

MINUTES

SPECIAL JOINT MEETING OF THE BUHL CITY COUNCIL AND THE BUHL RURAL FIRE PROTECTION DISTRICT
FEBRUARY 20, 2023

PRESENT:

Pam McClain	Mayor	Neal Gier	Fire District Chairman
Michael Higbee	Council President	Glenn Van Patten	Fire District Commissioner
Kelly Peterson by ZOOM	Council Member	Bob Linderman	Fire District Commissioner
Amanda Hawkins	Council Member	Andrew Stevens	Fire Chief
Marla Sisson	Council Member	Brent Reinke	JMA Chairman
Karen Drown	Clerk	Concerned Citizens	
Autumn Jones	Treasurer		

The meeting was opened at 6:30 p.m. Karen Drown confirmed a quorum for the meeting.

OLD BUSINESS

Minutes of January 16, 2023: Michael moved to approve the minutes from January 16, 2023. Neal seconded the motion. There was no discussion and the motion passed.

SPECIAL BUSINESS

Presentation of Promotion: Andrew reviewed the old way promotions were presented in the past out in the fire bay during a quick break. He then presented the promotion to Brian McGowan to Driver/Operator 3rd Class. He summarized the additional duties Brian has been doing.

NEW BUSINESS

Ratifying Joint Management Agreement with updated meeting time from April 20, 2020 Joint Meeting: Karen explained that since the agreement in 2020 changed the meeting time and this took place in the middle of COVID a true copy was not signed by Neal Gier as District Chairman and then Mayor Tom McCauley. It was confirmed by the members to have Neal and Pam sign the agreement.

Review and Consideration of City of Buhl Proposed Fire Contract Formula & Budget: Michael reviewed the proposed budget with figures. He stated that taxes are only collected on market value and the city doesn't levy just for fire service. There was a discussion about expenses covered by the administration budget. Michael added the budget has every citizen paying at the same levy rate. Glenn stated they need to look at give and take. Kelly rebutted by stating give and take gets away from equality. He added the district is growing faster now, but the city could grow in the future. Glenn stated the district would like the formula to have the mill rate calculation plus include 5% for growth and include sales tax or keep population in the formula. Michael stated the city has continued to overpay since the facts came out in 2013 that city residents pay 25% more and asked to have the district look at the \$80,000 increase as being equitable. He also commented on the size of the home being built in the district and the district population is not calculated in any census data. Neal commented in 25 years the district has purchased \$1.7 million in equipment. Kelly stated the population is all well and good but it doesn't matter when a call goes out how many live there. Marla stated she felt it should start fresh with the equal mill rate. Glenn again mentioned population and EMS calls. Marla stated those factors make it really complicated. There was a discussion about EMS calls not all equal and a call to an apartment versus a 400-acre farm fire call. Glenn stated the district is not going to budge the whole way; they would budge a little but not all. He suggested looking at annexation and include 5% growth and sales tax. Neal commented that he spoke with Ben in Boise and if the district annexed the city the city would lose some sales tax.

Brent questioned where the discussion was at. It was questioned about running an L-2 like an annexation. Glenn stated the district is ok with keeping it the same. Michael would like to look at the new formula for one year and see how it goes. Brent also suggested working with the state legislature in trying to get the law changed or an exemption for annexation. Kelly state the Council as a whole wants to be equitable in the mill rate. Amanda would like to try the new formula for one year. Glenn and Neal stated the district can't go with paying \$80,000 more. Kelly replied that the city can't stomach to continue paying unequal. Glenn questioned looking into an L-2 as annexation and keep the JMA formula the same. Amanda questioned if the district clerk could look into anything. That was followed by a discussion of the administration staff time and hours spent researching formula options. Brent questioned if the group would need to look at the same formula for next year unless they come to an agreement in the next 30 days. Michael stated this is not where he is at. Karen and Autumn suggested they meet with the county and gather facts and see if the county had any other directions. They would also contact the Idaho State Tax Commission about sales tax and annexation.

Update on Questions and Options for Bond Levy: Marla questioned if the levy rate would be the same. Karen stated it would not be as it would be calculated on land and structures for both entities.

CITIZENS CONCERNS – There was none.

Andrew stated he could operate on the proposed budget. He suggested hitting the legislation hard and hopefully in 10 years be able to do a true annexation. He stated his life would be less stressful if both entities would agree. It is exhausting.

MEETING ADJOURNED

Glenn moved to adjourn the meeting; Michael seconded the motion. There was no discussion. The meeting was adjourned at 8:17 PM.