

La Veta Fire Station
100 Birch St
La Veta, Colorado
MINUTES

February 8, 2024 @ 6:00pm

Present: Directors Schmidt, Alt, and Lacy, Brunner and Valdez were in attendance.

Staff: EMS Director Mower and Fire Chief Jameson and Administrative Assistant Passarelli

were in attendance.

Guests: Laura Jameson and Anna Jameson were in attendance. Christina Guadagnoli,

and Sue Alt joined via ZOOM

Call to Order – Pledge - Roll Call

Approval of Agenda

- Brunner Made a Motion to Amend the Agenda for February 8th to include the Mill Levy and Auxiliary plans for the community room. Alt seconded the motion. Motion Passed.

Minutes

- Brunner made the correction on the Fire Chief's Report. Change the "Walsenburg" to "State" owned the vehicle before we got it. Valdez made the Motion to approve the minutes as amended. Brunner seconded the motion. Motion Passed.

Public Forum

- Anna Jameson asked if she could use the firehouse for a Girl Scout Cookie Sale on February 10th & 17th 1:30pm to 3:30pm. Brunner made a Motion to approve the request. Lacy seconded the motion. Motion Passed.

Guests, Correspondence, and Presenters

- None Presented

Treasurer's Report (All reports given in board packet)

- Schmidt: In the expenses does that show the write-offs out of the bills? Mower: Since I have been doing this job I have not seen any request for write-offs. It could include that, but from September to now there have been no write-offs. Passarelli: there should be a number under the EMS Write-offs in QB. Alt: let me answer that correctly, the answer is no, it does not show in expenses. It will show in reduction of income.
- Brunner: What account did you derive the charges EMS \$41270? Is that 371 that you derived that number from? Or was it 370 total? Alt: Right it would be account 370. But again, that is a net number, gross charges minus the adjustments. Brunner: What you are saying is, we know our deposits just total \$151,388. We can't change that. Which was \$74k difference. Alt: I don't know any other account that I could find other funds. Schmidt: Most

- of that is the truck we bought, right? That's where we came up \$75k off during the year. Alt: True.
Valdez made the motion to accept the Treasurer's report. Brunner seconded the motion.
Motion approved.

Fire Chief Report (All reports given in board packet)

- Reinstate Dave Steffan; Schmidt: In order to comply with the SOP's the Chair will entertain the motion to reinstate Dave Steffan. Motion to reinstate Dave Steffan was made by Alt. Secoded by Brunner. Motion approved.

- Sale of E-62. Schmidt: Let's put a closing date for bids. Jameson: we need to put at least 2 weeks. Alt: what was the range for minimum bid? Jameson: I want to put a minimum bid of \$13,000. Alt: We budgeted for \$15,000. Jameson: If we make it to high they won't look at it. If we put it to low we will get low ball numbers. Schmidt: 2 weeks would be the end of February. Valdez: I think it should run a little bit longer. Jameson: We can run it for 2 weeks and close it the first part of March. We could schedule things and meet a half hour before next month's meeting and publicly open the bids at that. Schmidt: Lets close the bids on the 29th and open on the meeting in March. Alt: Do you feel there will be interest locally? Jameson: Everything else has been. Alt: Since we agreed the budget for \$15k for that, I would like that to be the minimum that we advertise for. Jameson: We can go that way. We have to be in the sales market. It's up to the board. Schmidt: To me the Blue Book Value is where we should start. Jameson, you said the Blue Book Value is \$13k, what is the high? Jameson: High end is up around \$18k to \$19k. Mid-range is \$15k. Brunner: We are not in a huge hurry. We can start at \$15k and if we don't get any interest then we lower. Schmidt: Motion listing E62 for a minimum of \$15k for sealed bids to be due by February 29th. Jameson: We can open them publicly at the March meeting. Why don't we do bids by March 8th. Schmidt: anyone have an opinion? Ok, closing March 8th. The Chair will entertain the motion to sell E62 for a minimum of \$15k with sealed bids to be received no later than March 8th. We will advertise for 3 consecutive weeks online and in the World Journal. Motion made by Brunner. Secoded by Alt. Motion Approved.

