

**POLSON RURAL FIRE DISTRICT BOARD MEETING
MINUTES MARCH 09, 2011**

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

Board trustee member absent: Fred Nelson and Steve Stanley excused.

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

Guests: Press - Berl Tiskus, Valley Journal Reporter; Volunteer Fire Personnel – Drew Hoel, Keith Paul; Residents - Tom Eddy, Alan Fillman, Leanna Fillman, Lee Manicke, Rory Horning.

Meeting called to order 7:00 p.m. Fairgrounds Rural Fire Station by Vice-Chair Clapp. The Pledge of Allegiance was recited. A quorum is present, therefore, the scheduled meeting will proceed. Chair Nelson is vacationing out of the area and Trustee Stanley is out of town on business.

Minutes February 9, 2011 Polson Rural Fire District Board Meeting: Clerk Manicke corrected a typo on page 3 second to the last line public information officer agenda item ~~when contracted~~ then contact the media source to arrive at a course of action. Trustee Hoel noted a typo on page 4 public input agenda item line 4 strike letter f at beginning of sentence. **Motion Trustee Sams to approve February 9, 2011 minutes with minor corrections, second Trustee Hoel. Motion carried unanimously.**

Communications: Lake County Election Administrator, Kathy Newgard advised the Polson Rural District Trustee election cancellation. Two filings for the two positions were received by the close of filing on February 17, 2011. Therefore, canceling the May 3, 2011 election. Following the election canvas, the Oath of Office forms will be sent for Steve Stanley and Dean Sams who filed for the positions. Chair Clapp noted the \$1,500 budgeted for the election will not be expended. Big Arm Association schedule use of Big Arm Fire Hall – Wednesday, March 9th 9:30 a.m. exercise class; Thursday, March 10th 10:30 a.m. community coffee hour; Wednesday, March 16, 23, 30 10:00 a.m. exercise class; Friday, March 18th 5:30 p.m. community potluck. Schedule submitted by Alison Meslin, Big Arm Association. Chair Clapp advised a communication was received from Mr. Tom Eddy. The communication will be heard as an agenda item. Fire Chief Fairchild advised the State of Montana Board of Investments Intercap Loan Program has a 1.95% variable interest rate effective February 16, 2011 through February 15, 2012.

Claims: Additional claim \$50.00 reimburse John Fairchild for operating supplies, two fire hydrant markers installed at Haack Road and Turtle Lake Road. Chair Clapp noted the snow plowing maintenance expenditure at the Fairgrounds and Big Arm stations were excessive due to winter conditions. **Motion Trustee Hoel to pay February 2011 claims as submitted, second Trustee Clapp. Motion carried unanimously.**

Treasury Report for month ending February 2011:

Fund balances are preliminary. February 2011 reports were not available from Lake County Treasurer.

Fund #7243 Voted Levy/Operating Fund Balance	\$ 95,937.42*
Fund #7245 Operating Fund Balance	\$ <u>38,862.95</u>
Total Operating Balance:	\$ 134,800.37
Fund #7244 Voted Levy {Fire Apparatus}	\$ 8,461.17
Fund #7246 Capital Improvement Fund Balance	\$ 26,834.47

*In view of the 2009 and 2010 real property tax over assessment, the board should consider Fund #7243 Voted Levy Fund as a reserve fund to maintain operations for fiscal year 2011-2012. Chair Clapp indicated it is his desire of the board to segregate the funds since funds will be diminished over the next

