

**POLSON RURAL FIRE BOARD MEETING
MINUTES MARCH 10, 2010**

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

Board trustee member absent: Fred Nelson, excused.

Staff Present: Fire Chief John Fairchild.

Guests: Berl Tiskus, Valley Journal Reporter; Sasha Goldstein, Lake County Leader Reporter;; Darryl Mariucci, Board Chairman Potomac Fire District ; Lester Johnson; Lee Manicke; Roger Rogers; Beth Hoel; Dean Sams; Volunteer Fire Personnel Ernie Butt, Chris McGuinness, Will Woodger; Grant Clapp; Jane Clapp; Jeff Meslin, Ron Friez, Jason Whealon.

Meeting called to order at Big Arm Fire Station by Chair Alison Meslin at 7:00 p.m.

Meeting Conduct: Chair Meslin announced the board has been conducting meetings in a very informal manner. Due to an increase in heated debate, the meeting will be conducted as prescribed in the guidelines of the Polson Rural Fire District By-laws. After the board has discussed a motion that has been seconded and prior to the final vote the board will allow public comment but not debate. A time limit may be set for individual comments on a given issue and limit repetitive testimony and discussion whenever possible. By using the guidelines everyone will be given an opportunity to voice their opinion and maintain a civil tone.

Minutes February 10, 2010 Polson Rural Fire Board Meeting: Fire Chief Fairchild noted a clerical error on page 5 topic Fairgrounds Fire Station Utilization – Trustee Laisy responded incident ~~instant~~ management. **Motion Trustee Laisy to approve minutes of February 10, 2010 with modification of Fire Chief Fairchild, second Chair Meslin. Motion carried unanimously.**

Claims: Chair Meslin provided a budget to actual summary. The board questioned the following expenditures. Check #4172 payable to Montana State Fund for worker's compensation \$1,530.58 is an adjusted amount for the previous calendar year which is calculated on the actual hours for rural calls and training. The training hours are split 50/50 between rural and city. Mutual aid response is not calculated for worker's compensation. Check #4179 payable to Allied Waste Services represents \$18.34 for January 2010 and \$17.17 for February 2010. Rural Fire and Office of Emergency Management will analyze disposal needs and perhaps share a container. Check #4167 payable to L.N. Curtis \$186.22 additional fittings for the lockers at the Fairgrounds Fire Station. Check # 4171 payable to Ace Hardware \$467.47 piping for air system. Check #4168 nozzle for engine #327 should be coded as budget line item #150 equipment. **Motion Trustee Manley to approve claims, second Trustee Laisy. Motion carried unanimously.**

Communications: Chair Meslin received a letter from the U.S. Census Bureau requesting use of the Big Arm Station March 15-19, 2010, 8 to 9 hours per day for census meetings and recruitment. **Motion Trustee Clapp to allow U.S. Census Bureau use of Big Arm Station March 15-19, 2010, second Trustee Manley. Motion carried unanimously.**

Treasury Report:

Fund #7243 Voted Levy/Operating Fund Balance	\$ 33,780.23
Fund #7245 Operating Fund Balance	\$ <u>88,187.76</u>
Total Operating Balance:	\$ 121,967.99
Fund #7244 Voted Levy {Fire Apparatus}	\$ 5,749.35
Fund #7246 Capital Improvement Fund Balance	\$ 50,054.02
Paid bills in the amount of	\$ 4,826.66

Check numbers 4163 - 4179
(paid March 10, 2010)

Treasury Correspondence – Received invoice to house engine #319 and #323 in heated garage 7/01/09 to 6/30/10. Contribution toward heating cost, electricity, insurance and repairs \$3,000. An invoice was attached for adding an automatic door opener with two remotes and service doors. The invoice was included to show costs incurred of \$928.00. Cost of heating to date is \$1,400. The housing invoice is per agreement at \$3,000 annually. The prior year payment was paid with June 2009 claims. **Motion Chair Meslin to schedule payment for housing engine #319 and #323 at the Clapp Ranch with June claims, second Trustee Manley. Trustee Clapp abstained. Motion carried.**

Chair Meslin discussed the 2006 voted indebtedness. The amount of the indebtedness owing on annexed properties at the date of annexation is an obligation of the city. The board voted at the February 2010 meeting to file a lien on the two remaining properties to obtain payment. For future reference, the obligation should be addressed at the time of annexation.

