

**RECORD OF PROCEEDINGS
ROARING FORK FIRE RESCUE AUTHORITY
VIRTUAL BOARD MEETING**

December 08, 2020

Authority Board President Ed Van Walraven called the meeting to order at 8:29 a.m. Board members present were Ed Van Walraven, Leroy Duroux, John Young, Bill Boineau, Dave Heivly, and Irene Greiser. Others present were Chief Scott Thompson, Deputy Chiefs Pete Bradshaw, Kevin Issel, and John Mele, Division Chiefs Richard Cornelius and Terry Cox, Finance Director Jennifer Thompson, Human Resources Director Renee Thomas, IT Director Erik Johnson, Attorney Bob Cole, Firefighters Aaron Allard, and Duty Crew at Station 45, and Administrative Assistant Susan Herwick.

Directors Donna Aiken and Drew Detrick joined the meeting via Lifesize at 9:30 a.m.

Minutes of October 20, 2020 Meeting:

Director Leroy Duroux made a motion to accept the minutes as read, the motion was seconded by Director Dave Heivly. All were in favor and the motion carried 6 – 0.

Public Comments:

None

Attorney's Report:

Attorney Bob Cole stated that his report could wait until the COVID-19 policy discussion later during this meeting.

Chief's Report:

Chief Scott Thompson stated that he had another meet and confer with the Union Representative yesterday. They would like to enhance communications from the bottom to the top. The minutes of the last meeting were sent out to the Board per the IGA. They want to meet more than two times per year and Chief Thompson concurs. The IGA says twice per year. Since these meetings have been positive and productive, does anyone have a problem with us meeting more often? We would like to meet every three months. Chief Thompson asked Attorney Bob Cole if the IGA needed to be amended. Attorney Cole stated not if you want to meet more often. Discussion regarding the contents of the IGA. Minutes of each meeting will be distributed to the Board once they are approved.

Chief Thompson stated that our application to water court has been finished for Station 46 in West Sopris Creek. As soon as it gets through Water Court, we will get the project moving through the Pitkin County Building Department.

Chief Thompson stated we had very strict numbers on how many calls they had to respond to, how many trainings they had to complete, how many on-call hours they had to have in a calendar year in order to qualify for LOSAP (Length of Service Awards

Program) for the volunteers. Chief Thompson met with the Advisory Board and they have come up with a compromise on these hours this year because of COVID restrictions on activity. In 2019 the volunteers were required to have 135 points for the year (100 required points plus 35 flex points). For 2020, we are only going require 75 points (60 required points and fifteen flex points). Twenty-Five people may meet the requirements this year. The Advisory Board agrees with this amended requirement. Discussion about LOSAP ensued. Chief Thompson stated that he would like to have the Boards approval on the amended requirements today. Director Duroux made a motion to approve the amended requirements for LOSAP in 2020, the motion was seconded by Director Heivly. All were in favor and the motion carried 6 – 0.

Director Duroux wants to make sure that a volunteer can appeal if they felt that they should have qualified and didn't for some reason. Chief Thompson stated absolutely.

Deputy Chief of Operations Report:

Deputy Chief Pete Bradshaw stated that the full-time recruitment was finished. We hired two new ALS providers (one from our volunteer ranks and one from outside the Authority).

Year-to-date we are down about 7% on our call volume.

We instituted a new surgical mask policy a couple of weeks ago. We are seeing good compliance with face masks in the fire stations.

Deputy Chief of Administration Report:

Deputy Chief Kevin Issel stated that he sold old Ladder 41 to Scott City, Missouri for \$30,000.

He has been overseeing the fleet now that Brian has retired. We haven't been able to hire a fleet mechanic yet. We are farming out repairs as needed.

All of our facilities are in good shape for the winter.

Deputy Chief/Fire Marshal Report:

Deputy Chief John Mele stated that the Fire Prevention Division hired Jim Pidcock as an additional Fire Inspector. There is lots of development and plan review going on right now. The Fire Prevention Division continues to foster a good working relationship with the Towns of Basalt and Snowmass Village regarding build-in fire and life safety features.

The SWIFT (State Wildland Inmate Fire Team) is back in Snowmass Village today. To date they have completed 25 acres of mitigation work this year between Basalt and Snowmass Village. They will be doing more wildfire mitigation work in the Pines Subdivision.

Division Chief of EMS:

Division Chief Cornelius then read each of Director Young's questions from his memo to the Board and supplied answers or deferred the question to Chief Thompson or Attorney Bob Cole for their answer.

DVC Cornelius answered additional questions regarding the answers to Director Young's questions as they were asked.

Chief Thompson stated that we received a copy of a Mandatory COVID Vaccine policy from Aspen Fire. This policy is quite harsh and we have time to discuss this policy further and possibly amend it before it is implemented. Attorney Cole stated that there are instances on the books in the past when employers have required employees to get vaccinated or be terminated.