two years. He suggested to segregate the funds and realize interest earnings on the fund balance during the interim. Mr. Eddy requested clarification on the \$95,000+ fund as the amount the district will need as a pay back to the property owners; while the total amount to be returned to the property owners over the two year period is \$121,000. Chair Clapp indicated the \$95,000 is a portion of the amount to be returned to the property owners. Currently the plan is to pay back the over assessment in two fiscal years 2011 and 2012. Although the correction is a Lake County issue. It is his thought the repayment schedule may need to be over a two year period. The repayment schedule has not been established. The second half of the 2010 real property tax revenue is outstanding which may have a bearing on the repayment schedule. He requested Bonnie clarify the method of repayment. Fund #7243 Voted Levy/Operating Fund is a voted levy fund for operating expenditures. With the over assessment issue, the board should consider moving the monies to a reserve fund to maintain operations in the years that constitute the pay back to the property owners. In the next two years the district will have diminished funds for operations. A preliminary over assessment amount was provided by Lake County Treasurer and the final amount will be provided when preparing the fiscal year 2011 Polson Rural Fire District budget. **Motion Chair Clapp to segregate the amount of money that constitutes the overpayment due to the error by Lake County, set those funds aside in a separate account for use in the year to which they need to be used and in the interim attempt to deposit the funds in an interest bearing account, second Trustee Sams. Motion carried unanimously.**

Total Operating Fund Expenditures	\$ 8,609.84
Check numbers 4491 - 4504	
(paid March 09, 2011)	

Final Lake County Treasurer report February 2011 revenue posted following meeting.

Fund #7245 Operating Fund Balance	\$ 40,541.60
Fund #7244 Voted Levy Debt Svc. {Fire Apparatus}	\$ 9,566.50
Fund #7246 Capital Improvement Fund Balance	\$ 26,841.17
Fund #7243 Voted Levy/Reserve Fund Balance	\$ 97,250.71

Trustee Hoel suggested the board address the proposed budget transfers. Trustee Clapp requested Bonnie articulate the proposed budget transfers. The proposed budget line item transfers include: 1). Administration transfer from 00455 election expense to 00430 worker's compensation \$1,500 (Trustee election by acclamation); 2). Building and maintenance – Big Arm Station #2 transfer from 00525 cleaning services to 00521 repair and maintenance \$1,000 (no cleaning services to date); 3). Debt service – transfer from 00610 for 2007 engine & pumper loan to 00521 building and maintenance \$1,500 (Voted Levy revenue sufficient for debt service payments).. The board directed Bonnie to complete the budget line item transfers. **Motion Trustee Sams to approve treasury report, second Trustee Hoel. Motion carried unanimously.**

Chief's report: Fire Chief Fairchild reported 16 runs in February with 5 rural responses including 1 rural fire, 1 vehicle crash, and 3 other responses including a propane spill, CO call and an ice rescue. Engine #333 is at TRM in Missoula to mount the tank and boxes, mount the hose reel and pump, and a platform is being built for the hose reel. The final plumbing and wiring for the lights will be completed in Polson then the engine will be in service. Trustee Sams reported the extensions for the reel, housing for the pump control panel, fabrication with powder coating, and boxes arriving later this month will complete the components. The hose bed for the 1 1/2-inch hose was not discussed. Anticipated completion date is March 22nd or 23rd. Fire Chief Fairchild reported the truck has a recall on the module. The initial report indicated the module is alright, although if it is not taken care of it could cause the truck to start on fire. Later Don Aadsen advised the recall was reinstated, therefore when the truck is back in Polson it will be scheduled for maintenance. John received the Jette Meadows Lake County

