

## RECORD OF PROCEEDINGS

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### MINUTES OF A REGULAR MEETING OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS OF THE BLACK FOREST FIRE/RESCUE PROTECTION DISTRICT

The Board of Directors of the Black Forest Fire/Rescue Protection District held a regular board meeting on November 16, 2022, such meeting duly posted for public notice.

A quorum present, the meeting was called to order at 7:00 p.m. by Chair Dowden.

Directors present: N. Dowden/J. Hinton/C. Behnken/K. Tarvainen

Directors absent: J. Abendschan

Also present: Linda Glesne/PJ Langmaid/C. Piepenburg/R. Dunn/D. Arkowski/fire department personnel/community members/and others via Zoom

**Roll Call:** Director J. Abendschan was absent. **A motion was made and seconded to excuse Mr. Abendschan's absence due to travel; the motion carried unanimously.**

**Oath and Badge Pinning:** Chief Langmaid introduced new firefighters, including some of their background information, and spoke to the dedication their jobs will require. Chairman Dowden administered the oath of office to four new permanent staff members – Firefighters Patterson, Priddy, Svoboda, and Kanipe. Family members and friends pinned their badges. Luis Marconato was also introduced, and is a graduate of the CSFD Fire Academy.

**Minutes** A correction was noted for the October 12, 2022 minutes, to change "four-window" on page two, the second paragraph of New Business, to "four-day window". **A motion was made and seconded to approve the board meeting minutes as amended for the October 12, 2022 regular board meeting; upon a vote the motion carried unanimously.**

**New Business** The agenda format was suspended to allow Attorney Linda Glesne to join the meeting via Zoom to lead a board discussion on the question of whether the Black Forest Fire/Rescue Protection District should participate in the Colorado Family and Medical Leave Insurance Program (FAMLI), a state-facilitated paid family medical leave program. This is a new program in Colorado that is funded by a 0.45% contribution from the employee, based on their annualized wages, plus a 0.45% matching contribution from the employer. Or the employer may wish to pay the full 0.9% premium. Special districts are allowed to opt out of this program if they are providing their employees with adequate benefits, and must notify the State of such action. Concerning independent options of employees, they may voluntarily choose to participate and contribute savings to the program. If the District opts into the program, it must abide by State rules of membership and stay in the program for at least three years initially. The District would have the ability to opt out after the initial three-year period. Also, if the District opts out now, it may decide to opt in at a later date, using a three-year window for opting in or out. If the District decides to opt out, that action must be revisited again in eight years and a vote taken again whether to opt out or in. A decision deadline is 12/31/2022. If employers provide similar benefits to employees already, they may consider opting out of this program. Ms. Glesne stated the great majority of her clients have opted out.

If an employee participates on their own in FAMLI, they are responsible for submitting the required forms and contributions, they own their account and the fund balance is portable; they may move it to another employer. There are rules in place limiting the maximum balance they may accrue.

Discussion ensued re benefits provided by the District to employees vs. those offered by FAMLI and the reliability of the costs of that program. Directors examined the language of Resolution 2022-03, a resolution declining participation in FAMLI, which sets forth the parameters of the new State program and the requirements of the District, ascertaining that the District had performed their due diligence in this matter. **A motion was made to adopt Resolution 2022-03, A Resolution Declining Participation in the Colorado Family and Medical Leave Insurance Program; the motion was seconded; the motion was approved unanimously by all directors present.**

**Financial Reports** Treasurer Hinton reported that the District has assets of \$2.8 million, with no exceptional transactions. **A motion was made and seconded to approve the financial reports; the motion carried unanimously.**

**Operations Report** A written report was prepared by Chief Langmaid and given to all directors. A copy is attached to the minutes.

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### Finance and Administrative – Admin. Officer Rachel Dunn:

- Notable revenues last month were ambulance receipts - \$20,837, tax revenues - \$56,018, deployment revenue - \$53,376.
- Notable expenditures – nothing to report.
- Procurement - uniforms.
- Monthly hours worked – 8,895.