Staff Report: Lieutenant Chris McGuinness, Polson Volunteer Fire Department presented a video capturing a 2009 review of fire department incidents and training sessions. Fire Chief Fairchild presented Volunteers Ron Friez, Jeff Meslin and Tom Sadecki three year service awards. Jeff Meslin received a plaque for 77 runs at the Big Arm Station. The monthly staff report included a successful ice rescue training session and 18 runs in February. Engine #327 annual inspection with concerns the rear axle seals are leaking and remove oil coating on brakes, with the estimated cost of repair and service \$150 to \$600. Lake County Fire Association meeting was held at the Fairgrounds Station. Positive comments were expressed by the group Mask fit tests are scheduled. Volunteers Drew Hoel and Matt Sisler will be attending Fire Academy 1 in Stevensville. Wildland basic training and driver training will be held March 13-14. Reported a grant writing workshop is available at the Polson Library March 26th at 6:30 p.m. Chair Meslin reported Dave Graham suggested a padlock installed on the back gate of the fairgrounds. The current insurance coverage on the Big Arm Station building is \$63,266 and contents is \$12,654. The insurance coverage needs to be analyzed and upgraded to the completed building status and contents.

Old Business:

FIRE COMPANY BY-LAWS – Volunteer Chris McGuinness reported the Polson Volunteer Fire Company has not followed up with discussion regarding by-laws. Jeff Meslin, President Big Arm Fire Company reported the Big Arm Fire Company reviewed the Polson Rural District by-laws and chose to adopt them with the amendment Article 2, Section 3 specifying active team members, supporting firefighters, and general members. **Motion Trustee Manley to approve the Big Arm Fire Company By-laws as presented with stated amendment, second Trustee Laisy.** Trustee Clapp questioned the support tier being covered by worker's compensation. Jeff Meslin indicated currently the company does not have support firefighters. Chair Meslin noted all active personnel is reported to worker's comp. **Motion carried unanimously.** Irvine Flats Fire Company has no report.

REPAIRS TO ENGINE #323 BRUSH TRUCK – Trustee Laisy analyzed cost comparison of straight cab or crew cab and gas or diesel. Trustee Clapp noted the rural has two wildland vehicles in addition to the DNRC vehicle on loan housed in the Big Arm Station. The criteria for a new engines is a minimum 4500. Trustee Clapp presented information on a 2008 Dodge 5500 diesel 44,000 miles with new tires, bed, crew cab cost of \$33,500. Ford Motor Company government funding lease purchase program new vehicle D-10 \$30,000 for straight cab and a 4500 crew cab with gas engine \$33,000. The lease purchase interest rate is 6.25%. Chair Meslin indicated traditionally lease-purchase interest rates are excessive compared to tax-exempt bank interest rates. Bonnie Manicke, board clerk noted the State of Montana Intercap Loan program offers a current variable interest rate of 1.95% and estimates the ceiling variable interest rate for a three year loan will be 3.00%. Trustee Clapp summarized purchase a new gas engine vehicle \$30,000 to \$35,000 and additionally the vehicle offered by Ronan Fire Department at \$15,000. Fire Chief Fairchild indicated the new purchase would be housed at Big Arm or Irvine Flats. Trustee Meslin suggested engine #314 moved to a different location and the new purchase housed at the Fairgrounds Station. Fire Chief Fairchild is agreeable to the suggestion to house the new purchase at the Fairgrounds Station. Fire Chief, Trustees Clapp

and Laisy form a committee. **Motion Chair Meslin Fire Chief Fairchild prepare a list of vehicle specifications for the April board meeting, minor repairs within reason to engine #323 and Bonnie research loan interest rates, second Trustee Clapp.** Resident Roger Rogers indicated engine #323 could be sold as usable truck for wood gathering. **Motion carried unanimously.**