Water and Sewer District agreement with the additions requested by the board February 9, 2011. The fourth provision of the agreement states *In return for access to JMLCWSO water for fighting area fires, the Polson Rural Fire District will coordinate with the Water District's Water System Operator a time to flush and test all fire hydrants within the boundaries of the Water District. This will be done annually at a convenient time negotiated between the Water System Operator and the Rural Fire District Chief.* Russell E. Barber, Jette Meadows Lake County Water and Sewer District President signed the Letter of Agreement which is in effect for a period of one year beginning January 1, 2011 and ending December 31, 2011 at which time it will be reviewed for renewal. John would like permission to sign the agreement and return the agreement to the JMLCWSO. Chair Clapp questioned the time coordination efforts of the fire department to flush the eleven hydrants. John clarified if water is used for fire response the fire department is obligated to coordinate with the Water District's Operator to flush and test the hydrants. The hydrants are the responsibility of the Water District's Operator in the event no water is used for fire response. Trustee Sams indicated he understands the obligation is for access to JMLCWSO. John replied the understanding between Russ Barber and I is it is the obligation of both parties to flush the hydrants only when water is used for a fire response. Chair Clapp suggested John clarify the agreement and sign. He also acknowledges the agreement will benefit Jette Meadows and the fire department. Mr. Eddy questioned others using the hydrants. John indicated Division of Fire also has access, but would be doing so under his authorization to access the hydrants. **Motion Trustee Sams to accept the Letter of Agreement between Jette Meadows Lake County Water and Sewer District and Polson Rural Fire District with the Fire Chief clarification on the position of the access, second Chair Clapp. Motion carried unanimously.** John reported an additional fire hydrant marker was ordered for the Fulkerson Corner area on Highway 35.

Old Business:

TYPE 3 UPDATE – The agenda item was discussed in the Chief's report.

New Business:

JETTE WATER - The agenda item was discussed in the Chief's report.

WEB PAGE REVIEW - Chair Clapp reviewed the timely posting of the minutes on the website for residents. Mr. Eddy indicated the minutes were posted timely last month. Trustee Hoel presented four proposals for a Polson Rural Fire District Website. 1). Juan Maso BCN2WEB service for first year \$654.00; service second year \$354. 2). Michael Hewston, Click Here Designs, LLC \$545.00. 3). Mike Brandt, Monster Website Development service for first year \$570, annual cost after first year \$70.00. 4). Steve Yates, Integrated Technical Solutions, Inc. services for \$769.00, additional pages after first two pages fee is an additional \$70.00 per page with posting for one year. The price range of the proposals is low \$545.00 to high \$769.00 for initial set up. The proposal includes posting the activities, board meeting agendas, board meeting minutes, website hosting/domain information, email hosting, and submitting text authorization. The proposals were submitted for a non-profit organization. Fire Chief Fairchild indicated currently the rural fire district information is posted on the Polson Fire Department Website. The domain registration is \$99.00 per year and no change for the monthly postings. He feels it is not in the best interest of the rural district to pay an additional \$750.00 for a website service to solely serve the rural fire district. The current website is available and working. Chair Clapp suggested the board contribute to the domain registration. The purpose is to insure the website is functional for public information and the trustee contact information should be posted on the website. **Motion Trustee Sams to pay one-half of the website domain and additional costs the board incurs for posting additional pages with Click Here Designs, LLC, second Chair Clapp. Motion carried unanimously.** Trustee Sams thanked Trustee Hoel for providing the website proposals. Mr. Eddy appreciated Trustee Hoel contacting his former company, Integrated Technical Solutions, Inc. in Illinois.

RISK ASSESSMENT/EQUIPMENT – Trustee Sams analyzed the equipment especially SCBA's. Twenty-eight SCBA bottles are due for replacement in four years. The fifteen year service life on the SCBA bottles purchased in 1999 to 2000 will expire in 2015. The city and rural entities jointly purchased Scott SCBA's in 2000 with financing over a two year period. An additional twelve bottles were purchased in 2004. The SCBA breathing apparatus is functional with passing an annual flow test.

