

Lower Valley Fire Protection District

July 11th, 2024

CALL MEETING TO ORDER

The Regular Board Meeting of the Board of Directors of the Lower Valley Fire Protection District was called to order by Board Vice President Mark Bonella. Advance notice of the meeting was provided. The roll call was taken, the following directors were present: Mark Bonella, Jeff Phillips, and Cliff Gray. Others in attendance: Chief Cavaliere, Derek Campbell, Stacie Dix, Kaden Fife, Dominique Johnson, Anton Knepprath, Beau Schmalz, Tim Struble, Bette Burnett, Diana Manzanaraes, and Mahea Rodriguez.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Chief Cavaliere led us in the Pledge of Allegiance.

CITIZENS COMMENTS/REQUESTS

None.

DISCLOSURE OF CONFLICT OF INTEREST

Mark Bonella is cousins with Paul Miller, CPA. Mark disclosed that the audit was independent of the board, and he had no part nor participation in its final summary or findings therein.

AUDIT PRESENTATION

Paul Miller, CPA, of Blair and Associates, P.C., presented a 29-page summary of LVFD's Financial Statements and Report. The audit included all financial activities through December 31st, 2023. Mr. Miller reminded the Board to continue being pro-active and ask questions regarding financial statements and dealings. He presented comparisons from 2022 to 2023 reflecting the overall net positions, including the revenues and expenditures of the district. Next, he discussed the steps for his budgetary process; general information regarding the pension plan; and our fixed assets and investments. Lastly, he reviewed the final budget and explained the overs & unders and the process of how to reconcile those line items. He concluded by acknowledging that no errors, fraud or abuse was found or detected within his audit of LVFD.

Motion was made by **Cliff Gray** to accept the financial statement and audit. **Jeff Phillips** seconded the **motion** and it passed with 3 votes.

APPROVAL OF REGULAR BOARD MEETING MINUTES

Cliff Gray motioned to accept the board minutes from 06/13/2024. **Motion** was seconded by **Jeff Phillips**. The **motion** was passed with 3 votes.

APPROVAL OF INVOICES

Diana presented the information and noted that expenses totaled \$140,913.69 from June 11th, 2024, through July 8th, 2024. Also discussed, was the cost of our

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911 Dispatch calls and the fees incurred to use the City of Grand Junction's 911 call center.

Motion was made by **Cliff Gray** to accept the invoices. **Jeff Phillips** seconded the **motion** and passed with 3 votes.

APPROVAL OF BILLING REPORTS & RESOLUTIONS

Jeff Phillips motioned to accept the billing write-offs in the amount of \$39,309.15 for June 2024. **Mark** noted that this amount is the lowest he has ever seen. The introduction of **Bette's** replacement, **Mahea Rodriguez**, was publicly introduced to and welcomed by the board.

Cliff Gray seconded the motion. The **motion** was passed with 3 votes.

APPROVAL OF FINANCIAL REPORT

Diana reports that the total balance in our bank account including cash on hand is \$4,303,185.53. The interest for the month of June/2024 is \$18,286.35. June's Mesa County Statement of Collections totaled \$668,360.20. **Diana** would like it to be noted that historically, after the month of June – we typically see a less amount from the Statement of Collections to the end of the year and the month of January.

Cliff Gray made a motion to accept the Financial Statement. **Jeff Phillips** seconded the motion. The **motion** passed with 3 votes.

ADMINISTRATIVE REPORT

Diana presented to the board the 2024 SDA Annual Conference in Keystone, CO. The dates are 09/10-09/12 held at the Keystone Conference Center. She would like to have a board member attend (virtually or in person). Cost of attendance is \$415.00 for in-person, and \$175.00 for virtual attendance. This conference was included in the 2024 budget for two attendees. Next month's board meeting is being moved to Tuesday, Aug. 13th due to a budget presentation by Shannon Currier, CPA. The presentation will be from 5:00pm to 6:30pm; and the regular board meeting will commence at 6:45pm. Lastly, the online transfer limit from Grand Valley Bank to Colotrust will require two approved signatures for approval. The transfer amount of up to \$700,000 is still sufficient.

Jeff Phillips made a motion to accept the transfer amount of up to \$700,000.00.

Cliff Gray seconded the motion. The **motion** passed with 3 votes.

REPORTS AND UPDATES

None.

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CHIEF REPORT

Chief Cavaliere announced that **Rebecca “Becky” Van Brammer** has been hired to fill the open full-time ALS/Firefighter position. **Becky** will start full-time on 07/22/2024. Country Jam stats were discussed. **Mark** noted that based on the stats report provided, Country Jam is losing us money overall. He proposed that negotiate with Mesa County regarding our rates for hire. **Mark** also stated that we are borrowing equipment from other agencies to help cover the demand in Fruita, while our equipment and other vehicles are staged in Mack, CO. **Chief Cavaliere** confirmed that there was no charge or fees incurred for borrowing equipment. **Stacie Dix** added to the discussion by stating that Lower Valley would be responding to Country Jam whether we are staged there or not. She states that agencies outside of Mesa County are not legally able to transport, thus LVFD would be making those trips and calls anyway. **Mark** acknowledged her point of view and agreed. **Chief Cavaliere** discussed the FPPA contribution rate changes starting on 01/01/2025. Death & Disability will be increasing from 3.6% to 3.8%. Defined Benefit Component increased 0.5%, totaling 22.5% (12% member [same rate] / employer increased from 10% to 10.5%). Social Security, currently at 6.2%, will remain the same. A future **motion** to accept this change will happen later this year. **Bette** announced that this is **Chief Cavaliere’s** last board meeting before retirement. Retirement party is scheduled for July 24th, 2024 from 1:00pm to 3:00pm in the truck bays.

OFFICERS REPORT

Swift water technical training is taking place in Palisade later this month. Two people will be getting their certifications. There are a few well-being and fitness things happening this month; **Stacie** organized a 100 push-ups a day challenge for the month of July; an LVFD team will participate in the “Tough Mudder” obstacle race; a counselor/therapist will be checking in with crews later this month as well to address mental health. Country Jam attendance was down this year; the ATV worked well; MIP medical clearances were up; went well overall.

UNION #5625 REPORT

Focused on positivity in their last meeting and keeping morale up. Crews feel like they’re being heard and some of their past concerns were addressed.

NEW BUSINESS

Chief Matt Katzenberger has agreed to serve as the interim Fire Chief of LVFD until that position is filled. **Chief Cavaliere’s** last official day as Chief is 07/26/2024. **Chief Cavaliere** met with the hiring committee, including **Mike Bennett, Cullen Purser, and Jeff Phillips** to discuss the job description and the advertising for the Chief’s position. The committee hired an outside agency to distribute the position to a wide audience. The committee wants to see who’s

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out there and get the best candidate for the position. The committee's goal is to find a new fire chief in 60-90 days. **Kaden** presented a question, asking the board if the crews would have any participation in the decision-making process. **Mark** said no. The board will be solely responsible for hiring the new chief. **Stacie** asked for clarification regarding the screening process. She would like to make sure the people that are screening candidates understand fire operations and come with experience. **Chief Cavaliere** confirmed that the screening process will be done by fire professionals, as well as making sure their personality and posture molds well into the established atmosphere of the LVFD.

OLD BUSINESS

None.

ADJOURNMENT

Mark Bonella made a **motion** to adjourn. All in favor with 3 votes.






