

**POLSON RURAL FIRE DISTRICT BOARD MEETING
MINUTES MAY 11, 2011**

Board trustee members present: R. Jack Clapp, Beth Hoel, Dean Sams, Steve Stanley..

Board trustee members absent: Fred Nelson, excused.

Staff: Fire Chief John E. Fairchild, Assistant Fire Chief Peter Bishop, Board Clerk Bonnie M. Manicke

Guests: Volunteer Fire Personnel – Drew Hoel, Greg Perkins; Residents - Tom Eddy, Jerry Peterson, Leanna Fillman, Lee Manicke, Roger Rogers, Frank Jones.

Meeting called to order 7:00 p.m. at Fairgrounds Rural Fire Station No. 4 by Vice-Chair Clapp. The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

Chair Clapp announced Trustee Nelson is out of the area. Trustee Nelson authorized a proxy vote for the May 2011 meeting to Trustee Stanley to vote on his behalf on any and all matters that may arise at the meeting.

Election of Officers: Motion Trustee Stanley, second Trustee Hoel to nominate Jack Clapp as chair. Nominations ceased. **Motion carried unanimously; noting Trustee Stanley voted Trustee Nelson aye by proxy.** Chair Clapp proceeded with the meeting. **Motion Trustee Hoel, second Chair Clapp to nominate Dean Sams as vice-chair.** Nominations ceased. **Motion carried unanimously; noting Trustee Stanley voted Trustee Nelson aye by proxy.** **Motion Trustee Stanley, second Chair Clapp to nominate Beth Hoel as secretary-treasurer.** Nominations ceased. **Motion carried unanimously; noting Trustee Stanley voted Trustee Nelson aye by proxy.**

Minutes April 13, 2011 Polson Rural Fire District Board Meeting: Tom Eddy requested minor corrections. He questioned if the items submitted during public comment were added to the minutes. Chair Clapp noted Mr. Eddy's letter and news article from the Los Angeles Times regarding the vehicle crash fees are communications preserved in the organization's correspondence file. Additional corrections page 3 line 5 add rescue vehicle. The fees all read a dollar amount slash one hour minimum. Perhaps the intent is a dollar figure per hour with an one hour minimum. Chair Clapp responded the fees reference information in the NRCG manual setting standard fees. Additional items such as water and gatorade should be billed for all responses. Trustee Sams replied the billing is for vehicle crashes only; other responses such as structure and wildland are not billed. Page 5 public input change enforce to encourage public safety. **Trustee Sams amended minutes to change enforce to encourage public safety.** **Chair Clapp clarified rescue is a rescue vehicle Motion Trustee Sams to accept the minutes of April 13, 2011 as corrected, second Trustee Hoel. Motion carried unanimously.**

Communications: Big Arm Association May scheduled use of Big Arm Fire Hall. Mondays and Wednesdays 9:00 - 10:00 a.m. exercise hour; Tuesday, May 3rd 4:00 p.m. committee meeting; Thursday, May 12th 10:30 a.m. community coffee hour; community potluck last week of May, date to be set. Silver Rock Pines Home Owners Association Sunday, June 26th 2:00 p.m. Schedule submitted by Alison Meslin, Big Arm Association. Chair Clapp announced the firefighters are planning a hamburger feed social event Saturday, June 25th 11:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. The event is free with donations accepted. Jack requested Mrs. Fillman post the event on the reader board and contact Alison to add the event schedule in the Big Arm Newsletter. Additional correspondence received a budget preparation form from Lake County Clerk and Recorder to submit a FY 2011-2012 proposed budget by June 15th.

Claims: Motion Trustee Stanley to pay May 2011 claims as submitted, second Trustee Nelson by proxy. Motion carried; noting Trustee Stanley voted Trustee Nelson aye by proxy. Trustee Clapp abstained due to reimbursement for supplies.

Treasury Report for month ending April 2011:

All funds reflect April revenue entered.

