

# *Lower Valley Fire Protection District*

*September 12<sup>th</sup>, 2024*

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## **CALL MEETING TO ORDER**

The Regular Board Meeting of the Board of Directors of the Lower Valley Fire Protection District was called to order by Board President Cullen Purser. Advance notice of the meeting was provided. The role call was taken, the following directors were present: Cullen Purser, Mark Bonella, Jeff Phillips, Jesse Mease, and Cliff Gray. Others in attendance: Interim Chief Matt Katzenberger, Casy Burns, Thomas Creel, Ben Linzey, Rebecca "Becky" VanBramer, Bette Burnett, Diana Manzanares, and Mahea Rodriguez.

## **PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

**Becky VanBramer** led us in the Pledge of Allegiance.

## **CITIZENS COMMENTS/REQUESTS**

None.

## **DISCLOSURE OF CONFLICT OF INTEREST**

None.

## **APPROVAL OF REGULAR BOARD MEETING MINUTES**

**Jesse Mease** motioned to accept the board minutes from 08/13/2024.

**Motion** was seconded by **Jeff Phillips**. The **motion** was passed with 5 votes.

## **APPROVAL OF EXPENSES**

**Diana** presented the information and noted that expenses totaled \$23,144.67 from August 8<sup>th</sup>, 2024, through September 4<sup>th</sup>, 2024. **Mark Bonella** questioned CMC Rescue expense, asking to confirm the number of crew members that attended that class. **Interim Chief Katzenberger** confirmed that both **Skyler Smith** and **Jesse Stocking** attended, and the registration fee was per person. Both of those crew members also received new harnesses

**Motion** was made by **Mark Bonella** to accept the invoices. **Cliff Gray** seconded the **motion** and passed with 5 votes.

## **APPROVAL OF FINANCIAL REPORT**

**Diana** reports the total balance in our bank accounts, including cash on hand as of September 4<sup>th</sup>, is \$4,717,295.03. The interest for the month of August 2024 is \$21,685.95. The YTD interest accrued is \$131,102.26. August's Mesa County Statement of Collections totaled \$50,156.06.

**Cliff Gray** made a motion to accept the Financial Statement. **Jeff Phillips** seconded the motion. The **motion** passed with 5 votes.

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## **APPROVAL OF BILLING REPORTS & RESOLUTIONS**

**Mark Bonella** motioned to accept the billing write-offs in the amount of \$141,496.69 for August 2024.

**Jeff Phillips** seconded the motion. The **motion** was passed with 5 votes.

## **ADMINISTRATIVE REPORT**

**Diana** reported that the SDA was very informative. She met our paralegal, Sarah with CEGR, and Sarah offered her assistance in elections. **Diana** also learned about DEO responsibilities and stated that Sarah would be able to be a Deputy DEO alongside herself. **Diana** also pointed out our vast SDA representation at the State Capitol. **Bette** announced her new date of retirement which will be on October 31, 2024. On September 5<sup>th</sup>, we transferred \$510,000.00 from the ColoTrust general account to our Grand Valley Bank (GVB) checking account due to the purchase of two ambulances - the Crestline and the Braun. The wire was completed on September 11<sup>th</sup> from GVB to Crestline and that ambulance was delivered today. The Braun will be coming from Washington on September 26<sup>th</sup>, and that wire will be sent by the 25<sup>th</sup>. **Gary Mulkey** and **Becky VanBramer** are flying to WA and driving the ambulance back. Lastly, **Mahea** updated the board regarding the change in our billing collection agency. Contracts for the new company were signed today. The new company, AR Services, retains 30%, whereas our old/current company retains 35-45%. AR Services is also locally owned, and they have a full electronic exchange capability.

## **REPORTS AND UPDATES**

None.

## **CHIEF REPORT**

**Interim Chief Katzenberger** updated the board regarding the promotional captain assessment. **Thomas Creel** and **Anthony Padilla** were the two selected, and the promotion takes effect on September 15<sup>th</sup>. The promotional ceremonies will take place at the end of October, that along with four recruits approaching their one year, and the new chief position, those will all be held in the same ceremony. Next, **Interim Chief Katzenberger** announced that Proposition 50 & 108 have been withdrawn from the ballot. They have been replaced by HB 24B-1001; however this bill does not appear to affect our 2025 budget. **Interim Chief Katzenberger** will be attending several sessions to gather more information. **Interim Chief Katzenberger** and **Diana** have been interviewing HR consulting agencies to fill gaps to aid in new legislative and HR laws coming into effect, and we do not want our district to be held liable for being unaware of unknown factors. The HR agency would make sure we're up

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to date from a legal standpoint and assist in employee resolution as well. This route would also be less costly for the district than using our attorney. **Odette Brach** (HR Director for the City of Fruita) is also an available resource for us. It should be noted that one of the consultant firms we met with, gave us a 96-98% rating for compliance, thus we needed minimal intervention. Regarding staff trainings, **Skylar Smith** and **Jesse Stocking** completed their rope tech certifications. That brings us to 5 certified technicians. **Troy Seal** completed his fire investigation class, and he has 2 modules left before his certification testing. **John Dawson** and **Stacie Dix** were both promoted through Mesa County EMS to APP III. All 3 of Mesa County's APP III's are here at LVFD (including **Ben Linzey**). **Cody Ciotti** is now an APP II. **Becky VanBramer** will be an APP I very soon. **Copper Lovern** was also recently credentialed as a paramedic and is now starting his residency program. Next, the CO Medicaid reimbursement program "CO EMS" was initiated for this year, and we'll be receiving \$47,800.00 from that program. This amount is less than last year and is expected to continue dropping. The State of CO is pushing for clients to choose a private insurance so we're treating fewer and fewer CO Medicaid patients. Regarding next month's board meeting - **Interim Chief Katzenberger** asked the board to move the start time to 7:00pm due to an appointment with the medical director from 5:00-7:00pm that is not negotiable. Board agrees with the start time of 7:00pm on October 10, 2024.

