

**POLSON RURAL FIRE BOARD MEETING
MINUTES SEPTEMBER 9, 2009**

Board trustee members present: Alison Meslin, Paul Laisy, R. Jack Clapp, Jim Manley, Fred Nelson

Board trustee member absent: None

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

Guests: Volunteer fire personnel Jeff Meslin, Roger Rogers, Lester Johnson.

Meeting called to order at Polson City Library by Chairperson Alison Meslin at 7:00 p.m.

Minutes August 12, 2009 Rural Fire Board Meeting; Motion Trustee Laisy to approve minutes of August 12, 2009 as presented, second Trustee Clapp. Motion carried unanimously.

Claims: Motion Trustee Nelson to approve claims, second Trustee Manley. Motion carried unanimously.

Communications: None

Treasury Report:

Operating Fund Balance \$ 56,426.98

Capital Improvement Fund Balance \$ 48,071.89

Voted Levy \$ 1,221.68

Paid bills in the amount of \$ 4,306.28

Check numbers 4036 – 4048, both inclusive.

(paid September 9, 2009)

Motion Trustee Nelson to approve treasury report, second Trustee Manley. Motion carried unanimously.

The fund balances were updated following the meeting to include the August revenue collections by Lake County Treasurer.

The board discussed the use of donated funds. The donor generally designates the use and the board approves the disbursement. Current donated funds are \$100.

Staff Report: Fire Chief Fairchild reported 22 runs in August. Equipment report -welded pump handle on Engine #327; annual certified pump tests will be done in September. The Rural Fire District's National Fire Incident Reporting System (NFIRS) is 15101.

Old Business:

UPDATE OF FAIRGROUNDS FIRE STATION - Support frames are erected, man door framework is built, the building should be enclosed within a week, dirt and gravel fill was provided by Lake County. Trustee Clapp suggested glycol mix should be added to the water pipes in the in-floor heating system to prevent freezing. Chairperson Meslin reported the contractor quoted water in the bid and commented the water should be adequate since the building will be accessed on a routine basis. The cost to add glycol mix is approximately \$1,500. Trustee Laisy reported stations in the 1960's had water in the in-floor heating system and experienced no problems. The thickness of the cement slab retains the heat for several days. Trustee Nelson noted the sheriff's department and office of emergency management will access the building five days a week, also in case of a power outage the alarm system will be activated. Chairperson Meslin will visit with the plumber on site shortly to discuss the in- floor heat alternatives. Trustee Nelson reported the Lake County Road Department provided a large amount of fill to the site at

Motion Trustee Nelson to send a thank you letter to the Lake County Commissioners and road department seconded Chairperson Meslin. Motion carried unanimously. Phase II on the building is almost completed - concrete slab poured with city inspection, insulated foundation and in-floor heat, plumbing roughed in with state inspection, building erected, garage doors installed, rough in electrical, and site prep completed with ramps. The insulation is delayed. A \$60,000 payment is due with the completion of Phase II. The note with Valley Bank Ronan needs to be negotiated September 16th. Building construction insurance is in place with Western States Insurance at a cost of \$400. In August an acquisition list of equipment was provided. Trustee Laisy plans to secure an air compressor and a bench. Fire Chief Fairchild reviewed a quote from Mission Valley Security for two installation options with a \$19 monthly monitoring charge. All pricing is for equipment only, labor will be donated. (Copy of proposal attached to file minutes). Decision tabled to next month.

UPDATE ON POLSON CITY WATER AND IMPACT FEES - Trustees Manley and Meslin met with City Manager Todd Crossett and Building Inspector Ron Melvin. The city requested the board approach the Lake County Commissioners to waive the \$20,000 the Commissioners wanted the city to pay for the building (stall) that is being turned back to the city. The building housed the Lake County Office of Emergency Management at the city shops on First Street East. In exchange, the city would waive the \$28,000 impact fee charges to the rural fire for the new station on Regatta Road. Additionally the city will install a two-inch line and charge for a 3/4-inch installation with an impact fee of approximately \$7,000. Also Trustees Manley and Meslin, City Manager Crossett and Building Inspector Melvin met with the Lake County Commissioners. The city offered to waive the \$28,000 impact fee for the rural station and the \$7,000 impact fee for the two Lake County wings to be constructed on the sides of the fire station. The Lake County Commissioners concern is it would cost the city \$80,000 - \$90,000 to replace the building at the city shop. The proposal came to a stale mate. Therefore, the rural plans to negotiate with the city on the impact fees. It is in the city's best interest for the fire station to have a two-inch line since a number of the responses are in the city. The members of the impact review board changed recently. The other issue is the funds involved are all local government funds - county, city and fire district funds. Also for board consideration is the interlocal agreement annual fee of \$15,000 and is the board in a financial position to continue with \$15,000 or perhaps cut back the annual fee to amortize the impact fees. Hopefully the city will propose the use of the 2-inch water line and charge for the 3/4-inch line. A 2-inch water line is installed for truck fill and a 3/4-inch water line will service water to the offices. The original quote for the impact fees were \$5,000. The rural purchased a \$4,148 building permit.

UPDATE ON FEMA GRANT APPLICATION FOR RECRUITMENT AND RETENTION - The grant is not open for submission.

REVIEW RURAL FIRE CHIEF'S JOB DESCRIPTION - Trustee Laisy reported the revisions suggested at the August meeting were added. A revised copy will be sent to board members for review. Trustees Laisy and Nelson will then meet with Fire Chief Fairchild before the next meeting.

VFCA ANNUAL PENSION CERTIFICATION AND RELATED ISSUES - Trustees Manley and Meslin met with Fire Chief Fairchild to review the creation of the Irvine Flats Fire Company and submit the related documents for certification. Changes were made to the certification. A second certification with original forms and the certification completed with Lake County were completed. Certification was sent for the Polson City Company, Big Arm Fire Company and Irvine Flats Fire Company. The state uses the county certification for disability claims.

