

MINUTES

SPECIAL JOINT MEETING OF THE BUHL CITY COUNCIL AND THE BUHL RURAL FIRE PROTECTION DISTRICT
April 19, 2021

PRESENT:

Tom McCauley	Mayor	Autumn Jones	Assistant Clerk/Treasurer
Michael Higbee	Council President	Neal Gier	Fire District Chairman
Pam McClain	Council Member	Glenn Van Patten	Fire District Commissioner
Sue Gabardi	Council Member	Bob Linderman	Fire District Commissioner
Kelly Peterson	Council Member	Andrew Stevens	Fire Chief
Karen Drown	Clerk	Concerned Citizens	
Elizabeth Barker	Treasurer		

Because of the recent COVID-19 pandemic this meeting was made available telephonically.

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

OLD BUSINESS

Minutes of February 15, 2021: Pam moved to approve the minutes from February 15, 2021. Kelly seconded the motion. Neal asked to amend the minutes in the first paragraph and remove the line that stated Michael asked a question about minutes and agendas that were not provided for meeting the district had held. Neal stated he felt they had sent everything they had. Pam stated Michael had asked that question and that it just can't be removed. Michael added to Pam's comment. Neal withdrew his amendment. There was no further discussion and the motion passed.

Discussion of adding the city to the Morton Building Agreement: Pam moved to add the City of Buhl to the Morton Building Agreement. Michael seconded the motion. Bob began the discussion by stating they cannot add someone else to the contract. He detailed the information the district was gathering through Morton Building. Pam stated she was surprised there was nothing for the previous joint agendas to discuss. Bob stated it was a district issue. Michael commented the district is in a contract with the city right now. There was a discussion about the current agreement between the district and Morton Building and the \$40,000.00 that was approved in the current joint budget for a study. Bob stated they are looking at the best thing for the district and that they have a right to do so. Glenn detailed this contract is for building plans and is not a feasibility study and felt things were brought up prematurely.

Pam stated she felt if this board could get along for two years in a row there is great things the boards could do for the residents of 83316. She said there is no transparency. Glenn asked if the city council minutes and agendas would need to be requested. Karen noted they are all posted on the city website. Glenn stated as partners he felt the minutes and agendas could be sent to the city. There was further discussion of the \$40,000.00 that was on the current years budget and the reason that Chief Stevens had added that to the budget because he does not design fire stations. It continued with a discussion about the 10-year plans with Council looking at the future and they cannot say right now if the city could be a part of it. Glenn stated it is great that the Council is passionate and is involved with the district. Bob noted that all they have right now is lines on a piece of paper. Chief Stevens commented that he had contacted Morton Building and their attorney said the city could be added to the contract. There was a vote on the motion. Sue voted yes, Michael voted yes, Pam voted yes, Kelly voted no, Neal voted no, Bob voted no and Glenn voted no. The motion failed.

NEW BUSINESS

Update on Stage 1 with Morton Building: Steve Case with Morton Building had sent over the floor plan. There was a meeting with Steve, Andrew and Glenn and they went over the floor plan. Andrew was now running it by the fire staff. Andrew detailed some changes they were considering to the plans. Pam stated the staff know more than the Council does on the plans, she asked for the timeline Neal was presenting be added to the minutes. There was discussion on the work Chief Stevens was doing on this plan with direction from the District but not through the joint boards. Michael noted an email stating this doesn't affect the city that was sent by Michael Ruffing. Glenn noted this is not just a district building and Bob added Andrew undersells himself where he has been to a number of fire houses. They stated they are looking at all options including areas for community use. Glenn concluded if Council wanted to see a station, they need to go see Gooding.

Presentation of 10-Year Strategic Plan: Chief Stevens said he doesn't look at the 10-Year Strategic Plan as a wish list, he needs to be looking at replacing equipment and every fire department has to plan. He stated this plan looks at

equipment in the future but it is not always going to be needed when on plan. He stated he has removed a station on this plan.

QRU:

Chief Stevens presented in his plan to add an additional staff person next year. Chief Stevens went through a presentation detailing the tasks of the QRU staff and that he is possibly looking at eight retirements in the next year. He is looking at ideas for coverage and working with medical director on training. There was discussion if the station had a place for a unit from St. Luke's would they have a 24-hour unit in Buhl. Michelle Rogers stated they are looking at options for that but she added the QRU is strong enough to cover area.

Station:

Chief Stevens would like to implement a residency program which helps the career staff and supplement shifts. He still wants to maintain the QRU and have a model QRU in the state. There was a discussion about the changes to community members having odd hours which is not helpful to volunteering. Diane Clemens stated volunteerism has taken on a different picture over the years, she has always seen it as "a service to the community." Chief Stevens detailed options to the schedule he will be considering including sleep time exemption and training options with possible reimbursement from Twin Falls County.

Training Grounds:

Chief Stevens showed details of requirements for training grounds which he would like to keep locally instead of traveling to Twin Falls and helping pay for their grounds.

Staffing:

Chief Stevens went over the benefits of additional staff and options that would allow.

Apparatus:

Chief Stevens noted he is fine tuning line items year to year and watching the apparatus and usage. He is also working on rotating apparatus based on usage and hours.

Neal questioned the amount of turnover in the department. Andrew stated they had lost a few this year but it has not been huge. Pam asked to keep the group up to date on the EMT search. Tom asked if there was enough room for training grounds and Chief Stevens believes there is because there are about 5 acres. Chief Stevens stated he appreciates what both entities give to the department. Pam concluded that she appreciates Andrew, staff and the volunteers.

CITIZENS CONCERNS – There were none.

MEETING ADJOURNED

Pam moved to adjourn the meeting; Neal seconded the motion. There was no discussion. The meeting was adjourned at 8:25 PM.