

**Spokane County Fire District #5**  
**March 24, 2008 Regular Meeting Minutes**

**Members Present:** Jim Ryan, Sheri Rhoads and Todd Lehman

**District Administrator:** Carol Harrington

**Guests:** see attached sign in sheet

**Time Meeting Began:** 7:00p.m.

- **Flag Salute**
- **Jim Ryan** read the opening paragraph regarding Roger Ferris' (WFCA secretary) from the agenda. There was a motion to make drafts of expenses and meeting minutes available in an office copy for the public during the meeting to remain at the district office. It was unanimously approved. A copy was provided. (Admin. note: the office copy, which was clearly labeled "Office Copy," was never returned).
- **The minutes from the February 25, 2008 Regular Meeting were reviewed.** Sheri mentioned that the propane fill dates were listed incorrectly; Carol corrected her error. The minutes from the March 6, 2008 Special Meeting were reviewed. **Both were approved unanimously.**
- **The treasury report was reviewed.** Carol read the report aloud.
- **The March bills** were reviewed. Sheri made a motion to defer 1<sup>st</sup> quarter Commissioner pay until the May meeting. Todd seconded the motion and it was approved unanimously. The expenses were approved for \$4,944.95.
- **Correspondence:** Thank you card from FD10 re: structure fire, Thank you card from MedStar re: EMS call, WSP Agreement re: State Fire Mobilization Reimbursement, E-mail from Rod re: AMR negotiation failure regarding their contract and how it may affect entities and ambulatory services, Andrew Taylor from State Auditor's office sent e-mail re: 2 constituent referrals by phone last spring 2007 regarding expenditures, financial reports, fuel logs and the petty cash account. I spoke with Andy on the phone March 19, 2008 and faxed over many docs to him from 2004-2008 current (approx 50 pages). On a second phone conversation with him same day, he was satisfied with our records (invoices, policies, logs, in-house and Spokane County Treasurer's financial reports) until further notice. He does not see any problem as of yet and said the secretary had kept good records, E-mail from Shaun of CenturyTel re: DSL detailing monthly fees should board decide to go with DSL. **The board will table DSL for one year as Carol said she did not use the Internet enough to warrant the monthly fees of more than \$50.**
- **Administrators Report:** Carol is currently talking to other fire districts' website managers and collect pricing information. She will keep the board updated.
- **Fire Chief's Report (Kjell is sick; Ron reported)**
  - **Personnel:** N/A
  - **Training:** EMS challenge occurred during the first training and everyone learned a lot; the second training took place at the CCC building regarding procedures and radio communications.
  - **Stations:** N/A
  - **Equipment:** N/A
  - **Other:** Jim Ryan discussed the PBY as he had called Ed Lewis, Chief of FD4 to attain more information. DNR is working on a bid for a CL-215 which is a 1,000 gallon tanker with a lighter payload than the PBR (which is usually 1,300 gal). It's faster but also more expensive. It has a shorter run period during the fire season to keep within the budget for the PBY. There is no contract yet and no information on where it will be housed. Kjell wanted the board members to approve the SOP's he gave them last month: the 1600 and 1800 drafts. The commissioners verified they each had a copy but would like to defer the approval until next month.

**Old Business:**

1. **2007 AFG Grant:** All the items are in except for one pike pole. The crew has been checking them in and making sure they are put on the appropriate apparatus. Carol will soon get a finalized bill from General Fire and Valence Communications and be able to send in via internet the information to get the funds to pay the invoices. Then the district will pay the 5% we owe.
2. **2007 DNR Grant:** We did get a new contract and Kjell has signed it. We are now waiting for the DNR to sign their copies and send the original back to us. Then we can begin acquiring the items (equipment) on that 50/50 match.

3. **Approve 3 reviewed policies: the board unanimously approved the following reviewed/revised policies: Public Records Policy, Litigation Policy, and Infectious Disease Policy.**

**New Business:**

1. **2008 AFG Grant:** Carol handed out a copy of the main items the team wanted to go for. Ron Wood reviewed why Wildland PPE is needed and why current suits are not up to standard; Dan Patterson also helped explain. **The items listed on the spreadsheet are: wildland harness to hold shelters and water, two pieced wildland suits, new headlamps, fire shelters, 5 radios, 10 pagers, two sets of chains for the tenders, a security system for Station 52, and a new vehicle.** Sheri asked why we need 25 quans on each of those items, how many firefighters do we have. Ron said he believed we had 25, Carol said she thought we had 24; she checked. We have twenty-four. Dan P. said that we have 10 people certified red card but that all of our firefighters can fight wildland fires. Sheri asked why we need 5 radios and 10 pagers. Dan P. said that some of the ones we have now do not have the capability for more channels, which they need. Discussion followed regarding the future communication problems Ozzie Knezovich has discussed with our community and the bond that may be on a future ballot. Jim said that the radios may be programmed with new communications but there is no guarantee. Sheri asked if we could wait until the communications outcome is. No, not really as some of our volunteers have radio/pager needs now. We will most likely go back to Motorola's as the Icoms have been breaking down frequently.

