

MINUTES

SPECIAL JOINT MEETING OF THE BUHL CITY COUNCIL AND THE BUHL RURAL FIRE PROTECTION DISTRICT  
MAY 16, 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 April 18, 2022:** Michael moved to approve the minutes from April 18, 2022. Neal seconded the motion. There was no discussion and the motion passed.

**Tabled Item: Joint Management Agreement Formula:** Michael stated the city's proposal is the same one as proposed at the last meeting. He noted it controls the funding at similar calculations. Neal stated the calculation could be considered but it needed to include population. He referred to several properties appraised value such as Kacy Meadows, Meadowbrook, Sawtooth Manor, Sawtooth Villa and Lincoln Courts which he added are not appraised for the full value. He also stated there are more calls made to city locations. He stated the district felt this is doable figuring with those also included. Kelly commented let's throw in mileage to calls and why not factor other items into calls such as number of personnel responding to each call. Michael stated that going over other options is opening up a lot of problems with this and not just weighting figures as they are and moving forward. Andrew stated he was going to research. There was further discussion about options. Andrew noted there is no set way to price each call.

Pam questioned what the problem was with the city proposal. She continued to say it saddens her that it is felt the city doesn't care about the fire guys like the district. She stated the group needed to sit there and come up with a solution because the joint board was not doing the job they were elected to do. She concluded she won't preside over a meeting when they are not getting anything done.

Neal stated it is not the \$18,000 it is the percentage they had concerns with. Bob also stated that Michael is tag-lining and is insulting. Michael responded by stating it was insulting on half truths about past processes or other budget items. Bob stated he felt other items needed to be included.

Andrew stated his major concern was call volume is going crazy. He noted it had doubled in the last 10 years and felt the GMT funding needed to be looked at for the future. For the GMT funding, you have to be a transport service. He detailed the current structure of the QRU shift and stated the need to revamp the entire model. The call volume cannot just rely on volunteer staff. He noted that Buhl has been subsidizing the Magic Valley Paramedics and St. Luke's on the QRU calls and transport is a money loser for St. Luke's. Andrew also discussed the loss of QRU personnel and how Rock Creek doesn't have a QRU but just relies on full-time staff and having a St. Luke's rig in the building. He noted he would like to have a residency program. He stated he doesn't want to have people call 911 and not have someone respond. He concluded that he needs to talk to the county and St. Luke's and change the model.

There was further discussion about transporting and QRU staff. Andrew did comment that a lot of property and lives have been saved with the system but they are always looking for good people with good ethics. There will be future meetings with the Rural EMS Advisory Committee about the topic.

Marla stated she trusted the information she was given by the administration staff and would like to look at that. She added the station isn't possible right now. Glenn also commented to look over this topic the next year but keep the formula the same for now. Pam asked if everyone is ok with going with the same formula. Michael stated he was not comfortable going with the same formula. Glenn stated they are not changing the formula tonight. And he moved to continue the next fiscal year at the normal JMA contribution. Neal seconded the motion.

Kelly commented that obviously there are two sides to this and possibly three or four. He agrees with Michael and added there are deadlines for the budget and this is just punting this issue. Michael added it is being punted just like a couple of years ago. Kelly concluded they are not solving anything. There was a roll call vote on the motion. Marla voted yes,

Michael voted no, Kelly voted no, Glenn voted yes, Neal voted yes, Bob voted yes and Amanda voted yes. The motion was passed by the district commissioners but was a tie vote by council members. Mayor McClain voted no and the motion failed.

Autumn reviewed the budget schedule. Mayor McClain stated she voted no because she cannot knowingly overcharge the citizens of Buhl. Marla stated she voted yes but doesn't agree with it but is not sure where to go.

There was further discussion of the formula and how it was figured and the information used. Kelly added that \$18,523 is not an issue but is more than covered in the return. He added another special meeting is fruitless. Kelly moved to approve the city's proposed change to the formula to the JMA and requested a roll call vote. Michael seconded the motion. Amanda questioned if we are doing this backwards? Kelly confirmed to not use the current JMA but use the new proposed formula. Karen proposed trying the new formula for one year since the current formula has been used since 1995. It was discussed to look at it changing the formula over the next year prior to determining the next year's budget. It was also noted the new proposed formula would decrease the contribution by the city by \$63,826 and increase the contribution for the district by \$45,303.

There was a vote on the motion with Marla voted yes, Michael voted yes, Kelly voted yes, Glenn voted no, Neal voted no, Bob voted no and Amanda voted no. The motion failed. It was noted since both motions failed the standing JMA agreement would continue.

## **NEW BUSINESS**

### **Discussion of Joint Department Operations:**

It was noted this was discussed within the other agenda item.

**CITIZENS CONCERNS** – Andrew stated he needed to apologize as he spoke out of turn

Glenn asked David McClain's opinion of this situation. David stated he wished they had never done the original agreement. He noted he had been asked by the chief to rejoin after 7 years of retirement. He also apologized to Neal for the statement he made at the last meeting. He concluded this is a huge crossroads for the group.

## **MEETING ADJOURNED**

Michael moved to adjourn the meeting; Glenn seconded the motion. There was no discussion. The meeting was adjourned at 8:10 PM.