## OFFICERS REPORT

**Beau Schmalz** reports that he has filed for a wildland Basic Fire Prevention Control (BFPC) grant for \$16,000 and we should be hearing about this soon. **Cliff Gray** asked how many people submit for grants within the district. **Interim Chief Katzenberger** confirmed that **Gary Mulkey** handles the EMS provider grants; **Beau Schmalz** handles the PPE grants; **Adam Compton** handles the local Mesa County grants; both **Interim Chief Katzenberger** and **Travis Holder** work on the larger business grants; and the wellness committee handles the grants for peer support trainings and workout equipment. **Interim Chief Katzenberger** also stated that having the captains and crews invest their time into seeing how equipment and things are accumulated and acquired are an important process. Their personal investment is the key to boots on the ground operations. **Cullen Purser** commended the district for doing these things and stated that this is what sets us apart from other departments.

## UNION #5625 REPORT

**Thomas Creel** announced his Vice President resignation and reports that **John Dawson** will become the new Union VP effective September 13<sup>th</sup>. He also reports another successful community pancake breakfast with a large turnout

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from community members. The union will do another Hot Coco Event this year as well, more information to come.

## **NEW BUSINESS**

**Ben Linzey** announced to the Board his resignation from LVFD. His last day will be December 7, 2024. He is now a certified nurse practitioner and is relocating to Florida to start a family with his fiancé. The Board commended **Ben** for his time and contributions to the District and **Interim Chief Katzenberger** invited him back as a contract employee to provide medical oversight for Country Jam 2025, whom would then be credentialed as an APP IV. Next, IT providers was discussed. Due to terrible customer service, significant cost increases and technology issues, we are canceling services with Iron Edge as soon as possible. **Interim Chief Katzenberger** and **Diana** have selected 2 companies to choose from – Networks Unlimited and Jet IT. Networks Unlimited is a bigger company; Jet IT is owned and operated by a Loma native, Joseph Eckhart. Jet IT is also the cheapest option and also, we'd be a shared administrator in order for us to handle minor issues in-house vs calling a help desk. **Cullen** agrees and proposes that we hire Jet IT, with the possibility of assessment as needed, in the future. Also noted for consideration was our current server replacement vs remote hosting off-site. Next, the selling of ambulance 3113, the 2015 GMC. **Interim Chief Katzenberger** is asking the board's approval to begin the process of selling it. There are some caveats before the final sell but would like to begin listing it now. Ambulance sales sites, private listing, and eBay were all mentioned as a possible selling avenue. Pricing is anywhere from \$10,000 to \$40,000 depending on the comps. **Interim Chief Katzenberger** would like to start the listing at \$28,000-\$29,000. CMU may be interested in it as well as a training ambulance. **Mark Bonella** made a motion to sell Ambulance 3113. **Jeff Phillips** seconded the motion. The **motion** passed with 5 votes. **Cullen** then provided an update regarding the new chief hire. The hiring committee is down to 3 finalists, one of them being **Interim Chief Katzenberger**. On Thursday, October 3<sup>rd</sup>, all 3 candidates will be available for staff to spend time with all 3 candidates; ask questions and fill out a questionnaire, with the staff's thoughts and hopes on the 3 candidates, of which all will be read and considered by the board. On Friday, October 4<sup>th</sup>, there will be a panel interview comprised of professionals around the valley, as well as the board's opportunity to interview. An executive session will be held after this point. Executive session meeting will be tentatively scheduled for Tuesday, October 8<sup>th</sup> at 6:00pm for the purpose of selecting LVFD's new chief.

## **OLD BUSINESS**

None.

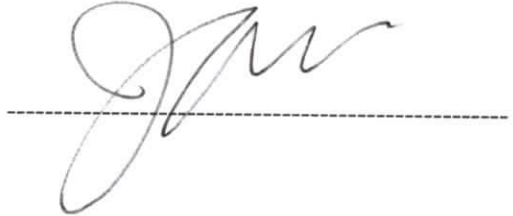
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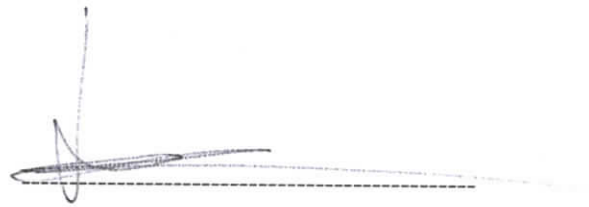
**ADJOURNMENT**

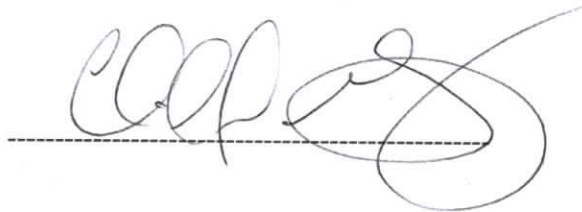
**Cullen Purser** made a **motion** to adjourn. All in favor with 5 votes.

  
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