FAIRGROUNDS FIRE STATION LETTERING - Fire Chief Fairchild reported the cost of a banner for the open house is expense, therefore suggested permanent lettering for the 14-foot bay door. Quotes were received from Gull Printing, Inc. and Signs; and Bishop Signworks. The proposed lettering is ***FAIRGROUNDS STATION POLSON RURAL FIRE DISTRICT NO PARKING***. Chair Meslin noted the district has 18-inch dimension lettering left over from the Big Arm Station -Polson Rural Fire District- that could be used for the Fairgrounds Station on the building or a sign on the fence at no cost. Bishop Signworks quote \$250 installed provides for 14-inch letters for Fairgrounds Station and 9-inch letters for Polson Rural Fire District No Parking. Gull Printing, Inc. and Signs provides 10-inch letters for \$182 plus \$100 installation fee. **Motion Trustee Manley to accept quote from Bishop Signworks at \$250 installed, second Trustee Clapp. Motion carried unanimously.**

STAKEHOLDERS GROUP REPORT – Trustee Manley participated in the February 28th, 2010 stakeholders group and considered it worthwhile. He expressed the maximum benefit would involve participation with all rural fire board members and others who would like to attend. The initial objection of all board members in attendance was advice by City Attorney James Raymond to City Manager Todd Crosssett with regard to the open meeting law stating no more than two members should attend. Trustee Manley does not agree with the legal advice, which is the rural district's concern. The City Manager plans to encourage all board members to attend the stakeholders group and handle the meeting as an open meeting by advertising the meeting and preparing minutes of the sessions. The board is waiting for an open invitation to the March 2010 stakeholders meeting to include all Polson rural fire board members. Trustee Clapp noted Jeff Meslin attended meeting in the past and suggested Jeff attend the March meeting. Trustee Meslin and Laisy indicated if the meeting is open to all board members, members should plan to participate.

REVIEW RECRUITMENT AND EQUIPMENT NEED FOR FAIRGROUNDS FIRE STATION – Trustees Laisy and Meslin comprising the building committee and Fire Chief Fairchild met with contractor Paul Iverson regarding a number of items. Reviewing all items with the contractor, Mr. Iverson was willing to make adjustments or suggest a solution. Trustee Manley reported Mr. Iverson is very open to make adjustments, requests a list of present adjustments to complete in one session, and not be advised third hand in a piece meal fashion. Mr. Iverson suggests utilizing the building for another couple of months and develop a definitive list of adjustments. The warranties were confirmed, the building has a one year warranty from delivery date and enamel finish on the building exterior is a thirty year warranty. Fire Chief Fairchild reported no recruitment at this time. He requested the board consider purchase of leather boots required for wildland firefighting. Chair Meslin indicated if the Plum Creek Grant is successful other funds could be available for the purchase. The Plum Creek Grant application request is for turnout gear for the Fairgrounds Station.

OPEN HOUSE FOR FAIRGROUNDS STATION – Trustee Laisy reported the plans were finalized for the open house and it appears Fire Chief Fairchild is the lead orchestrate for the event including food and demonstrations along with the firefighters providing information on activities of the department. Posters announcing the event will be distributed and additionally a community news release was forwarded to the local newspapers. The open house is scheduled for Saturday, March 13th 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. with a ribbon cutting ceremony at 10:00 a.m. Parking will be arranged on the fairgrounds site adjacent to the station. Chair Meslin contacted several people instrumental in the Fairgrounds Station and encouraged all board members to participate in the ribbon cutting ceremony. Fire Chief Fairchild added a resident observed the Fairgrounds open house announcement and volunteered to have her kids make cupcakes for the event. Mr. Ken Avison plans to perform the magic show at 3:00 p.m. The magic show entertainment will be announced during community spots on KERR radio. Volunteer fireman Ernie Butt suggested contacting the Salish & Kootenai Tribal television station to post the event on the community events. The open house will also be posted on the DRS reader board sign.