Fund #7245 Operating Fund Balance	\$ - 26,292.69
Fund #7244 Voted Levy Debt Svc. {Fire Apparatus}	\$ 12,999.93
Fund #7246 Capital Improvement Fund Balance	\$ 27,111.08
Fund #7243 Voted Levy/Reserve Fund Balance	\$ 99,634.41

Total Operating Fund Expenditures	\$ 58,440.29*
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Check numbers 4525 - 4550
(paid May 11, 2011)

*Includes truck debt service payment \$41,798.63. Funds will be transferred from Fund #7244 Voted Levy Debt Service to Fund #7245 Operating Fund following May real property tax collections. Anticipated voted levy debt service fund balance month ending May 2011 will be the amount of the debt service payment. Chair Clapp requested the board review timely the information received from Lake County regarding the mill levy payback adjustment in the FY 2011-2012 budget. The anticipated fund balance in the Voted Levy Reserve Fund at June 30, 2011 should be \$118,000. Trustee Stanley requested the minutes clarify the over-assessed mill levy for FY 2009-2010 and 2010-2011 is a county error.

Motion Trustee Stanley to accept treasury report, second Trustee Hoel. Motion carried unanimously; noting Trustee Stanley voted Trustee Nelson aye by proxy.

Chief's report: Fire Chief Fairchild reported 16 runs in April for the department with 9 rural responses including 4 fire calls – 1-chimney, 3- grass; 4 vehicle crashes – noting one crash was a mutual aid call at mile marker 9 and one alarm call. May 1st John and Trustee Hoel attended the Firefighter One Class graduation process at Ravalli Fire District for Drew Hoel, Will Woodger, Matt Sisler, and Ryan Nelson. Firefighter One Class graduates represent the Big Arm Station and the Polson Station. Each member and their family completed 72 hours of training. John thanked the families for their dedication and the board for promoting the program. Trustee Stanley and Fire Chief Fairchild met with Tribal Councilman Jim Steele and Bob McCrea of Tribal Land Management to discuss pre-planning and response in the Jette and Rocky Point area. A written document will be available soon. Trustee Stanley noted a concern on the Melita Island Road and White Swan area for wildland response. The area provides a one way access. The co-operation of Tribal Land Management and the rural working together will be a challenge to respond to certain areas. A crash response was billed. To date no data or payment was received. Engine #333 is in service and the project was a success. Big Arm Station will be hosting a Hamburger Feed Saturday, June 25th 11:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. Mr. Eddy questioned if a response was received from the Lake County Attorney's Office regarding a letter he submitted to the board requesting information on the vehicle crashes. Chair Clapp replied the County Attorney's office has not replied. Jack suggested Mr. Eddy contact Lake County Dispatch for the public information regarding vehicle crashes. Mr. Eddy suggested the information will assist the board to evaluate the billing issue and would be helpful to the board. Trustee Stanley indicated he is receiving all the information needed. Trustee Sams indicated the fire department and dispatch collects data to prepare a report. The chief is gathering information from a variety of sources to implement the program. The bill submitted for a recent vehicle response was \$1,090 which included extraction.

Old Business:

OPEN SEALED BIDS ENGINE #323 – Five bids were received for the 1987 Chevy fire apparatus Engine #323. 1). J & N Orchards Bigfork by Nat O'Farrell \$2,500; 2). Eagle/Cougar Fire District by Ron Hall Lewiston, Idaho \$500; 3). Rocky Mountain Construction and Improvements by Drew Hoel \$1,127.50; 4). Carl Walton, Polson \$1,675.00; 5). Jim Taylor, Polson \$856.00. **Motion Trustee Stanley to accept the \$2,500 bid by J & N Orchards, second Chair Clapp.** Fire Chief Fairchild suggested the board consider generosity to the Eagle/Cougar Fire District. Chair Clapp indicated the \$2,000 difference between the high and low bid suggests the bid by J & N Orchards honored. **Motion carried unanimously; noting Trustee Stanley voted Trustee Nelson aye by proxy.** Trustee Hoel will notify the unsuccessful bidders. The light bar and insignia will be removed.