- USDA Grant: Schmidt: Is this something that we need to get started on now? Jameson: it's all in the email. We just have to get them that information. I need to keep working on getting the money from Bree at the school. Schmidt: Once we get that all ready to submit we need to send that around to all the board members. We want to wait to submit till we have confirmation that we have the matching funds. Jameson: According to Bree, she can cut the check at any time. Alt: What's the string attached to getting the funds from the school? Jameson: we are doing a cooperative training. Valdez: What's the training? Jameson: we get credit for showing up like we did the other day. It's no real strings attached. We just have to work with them. Bree ended up with 10k for this year and for next year. Valdez: As representing the school, I would like to see some fire training or EMS training. Mower: We show up for football games all the time. Valdez: This is beyond showing up for those things. I would like to see some education. Jameson: I have one for you. You see that huge structure that we get no revenue for covering it. Valdez: I would like to see continuing education on EMS week or Fire Week. Mower: That goes without saying. We do that and

always have done it. Brunner: I think it would be important for me as a board member that we follow the SOP's under Grants. I think we need a bigger picture before we look at things like that. I really appreciate the Chief saying we need a grant for the SCBA's, but we need to prioritize our grants and figure that out as a board. I think the grant policy in the SOP's allows for that. I think if we follow that, we will have input to say this is what our most important priority is in the bigger picture. Schmidt: That was why I was saying when we get the application ready to send then it will come around to the board and the board will have the say. Mower: And that's fine, but SCBA bottles are priority for the record. Because they are a huge safety issue if they are not up to date and we use them all the time. It is absolutely necessary that we keep up with those. I would ask that the board keep that in mind because this is the lives of your firefighters that we are talking about.

- Jameson: Who's responsible for applying for Grants. D-FPC had a Health and Safety Grant. I don't know if you have applied for that grant or not. Who's responsibility is it to bring this stuff to the board. The board has taken control of Grants. Does the board want to take control of that and work on revenue for us?? Schmidt: My opinion on that is it's definitely the Director of the departments job to bring those grants to the board. The other side is the policy allows for us to review those applications. We want you to bring any and all grants to our attention. We will do anything we can to help with that process. Jameson: We need to get involved and get engaged in grants. I think grants are the only way we will get out of financial problems. Valdez: I think that is true. I understand why you have to have proper procedures for grants. Schmidt: I don't want to be where the board doesn't know what grants we are applying for. Valdez: Did you do the proper paperwork for the grant? Jameson: No, all we have is the paperwork that needs to be filled out. Schmidt: At this point nobody has done anything they shouldn't have done. Jameson: I want to talk to Mower and see if there is anything else we can use. The grant money is for capital items. Items that have a life span. Valdez: I would like for you all to pursue this process. Jameson: We will move on this one and any others that come along.

- Alt: Jameson, do you have a number on how many SCBA's we have and the expiration dates? Jameson: No I don't have that right now. Brunner: I think what would really help is how many we have and how long they are good for. Jameson: These are our oldest. Valdez: Maybe next month you can give us an inventory on what we have for the budgeting and grant purposes. Jameson: I'm trying to find revenue to help pay for that so it doesn't come out of the general fund.

- Snow Removal: Schmidt: We need to bid out the snow removal. We should put an ad in the paper and get bids. It needs to be automatically done. Brunner: Made a motion to place an ad in the paper for snow removal at station one. We are looking to hire somebody to do snow removal. Seconded by Schmidt. Motion approved.

- ISO, Valdez: Are we going to try and get to a lower rating? Jameson: It isn't cost effective to give enough back to the community for what it costs to do. Mower: Then there is the water supply. You can only get to a certain point on that. Valdez: Does this information go to insurance companies? Mower: When they apply for insurance on a home it is supposed to be applied. Alt: We should advertise the good news. Every home owner can take advantage of this now. Jameson: Not every. Only if you live inside 5 miles of the station

and close to a hydrant. You can get the advantage. The next step we need to work on the tender operation to supply a steady flow of water to the fire to help on insurance. Valdez: How about an article in the paper? Schmidt: It should include this and the lower mill levy saving people money on that also. Mower: I would suggest we do this on a regular basis. Twice a year or quarterly. Put some kind of report in the paper about what the district is doing. What we have accomplished. Valdez: There's a lot we can do to make the department shine. I think we should work on an article for the paper. Alt: I volunteer to pull something together. Valdez: Of course you will send it out to the board? Alt: Yes. Mower: It needs to include EMS and Fire. Alt: If you want to give me some bullet points to include we can do that. Mower: Some of that is in my report.