JUNIOR FIREFIGHTERS PROGRAM – Trustee Laisy researched the program and is favorable to the program. He introduced Darryl Mariucci, Board Chairman Potomac Fire District. Potomac established a junior firefighters program which has been successful for twenty years along with a father/son program. Trustee Laisy's major concern is to establish good, orderly control on driving to and from the fire station. Additionally a senior volunteer firefighter needs to be in charge to manage junior firefighters at the fire scene. Fire Chief Fairchild responded the junior firefighter is assigned to an officer to complete minor detail such as changing SCBA bottles or handling tools. Trustee Manley noted previously Trustee Laisy indicated 20 percent of firefighter deaths occur driving to and from a fire. Chair Meslin spoke with Frenchtown and their program requires the cadets to serve for one year and complete certain levels of training before being allowed to respond to a call. She suggested a one year training without responding to calls; while training can be comprised to assist with hose after a fire, training meetings, fund raising, and build a relationship with the department. In searching the internet, all states encourage the program, although many restrictions apply. The local training program could be six months to one year. The orientation program for the cadets is very similar to the adult firefighters program with additional understanding of the rules. At the scene, a cadet is identified by a different colored accountable helmet tag. Chair Meslin suggested a 16 year old for the first year required to achieve a certain amount of training. The task book is generally completed in six months with an officer in charge of the program. While Trustee Laisy indicated the requirement should be geared on achievement rather than time. Grant Clapp expressed being at the scene in the background provides the most experience. Fire Chief Fairchild noted Grant Clapp and Nathan Boucher were cadets and became firefighters. The success of the program relates that all five past cadets are employed in the fire service somewhere. **Motion Trustee Laisy to approve the guidelines for junior firefighters, second Trustee Clapp.** Chair Meslin encouraged language that a cadet respond in their own vehicle following authorization by the fire chief. Trustee Clapp indicated the concerns are appropriate; while most likely the cadet is responding with a parent. Chief Fairchild inserted language cannot respond to a call for six months and or authorization by the chief and must complete task book training. **The motion was modified to include a junior firefighter cannot respond to calls for six months and or authorization by the fire chief and complete task book training. Trustee Clapp second modified motion.** Resident Dean Sams suggested a school achievement passing grade. The guideline requires a grade C or above to participate and remain active in the program. **Motion carried unanimously. The following addition was requested at the April 14, 2010 Rural Fire Board Meeting.** *Trustee Clapp further explained the on site management of Junior Firefighters. Junior Firefighters are identified by a name tag on the back of a different colored helmet. They are immediately assigned to an officer or a senior firefighter. Trustee Laisy supports the program with emphasis on safety. The program is ongoing and it is not clear if the program is the responsibility of the rural fire district or the city.*

CONSIDER UNIFIED/ CONSOLIDATED APPLICATION - Trustee Clapp reported the rural provided an original application which was voted on by the board. Certain criteria was either missing or did not fit the rural application. Fire Chief Fairchild consolidated the rural and city applications to meet all criteria. The fire fighters are covered on a rural and city pension and the department operates as one under the interlocal agreement. Hopefully one unified application addresses any concerns raised by the board and will not require an applicant to complete two applications. Trustee Manley indicated the joint application would require an applicant to become a rural fire fighter, would be required to join the Polson Fire Department which the board has no control over. In the past a Polson Fire Department did not exist. The Polson Fire Department has been turned over to the Polson Volunteer Fire Department which is a separate, independent autonomous entity which in the past has written their by-laws and amending their by-laws and taken the position they have complete control over who is a rural firefighter. He is uncertain why the board would require an applicant who wants to become a rural fire fighter to also join the Polson Fire Department, especially given the history of the problems that has caused. Trustee Clapp suggested an option to complete a joint application or a rural application; likewise the option could be for someone to join the city and doesn't want to participate with the rural. Although for someone who wants to participate in both the joint application is available. Fire Chief Fairchild indicated the rural application is in violation of the law by not requiring equal opportunity employment section on a separate page. The EOE form complies with non-

