

**POLSON RURAL FIRE BOARD MEETING  
MINUTES – JUNE 13, 2007**

Board trustee members present: Ross Hoyt, Alison Meslin, Fred Nelson, Jim Manley and Dave Ottun.  
Board trustee members absent: None  
Staff Present: Fire Chief John Fairchild, Assistant Fire Chief Pete Bishop.  
Guests: Earle & Wanelda Schafer, Lester Johnson, Jeff Meslin.

Meeting called to order by Chairman Hoyt at 6:58 p.m.

**Rural Fire Board Meeting Minutes May 9, 2007:** Fire Chief Fairchild corrected the minutes to read staff present Assistant Fire Chief Pete Bishop not Paul Bishop. **Motion Trustee Nelson, seconded Trustee Meslin to approve May 9, 2007 minutes. Motion carried unanimously.**

**Treasurer's Report:**

Report read by Trustee Meslin.

|                                  |              |
|----------------------------------|--------------|
| Operating Fund Balance           | \$ 3,258.88  |
| Capital Improvement Fund Balance | \$ 52,636.37 |
| Voted Levy                       | \$ 2,833.71  |

|                  |             |
|------------------|-------------|
| May expenditures | \$ 6,343.84 |
|------------------|-------------|

Check numbers 3415 - 3429, both inclusive  
(Paid June 13, 2007)

**Bills:** Trustee Meslin questioned check #3418 payable to Fire Apparatus Repair \$828.80 for engine 318 aluminum tool boards; check #3421 payable to L.N. Curtis \$3,372.50 for 2 sets of turnout gear and foam. Trustee Manley questioned check #3429 payable to Western States Insurance \$945.00 is an insurance coverage addition for engine 318; check #3427 payable to Verizon Wireless \$107.71 is for staff phones an additional phone will be requested for Assistant Fire Chief Bishop. Incident calls are handled by cell phone rather than by dispatch. Inquired the method used to split the expenses between the rural and city. Fire Chief Fairchild explained expenses are split 50/50 or by usage. The increase funds in the capital improvement fund reflects the sale of the slide-in to Wolf Point Fire in the amount of \$8,000. **Motion Trustee Meslin, seconded Trustee Nelson to pay bills. Motion carried unanimously.**

**Old Business:**

**ELECTION OF OFFICERS** - Open nominations for Chairman, Vice-chairman, and Secretary-Treasurer. **Motion Trustee Nelson, seconded Trustee Ottun nominate Ross Hoyt as chairman. Motion carried unanimously.** Alison indicated Fred has seniority. **Motion Trustee Meslin seconded Trustee Manley nominate Fred Nelson as vice-chairman; Motion carried unanimously.** Jim asked if Alison would be willing to serve as secretary-treasurer. **Motion Trustee Manley, seconded Trustee Nelson nominate Alison Meslin as secretary-treasurer. Motion carried unanimously.**

**IMPACT FEES** - Trustee Nelson spoke with the Lake County Commissioners and Fire Chief Fairchild regarding an increase in the fees. The commissioners would prefer the money utilizes for capital expenditures not every day operations. Fire Chief Fairchild spoke with Lake County Fire Association suggesting all Rural Fire Boards draft a letter asking for \$700 to \$800 per lot impact fee. Recent subdivision reviews Stone Horse (formerly Stone Ridge) and parcels near Forman Road have taken additional time indicating expenses need to be covered. The commissioners are also looking for a plan from the departments for use of the money. August 4, 2007 is the next meeting of the Lake County Fire Association and suggest a letter from each fire department included in the meeting agenda. The board will review a draft letter at the special meeting, June 27<sup>th</sup>.

**BIG ARM STATION RENOVATIONS** – Trustee Meslin reported cement walkways completed, handicap ramp is built, doors and trim painted, trees planted and foam blocks painted on the north side, parking area is completed, rock retaining wall is built. Next week plants and decorative river rock and gravel in front of the retaining wall will complete the renovations. The Big Arm and surrounding community residents contributed monetarily, time and energy to the project.