COMMITTEE UPDATE TO REVIEW RECRUITMENT AND EQUIPMENT NEEDS

FOR FAIRGROUNDS FIRE STATION - A mailing list has been compiled of residents who live north of the bridge and including Jette Lake. Trustee Laisy will draft a letter encouraging residents to step forward and inquire about the department; then perhaps become a volunteer.

REVIEW POTENTIAL CHANGES TO OPERATIONAL GUIDELINES - Trustee Manley noted the guidelines were approved at the August meeting. Trustee Laisy was not able to review the personnel section numbered 100 since the disk did not read. Trustee Manley has concerns. The guidelines are contrary to many of the policies and votes taken by the board. Some are internally inconsistent. The Volunteer Fire Company Guidelines is a separate entity in which the board has no control cannot supercede the by-laws of the volunteer fire department which the board has not approved. Trustee Clapp indicated the volunteer by laws are reserved to the volunteers exclusively. Chairperson Meslin stated the guidelines are contradictory to the Big Arm Fire Company by-laws and in some respects contradicts some decisions the board made this past year. The board should draft administrative rules, by-laws and an application for volunteer fire fighters for the district which may be different from the city fire company. The board needs to adopt a document that the board approves and is not contradictory to items approved by the board in the past two years. Then the fire chief will have a working document he can administer, therefore the board is not required to micromanage. Trustee Clapp indicated the board should set policy while the fire chief is the fire administrator to establish the guidelines. If specific items are inconsistent, the board should discuss the items with the fire chief. Trustee Manley indicated there is not an issue with the sections that relate to operation and training. The administration and discipline sections of the guidelines are a concern.. The guidelines cannot supercede the authority reserved by the membership exclusively as may be set forth in the Polson City Volunteer Fire Department by-laws. The statement indicates the Polson City Volunteer Fire Department has veto authority or is the ultimate authority on discipline, and membership selection of its members. For the past two years, the board struggled with the issue. The Polson Volunteer Fire Department is a separate entity which the board has no control over that raises money on its own, has a separate tax identification, and by past written revisions of the by-laws of the separate entity reserves the exclusive authority for membership as a firefighter, changed Big Arm Company to Station #2 of the Polson Volunteer Fire Department. The board requested authority to appoint membership and received resistance from the volunteers. The guidelines adopted by the board are subject to the superior authority of the Polson Volunteer Fire Department. Another portion indicates a grievance will be heard by the board. But elsewhere a different procedure states if the fire chief chooses to terminate a volunteer the grievance is heard by a five member board appointed by the chief. Therefore the board would have no knowledge or involvement of the termination or grievance. The guidelines are inconsistent with issues the board dealt with over the past two years to create and clarify a recognizable structure of Polson Rural Fire District made up of three companies. Trustee Clapp summarized the discussion by indicating the guidelines are a work in progress and should be reviewed with the chief and brought back to the board. **Motion Trustee Manley to rescind approval of the operation guidelines numbers 100's and apparatus operational guidelines numbers 301.00, 301.02, 302.00 and discuss the specified guidelines at a subsequent meeting to rewrite the guidelines to be consistent with policies, second Trustee Nelson. Trustees Meslin, Laisy, Manley, Nelson for; Trustee Clapp opposed. Motion carried.** Trustee Clapp noted no apparatus operational guidelines are in place with the vote to rescind. Trustee Laisy expressed the standard operating guidelines are the most important for the safety of firefighters. Also concerned with discipline policy being easy to understand, done properly, documented properly, appeal process with the board of directors, and job description. Trustee Clapp indicated the chief is in charge of development and implementation of operations and procedures. **Motion Chairperson Meslin to meet once a month to review and make changes to the guidelines and formulate rural fire company administrative guidelines. The board should meet one hour before the regular monthly**

meeting to work through the guidelines page by page so the board is in general consensus to produce a document that the board and the rural fire companies, and the chief can administer, second Trustee Manley. Motion carried unanimously.

New Business:

POLICY FOR DONATIONS - The board should decide if public funds should be used for memorial donations for firefighters, related persons, or board members. In the past, a card was sent on behalf of the board. Trustee Nelson suggested consideration on a case by case basis. Recently the volunteers conducted a boot drive. The funds were deposited with the city funds to purchase equipment and possibly a thermal-imaging camera. Traditionally the weekend boot drive is for Jerry's Kids Muscular Dystrophy, therefore a number of people assumed the collection was for Jerry's Kids. The activities of the city fire company are not controlled by the rural board. It is recommended as it involved rural residents and some members of the board thought it was for Jerry's Kids. Therefore the boot drive collection should not be done on the same weekend. The board's statement is a suggestion.

TAX REVENUE ANALYSIS - Chairperson Meslin presented a summary of tax revenue by area locations in the rural fire district. Tax revenue percent of total revenues: North of bridge - Big Arm, Jette Lake, Sunny Slope, Jette Meadows, Rocky Point, Irvine Flats = 78.85%; South of bridge - Valley View, Turtle Lake & south, lakeside of rte 35 = 10.36%; Other - Pacific Power & Light, and other utilities = 10.79%. Taxable properties: North of bridge 2396; South of bridge 658. The board thanked Alison for the research and valuable information. Trustee Laisy added the statistics warrant the new station north of the bridge.

PUBLIC INPUT ON NON AGENDA ITEMS – None.

Motion Trustee Nelson to adjourn, second Trustee Manley. Motion carried unanimously.

Meeting adjourned 9:08 p.m.

Alison W. Meslin Chairperson

Jack Clapp Secretary-Treasurer