



SPECIAL MEETING
BOARD OF DIRECTORS
DE BEQUE FIRE PROTECTION DISTRICT

DE BEQUE FIRE STATION
Wednesday, February 28, 2024

MINUTES

CALL TO ORDER:

Pursuant to notice, the regular board meeting of the De Beque Fire Protection District was called to order by President Tanner at 6:02 p.m. on Wednesday, February 28, 2024.

OPEN WITH PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE TO FLAG:

The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

ROLL CALL/ESTABLISH QUORUM:

Cynthia Farris	Present
Melanie Hansen	Present
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 Nate Voorhees
Secretary Kim Latham

ADDITIONS OR DELETIONS TO AND APPROVAL OF AGENDA:

Motion was made and seconded to approve the agenda with the addition of Item 5) Sewer Discussion.

Motion by Board Vice President Ramthun

Seconded by Board Secretary Hansen

Vote:

Cynthia Farris Aye

Melanie Hansen Aye

Dustin Koehler Aye

Maria Ramthun Aye

Annette Tanner Aye

Motion Passed.

BUSINESS:

1) Trane Heater/AC Unit Discussion

Chief Matis updated the BOD about the current situation regarding the station heater/ac repair.

Trane has provided an estimate for the repair in the amount of \$36,891.54, which includes labor only as the parts are still under warranty. The District attorney provided an email letter with his



recommendations for the BOD to consider. Chief Matis stressed that the attorney sent a demand letter to Trane which gives them an opportunity to fix the issue within a reasonable time frame and at a reasonable cost. The attorney recommends that the District hire an independent consultant to come look at the unit to give an estimate of their opinion of the cost to repair the system. There are three options at this time:

- a. Accept the bid and sign the contract.
- b. Delay signing the contract and contact an independent consultant to see if it is a fair bid.
- c. Contact our attorney with a non-acceptance of the bid and move forward with action to get expenses reimbursed (we have purchased portable heating units that are scattered about the station to keep the chill off and the pipes from freezing, as well as a/c window units for each dorm room during the summer months. Also research into additional electricity/propane usage from November 2022 – Current compared to previous years is warranted).

President Tanner said she would rather pay a different company to come in and make the repairs since Trane has been giving us the run around for 14 months now, and she would like Chief Matis to let Trane know the parts that are under warranty that Trane has now said they have in hand need to be shipped to the station and kept here as they are our parts and we need them onsite. Chief Matis pointed out that repairs are definitely needed, but the cause of all the units going out at the same time also needs to be addressed by whoever fixes the units. It is unlikely that all the units would go down at the same time and if we don't address that issue we may be in this same situation a year or so down the road. Chief Matis would like to have a member of the Board present for representation if a call to the attorney to move forward with a non-acceptance of the bid is desired. President Tanner said she could come in on Monday for the call. Discussion continued regarding trust issues with Trane at this point and any other options we might have if we do not accept Trane's bid. Chief Matis again stressed that the initial contact with Trane gives them an opportunity to make the situation right. He recommended that we have our attorney negotiate the cost with them and have them respond back. The BOD determined that a reasonable cost would be half the amount they billed us, or to contact an independent consultant to give a reasonable estimate of the cost of labor only. Discussion continued regarding the cost to the District to hire an independent consultant.

Action on Trane proposal

A) Motion was made and seconded to obtain an independent consultant to come as quickly as possible to look at the system to give a repair cost estimate.

Motion by	Board Vice President Ramthun
Seconded by	Board Member Farris
Vote:	
Cynthia Farris	Aye
Melanie Hansen	Aye
Dustin Koehler	Nay
Maria Ramthun	Aye
Annette Tanner	Nay
Motion Passed.	

President Tanner iterated that she was not against hiring an independent consultant, but she would like to first contact the attorney, have the attorney contact Trane and let them know we will be hiring an independent consultant to give an estimate of repairs costs, then contact the independent consultant. She would like the attorney to make it clear to Trane that he (the attorney) recommended that we hire an independent consultant, and we are following our attorney's recommendations. It



was noted that the previous motion and vote did not specify the order of actions, just that an independent consultant estimate would be obtained.

- B) Motion was made and seconded to have the attorney get ahold of Trane and let them know that we are hiring an independent contractor per our attorney's recommendation (that we already voted and passed) and go from there to see if Trane wants to reduce the cost of the repairs.

Motion by: Board President Tanner
Seconded by: Board Member Farris
Vote:
Cynthia Farris Aye
Melanie Hansen Aye
Dustin Koehler Aye
Maria Ramthun Nay
Annette Tanner Aye
Motion Passed.

- C) Motion was made and seconded that if Trane comes back with a proposal that is 50% or less than their current repair proposal of \$36,891.54, that we move forward and sign the contract. Fifty percent of the contract is \$18,445.77.

Motion by: Board President Tanner
Seconded by: Board Member Koehler
Vote:
Cynthia Farris Aye
Melanie Hansen Aye
Dustin Koehler Aye
Maria Ramthun Nay
Annette Tanner Aye
Motion Passed.

2) Sewer Discussion

Chief Matis informed the BOD that he would be calling an executive session at the next BOD meeting to discuss the current sewer tap issue with the Town of De Beque because one DFPD Board Member also sits on the Town of De Beque Board of Directors and conflict of interests need to be protected. Chief Matis clarified that the Town of De Beque Town Administrator contacted him awhile back for a letter of support for a grant that they were pursuing regarding the upgrade of their sewer system. Chief Matis did not give a letter of support for several reasons, including (but not limited to) the speedy time-frame that she required for the letter (two hour notice); a requirement that DFPD has to hook to the sewer, but no response on the costs to the District or consideration of the enormous \$106,000 tap fees we've already paid for our current sewer attachment to the Town's system; or that there was no communication to us regarding the fact that we were "obligated" to hook up to the new system in pursuit of the grant the Town of De Beque applied for.



ADJOURNMENT:

Motion was made and seconded to adjourn the meeting.

Motion by: Board Vice President Ramthun

Seconded by: Board Secretary Hansen

Vote:

Cynthia Farris Aye

Melanie Hansen Aye

Dustin Koehler Aye

Maria Ramthun Aye


Annette Tanner Aye

Motion Passed.

Motion Passed. Meeting adjourned at: 7:02 p.m.

Next regular meeting: Monday, March 11, 2024

Approved by the De Beque Fire Protection Board of Directors on Date Here


Annette Tanner, President




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