budget
  - \$155K left to spend within the original budget
  - \$165K is Erik's new 2022 budget proposal
    - Jim proposed to adjust Erik by the following amounts
      - Agrees with everything but adjust the following adjusted for:
        - +20K for legal bills (may be high based on Starla's previous comment)
        - +12K vehicle repairs
        - -34K office remodel
        - -14K reduce to one approved part time chief (wages + taxes)
        - This brings total remaining expenses under \$155K
    - Erik follow ups
      - His proposed numbers are operational numbers only
      - Building remodel
        - 1 bid so far on the building for chief/admin/chief office space - \$27K
        - Painting - \$6K - mural will be cheaper
      - Hiring - will not move ahead with office space or hiring. Would like to start the hiring process in Nov with a Jan start date in mind.
    - Starla motioned to continue to operate under the budget as it is, reconvene in two weeks to review the 2022 budget, where we are at with goals for 2023 and reserves. Jim seconded. The vote passed unanimously.
    - Jim motioned with a specific approval for the \$7800-radio installation. Justin seconded. The vote passed unanimously.

## CHIEFS REPORT

- Still working on fleet management agreement with May River - continues to do our maintenance
- EMTS grant - continue to work on statement of work
- Cell phone for chief - pushed down the road
- Antenna system that keeps data throughout the system. Need to figure costs.
- Command vehicle upgrades - pushed down the road
- Reclassify district admin to salary position - set to next meeting
- Incident review - 50 calls.
  - Residential fire on Gold Dust Creek Rd. Recreational vehicle involved. Minor paint damage on the garage. Mutual aid partners responded. 4 Mile Fire District covered the district area while FFPD was out.
- Will upload interview chief had to the website
- Fall wildland fire season - will provide information when county discusses restrictions
- Captain Quick - put into the approved part time position. Working on some training agreements.
- Emergency Oxygen power outage program - 10 responses. 9 would purchase program
- A Wildfire assessment program was created. Entails assessing property and creating a memorandum for insurance companies
- Trunk or Treat - Sending out this week.
- 2 new volunteers this week. Will get them activated and start training
- Fire Corps - rebuilding. Present the vision for this next month. Pancake breakfast will be a high priority. Look to do a lot of events, not all fundraising.
- Rebranding - Looking at how to do that. Will be presenting soon. Looking at logos, badges, uniforms - all of it.
- Clarified about potential volunteer firefighters living at Fort Carson. They live here in this community - but work at Fort Carson.
- Starla wants to think about how to recognize volunteers.

## OLD BUSINESS

- Board member applicants - 13 different applicants.
  - How to move forward?
  - Justin - Like the BOCC, each pick the ones we like and interview them. Select people that are unbiased so we can have good dialogue. Appreciates having these discussions so the community knows we are open to all ideas.
  - Jim - Pick our top 3 - 5 and see if there is an overlap. Scheduling 13 interviews will delay the process. Wants the board to be filled out quickly to help with the overburdened workload.
  - Starla - Embrace some diversity and interject ideas. Teams will win every time over an individual.
  - Starla asked board members to email each other their top candidates by Monday. Tuesday she will communicate with each individually and set up a meeting.
- Credit card policy
  - Current card holders include Chief Holt, Capt. Quick and Patti.
  - Have a policy for the Chief. Separate policy for the department.
  - To be used for purchases outside of normal budgeted expenses. Purchases outside of operational overhead.
  - Motion by Jim to keep the Chief's limit to \$5000 to be used for department use only. Starla seconded. The vote passed unanimously.

## **NEW BUSINESS**

- Preliminary assessment numbers
  - 2022(actual) 69,161,230
  - 2023(prelim) 68,637,190
  - Mill Levy = 5.85
  - Starla - reached out to mutual aid partners and Tori (CPA). It is best to ask the legal team to make sure the numbers are correct. Will follow up.
  - Certification of levy valuations due Oct 15
  - Final budget deadline due Dec 15
- Appeals process for volunteers - how to proceed
  - Jim - if the review board includes the one who took the disciplinary action, those terminated will not feel it will be a fair process. Create a review panel that is independent of the Chief. The Chief would be there to present his case.
  - Justin - agreed. Volunteers need to feel like they are getting a fair shake. Once we get 2 more board members - the board can do the review.
  - Erik - look outside for a resource on how this should happen
  - Starla - tabled for now
- Zoom meetings - open discussions
  - Starla - would like to have a combination of both public and zoom. Zoom does give a good recording of the meeting. Continue to offer a safe place
  - Judy Dunn will look at SDA, Robert's Rules of Order, bylaws, and other public entities on how they run public decorum.
    - Offered multiple options in Divide, WP
    - Board grateful for all the work
  - Erik - will need to be in the district during the meeting
  - Look at updating meeting time in Jan 2023

## **ANY OTHER ITEMS THAT COME BEFORE THE BOARD**

- Received a copy of the original Service Plan.
  - Looking to file an updated one at a later date.

## **ADJOURNMENT**

- Motion to adjourn by Starla. Second by Jim. The motion passed unanimously. The meeting was adjourned at 8:42 PM

## **APPROVAL**

On this day, November 30, 2022 we attest that the foregoing minutes, which have been approved by the affirmative majority vote of the Board of Directors of the Florissant Fire Protection District, are a true and accurate record of the meeting held on the date stated above.

President, Starla Thompson

Vice President, Justin Snare