EMT Director's Report: (All reports given in board packet)

- Tuition Agreement; Mower: I will be changing the agreement to be for 2 years and 60 calls. Schmidt: You need to send that to the board for approval. Mower: I will do that. Valdez: Do you address pro rating it if they complete 14 months and must move? Mower: No, we have never done that. Valdez: What do you do if they don't make their commitment? Mower: If they don't make their commitment, they pay the money back. Valdez: It shouldn't be the full amount if they give you 14 months. It should be pro-rated. Mower: All I know is we have never done that. Alt: It doesn't mean we shouldn't. Circumstances where somebody must move. Valdez: It should be prorated. Mower: I can put that in there with all the numbers. Brunner: Do you want to go to the 2 years because the class costs more? Mower: Yes. The EMT classes were half the price. Part of that is also retainment. We need to benefit from the expense we put out for this. I will look at the contract in detail and retype it.

Administrator's Report: (All reports given in board packet)

- HB21-1110; H. Jameson has contacted a local IT that will update our website for free.
- Archive Docs; Brunner: Go By SDA Rules
- Incentive Pay; Brunner: Follow SOP's
- Emergency Lighting; Brunner: order new ones and replace.
- BRC Grant; Passarelli: I request permission to look into it. Alt: Absolutely.
- Firehouse Grant; Schmidt: Did we get any information on that? Passarelli: According to the minutes from the June 5, 2023, meeting

- A company that writes grants has submitted a proposal to write a grant for us, they have an 80% return on what they submit. They will be applying for approximately \$75,000.00 worth of grants that will cost us approximately \$5,000.00 if they are successful. This grant would provide for about 15 SCBA units.
- *MSA: The Board of Directors voted to move forward with the grant proposal. Director Brunner asked that the process for the grant follow the SOPs in that the Board of Directors will have the last say in the approval of the grant, that the BOD will know the full extent of the grant, and the full amount that the LVFPD will be financially responsible for. Director Schmidt stated that he agreed, the SOPs do need to be followed and the company Firehouse Grants would be given the 5 items listed in the SOPs prior to entering a contract

with them. Director Alt stated that the SOP items will be included in the contract and monthly reports will be given to the BOD. All agreed and the motion passed.

Brunner: I think this was the participation part of it. Schmidt: That was our match. For their services as I recall was \$500. They are generating the narrative right now. Brunner: was that for 2024 or 2023? Jameson: The information is for 2023 that they are requesting. The inadequate way things were done was just numbers thrown out for the years previous. So, to try to make it look like it was not plum out of line. There was an accurate EMS calls and Fire calls from last year. On the reporting side we need to change the way things are done to make it easier to access that information. Alt: Have we determined that the \$1000 invoice is valid? Schmidt: I am almost positive that we sat right here and agreed to \$500 upfront, and they keep applying for us until they get something. If they get something, then we have a \$500 match. Brunner: It works well since we never signed a contract. Passarelli: There is a contract according to Alt in the June minutes. Brunner: I remember that conversation too. Valdez: Do you have the contract, Alt? Alt: No. Schmidt: Lets just contact them and have them send us a copy of the contract. Passarelli: I will contact them.

Old Business

- a. Ballot Question/Will Levy; This will be discussed in the Special Meeting on February 12, 2024, at 6:00pm.
- b. Plans for Community Room; This will be discussed in the Special Meeting on February 12, 2024, at 6:00pm
- c. EMS Mutual Aid Agreement: Motion to accept the changes to the agreement and send it out to be signed by the 3 parties. Seconded by Alt. Motion Approved.