RESOLUTION NUMBER 20 VEHICLE INCIDENT RESPONSE ITEMIZED BILLING -

Chair Clapp read Resolution #20 – Crash Response Fees.

WHEREAS the costs associated with providing crash response are ever increasing and being borne by the taxpayers of this District alone, and a number of other communities charge for such services, the Trustees of the Polson Rural Fire District have determined that it is in the best interest of the citizens of the District to charge for said services in order to continue to maintain and expand the level of service provided.

WHEREFORE, IT IS RESOLVED that the Polson Rural Fire District shall charge for services rendered in response to motor vehicle accidents on an itemized basis to be determined by the Chief of the Department and approved by the Board.

WHEREIN, we have set our signatures this 11th day of May 2011.

Signed: Fred Nelson; R. Jack Clapp; Beth Hoel; Steve Stanley; Dean Sams.

Mr. Eddy commented he suggested a resolution should be adopted at the December 2010 rural board meeting. At that time, the board indicated a resolution was not necessary. Chair Clapp replied the resolution is being considered for adoption to satisfy the controversy. Mr. Eddy noted there was no public notice of the resolution and the resolution does not state by what authority the board is enacting the fees. Chair Clapp indicated the public notice is the item listed in the agenda. **Motion Trustee Stanley to adopt Resolution Number 20 Crash Response Fees, second Trustee Sams. Motion carried unanimously; noting Trustee Stanley voted Trustee Nelson aye by proxy.**

New Business:

FIREFIGHTERS DISCIPLINARY APPEAL PROCESS - The firefighters are in the process of updating the by-laws of the fire department. They are requesting the board or alternatively the city be a court of final appeal if a firefighter is suspended in event that person wishes to appeal to the board or the city. Obviously in order to appeal the board will need to acknowledge the process. In the case of suspension the person must be furnished with a written copy of the charge against them setting forth reasons for the suspension. Such suspension may be appealed to the next regular meeting of the rural board or the city commission by the suspended member and the suspended member shall be given written notice when the suspended member may appear in person or by counsel and make his or her defense to set charges. Should the charges be not proven by the rural board or city commission the suspended person shall be reinstated and be entitled to usual compensation for the time so suspended. If such charges are found proven by the rural board or city commission by a vote of the majority they may impose such penalty as they shall determine the events warrant. This may include but not be limited to continuation of suspension for a limited time or in the removal of the suspended person from the department. Policy - Each firefighter must be guaranteed fair and honest treatment in all aspects of fire department administration and operations. Officers shall treat each firefighter with respect and shall not demonstrate personal prejudice or grant unfair advantage to one firefighter over another. The firefighters request is if this is passed the board agrees to allow the procedure to be implemented. Assistant Fire Chief Pete Bishop contacted all fire personnel by email three weeks ago and at the meeting last evening no negative comments were voiced. **Motion Trustee Stanley the board agrees to service the appeal process in the disciplinary proceedings in the fire department if that becomes necessary, second Chair Clapp. Motion carried unanimously; noting Trustee Stanley voted Trustee Nelson aye by proxy.**

ISO INSURANCE UPDATE - Chair Clapp indicated some insurance companies do not recognizing the Fairgrounds Fire Station or the Irvine Flats Fire Station when computing insurance premiums. During the last ISO rating, Polson Station Number 1 and Big Arm Station Number 2 were the only recognized stations, therefore ISO has not updated the added stations. The board would like the ISO to bring the properties within five miles of either station to receive credit on the insurance billing. Currently the properties are considered a protection Class 10 outside of the five mile radius and receive no credit. Fire Chief Fairchild assured the board he is working with the ISO to update the data. All stations are on file and updated with ISO although the Irvine Flats Station Number 3 is not recognized. ISO is assuming Irvine Flats Station does not have an engine company. Assistant Fire Chief Pete Bishop

