



REGULAR MEETING
BOARD OF DIRECTORS
DE BEQUE FIRE PROTECTION DISTRICT

DE BEQUE FIRE STATION
OCTOBER 14, 2024

MINUTES

CALL TO ORDER:

Pursuant to notice, the regular board meeting of the De Beque Fire Protection District (the District) was called to order by Board President Tanner at 6:01 p.m. on Monday, October 14, 2024.

OPEN WITH PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE TO FLAG: The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

ROLL CALL/ESTABLISH QUORUM:

Cynthia Farris, Present; Melanie Hansen, Absent (Arrived at 6:03 p.m.); Dustin Koehler, Present; Maria Ramthun, Present; Annette Tanner, Present. A quorum was present and the meeting, having been duly convened, was ready to proceed.

OTHERS PRESENT:

Forest Matis, De Beque District Fire Chief; Lieutenant Jesse Hughson; Lieutenant Nate Voorhees via Zoom; Lieutenant Triston Quigley via Zoom; Firefighter Tyler Sepsey; and Secretary Kim Latham.

ADDITIONS OR DELETIONS TO AND APPROVAL OF AGENDA:

No Additions or deletions to the Agenda were made. Motion was made by Board President Tanner and seconded by Board Vice President Ramthun to approve the agenda as presented. Vote: Cynthia Farris, Aye; Melanie Hansen, Absent; Dustin Koehler, Aye; Maria Ramthun, Aye; Annette Tanner, Aye. Motion Passed.

MINUTES:

Minutes were presented to the BOD for consideration for the regular board meeting on September 9, 2024. It is noted that Board Member Hansen arrived at 6:03 p.m. during the review of September's minutes. Motion was made by Board Member Farris and seconded by Board Vice President Ramthun to approve the minutes for September 9, 2024 as presented. Vote: Cynthia Farris, Aye; Melanie Hansen, Aye; Dustin Koehler, Aye; Maria Ramthun, Aye; Annette Tanner, Aye. Motion Passed.

FINANCE REPORTS

Financial Reports were presented to the BOD for August 2024. Motion was made by Board Vice President Ramthun and seconded by Board Secretary Hansen to approve the finance reports, including the check report, for August 2024 as presented. Vote: Cynthia Farris, Aye; Melanie Hansen, Aye; Dustin Koehler, Aye; Maria Ramthun, Aye; Annette Tanner, Aye. Motion Passed.

Insurance Write-Downs in the amount of \$3,702.80 for August 2024 were presented to the board. (It is noted that the EMS billing company is now combining write downs and write offs into one category). It is also noted that the EMS billing company is trying to track down information regarding some deposits that will change the total amount due DFPD upon the completion of their research. Motion was made



by Board President Tanner and seconded by Board Vice President Ramthun to approve the EMS write-downs in the amount of \$3,702.80.00 for August 2024. Vote: Cynthia Farris, Aye; Melanie Hansen, Aye; Dustin Koehler, Aye; Maria Ramthun, Aye; Annette Tanner, Aye. Motion Passed.

PUBLIC COMMENTS:

None.

OLD BUSINESS:

- 1) **Trane Update.** Chief Matis updated the BOD on the progress with the Trane system heating/ac unit. Trane completed the repairs to our system; thereafter, the thermostats stopped working. Trane sent Hawks to complete repairs. Soon thereafter the thermostat in the Chief's office stopped working. Trane sent Hawks back for more repairs. While Chief Matis was on assignment the system stopped blowing air properly and the actual internal room temperatures were not close to the thermostat settings. Trane again sent Hawks to assess the situation. Trane came back onsite and determined another circuit board is out on the unit. Trane determined the unit parts are still under warranty, but we will need to pay for labor to fix the unit, which is where we have been for the last two years. President Tanner inquired about attorney fees that we have had to incur to get Trane to provide a functioning unit. Vice President Ramthun stated she is not interested in continuing to get lawyered to death. President Tanner noted that the only alternative is to replace the system with a new unit and get rid of Trane altogether. Chief Matis has had A-1 Heating and Cooling come in and gather data to provide a bid on what it would cost to replace the unit. Chief Matis estimated a new unit could cost between \$250,000 to \$600,000, but he has not received the estimate from A-1 to date. Vice President Ramthun noted that we have not have heating and air conditioning for two years, which is not fair to the employees who work here. Discussion continued regarding options for funding (grant possibilities) and whether or not we could or should take legal action to get expenses and legal fees back from Trane. Between labor costs for repairs and legal fees we are already at a cost of over \$70,000 for a unit that still does not work. Fire Chief Matis will contact A-1 to get their completed bid, contact the attorney with the current status of the system, and check into possible grants for funding a new system.
- 2) **Ladder Truck Update.** The Ladder truck repair costs are increasing due to the age of the unit and the inability to get replacements for the current mother board and other needed circuit boards electronic elements. This means we will need to update the entire electronic units, but the parts will come from Germany. Lieutenant Voorhees is estimating it will take an additional \$30,000 on top of the initial \$25,000 estimated cost to get the unit functioning. Meeker is still interested in buying it for \$200,000 after it is fixed. Motion was made by Board President Tanner and seconded by Board Vice President Ramthun to approve up to \$50,000 for repairs for the Ladder truck. Vote: Cynthia Farris, Aye; Melanie Hansen, Aye; Dustin Koehler, Aye; Maria Ramthun, Aye; Annette Tanner, Aye. Motion Passed.
- 3) **Employee Openings Update.** Chief Matis reported that Triston Quigley accepted the open Lieutenant position, and Firefighter Elijah Gerber applied for and accepted the full-time position that became available with the promotion of Triston Quigley to the Lieutenant. We now have a part-time position to fill.
- 4) **Deployment Update.** Chief Matis reported that we have now participated in several fire deployment assignments, which should help us get close to our estimated budget amount for deployment income.