discrimination. Trustee Manley suggested if the rural application has deficiencies the chief provide a list and the additions will be added to the rural application. Then if the Polson Fire Department (which is actually the Polson Volunteer Fire Department) is satisfied with the application the Polson Fire Department can include in their by-laws acceptance of the rural application as an application to the Polson Fire Department. The rural and city fire departments act as one department. Each rural company has the right to choose their membership which then is reviewed by the chief and approved by the board. The Polson Volunteer Fire Department has by-laws that are inconsistent with resolutions and by-laws of the rural district. Chair Meslin indicated it gives the Polson Fire Department authority to terminate and investigate backgrounds. It mentions the Polson Fire Department Company, but mentions no name of which company does the recommendation and the applicant is signing to be accepted by the organization which in actual fact they are accepted by the company. In conclusion, the board considered the joint application and the board does not wish to act on the joint application.

New Business:

INTERLOCAL AGREEMENT – Trustee Manley reported this is the time of year to review the interlocal agreement with the City of Polson. It is noted the paragraph entered below should be deleted since it is inconsistent with the resolution of the Polson Rural Fire District Board of Trustees, for Clarification of Organization Structure of the Polson Rural Fire District Firefighting Companies.

WHEREAS, the fire needs of the City and District are currently met by a single unified structure of volunteers in the Polson Volunteer Fire Department pursuant to a Mutual Aid

Agreement which the parties hereto desire to retain intact together with the equipment thereof.

Trustee Manley suggested a letter sent to the City requesting the paragraph deleted which is not necessary for the agreement. **Motion Trustee Manley to send a letter to the City of Polson to delete paragraph three of the Interlocal Agreement referenced above, second Trustee Laisy. Motion carried. Trustee Clapp abstained.**

CONSIDER AND DISCUSS HIRING A CONSULTANT TO STUDY FAIRGROUNDS STATION –

Trustee Manley suggested the board would benefit from an independent study and advice for the use of the Fairgrounds Station. He contacted Scott Waldron, Fire Chief at Hebgen Lake and West Yellowstone to advise the board on the most efficient use of the Fairgrounds Station. Trustee Manley met with Scott and considers him well qualified to conduct an independent study. Scott will initiate a background study, then if the board declines to move forward with the independent study Trustee Manley will be responsible for the cost of the background study. The study could involve a study of the entire system which includes all the stations. **Motion Trustee Manley the board hire an independent consultant to advise the board on the most efficient use of the new station subject to the board's approval of the cost when a cost is quoted, second Chair Meslin.** Trustee Clapp suggested Scott submit a proposal with the scope of services and estimated costs. Resident Dean Sams commented prior to construction of the Fairgrounds Station the board had an opportunity to share the cost of a consultant with the City of Polson, Polson Volunteer Fire Department, and Polson Rural Fire District. The current cost of the consultant will be paid by the Polson Rural Fire District. The district has a paid staff, volunteer fire personnel, and the rural board to analyze placement of equipment. Volunteer fireman Chris McGuinness is happy the board is considering an outside consultant. Jane Clapp asked if the trustees proposal is a policy making decision or the trustees trying to run the fire department. Trustee Clapp felt it is a good idea, although would feel more comfortable with a proposal identifying the scope of services and cost. **Motion carried. Trustee Clapp opposed with clarification he would like to review a proposal.**

POLSON RURAL FIRE DISTRICT ELECTION – Chair Meslin reported last year a letter was sent to the election office stating the board would make a decision for walk-in election or mail ballot prior to the election. Last year the board's decision was to have the least costly method. The least costly method is to partnership with the school election and share the cost to conduct a walk-in election. Trustee Clapp noted a \$70 difference between the walk-in and mail ballot. There was a 40 percent return in the mail ballot election; while the typical school election walk-in ballot was at 10 percent. Last year the fire district's election expense was excessive since the school conducted a walk-in and the fire district conducted a mail-in ballot. In the future, the board needs review the election proposal at the February meeting. Trustee Laisy

supports a mail-in ballot, however if the school district chooses a walk-in the cost would be excessive. Therefore perhaps the district should work with the school board to utilize the same election process. The cost of the mail ballot was decreased this year due to the non-profit postage status reduction to 22 cents per mailing.