indicated ISO will not recognize a single engine or two engines housed in a barn. Additionally ISO requires a minimum of six firefighters to respond and ability to attack a house fire within two minutes of arrival at the scene. Chair Clapp noted six firefighters and a Class "A" Engine are available at the Big Arm Station and Irvine Flats Station. In 2005, the department did not receive the qualification for water shuttle. Tenders qualifying for water shuttle are Engines #319 and #327. July 2011 is the earliest ISO will be available for the Polson Fire Department review. Prior to scheduling a review with ISO, a completed data packet and letter from the board chair is required. ISO is not qualifying a creditable water source for Polson Fire. Property located more than 1000 feet from a hydrant is rated protection Class 9. Water shuttle capability could change the ISO rating to protection Class 5. ISO needs to evaluate and recognize the Fairgrounds Station and Irvine Flats Station. The goal is to establish a five mile radius around all four stations. Residential property insurance rates will experience a lower rate. Water flows are considered for commercial property insurance rates, therefore, the commercial insurance rates will likely remain the same. The water shuttle credit is an important factor in the ISO rating. The board chair will submit a letter for the data packet to ISO.

APPOINT BUDGET COMMITTEE – Chair Clapp noted last year the budget committee did a great job and requested Trustees Hoel and Stanley work with John and Bonnie to prepare the FY 2011-2012 district budget. **Motion Trustee Clapp to appoint Trustees Hoel and Stanley to prepare the FY 2011-2012 budget, second Trustee Sams. Motion carried unanimously.**

Public Input on Non Agenda Items: – Roger Rogers requested clarification regarding the over taxation. Trustee Stanley noted the county incorrectly levied additional mills preparing the district's budget for two years. The mills will be reduced in the FY 2011-2012 budget. Chair Clapp indicated the county over billed, the county held the funds and the board is not responsible. The board has requested the over billing be corrected. Mr. Eddy asked the reasoning for the discussion every month regarding the payback. Chair Clapp replied the board is concerned that the payback be completed and the issue raises a certain level of confidence. The board wants to be sure the issue is being addressed. Additional concerns should be addressed with the Lake County Commissioners. During a prior meeting, Mr. Eddy provided some figures to the board indicating a possible error in the mill levy calculation. The county was not aware of the over taxation. Discussing the crash response fee, Mr. Eddy requested the record include the itemized billing numbers voted on do not meet the standards of Montana law. Particularly, in two areas the numbers include various crews for the equipment responding. Since that is not a cost to the rural fire district it does not reflect the cost of the service. The second issue is having a one hour minimum for response equipment is also inconsistent with the mandate of having the bill reflect the cost of the services. Assistant Fire Chief Pete Bishop replied to Mr. Eddy's comments. There is a cost to the rural fire district for worker's comp, wear and tear on equipment which constitutes a cost. Pete invited Mr. Eddy to experience a crash scene. Pete thanked the board for what they do; while at times he doesn't always agree with the board he disagrees in a proper and polite manner. The board members have experience as retired firemen, past board members, business persons and concerned citizens who intend to do what is best for the district. He appreciates the board's concern for the district. There is a small minority group that seem to oppose everything the board tries to accomplish. The negative letters in the newspapers, comments at the board meetings, and the looks, sighs and eye rolls. The negative atmosphere needs to cease. Everyone is trying to do the best for the fire district. The opposing group needs to be polite and professional to the board. The board won't attack you if you don't attack them. Referencing the vehicle crash fees, Mr. Eddy indicated if there is cost for depreciation, and turnout gear that is warranted; but it is his understanding the NRCG has costs in the fee for personnel and that does not apply. Frank Jones supports Pete's comments. The current board has been working very well together. The climate and atmosphere is more conducive to the community to accomplish goals. Fireman Drew Hoel on behalf of the Firefighter One Class appreciates the opportunity to attend the training sessions. Drew acknowledges the funds expended for training and is hopeful the funds expended will come back and serves the community well. Trustee Stanley noted the board members attended the volunteer fire department business meeting and expressed the board can't thank the volunteers enough for their service to the community.

Motion Trustee Stanley to adjourn, second Chair Clapp. Polson Rural Fire District meeting adjourned 8:04 p.m.

R. Jack Clapp, Chair

Beth Hoel, Secretary-Treasurer