

MINUTES

SPECIAL JOINT MEETING OF THE BUHL CITY COUNCIL AND THE BUHL RURAL FIRE PROTECTION DISTRICT
APRIL 18, 2022

PRESENT:

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

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

OLD BUSINESS

Minutes of March 7, 2022: Neal moved to approve the minutes from March 7, 2022. Michael seconded the motion. There was no discussion and the motion passed.

NEW BUSINESS

Joint Management Agreement Formula: There was a review of a formula that uses the net taxable market value on structures only for each entity and the levy rate of the district. Michael explained it takes out the population and is equal on structures only. It was noted that this new formula amount is less than the current years budget but more that is spent by the department. Michael added the district has been able to save every year and the district would have to be restricted if paying equal. This is as close to annexing without annexing and having a cap of 8%. Michael concluded the proposal for the contract from the district at the last meeting there is no way for the city to afford it. Neal noted this option doesn't allow for equipment and a fire station. Autumn noted this is only for the operating and maintenance budget. Capital costs and the station would be discussed separately as capital purchases are needed. Amanda and Michael both stated they don't think eight people should decide to spend \$4 million dollars. Glenn added with this option the district won't have money for capital equipment purchases. Michael stated with the current agreement the city has subsidized the district over the years which created the savings they have. Glen questioned if call volume should be included.

Kelly stated the district was able to have a savings because they are only taxing for fire but city residents are paying for mor that just fire service. The change doesn't put that amount of saving into the city savings it would go to other departments.

There additional discussion about the district residents have been saving for a new station and Glenn noted having a levy won't go over well. But Kelly questioned under the proposal from the district for the contract the station wouldn't be owned 50/50 even if the city could afford the proposal. There was a discussion of options for contracts and the overage of any budget would be available for capital purchases from a fund balance savings. Michael moved to table this item until May 16th and hold a special meeting at 6:30 PM. Kelly seconded the motion. There was no discussion and the motion passed.

Discussion of going to the voter for levy: Michael stated he had talked to at least 10 people concerning building a fire station and he added the city would feel more comfortable for that size of a decision they should go to the voters. Marla also stated it is a lot of money to decide on, it is how you phrase things and possibly have town hall meetings. Glenn stated the option they are looking at is a lease to own building and doesn't go out to the voters as it would not be owned until the final payment. It was stated it is intriguing that the district would get a \$3.9 million dollar building without taxes going up. But Michael it is an increase but it is coming from the city, he added the city can't levy and not own part of the building. It was questioned if both entities went out for a levy and only one passed. Karen noted that would be a difficult position and they would be separate ballots for each entity and the potential of one not passing could happen cause problems.

City & District Contract Discussion (City Proposal): Glenn noted the HR and Administration that is currently provided is a massive benefit for Andrew. Michael stated based on the minutes that the city has received and the proposal, he gets worried about the option of the city contracting with the district with the amount of work that is currently being done by admin staff and how that would go.

Presentation of 10-Year Future Needs: Andrew stated it is unhelpful to talk about the past. He noted the amount returned each year needed to be looked at with salaries versus operating and maintenance of unexpended. He is trying to spend more responsibly. He noted the 10-year plan he is presenting is worst case scenario and that he tries to stretch the life of an apparatus as much as they can. He would like to have grants every year. There was a discussion of the current condition of specific equipment. Michael noted that the replacement cost of a first out engine is almost as much as a quint. Andrew stated the proposed is all the bells and whistles. It was questioned if there is a benefit in a piece of equipment for almost double the costs. There was additional discussion about purchasing three brand new brush trucks that are going out in the brush and get beat up. Andrew stated that equipment is used all the time. There was additional discussion about fighting fires in the district.

There was a discussion about staffing. Andrew stated he is fully staffed. Andrew noted an EMR certifications is now equal to what an EMT was and to get an EMT is now better to go through CSI for the success rate. It was discussed if St. Luke's would be housed in the new station. Andrew stated there is room for them but the department would still need the QRU because St. Luke's covers the entire West End, transporting and reporting to other calls. The QRU is needed to be available to cover calls. Andrew explained they are out growing the station as there is 1 to 3 individuals sleeping here at night.

There was a discussion about the process for the NFPA ratings. NFPA sets the standards for fire service. Currently the city is at a 4 rating and it includes anyone within 1000 feet of a hydrant. The district residents are an 8 rating. The next inspection could change that as the quint was not included in the last audit.

CITIZENS CONCERNS – There were none

MEETING ADJOURNED

Kelly moved to adjourn the meeting; Marla seconded the motion. There was no discussion. The meeting was adjourned at 8:15 PM.