**Jefferson County Fire and EMS**

**Board of Directors Meeting Minutes**

**June 18th, 2024**

**Meeting Called to Order**:
The meeting was called to order at 6:11 PM.

**Pledge of Allegiance**
Attorney Tim Gassner led the Pledge of Allegiance.

**Roll Call**
Present from the Fire Board were Rob Galyen, Kim Stout, and Chris DuPont.

 Ryan Boyle and Director Dusty Miller were absent.

**Fire Staff Present**
Fire Chief Blake, Deputy Chief Skaar, Deputy Chief Earnest, Admin. Assistant LeeAnn Patton, Firefighter/Paramedic Andrew Glen, Firefighter/Paramedic Kayla Page, and Captain Kirk Hagman were in attendance.

**Community Members**
Linda Larson and Brandie Macnamee were present.

**Agenda Approval/Adjustment**
Chris DuPont motioned to approve the agenda as presented. Kim Stout seconded the motion. The motion carried.

**Presenter: Budget Hearing 2024-2025**
Brandie Macnamee assisted Chief Blake in updating LB-1 with revised contact information and resolution details. Chief Blake informed the board of an extension granted by the County for LB 50 submission and ongoing work on the RFP. A discussion ensued regarding the approval of LB 50 with the extension, which Chief Blake confirmed was necessary. The budget hearing concluded at 7:04 PM.

**Citizens Input**
There were no comments during the Citizens Input portion.

**Minutes from Previous Meetings**
Chris DuPont motioned to approve the minutes of May 14th, 2024, and June 18th, 2024, as presented. Kim Stout seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

**Old Business**

**EMS/Fire Consolidation:** Chief Blake provided an update on the consolidation process following recent staff changes, noting progress in financial management and budget integration.

**Old Business**

**Building Expansion:** Chief Blake reported no new developments regarding the building expansion project, confirming the completion of outstanding bills funded partly by seismic grants.

**Old Business**

**Bond Update:** Chief Blake discussed ongoing preparations with SDAO and the County to secure necessary bond funds, highlighting a tentative funding date of September 2024. He emphasized the need for a committee to oversee bond fund allocation and potential reimbursement for building expenses.

**New Business**

**2024-2025 Budget Resolution:** Chris DuPont motioned to approve the budget for fiscal year 2024-2025 and set the general fund tax rate at 1.1847 per thousand. Kim Stout seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously. In addition to General Bond Resolution #6 2023 – 2024 was moved by Chris and seconded by Kim Stout, receiving unanimous approval.

**New Business**

**Selling of Apparatus 1724:** Deputy Chief Skaar updated the board on the sale of Apparatus 1724 to Lake Chinook for $4,000.00, noting the current inventory of six wildland apparatuses.

**New Business**

**Finance Update/Policy Review:** Chief Blake discussed repayment strategies with PERS, proposing phased payments aligned with anticipated revenue streams from Medicare and Medicaid. He acknowledged the importance of financial prudence amid uncertainties in funding timelines. HE gave multiple options on how it could be paid back.

During the discussion, Chris DuPont raised concerns about the district's cash flow. Chief Blake characterized the situation as a waiting game, noting expectations from billing that funds would be received soon, with some already coming in. He anticipated a regular cycle of funds by July or August of the current year. Chris DuPont asked about contingency plans if Medicare or Medicaid payments faced further delays. Blake cautioned that the district could manage for another four months, after which financial strain would increase, highlighting the dependency on Medicare and Medicaid timelines.

Chris DuPont expressed a preference for expeditious repayment, utilizing available bond funds while ensuring the district's financial stability and timely personnel payments. Kasey inquired about accessing the loan before year-end, which Blake confirmed, detailing ongoing fund transfers. However, Kasey advised caution in bond expenditure, citing concerns about audits and the need to secure both bond and billing revenues to sustain operations. He emphasized the importance of financial prudence to avoid future bond requests from the County.

Kim Stout advocated for immediate partial repayment, regardless of the installment structure. Kasey proposed evaluating current financial obligations before proceeding with further repayment strategies. Linda shared insights into community financial challenges, noting that many were struggling with tax payments amidst economic constraints, emphasizing the unpredictability of usual funding sources.