FORM A NEW FIRE COMPANY(IES) – Trustee Manley reported the board received 27 responses from volunteers to be part of the Polson Rural Fire Company. Therefore, the maximum number of volunteers being 28 would suggest a new company should be formed to make everyone eligible for the retirement benefit. **Motion Trustee Manley to form a Fairgrounds Fire Company, second Chair Meslin. Motion carried unanimously. Motion Trustee Clapp to form a second Polson Rural Fire Company. Motion died for lack of a second.**

PUBLIC INPUT ON NON-AGENDA ITEMS – None.

AGENDA ITEMS FOR APRIL MEETING – Chair Meslin submitted the following agenda items for the April meeting. 1) Review construction loan, 2) Discuss “Recruitment and Retention of Volunteers” authored by Lieutenant Wilson, 3) Review budget to actual and line item adjustments. Request tentative agenda forwarded to trustees by Friday prior to the Wednesday meeting of the next week. Trustee Manley handed out the corrected pages of the guidelines.

The business session of the Polson Rural Fire Board adjourned at 9:45 p.m.

EXECUTIVE SESSION -

Trustee Clapp suggested the board address the subject matter of the executive session. Trustee Manley indicated the topic of discussion is personnel matters. Trustee Clapp indicated the fire chief will be discussed and under Montana Statute he has the option to waive the right to privacy and remain on the record. Chair Meslin indicated with regard to certain previous issues that have rose and when she talked with the fire chief in a small group the discussions were reasonable. Therefore, she would like to discuss issues in an executive session for a better, fuller discourse. The purpose is not to attack the fire chief personally. The fire chief has waived his right to privacy. The other agenda issue for the executive session is Paul Bishop reinstatement to the volunteer fire department. Paul sent a letter to the district indicating withdrawal from the Polson Volunteer Fire Department and withdrew the signed form to be a volunteer for the Polson Rural Fire Department. Paul Bishop also stated in the letter a request to withdraw from the Polson City and Rural Volunteer Fire Department. Trustee Manley expressed the board should not discuss Paul Bishop unless Paul has waived his right to privacy.

Trustee Manley indicated the board plans to talk frankly and it is his recommendation the chief maintain the right to privacy and the executive session closed. The purpose of the discussion is to introduce some guidelines of what is expected of the fire chief's position, make the expectations more clear, and discuss performance. Trustee Clapp noted a few months ago the board developed a review guideline that would set certain criteria based in large part following the Missoula Rural guidelines. Trustees Laisy and Nelson served on a committee to create a job description for the board to review. Trustee Laisy recommended to the board that the description not be adopted at the time since the board was making some changes in the fire district's policies and procedures and it was unfair to the fire chief to lock him into a job description at that point. It would be better to complete the changes in the policies and procedures and then adopt a job description for the fire chief position. Fire Chief Fairchild indicated the agenda item *review rural fire chief's job description and review procedure* was tabled by the board several times and still remains tabled. Trustee Manley is concerned if the personnel issue is discussed in an open session it may affect the board's ability to work with the chief in the future. He would like to identify the issues, discuss the issues with the chief in an executive session. Following the introduction of the issues, the chief can make a decision to request an open or closed executive session. Trustee Manley does not recommend the public withdraw; mostly in fairness to Fire Chief Fairchild. Chair Meslin indicated she has certain questions, basically why certain things were done as opposed to some of the decisions the board has made and the completed contrary to the board's direction and request. She would like to discuss issues as done in the office, for the board to present and