**A new Engine/Tender vehicle for the grant was discussed.** It would cost about \$325,000. Jim explained possible future grant changes because of politics and FEMA funding. Jim discussed the Wildfire Community Plan that was discussed at a meeting recently at FD9. The first draft of this plan is due in April. It may be tied to future grants, he is not sure. He also discussed legislation that is being drawn up that would make our current tenders unable to have light bars and not exceed speed limit during an emergency. The first attempt in the legislature to pass it was shot down but is probably going to be attempted again. The reason for the truck on the grant is a dual purpose; it will carry EMS gear, responding to possibly 80% of the calls. The gallons of water it could hold is 3,000 on a tandem axle. Ron said it would go on maybe not 80% of the calls, but on a lot of them. Jim said that this is now what is being ordered by many fire departments. Mike Flint has looked at these and compared it to other vehicles. It has a pumper that has a high capacity. Compartments are like a pumper. Larry Wendlandt asked if this would replace two trucks. Jim said yes. This would replace a tender and possibly a pumper or a brush truck. Gary Pietz did not understand why it would replace a brush truck. Dan Patterson said that it is also a safety issue as many of our volunteers cannot drive our tenders. Sheri asked if the AFG is going to be offered in 2009. Jim said it was discussed at the SCFCA meeting but with the Presidential Elections going on at this time it is unknown. Sheri wants to know if we go for a vehicle and get it, where are we going to get our 5% match for over \$18,000? If we can't sell some of our equipment, where are we going to come up with that kind of money? Jim discussed entities that may need vehicles but can only afford used ones. Todd Lehman said that if we can't use it in our fire district, then other FD's probably couldn't use it either. Jim said we have some options; he brought up Medic 51, our newest rig. We are the only FD in the county with that type of rig. It has been suggested by the grant committee that maybe we should move it (sell it) and buy a suburban to fulfill that role and see what we could get for M51 and the tender. Sheri said that we still have a balance of over \$17,000 and we still have to get a light bar and other things if we get a truck on the grant. Jim said that we have not checked into what the M51 would sell for. **Sheri asked if we could get a committee together to present a pro/con sheet on this because in reality, we do not have the money.** Jim said it is a good idea to investigate that further. Todd said that the wildland gear is needed but he has reservations regarding the vehicle; there is no reason to run a tender over the speed limit anyway. Jim said that we also have to consider what we have the people's money in regarding taxes appropriated for fire and what we have had to spend regarding EMS service; that the people have clearly spoken by vote when our EMS Bond Levy failed to pass. **Sheri motioned that the AFG 2008 Grant be for quantity 24 sets of Wildland PPE, two sets of chains for the tender, 1 security system, 10 pagers and 5 radios. Todd seconded, it was approved unanimously.** Carol said the approximate cost would be \$942.50 for our 5% match. Sheri mentioned the study on M51; she asked Gary Pietz if he would provide his opinion as a representative from the community on a pro/con statement for the next business meeting. Gary said he would.

2. **Discuss Medic 51: was discussed under item 1 in New Business.**

Jim asked if there was any other business. **Todd mentioned the Fire Chief's job description.** Carol said that she asked Kjell if he wanted the description that was in the Organization Policy on a separate document. Kjell said that would be fine. Carol will have that ready for the next meeting.

**Public Concerns:**

1. **Gary Pietz:** He said that in the Jan. 28, 2008 meeting door locks were discussed and Jim got bids. Then in the Feb. 28, 2008 meeting it shows an expense for a lock. When was it approved? Ron and Dan Patterson explained that the handle of the lock broke completely off and it required immediate action; it could not wait for a business meeting at the end of the month. They did call Jim Ryan at home and discuss what had happened with the handle and asked if they could go ahead and order/install the lock. Jim verified this and said it was an emergency situation. Gary said that the station is not secure if other volunteers have the codes, so how have we solved the problem? Ron Wood explained that only two volunteers have the codes and he is one of them; of course we have solved the problem. We can get printouts of who has come and what time they were there. Gary said he still thinks there is a problem, that no one should have the codes. Ron said that that is ridiculous; someone has to have the codes to enter them into the computer to run the program. Jim discussed that no security system is guaranteed, that Gary knows that working where he does. Higher end systems cost \$10,000. We went with what we thought was best. Gary then said that the public only gets information on a monthly basis and that is a problem. This purchase and the emergency were not mentioned; it should have been mentioned in the next month's minutes.
2. **Debi Davis:** She commended Sheri on her questioning the vehicle on the grant and decisions up for discussion. Police reports regarding Kjell Anderson have not been discussed since the board received them. Sheri said the reports gave the board no additional information, that a lot of the text had been blacked out. All the commissioners at this time looked through their binders for their copy of the police reports. They found them and reviewed them. Sheri asked Jim if he thought the board had already discussed this. She thought the board had taken appropriate action already prior to receiving the police report. Debi said the minutes said that Kjell "requested" a leave of absence; that Greg Lucht stated in that meeting that Kjell "asked" for a leave of absence, not that the board had put him on a leave of absence – there is a difference. Jim discussed that there is always two sides and that there have been volunteers that have gone through a separation in the past. Debi mentioned the Snure seminar handbook on ethics (p.27) and asked the commissioners to review that. Jim and Sheri reviewed that page. Debi asked if that is acceptable behavior for a Chief representing our district. Sheri said no, but appropriate action has been taken. Debi asked what was it? How do we know? Prove it. Sheri said why do we have to "prove it to you?" Debi said, because I asked you to. Carol got out the meeting minutes when the executive sessions took place in 2007 regarding Kjell and read them. Jim said we shouldn't discuss the matter unless we go into executive session. He asked Sheri and Todd if they wanted to go into executive session to further review an employee's performance. The board decided yes, they would. They went into the washroom so others could remain in the office.

**Regular session out at 9:45p.m. Executive session began at 9:46p.m.**

**Executive session out at 10:00p.m. Regular session began at 10:01p.m.**

Jim said the board discussed the issue and determined that it had been addressed properly. Debi said toward the board, "You're a real piece of work." then got up mumbling and left the meeting.

There was no other business.

The next regular meeting will be April 28, 2008 at 7:00p.m.

The regular meeting adjourned at 10:02p.m.

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Spokane County Fire District5 Chairman

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Spokane County Fire District5 Commissioner

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Spokane County Fire District5 Commissioner

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*Attest:* Spokane County Fire District 5 District Administrator