- 5) 911 Flag on Bridge Report. The on-duty crew went to the bridge to hold a flag in remembrance of the lives lost at 911. It was also the funeral remembrance for the some of the CDOT workers who were killed on duty recently. The response to the flag was very favorable, with honks and waves from people and truckers driving under the bridge, and the CDOT motorcade was especially touched that we were there as they passed the bridge on the way to the funeral.

NEW BUSINESS:

- 1) Wage Gap Presentation. Lieutenant Quigley put together a wage gap study for the BOD to consider. The wage gap study shows the wage differences between ALS/BLS provider wages and the gap between Lieutenant and Captain wages. The goal is to get to a \$10,000 difference between the groups. The current wage gap is currently a bit higher than that amount, which would mean the need for an increase in BLS wages to close the gap. After looking at the data, the BOD tasked Lieutenant Quigley to come back to the BOD with solid per year figures on the cost to get the wage gaps into the \$10,000 goal range.
- 2) Budget Presentation/Set Budget Public Hearing Date. Chief Matis and Secretary Latham presented a beginning draft budget to the BOD to assess the 2025 budget estimates. Discussion ensued regarding the almost \$900,000 expected decrease in tax revenue. Chief Matis will contact our attorney regarding Tabor effects of the decrease in tax revenue for 2025 and any possible increases in subsequent years. Discussion ensued about the need to subdivide accounts to set aside a monetary amount each year to accumulate funds for apparatus acquirement and how to show that in the budget as well as how to categorize unexpected expenditures.
- 3) Apparatus/Equipment Purchase Approval. Discussion ensued regarding whether or not to purchase a squad replacement for Squad 81 this year due to budgetary projections for this year vs. next year. It was decided to table this for now pending the potential need to replace the heating/ac unit.
- 4) CO Wildfire Collaboration Matching Grant Fund Request. The CO Wildfire Collaborative is requesting member fire districts to donate \$5,000 for matched funding for a FRWRM grant request for the purpose of hiring a full-time person to run the collaborative as a nonprofit and for mitigation and community outreach projects. The commitment would be reviewed each year by the fire district BODs. Motion was made by Board President Tanner and seconded by Board Secretary Hansen to approve \$5,000 to the Colorado Wildfire Collaboration Grand Fund Request. Vote: Cynthia Farris, Aye; Melanie Hansen, Aye; Dustin Koehler, Aye; Maria Ramthun, Aye; Annette Tanner, Aye. Motion Passed.

FIRE CHIEF REPORT:

- 1) Chief Matis – Most items were discussed earlier in the meeting.
- 2) Annual Staff Christmas Party – after discussion, it was agreed upon to set the annual staff party for December 14, 2024. The Chief will contact Berna B's to cater the event again.
- 3) Board Secretary Hansen reported a conflict for the regularly scheduled BOD meeting on November 11th. Discussion ensued. Motion was made by Board President Tanner and seconded by Board Vice President Ramthun to move the meeting to Tuesday, November 12, 2024 at 6:00 p.m. Vote: Cynthia Farris, Aye; Melanie Hansen, Aye; Dustin Koehler, Aye; Maria Ramthun, Aye; Annette Tanner, Aye. Motion Passed.



CREW UPDATES:

- 1) Lieutenant Triston Quigley – No report.
- 2) Lieutenant Voorhees – No report.

OTHER COMMENTS:

BOARD COMMENTS:

- 1) The Board would like a staff picture wall. Chief Matis assigned Lieutenant Quigley the project of creating a staff picture wall.
- 2) Chief Matis is directed to contact the District attorney regarding Tabor/Gallagher issues.
- 3) Secretary Latham is directed to contact the auditor regarding the placement of the unexpected expense line in the budget.
- 4) Secretary Latham is directed to prepare a Fund Balance Resolution for the next regular board meeting.
- 5) The public board meeting sign needs repaired.

ADJOURNMENT:

Motion was made by Board Member Farris and seconded by Board Secretary Hansen to adjourn the meeting. Vote: Cynthia Farris, Aye; Melanie Hansen, Aye; Dustin Koehler, Aye; Maria Ramthun, Aye; Annette Tanner, Aye. Motion Passed. Meeting adjourned at 9:07 p.m.

Next regular meeting: Tuesday, November 12, 2024.

Approved by the De Beque Fire Protection Board of Directors on November 12, 2024.



Annette Tanner, President

Melanie Hansen, Secretary

Board of Directors:

Board President Annette Tanner
Board Vice President Maria Ramthun
Board Secretary Melanie Hansen
Board Member Cynthia Farris
Board Member Dustin Koehler

It is noted that Board Member Cynthia Farris is also on the Board of Directors for the Town of De Beque. It is noted that the dual Board positions might be considered a conflict of interest in the event of interaction between the De Beque Fire Protection District and the Town of De Beque.