discuss the matters. The entire board can't meet in the chief's office. The proceedings need to be done in an executive meeting, since no more than two board members can meet in the office setting. She would like the fire chief to trust the board. The board wants to discuss the issues and wants the chief and the board to be comfortable. Fire Chief Fairchild replied he has nothing to hide. Trustee Manley's primary concern centers around insubordination and the board has over the past couple of years asked you to do a number of things that you have not done. Specifically with regard to assisting the formation of companies, assisting with getting by-laws in place, seeing that officers were elected, and working with setting up a liaison system so that each company had a liaison person that you met with them and treated them as real companies. It first became a problem with Big Arm because Big Arm wanted to have their independence back. The board passed a resolution, even though Big Arm had been a company for thirty years or more. The board passed a resolution for the fire chief to recognize Big Arm, requested specifically the fire chief work with Big Arm. Instead the fire chief got Big Arm aside and told them that if you even heard of them talking about doing what the board had asked that you would immediately terminate them and that was gross insubordination. Trustee Manley and the chief talked about that afterwards and Trustee Manley had asked or hoped that the fire chief would start working with the board and assisting with what the board is trying to do with the companies and the chief has not cooperated. The board asked if once a month the chief would meet with Big Arm for example and during the past two years a meeting was scheduled once. The meeting was held since Trustee Manley asked in an email to give the board a report as part of the staff report about the meeting with Big Arm. A meeting was arranged once, but maybe other meetings were scheduled that Trustee Manley is unaware of. If the board passes things that is not consistent with what you want or what you perceive the Polson firefighters want you don't do it. The board passed guidelines for the Polson firefighters. Trustee Manley listened to the recording of the February 10, 2010 meeting and the behavior he heard was unacceptable behavior, people were yelling at the board, a Polson firefighter who lives in Polson and works in Polson was telling a Trustee to resign from the board. It is not the board's job to discipline these people that is the job of the fire chief, which the board passed a specific guideline on the issue. The disciplinary section of the guidelines addresses the situation in section 100.10. Have you given the guidelines to the rural firefighters and has training been provided for them. Fire Chief Fairchild replied the guideline 100.10 was just approved last month. Trustee Manley indicated the board approved the guideline two months ago. Then there is a specific process that the firefighters are to use if they have concerns or complaints to the board. He suspects the firefighters don't even know of the guidelines. Fire Chief Fairchild located the board's motion passing the guidelines January 13, 2010. He has not had time to make multiply copies for the fire personnel. Trustee Manley noted in the meantime incidents happen like the February board meeting; while the guideline was passed the month before specifically to avoid further incidents. His comment on the chief's performance is the board can't criticize the firefighters of their actions if they haven't been given the guideline or provided training. Chair Meslin noted the wording and draft for each spokesperson of the company was actually drafted July, 2009. The board didn't do a resolution since the wording would include in the future policies and procedures guidelines. Trustee Manley suggestion subject to the board's approval the criticism or concern of the fire chief is that while you are expected to wear three hats; the chief does not understand the role. It was exemplified last summer at a meeting when Mr. Rogers spoke at the end of the meeting stating "John who do you work for?" Fire Chief Fairchild replied he works for the firefighters. While Trustee Manley admires the spirit of the statement, he doesn't think you understand you don't work for the firefighters; you work for the rural board as a Rural Fire Chief, and as the rural board directs you to do things you have an obligation to do that unless it is against the law. If you are not going to comply with the requests you should openly tell the board and not go behind the scenes to not implement things that you don't agree with and actually in some instances being insubordinate in saying that you will terminate personnel if they do what the board has asked. Trustee Manley suggests to the board the board review the situation in 30 or 60 days and see if the fire chief is cooperating with the board's request to complete setting up the separate companies and getting them functioning as separate companies with by-laws, officers; that you provide a copy of the guidelines, training on the guidelines so further incidents don't occur; and monitor those as performance goals. Chair Meslin would like to add the resolution which was passed on the application process. It was specified the copies of the application would be forwarded to the board and the board would be involved in an interview. The resolution was passed in November 2009. Yet there has been recent applications Greg Perkins and Paul Iverson to be members of the Fairground Fire Company and currently joined the Polson Rural Company instead of the Polson Fairground Company. Trustee Clapp indicated Greg