New Business

- a. Bookkeeping back in-house; Alt: We have talked about it and pretty much in agreement that we should pull the plug at the end of this month. I will get with Passarelli and hammer out the details. I will send them a letter. Schmidt: First, the board will have to approve terminating that agreement with Century Financial. Then you can send them a letter. Alt: Why don't we wait till the next board meeting, and I can present that letter? Valdez: I would love to save the monthly money. What happens if Passarelli decides to leave. Brunner: Century will pick it back up. Valdez: I hate having one person in charge. We need another person for backup. Passarelli: What I have done so far is make instructions on how to do everything I do. If I were to leave, the next person can just come in and pick up. Schmidt: Will you have a plan and present it at the next meeting? Personally, I don't have a problem with this board to decide tonight that you 2 take care of this. Valdez: I'm fine as long as Passarelli has the instructions in place. Motion to terminate our agreement with Century Financial and pull the bookkeeping back in-house was made by Brunner with the caveat that we don't have some contractual agreement with Century Financial that precludes us from saying by. Seconded by Lacey. Motion Carried.
- b. DOLA Application; Schmidt: We probably need another grant to finish the Community Room. So we can apply for a DOLA Grant for 2025. Brunner: Our first step would be to talk to our local person from DOLA to get some directions. Alt: Do these DOLA Grants include

money for engineering or just construction? Brunner: They can. They are willing to help if they see the benefit to the community. Valdez: Do we have to match? Brunner: Last time we had money to use to match. Schmidt: The main thing is DOLA has a lot of money in this now. Brunner: We can meet with the representative here and see what they think. Mower: They usually want shovel ready. Schmidt: We already have the plans. Brunner: With a few changes. We need to update it. Schmidt: There are a few things just because development has already happened. We just need to contact them and get the relationship going. Brunner: Schmidt and I will contact our rep.

c. Energy Conservation: Brunner: Our utilities for January were \$1868 that's just for Station 1. That is electricity and propane. Our budget was \$917. So, we spent double. Why? It's a little colder. We have gone to use more electricity because we have the lights on at night and we are using more propane because we increased the temperature in the days. I think as a board that we must show conservation. That we are being good stewards with the taxpayer's money. B. Jameson stated it was a safety issue. I think we need to change the light fixture so they can turn it off and on. I have a hard time with the bill. The truck days were designed to be net zero. We lost that during the building. The days are supposed to be 50 degrees. The lights are not LEDs. We need to figure out how to show the community that we are being good stewards of our energy. Valdez: If you look at any facilities, payroll is the most expensive and then your utilities. The community is not going to say, "hey I want to look at your light bill". I wouldn't want to go into a dark building. Brunner: We are not saying that we must have a black building. What I'm saying is we don't need the lights on 24/7. Valdez: Surely, they are not on during the day. Jameson: Yes, they are because I don't come down and turn them off every morning and come back every evening to turn them on. Valdez: We couldn't put them on a timer? Brunner: We could, but that was never finished. That was part of the contractor's problem. Maybe we need a night light. But to leave the lights on 24/7, the bulbs go out. There is not a harder light to change than that top row. The truck days - it's nice to have a warm day, sure, we know that. The building was built to be at 50 degrees. It's an unmanned bay. The 10k square feet of propane use is the problem. Valdez: You are the ones who come in and get the trucks. What do you think about the bays going back to 50? Jameson: For the last 3 years the temperature has been 60 degrees out there. Brunner: I don't think so because I usually turn the heat on and turn it down. Jameson: Since I have been Chief, the temperature has been set at 60 degrees. If I keep the ceiling fan going when we get solar heat, it keeps it at 65 degrees normally. Valdez: Normally are you working in the bays? Jameson: There is quite a bit of time we are out there. We have 1 full day of training every month. Then there is time during the month that people are here working on stuff. Valdez: Can you turn the heat up when you are in there working? Brunner: It was never meant for that. Jameson: It must be at a certain temperature. We don't want it to be high, and we don't want it to be super low. Can I get a pull from the volunteers to help with the bill? We are a 24hr service. How can I make it so we can generate funds to help with the bill so it's comfortable for us to be out there. Valdez: What would you like? Why do you think the lights should be on all the time? Jameson: It started with the door not working. So, we started leaving the lights on and it made it so it was easily accessible at night. If we could get a light sensor and make sure they are just on at night, that would be perfect. Valdez: Can we do that Brunner? Brunner: Sure. Jameson: We were talking about vandalism around town. It was nice to drive by and be able to see in the building. Valdez: Does that make us a target? Jameson: It makes us less of a target. Brunner: If we got people coming in the building, that's a different story. Valdez: Your