Attorney Cole stated that requiring employees to be vaccinated is an EEOC (Equal Employment Opportunity Commission). When serious health concerns require vaccination, you can require vaccinations with two exceptions 1) health concerns, and 2) religious reasons. The current guidelines from EEOC are to follow the current Center for Disease Control (CDC), State, and Local guidelines. You will have to allow for accommodations, if the employee gives one of these reasons. This policy is harsh and the Board needs time to digest the information before discussing it. Chief Thompson stated that if we need to schedule an emergency meeting on this policy, we will.

Division Chief of Training:

Division Chief Cox stated that training has been difficult this year. Live fire training was completed in September. Driver's training was completed in October. The thirteen new volunteers are currently attending the firefighter orientation academy. The Board members need to have access to Target Solutions. The new recruit training video will soon be uploaded to Target Solutions. He is continually looking for new training to offer our people.

Chief Thompson thanked Division Chiefs Cornelius and Cox for training all of the new volunteers.

HR Report:

Human Resources Director Renee Thomas stated that in the last few weeks we hired sixteen new people (thirteen volunteers, two full-time ALS providers, one Fire Inspector).

We signed up with a new health care group and everyone had to reenroll for their benefits.

The fleet mechanic applicant withdrew his application so we are readvertising for this position.

The HR policies are being updated to match current laws coming out.

The performance evaluation system has been rolled out.

Finance Report:

Finance Director Jennifer Thompson stated that we need to adopt the 2021 Budget at this meeting. There was no increase to either the B&RFPD or SWFPD budgets.

Director Greiser made a motion to approve Resolution 8, Series 2020 to adopt the 2021 budget; the motion was seconded by Director Duroux. All were in favor and the motion carried 6 – 0.

Director Boineau made a motion to approve Resolution 9, Series 2020 for supplemental expenditures and revenues for each fund and adopting a supplemental budget for the calendar year of 2020; the motion was seconded by Director Greiser. All were in favor and the motion carried 6 – 0.

Jennifer Thompson stated that a second supplemental budget could be approved, if needed.

Wildfire response has been billed but the revenue has not been received yet. We have spent 86% of the operations budget for 2020 as of the end of November. We sold some of our fleet this year and that money has been deposited.

Information Technology:

None

Board Comments:

The Board discussed changing the meeting times on the days when both the RFFRA and SWFPD Boards meet. It was decided that on those days where there are dual Board meetings the SWFPD Board meeting would start at 8:30 a.m. and that going forward all RFFRA Board meeting would follow at 9:00 a.m.

Director Young stated that the alarming rate of increase in COVID-19 transmission is what precipitated his memo to the Board. Division Chief Cornelius, Chief Thompson, and Attorney Cole answered Director Young's memo questions.

Staff Comments:

Chief Thompson stated that RFFRA is the forerunner of the agencies in the Valley with COVID response. No one has been exposed while on the job. Anyone who has any symptoms stays at home. Division Chief Cornelius is our point person for this pandemic. We are continually working with both Eagle and Pitkin Counties.

Old Business:

None

New Business:

Chief Thompson stated that the Authority is offering asymptomatic COVID testing through the School District. Renee Thomas stated that insurance covers COVID testing for free and we are letting everyone know about free testing available throughout the valley.

Director Young wants all Authority members to have access to COVID testing at the District's expense regardless of whether they have insurance or not.

Director Heivly stated that you need to go to rfvcovidtest.com and schedule an appointment to receive a test at one of the free testing facilities.

Director Young asked if once people were vaccinated could we start meeting in person again. Attorney Cole stated that the CDC states that vaccination is not a means for loosening restrictions on getting together, wearing masks, and washing hands. Division Chief Cornelius stated that getting vaccinated may prevent serious illness if you come down with COVID. You will still have to follow all restrictions.

Director Young wants to thank the Board and staff for their quick response to his memo and for the handling of the COVID pandemic.

The next regularly scheduled RFFRA Board meeting is set for January 19, 2021. Jenn stated that a new meeting schedule would be sent out by the end of the week.

Volunteer Meeting:

We will have a virtual meeting on January 5, 2021 at 6:00 p.m. We have requested that questions be submitted ahead of time. Director Bill Boineau stated that he would attend this meeting.

Non-Agenda Items:

Director Young asked what we were doing since we can't get together for an awards banquet. Chief Thompson stated that we would be giving everyone a gift card for \$100.00 to City Market. Hopefully, we can throw a big party come summer 2021. We will be holding a virtual awards banquet on a date yet to be determined the first part of February 2021.

Adjournment:

Director Duroux made a motion to adjourn the meeting, it was seconded by Director Heivly. All were in favor and the motion passed 6 – 0. The meeting was adjourned at 10:23 a.m.

To watch this meeting in its entirety, please go to the following link:

<https://youtu.be/41pZJ9qyll0>