Perkins wanted to be part of the Polson Rural Company. He had an opportunity to follow up with a prior applicant who had been quite active and hoping to join; although the applicant decided not to join because of the action of certain board members pushing. Trustee Laisy asked if Trustee Clapp is on a committee to meet the applicants. Trustee Clapp talked to the applicant at his place of business. Chair Meslin noted that Perkins and Iverson application approved by the board was for the Fairgrounds Station. Fire Chief Fairchild was instructed to have them join the Fairgrounds Station, but since changed the applications into something else. There is going to be a time lapse since the new recruits need training. What is wrong with have the applicants assigned to the Fairgrounds Station when the training is still being done together. Meslin and Laisy have been recruiting since September, 2009; while the fire chief has done nothing to recruit for the Fairground Station. Chief Fairchild has recruited volunteers north of the bridge for the Polson station, but has not recruited for the Fairgrounds Station which she believes is a conflict. Trustee Manley noted the chief stated publicly utilization of the Fairgrounds Station is about response. While privately the chief commented to Trustee Manley the station is being utilized as it is currently. The station is a controversial issue with the firefighters and didn't want to rub it in their noses. Chief Fairchild expressed he did not make the controversial statement. Trustee Clapp noted there was one firefighter that spoke out at the February 2010 meeting. While criticizing the chief for non-discipline of fire personnel, the guideline states the district recognizes that every firefighter has the right of free speech and firefighters may address complaints and concerns to the board if a firefighter believes that is necessary. Trustee Manley suggests the first paragraph read. Trustee Laisy asked Trustee Clapp if he is acting as a member of the board, as an attorney for the fire chief, or attorney for someone else. Trustee Clapp is acting as the only duly elected board member and the only firefighter. He disagrees with some of the statements being made. Chair Meslin has a comment regarding conflicting statistics. During the January 2010 meeting Craig Jeppson presented a statistical report and the chief presented an annual report with the number being very different. Recently the workman's compensation report with run statistics was analyzed noting none of the numbers match. The report compiled by the chief indicates the average training hours per volunteer is 261 hours. Retention was at 95 percent although 11 firefighters left the department; and during a two year period 17 firefighters left the department. Trustee Manley indicating conflicting reports regarding firefighter response. The board has been repeatedly told there aren't enough firefighters and generally only 4 or 5 firefighters respond. The opinion is currently there are not enough firefighters to respond to two stations. While the Jeppson report indicates a 90 percent response on major structure fires which would represent 20 firefighters. Chief Fairchild indicated the structure fires have a very large turnout 27 to 30 firefighters. Trustee Laisy noted the information that the board receives is conflicting. Trustee Manley indicated the statistics given to support a functioning Fairgrounds Station the statistics are low and the purpose of the statistics to be reported in the newspaper to tell the board of a good job being done the statistics are very different. Due to the conflicting information, the board needs outside advice for proper utilization of the Fairgrounds Station. In conclusion, following a 30 or 60 day period the board will review the fire chief's performance in the matters the board discussed. Trustee Laisy added a recent concern with apparatus. By standards engine/tender #327 housed at the Fairgrounds Station is not an engine. It does not have adequate hose, lacks tools, and has no breathing apparatus. Chair Meslin noted the board decided to house water/tender #327 in Irvine Flats as the ranchers needed a supply of water. When engine #319 was retired and a 1982 engine #319 was purchased the apparatus was to be housed at the Polson Station. The exhaust pipe on the cab exceeded the clearance to fit in the Polson Station. The board requested a modification to the exhaust pipe and the engine housed at the Polson Station as originally planned. The engine is housed in Irvine Flats, while the board approved the purchase for the Polson Station. Tender #326 housed at Big Arm is required in writing to respond to every call. Trustee Laisy suggested a better dispatch policy. The trustees agreed to revisit the issues in 30 days.

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

Board adjourned 10:25 p.m.

Alison W. Meslin Chair

Jack Clapp Secretary-Treasurer