In response, Blake acknowledged the considerations raised by Skaar and Linda, agreeing on the need to balance immediate repayments with long-term financial planning in collaboration with the County.

Earnest emphasized the importance of demonstrating intent to pay, suggesting even a minimum payment of 20k alongside current payroll obligations, despite the additional payroll taxes. Kasey supported this approach, proposing an additional monthly payment of 20k. Blake acknowledged this as feasible and committed to updating PERS after speaking with them the following day. He noted the possibility of using Medicare funds towards repayment, with Kasey estimating potential backpay from billing to range between 700k and 800k, which could be supplemented by bond funds. However, Kasey expressed concern over the 200k already drawn from the loan, fearing it might not suffice until September to November.

Chris DuPont advocated for making the minimum payment for the current month, cautious not to spend funds before they are received. Blake informed the board of receiving 40k in EMS billing with expectations of more in the current month. Responding to Rob's inquiry about the nature of the 40k, Blake confirmed it included back billing, clarifying that recent billing consisted of a mix of funds. He explained the process of selectively pursuing payments, noting the variability due to insurance company practices and the need for detailed information.

Blake expressed a desire to double the monthly PERS payments to expedite catching up, considering it a reasonable step forward. He indicated a pending decision pending Trizetto's approval to clarify the expected revenue. Earnest cautioned against overreliance on the loan, suggesting waiting until additional ambulance funds are received before proceeding with higher payments. Skaar proposed allocating 20k towards PERS if smaller amounts are received, with larger chunks used to offset costs once obtained. He suggested a chunk of the bond be used if secured, advocating for incremental payments to PERS until then.

**New Business**

**Fire OPS:** Deputy Chief Kasey Skaar provided the board with an update on Volunteer Scott Pollard's recovery following the recent building fire.

Skaar ensured the board had reviewed the monthly report and proceeded to give an overview of key statistics for the month. In response to Rob's inquiry, he discussed notable aspects of the month, including which ambulances were most frequently deployed as third responders. Rob also sought clarification on instances involving transfers.

Regarding equipment updates, Skaar reported on the acquisition of a Utility Terrain Vehicle (UTV), indicating an anticipated delivery by July 1, 2024. He mentioned plans for crew orientation sessions once the UTV arrives, noting its potential utility in recent calls since its initial order. However, he acknowledged the delayed arrival of the unit and confirmed efforts to expedite its receipt.

Skaar mentioned the commencement of new students in the Firefighter 1 (FF1) academy that week, led by Mark Johnson. He shared positive news of a commendation received from a student of the A shift, who was leaving to become an Apparatus Operator (AO) in Bend. Additionally, a student from the C shift had been hired at Redmond Fire, underscoring ongoing successes in the department's training and recruitment efforts.

**New Business**

**Fire Prevention:**
Deputy Chief Earnest provided an update on activities for the month, detailing the calls he responded to, the inspections completed, and the depts. participation in community events. He highlighted our involvement in organizing the Egg Drop event, expressing enthusiasm for its success and a desire to expand its scope in the coming year. He then, briefed the board on the recent COSI fire incident.

Additionally, Deputy Chief Earnest informed the board about an upcoming show-and-tell event at the library aimed at educating children. Looking ahead, he discussed preparations for the upcoming Fourth of July celebrations, which include organizing the parade, conducting firework inspections, and managing other related activities.

**New Business**

**EMS Report:**
No report was available due to Deputy Chief Lepin's absence. Chief Blake mentioned pending radio equipment installations for new ambulances and participation in upcoming training sessions.

**New Business**

**Chief Report:**
Chief Blake provided a financial update, including approval to pay pending bills and discussed ongoing challenges and strategies for managing cash flow and debt obligations.

**Pay Bills**:
Chris DuPont motioned to pay the bills as presented. Kim Stout seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

**Citizens Input:**
Brandie Macnamee inquired about a potential supplemental budget and emphasized the need for proactive management in securing bond funds.

**Additional Comments/Concerns:**
There were no further comments or concerns raised by board members or attendees.

**Adjournment:**
The meeting adjourned at 7:54 PM

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**Board President**  **Recording Secretary**