

Aspen Fire Protection District

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Board of Directors Regular Meeting December 13, 2022

The Board of Directors of the Aspen Fire Protection District met for their regular meeting. The meeting was open to the public in person and virtually via Zoom.

Meeting called to order by John at 4:35pm

Roll Call:

- Board of Directors Present: John Ward, Dave “Wabs” Walbert, Emily Taylor, Steve Wertheimer
- Board of Directors Absent: Parker Lathrop (at time of roll call)
- Staff/Volunteers Present: Rick Balentine, Jake Andersen, Nikki Lapin, Jan Schubert, Jan Legersky, Arnold Nimmo, Jake Spaulding, Scott Arthur
- Public/Others: Richard Peterson, Sebastian Wanatowicz

Executive Session:

MOTION: Motion by Emily to move into Executive Session pursuant to C.R.S. § 24-6-402(4)(f) for a conference with the District’s Attorney for the purposes discussing personnel matters relating to the Fire Chief and the 2023 Fire Chief Contract, for which the employee has not requested discussion at an open meeting. Steve second.

Discussion: None

Vote: All approved

Regular Meeting Resumed at 5:38pm

Roll Call:

- Board of Directors Present: John Ward, Parker Lathrop, Dave “Wabs” Walbert, Emily Taylor, Steve Wertheimer
- Board of Directors Absent:
- Staff/Volunteers Present: Rick Balentine, Jake Andersen, Nikki Lapin, Jan Schubert, Jan Legersky, Arnold Nimmo, Jake Spaulding, Scott Arthur
- Public/Others: Richard Peterson, Sebastian Wanatowicz

Approval of Minutes:

MOTION: Motion by Steve to approve minutes from: Regular meeting held on November 8, 2022. Wabs second.

Discussion: None

Vote: All approved.

Public Comment: None

AVFD Inc.: None

North 40 Housing Project Update: Sebastian Wanatowicz

- Project Budget: Payout Application #21 has been approved for \$11,112.92. This was for a few remaining invoices as part of the GMP scope of work. All invoices have been paid and the maximum amount of contract has been reached. Discussion of breaking up the retainage into two parts as it pertains to Pay Application #22 and #23. The remaining balance is approximately \$712,000.
- Sebastian gave overview of current issues with water coming out secondary roof drains, guard rails and windows. It was recommended staying with the warranty on windows and working with Pella.
- There was no snow fencing put up on the east side of Building #2. There will be a fee to add snow fencing. This will be a change order on contract and funds out of contingency will be used. There may be savings from lighting on Building #2 that can be used.
- The Board directed Sebastian to release \$362,000 on Payout #22, move forward with snow fencing on Building #2 and reduce lighting project.
- Sebastian will help Rick wrap up the last few items as described above. Thank you to Sebastian and his great work on the project.

Wildfire Community Action Fund Project – Ali Hager

- Willoughby Fire Break Project: Have received a soft yes. BLM will work with us on this project. Paperwork is still to be signed.
- Chipper Program: The City and County have agreed to partner to help with expanding the program in 2023.
- Gala Update: This will be a fundraiser for WCAF potentially in February. More information to come forth in January.
- PODS (Potential Operational Delineation) Mapping: Mapping information and its potential was presented. This is a preplan for wildfire that can continually be built upon. White River National Forest is working on their PODS mapping. This information will be shared with neighboring agencies.

Financials

- Monthly Financial Review: Included in the board packet. No further discussion.
- 2023 Budget Review. The budget was included in board packet. Chief Balentine noted the following changes/adjustments:
 - Salary: It was noted the small adjustment to Career Firefighter salary, training position and adjusting the starting salary for executive assistant position. The holiday pay of \$57,000 was added in that was previously missed.
 - Capital Acquisition Fund for Station Alerting System: Staff explained reasoning for addition. There was discussion about automating locks but holding off now to move forward with this system.
 - Hybrid Vehicle: Discussion of replacing Fire Prevention truck with hybrid vehicle.
 - Cameras: Upgrade is needed at Station 61, 62, 63 and 64.
 - Pano AI: City has committed to \$40,000 for cost sharing. Staff will go back to Pitkin County with further information.
 - Wildfire Community Action Fund: There was clarification on the consulting fees.
 - Administration: Staff has done an incredible job over the last year getting career firefighters and operational personnel where we think they need to be in terms of being competitive in the valley. Further focus has been on evaluating the increased workload of District Administrator/HR Coordinator and Finance, reviewing job descriptions, salaries and aligning them accordingly. With the addition of an Executive Assistant, Nikki Lapin will move to a director position with primary focus on Human Resources. It was noted the due to the salary adjustments being made throughout the valley another salary study will be done in 2023.
- Fire Place: There was discussion of whether other housing (ie. Starwood, Woody Creek, North 40) should be broken out in further detail and added into the overall housing budget.