**New Business:**

**OATHS OF OFFICE** - Chairman Hoyt administrated the oath of office to Trustees Jim Manley and Dave Ottun appointed by Lake County Commissioners and Trustee Alison Meslin elected by acclamation. Trustees Manley and Ottun will fulfill the terms of resigned trustees Ron Ryan and Steve Lozar to April 30, 2008. Trustee Meslin elected by acclamation will serve a three year term to April 30, 2010.

**BRUSH TRUCK FOR SALE** - Fire Chief Fairchild described a brush truck that is for sale a 4X4 F550 \$58,000; but does not recommend the purchase.

**TOWER ROAD PROPERTY** - Fire Chief Fairchild presented plans of the donated lot in the Stone Horse subdivision (formerly Stone Ridge subdivision) with a 6” water main for filling trucks and two road accesses. The land donation is available to construct a fire station within a ten year window from July 2006. A site visit is suggested to say thank you and discuss design, etc. Developer Ned Banning thought the potential lot owners would donate to the building. Assistant Fire Chief Pete Bishop discussed cost and meeting covenants requirements. Trustee Meslin was concerned about the cost of the “Design Guidelines” and suggested finding out if a small building could be built first and enlarged at a later date. Land on Jette Hill has been offered and questioned if the offer is still available. ISO rates improve when a residence is located within five miles of a fire station or within 1000 feet of water, therefore, the proposed station will reduce residential insurance rates. Fire Chief Fairchild indicated the bridge will be resurfaced within the next two years beginning the end of May through September with night closure 11:00 p.m. to 6:00 a.m., therefore, fire trucks would have to be parked north of the bridge. Trustee Ottun asked where the fire hydrants will be located. Trustee Nelson suggested the developer build for us and we buy back. Trustee Meslin was concerned about paying for the building as we cannot ask for more taxes until the present 7 year mill levy ends and could a simple metal building be erected and rock facing etc added later. Trustee Nelson, Trustee Ottun and Assistant Fire Chief Bishop discussed the Missoula fire building which is an attractive building but also a steel structure. Fire Chief Fairchild will set up a meeting with Stone Horse.

**REVIEW OF BY-LAWS** - Trustee Meslin suggested provisions to control absent board members describing the problems of the last year where at most of the meetings only three members attended. Trustee Manley thought it could be left to the board’s discretion. Trustee Ottun thought it would be a good idea and specify how many times a trustee could be absent. Chairman Hoyt described Ron Ryan and Steve Lozar experienced employment changes and difficulty coming to a decision due to their long service to the board. Assistant Fire Chief Bishop indicated the volunteer fire department unexcused absences are reviewed and voted by the members. Trustee Manley suggested an amendment which after discussion the board made the following amendment:

“If a Member of the board fails to attend two (2) or more consecutive meetings or 80% of all meetings in a calendar year without good cause the Board shall vote at the next regular meeting whether the Member should continue on the Board.”

The amendment will be included in the regular meetings posted agenda and voted on during the July meeting.

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Trustee Meslin asked about the 2 day notice for special meetings and was concerned about lack of time for required public notice. Chairman Hoyt noted that at times speed is critical. Trustee Manley will review the Montana Codes and inform the Board of the legal requirements.

**INTERLOCAL AGREEMENT** - Chairman Hoyt suggested the Board form a committee to review the agreement and report back to the whole board. **Motion Trustee Nelson, seconded Trustee Manley to form a committee. Motion carried unanimously.** Chairman Hoyt asked for volunteers. Trustees Manley, Meslin and Nelson form a committee to meet July 11, 2007 at 6:00 p.m. prior to the regular board meeting.