A risk assessment needs to be completed throughout the department. The SCBA's are a priority safety for the firefighters. Turnout gear needs to be replaced by creating a replacement fund or use of grant funds. John discussed a proposal to replace twenty-eight bottles over a three year period. The cost to

replace nine bottles per year at the current price would be \$6,183 per year. Consider replace full mask for \$280.00 or replace the straps at \$22.00 each for the top and bottom straps; ten set replaced per year would be \$440.00. The price of turnouts varies a great deal from year to year due to the petroleum product used in the garment. He would like to purchase four sets per year. To maintain the turnouts in service, material has been ordered to repair the turnouts. A turnout set is approximately \$3,000. The FY 2012 budget proposal for SCBA bottles and turnout gear is approximately \$22,000 to \$25,000 including freight. Chair Clapp verified the initial twenty-four bottles needs to be replaced before 2015 which will allow for a four year replacement period. Trustee Hoel proposed reviewing the planning committee financial expectations along with the risk assessment needs. Chair Clapp noted in previous years the wildland fire season brought in thousands of dollars in revenue; while in 2009 and 2010 there were no significant wildland fires. John reported the BIA changed the fees for fire departments wildland response which has affected the department greatly.

Public Input on Non Agenda Items: – Chair Clapp introduced a letter from Mr. Eddy for a specific request. He would like to obtain an opinion from the Lake County Attorney before discussion. Basically Mr. Eddy has requested the chief's report provide specific information regarding crash response. Some of the information in the report may be private. It is his recommendation Mr. Eddy's letter reviewed by the Lake County Attorney. Mr. Eddy replied he wasn't asking for any personal information. It is his understanding to implement the fees there needs to be some hearings open to the public prior to implementing these fees. He is of the opinion the board can't enact these without holding some hearings. Chair Clapp respects the comment, clearly it was on the agenda for four or five months. Currently the board has made a decision to enact the fees and is moving forward. Mr. Eddy referred to MCA 7-6-4013 which states the local government has the authority to establish fees, the governing body shall hold hearings as provided in MCA 7-1-4131 that has the requirements for hearings which include notice of publication in the local newspaper of when hearings are held for public input. Chair Clapp advised the board met the requirement through the publication of the agenda posted at the fire halls and on the website and it was significant in the newspaper to the public through news articles and letters to the editor. The board feels the notification has been met and until someone tells us otherwise we are going to proceed. Mr. Eddy indicated he does not consider letters to the editor as being a response to any public hearing; plus the agenda item states alternate funding sources which is not very specific to this particular source of funding. Mr. Eddy requested copies of the agendas published for the last year. Trustee Hoel provided a quick note for Mr. Eddy stating the December 2010 agenda item is "alternate funding fire recovery fund program consider resolution and contract". Rory Horning commented regarding interaction with Lake County. Did you get a legal opinion on this from the county whether you have a right to implement these fees. Chair Clapp replied the board did not get a legal opinion from the courthouse to implement the fees. Additionally he suggested Fire Chief Fairchild prepare an itemized billing documentation for proposed fees. A crash committee report will be prepared semi-annually or annually for public review. The purpose of the crash review committee is to make sure the program is working properly; while the committee will work through the oversight. The one response this month did not require a truck, therefore no bill was generated. Mr. Eddy's letter also requested the policy for crash response. The department is dispatched by county dispatch, the fire chief and assistant fire chief are general the first to respond at the scene, the crew responds to the respective stations, the chief analyzes the situation, if no leakage, blockage or injury the truck is not dispatched. In some instances, trucks do roll to an accident scene prior to an assessment as a precautionary measure. The first piece of equipment is an engine to extinguish a possible fire, then typically the rescue truck is next for extrication. Fire Chief Fairchild invited Mr. Eddy to visit his office with concerns. As an example, a dispatch at 2:00 a.m., he never knows what the response involves or which station will respond. The policy is an engine, rescue and whatever else for a quality response. Chair Clapp expressed everyone

attempts to provide an adequate level of service to the community. Mr. Eddy provided an additional letter to the board and a news article from the Los Angeles Times regarding crash fees. Trustee Sams expressed the items presented were not on the agenda and doesn't have application.

Being no further business. Motion Trustee Sams to adjourn, second Trustee Clapp. Motion carried unanimously.

Polson Rural Fire District meeting adjourned 8:22 p.m.

R. Jack Clapp, Vice-Chairman

Beth Hoel, Secretary-Treasurer