### Branch II Logistics – Planning and Prevention – Deputy Chief James Rebitski (by Chief Piepenburg)

- Fleet – routine repairs and maintenance.

### Facilities Unit

- Facilities – nothing to report.

### Resources Unit

- Pierce aerial had new lights installed and ETA is delayed to mid-January 2023.
- Working on wildland fire assessment.

### Inspections Unit

- Routine activity.
- Increase in recreational fire permits.

### Fuels Management (Mitigation) Unit

- Working on grants to obtain chipper and truck.

### Operations – Deputy Chief Piepenburg

- Training hours continue to be significant at 21% of work hours.
- Wildland engine returned from deployment in southeast Colorado.
- Assisted Hanover in wildland fire and Pueblo County for vehicle fire.
- Four members graduated from CSFD Fire Academy, with BFFD member Trevor Holliday named top recruit.
- CSFD personnel came to BFFD to train in the training building. Outside participants are not charged for using the facilities as all departments and districts share their training spaces.

### Command/Strategic – Chief PJ Langmaid

- Chief advised he was notified that the work estimate for the Pierce aerial did not include lights in the bucket, at a cost of about \$3,500. The Chief made a decision to approve this extra work, and the Board concurred.
- Chief and the staff will be meeting to review capital needs, facilities needs, training, strategic planning, and other needs and will report on the findings to the Board.

**Old Business** Public Hearing – 2023 Budget for the Fire District. Ms. Dunn presented budget projections for an eight-person per day budget plan. Several items were highlighted, such as a reduction in workers compensation. The “estimated” column will continue to change until year-end and will continue to decrease. This will impact the beginning balance for 2023. Total expenditures include deployment expenses and deployment revenue is also included to offset this expense. Total revenues for the 2023 budget will be \$4.8 million, which will be balanced by \$4.8 million in expenditures. Major expenditures will be \$43,879 each for a Pierce engine and a Pierce tender.

It was announced that the bank president, Dave Wood, will be retiring. There are plans to commemorate his association with the fire district. He will be invited to the awards banquet in March.

At the December board meeting the budget resolution will be adopted and the mill levy will be certified. The mill levy will be adjusted due to the state reduction in the RAR, resulting in a revenue neutral budget that does not increase taxes.

### **Reports on Workshops and Meetings** None

**Correspondence** A donation of \$3,000 was received from the family of Walter and Imelda Evans, both former volunteers in the fire department beginning in 1976. Walter and Imelda are both deceased and were extremely dedicated to the fire department. To recognize their service to the fire department, their children decided to make this donation in their names. Chief Langmaid suggested perhaps dividing the funds between the two stations for quality-of-life items. Board

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members considered memorializing their service in some way that would be publicly noted, such as photos and plaques centered in an area of the front entry of station 1.

**Public Comments** Ms. Linda Smith noted that in the past many paid personnel would leave the BFFD fire department soon after being hired to go to departments that pay more. She stated that it seemed that was no longer the case and she asked if the employee level has stabilized. Chief Langmaid responded that it has slowed down, but there is always a competition with other departments who are able to pay more. In an effort to maintain an employee force, other efforts are under way to build and strengthen a department culture.

Ms. Smith continued with questions about a possibility of a new fire station in Flying Horse North to service that area of Black Forest, asking if FHN would be assisting with land, equipment, and the building of a station. The Chief replied that more staff will be needed, the cost of which will be provided by FHN property taxes upon build-out. Station 2 is unable to meet the needs of FHN. Sufficiency of water is also a big issue. The developer is committed to working with the fire district to solve the issues currently being considered.

**Future Meetings** The next regular board meeting will be December 7, 2022, at 7:00 pm. The financial reports will not be available that early in the month, and will be presented in January. There will be an all-hands meeting on December 3, and the Board is included. A public notice will be published notifying the public that the Board meetings in 2023 will be held on the third Wednesday of every month, unless circumstances require changing the date.

**Adjournment** There being no further business, the board adjourned at 9:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Donna Arkowski, Secretary