**FIRE BOAT** – Fire Chief Fairchild discussed retirement of the current fire boat, receiving many calls, looking at boats, volunteers voted to buy a boat and would like assistance from Board. City will contribute \$5,000 and perhaps the rural board will consider \$5000 and the volunteers will contribute the balance. Fire Chief Fairchild and Assistant Fire Chief Bishop described the importance of the boat for rescue and to service homes that are difficult to reach by road. Trustee Nelson suggested a 20' boat and felt a 17' is inadequate. Sheriff department has a boat although the boat is not available for fire department use. Currently the sheriff's department indicated funds are not available to operate the boat. Search & Rescue have a newly voted mill levy but are two years away from implimenting the levy funds. Fire Chief Fairchild indicated firemen are using their personal boats for rescue, or citizens are helping. Assistant Fire Chief Bishop said volunteers wants to stay in the boat business. Trustee Meslin is concerned the boat would be used to assist people running out of fuel. Fire Chief Fairchild suggested giving them a donation envelope. The fire department's responsibility ends at the high water line. Trustee Meslin asked how that affects liability etc. Fire Chief Fairchild said if the Sheriff calls them out it is mutual aid which covers them. Trustee Meslin suggested that we already have two organizations to do this and perhaps they should be approached on how they could be more effective. Trustee Nelson asked if the volunteer have funds available. The volunteer's boot drive raised \$9,000. Trustee Manley thought the Search and Rescue and the Sheriff's department would be more likely to delay their service. **Motion Trustee Nelson, Fire Chief Fairchild set up meeting with the Sheriff on June 27, Trustee Manley amended the motion to include Search and Rescue, seconded Trustee Ottun. Motion carried unanimously.** Trustee Nelson asked if the retired fire boat, donated by the Shefiff's Department, could be sold, with the proceeds toward the boat purchase.

Meeting adjourned 8:49 p.m.

**SPECIAL MEETING  
POLSON RURAL FIRE BOARD MINUTES  
JUNE 27, 2007**

Board trustee members present: Ross Hoyt, Fred Nelson, Alison Meslin, Jim Manley and Dave Ottun

Board trustee members absent: None

Staff Present: Fire Chief John Fairchild, Assistant Fire Chief Pete Bishop

Guests: Volunteer fire personnel Terry Gembala, Bruce Gerlach, Karen Sargeant.

Meeting called to order by Chairman Hoyt at 6:30 p.m.

**SUBDIVISION REVIEW FEES** - The current subdivision review fee is \$100 per lot. The board is requesting a letter sent to Lake County Commissioners requesting an increase in the subdivision review fee to \$750 per lot. **Motion Chairman Hoyt, seconded Trustee Meslin Fire Chief Fairchild draft a letter to Lake County Commissioners to increase the Polson Rural Fire Department review fee to \$750. Motion carried unanimously.** The draft letter will be reviewed and finalized during the July 11, 2007 board meeting.

**FIRE BOAT** - The volunteers voted last evening to pursue acquisition of a 17-foot fire boat. The department is second on the list to acquire a released from service 23-foot coast guard boat at no cost. There is a possibility to move to first place with information regarding homeland security issues and border patrol. Fire Chief Fairchild indicated the boat is a necessary piece of equipment for the department. To date this year, the department responded to sixteen boat calls with two boats on fire and numerous stranded motorists. A donation envelope will be provided for all calls. The City will fund the insurance coverage and maintenance of the boat. Trustee Nelson will support use of the boat for fire calls and stranded motorist situations, but indicated the lake is not in the fire district and the city is insuring a boat that is not being used in the city. The service calls should be billed. Fire Chief Fairchild reported the sheriff's department will man the Lake County boat with Officer Jeff Ford four days a week in the near future. The retired boat taken out of service is unsafe for rescue operations while it is top heavy and underpowered. The retired boat can be sold and the funds put toward a new boat. The volunteers plan to purchase an adequate boat and sell it at the end of the season if the coast guard boat is acquired.

**FY'07-'08 BUDGET REVIEW** - The budget requests for FY '07-'08 needs to be submitted to Lake County Clerk and Recorder the first part of August. The board reviewed revenue and expenditure projections. Additional expenditures should be budgeted in the operating fund for the equipment debt service. The PPL protested taxes should be considered as a reduction in anticipated revenue. The board requested the budget trimmed to \$100,000. **Motion Trustee Nelson, seconded Trustee Manley to trim the budget to \$100,000 which reflects a budget decrease of approximately \$24,000. Motion carried unanimously.**

Meeting adjourned 7:45 p.m.

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Ross Hoyt, Chairman

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Alison W. Meslin, Secretary-Treasurer