Board Comments & Action Items: None

- Wabs: No comment.
- Steve: Commented on being a tough, but good year. The personnel and the way they have started working together has been positive. As a year, staff did a great job.
- Emily: No comment.
- Parker: No comment
- John: Commented on department doing a good job.

MOTION: Motion by Steve to approve Resolution 2022 #12-01 To Adopt 2023 Budget. John second.

Discussion: None

Vote: All approved

MOTION: Motion by Emily to approve Resolution 2022-#12-02 To Set Mill Levies. John second.

Discussion: None

Vote: All approved

MOTION: Motion by Parker to approve Resolution 2022-#12-03 To Appropriate Funds. John second.

Discussion: None

Vote: All approved

MOTION: Motion by John to continue discussion of action on Chief's contract until next regular meeting on January 10th. Parker second.

Discussion: None

Vote: All approved

MOTION: Motion by John to opt out of the FAMLI (Paid Family & Medical Leave Insurance Program). Steve second.

Discussion: None

Vote: All approved

Staff Report:

- Fire Marshal and Prevention: Jan Legersky reviewed Fire Marshal report for November that was added in after the board packet went out. There was discussion of new sprinkler requirements and concern of impact on water systems overloaded in the event of wildfire, along with impact on Fire Marshal's office workload. At the last meeting, the Board decided to write a letter, however after further discussion it was decided to hold off at this time. First reading will be after the new year.
- Operations Overview:
 - SCBA purchase: MSA was going to give \$12,000 discount for old equipment. Staff proposed donating 20 to CMC and the remaining to another agency in need or possibly Ukraine. Board directed staff to donate as they see fit.
 - Ballistic vests will be coming soon in case crews may need it.
 - Volun"Tiers" Program: Staff reviewed the programs being offered to volunteers that will better meet their needs and needs of organization.
 - Thank you to the Board for all the support. People are stepping up and getting things done.
- Training Update:
 - Scott Arthur was promoted to Division Chief of Training this week.
 - Scott reviewed trainings listed in the staff report.
 - Class of 2022 have completed required training and were sworn in at the last Operational meeting held in December.

- Class of 2023 is working on modified task book before going off to CMC Academy in January. The goal is to have them sworn in December 2023.
- Scott reviewed all firefighters going through certifications as listed on the staff report.

CEO/Fire Chief and Good of the District:

- Roaring Fork Collaborative: The steering committee will Ali Hager Hammond and Chief Balentine will be co-chairing, Basalt Town Manager the vice chair, Eagle County Wildfire the treasurer and Glenwood Fire Chief the secretary. Aspen Institute will be the fiscal agent. This is going to be great for the entire valley. There are 18 agencies from Aspen to Glenwood Springs involved.
- 2022 Recap:
 - Thank you to the Board.
 - Thank you to Deputy Chief Andersen with getting people involved in making decisions.
- ISO: Chief Balentine and Deputy Chief Andersen met with a representative on items that can be improved. This was more of a discussion, not a review. Staff is confident that substantial changes can be made over the next five years.
- PHE (Public Health Emergency Leave): The State has extended through February 2023. This covers COVID sickness, RSV and Influenza.

Old Business:

- Woody Creek Project Update: No update.

**MOTION: Motion by Parker to adjourn at 7:36pm. Emily second.
Vote: All approved.**

***** A full recording of this meeting can be requested by contacting the District Administrator at nikki.lapin@aspenfire.com or by calling 970-925-5532.**