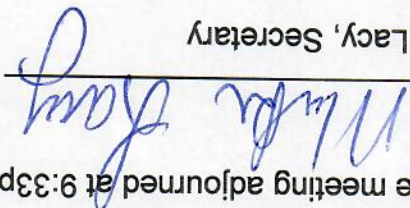
utilities in a building this big are going to be high. Brunner: We know that they are going too high. But they don't have to be that high. We don't need them on 24/7. Jameson: We will shut them off. For training days, we will find somewhere else to have training. Valdez: Why? Jameson: At 50 degrees you need full gear on. At 60 degrees you can be comfortable with a light jacket. Brunner: For training days, they are 1 day a month. We can turn it up for those days. There must be a manageable way to fix this. Valdez: On training days, you should be comfortable. You should not have to go anywhere else for training. I don't think our people should be out there when it's that cold. Brunner: I don't have a problem with that. That is not the issue. That's not what we are talking about. Right now, those days will be at 60 to 65 degrees all night long. It doesn't make sense to keep it on 24/7. It doesn't make sense to keep the lights on 24/7. There are ways we can go around that. We need to conserve. Valdez: We need to figure out a light that will work. If you are going to have a training day, we can put the heat up. I don't think you guys should have to sit out there at 50 degrees. Jameson: It costs money every time we turn it up. We are trying to keep it at a constant temperature. Valdez: So, you are telling me it's going to be a surge in the cost to turn it up? Brunner: If you want to make it comfortable at 65, come in the day before and turn it up. Then turn it off when you get here. Schmidt: What are we going to set the heat at? Alt: What's the design goal? Brunner: It was built to be at 50 degrees. Schmidt: Here's my proposal. We will test it. Turn it to 50. When we get the utility bill next month we will see if it makes enough difference to matter. What it has to be is set so the equipment will start, and the water doesn't freeze. We should set the temperature at 55. Test it out and see if it's going to make a difference. Until we get the light installed, we will continue to do what we are doing. Brunner: Let's do 55 degrees. Valdez: Then we can evaluate what the savings are.

- d. Review & Approve EMS Transport Billing Policy; Schmidt: My only concern is the part that states the EMS Director will be sending billing into every Tuesday and Friday. Mower: This is not part of my job. Brunner: So, we can contain control, we can put the EMS Director will direct the billing company to pull the PCR's. It's the billing company's responsibility to do this.
- Valdez: When did we update our fees? Brunner: We just did last year. Valdez: Every year, we should be looking at a fee increase. Brunner: What we did last time is we asked QCM to compare us to other companies to see if we were in the ballpark of billing. We can ask SDW to do this also. Valdez: We should make sure we look at this annually. Brunner: Let's leave it as it is so we can get them rolling on billing. Then later down the road we can look into this.
- Alt: Let me re-word this Policy and can we put this on Monday's agenda to approve and sign. Schmidt: We must list it as a Special Meeting. We will put February 12, 2024, as a Special Meeting and post the agenda. This will be discussed in the Special Meeting on February 12, 2024 at 6:00pm.
- Schmidt: 6.2.2 what is this? Brunner: This is our Charity Clause. If it's a district person we do not send them to collections. They must be taxpayers of the district. Everyone else goes to billing. Mower: Property owners. Valdez: Do we have to have a Charity Clause? I say anyone who doesn't pay goes to collections. Brunner: It's up to our discretion to say who we are sending to collections. Valdez: Do we have to have a Charity Clause? Brunner: I think so because they pay taxes. Valdez: Does the Special District require that? Brunner: No, it's just us. Valdez: I think that is a poor policy. Brunner: Valdez you can make a motion to cancel that. A motion that any unpaid bills go to collections, no matter if you are in district

or not made by Valdez. Seconded by Alt (Discussion) Brunner gave the history on why the Charity Clause came into existence. Mower: I have not received any that we need to look at that would not be sent to collections. I have not got any since I took over EMS. Alt: I think it would be terrible optics to make that change when we are trying to go for a new mill levy. Schmidt: I don't see any problem leaving it as it is. The amount of money we are talking about is extremely low. We very seldom use it. Roll call vote 4 No's to 1 Yes. Motion Failed.

Executive Session – not needed.

*** MSA:** The meeting adjourned at 9:33pm



Mike Lacy, Secretary