

**LA VETA FIRE PROTECTION DISTRICT**  
**La Veta Fire Station**  
**100 Birch**  
**La Veta, Colorado**

**MINUTES**

March 14, 2019

6:00 P.M.

Present: Directors Littlefield, Nielsen, Heikes, and Walker were in attendance.

Staff: EMS Director Schmidt, and District Secretary Pezze. Acting Fire Chief Steffan's absence was excused due to travel and being unavailable.

Guests: Ron Jameson, Dave Mower, Norma Mower, Jim Berg, Mark Brunner, Peg Littlefield, Eddie Ray, Justin Jameson, Mickey Schmidt, Richard Pezze, Cheryle Johnston, Stirling Lathrop, Sam Kaemer and cameraman Carl from KOAA News 5.

**Call to Order – Pledge - Roll Call**

The meeting was called to order, the Pledge of Allegiance was given, roll call was taken and Director Littlefield welcomed all those in attendance.

**Approval of Agenda**

The March 14, 2019 Agenda was approved as presented.

**Minutes**

**MSA:\*** Minutes of the February 14, 2019 regular meeting were approved as presented.

**Appointment of Board Directors**

Three letters of interest were received for filling the Board Director vacancy that was created by Shannon ShROUT's resignation in December of 2018.

**MSA:** The Board approved and appointed Ronald Jameson to fill the vacant Board Director position

Director Littlefield then administered the Oath of Office to Ron Jameson. The Board welcomed Director Jameson and thanked him for his interest in serving the La Veta Fire Protection District (LVFPD).

**Public Comments**

Stirling Lathrop, representing the La Veta Fire Protection District Auxiliary presented the Volunteer of the Month Award to Firefighter and EMT Mark Worgan. Director Littlefield also expressed appreciation for Mark's contributions and dedication to the District.

Stirling Lathrop then asked Director Nielsen if he would be able to identify the respondents who made comments in the Survey Monkey survey. Director Nielsen stated that, from his own perspective, as a third party reading those comments, he would probably not be able to identify who made comments.

**Guests, Correspondence, and Presenters**

District Secretary Pezze advised that the Cucharas Sanitation and Water District (CS&WD) honored the LVFPD's request of reverting the new monthly rate of \$250.00 back to the previous \$80.00 per month for the water and sewer service at the Cuchara Fire Station. Appreciation was expressed to the CS&WD Board of Directors for their consideration.

**Treasurer's Report**

The Treasurer's Report and payments for the March 14, 2019 meeting were presented.

**MSA:** The Board approved the Treasurer's Report as presented.

District Secretary Pezze presented the Application for Exemption from Audit for fiscal year 2018 as prepared by Dixon, Waller and Co., Inc. Director Littlefield stated that in his visits with Tim Dixon, CPA, Tim has attested to the LVFPD's fiscal strength and current financial condition. Director Nielsen added that USDA and San Isabel Electric Assoc., Inc. and the Fowler State Bank also determined that the LVFPD is fiscally stable in issuing loans for construction of the new La Veta Fire Station.

**MSA:** The Board approved and signed the 2018 Exemption from Audit Application as prepared by Dixon, Waller and Co., Inc.

**\*MSA = Moved, Seconded and Approved (unanimously unless otherwise indicated)**

**EMS Director Report**

- 1) 10 EMS runs with 8 patients transported in February 2019.
- 2) The Colorado Dept. of Public Health and Environment (CDPHE) grant application for the new ambulance and equipment for Cuchara is pending. The local RETAC grant hearing will be on March 19, 2019. Mark and Cyndi Worgan and EMS Director Schmidt will attend that hearing. The next step is the State grant hearings that will occur in April in Denver.
- 3) Director Schmidt will attend the regular RETAC meeting prior to the grant hearings on March 19, 2019. Regarding the annual Huerfano County RETAC funds (awarded via a mini-grant submitted through the County Commissioners), she is hopeful that Darrick Garcia, with Spanish Peaks Amb. was able to get LVFPD's Medical Director fees of \$3,000 (for Dr. Weber) added as an amendment to the County's RETAC grant request.
- 4) Jake Thomsen has taken a firefighter job with South Metro in Denver and has turned in all his gear and equipment.
- 5) Eddie Ray has been conducting very beneficial EMS training sessions to provide training on specific topics required for National Registry continuing education credits.
- 6) Wilz Trauma Symposium will be held in Pueblo on March 16<sup>th</sup> and one LVFPD EMT may attend.
- 7) Eddie Ray is interested in attending a leadership conference in Grand Junction in April.
- 8) The surveillance cameras have been installed in the EMS and Fire Dept. apparatus bays. The cameras are motion activated and additional cameras can be added if necessary.
- 9) Asst. EMS Director Mower informed the Board about a very critical EMS call that occurred on Hwy. 160, at the top of La Veta Pass earlier in the day. Mower advised that he would like to be sure that an event be coordinated to show appreciation and recognition to all the parties involved with the call including, but not limited to, personnel from Colorado State Patrol, La Veta Marshal's Office, Huerfano County Dispatch, Costilla County Emergency Responders, LVFPD EMTs etc.
- 10) Eddie Ray will re-schedule the Stop the Bleed class at the La Veta Library in the near future.

**MSA:** The Board approved retiring to executive session to receive legal advice of Counsel (attorneys) pursuant to §24-6-402(4)(b), C.R.S.

The Board retired to executive session at 6:30 PM.

The Board returned from executive session at 7:17 PM. Attorney Dino Ross with the law firm of Ireland Stapleton Pryor & Pascoe, PC stated over the phone, "This is Dino Ross with Ireland Stapleton and my partner Kelley Duke and I provided legal advice to the Board in executive session pursuant to §24-6-402(4)(b) of the Colorado Revised Statutes. As attorney client communication that executive session was not recorded."

No Board action taken.

**Fire Chief Report**

- 1) 4 fire calls in February 2019: 1 Motor Vehicle Accident, 1 semi rig with smoking brakes, propane tank leak, and fire alarm activation at the La Veta School.
- 2) Fire Trainings in February: Feb. 16 on Hazardous Materials with CO State Patrol Sgt. Luke Armstrong with 15 La Veta FFs and 4 FFs from Huerfano County Fire Protection District. February 16 afternoon session on communications and radio use with 9 La Veta FFs in attendance.
- 3) Acting Chief Staffan and Coleman Glover traveled to Barstow, California to pick up an emergency backup generator for the La Veta Station on February 25 to February 28. Acquisition of the large generator was arranged by Huerfano County personnel. The generator comes from US Department of Defense and was governmental military surplus stock. Cost incurred, to date, for getting the generator is \$2,680.00. This includes traveling costs, new tires for the generator trailer and other various parts and repairs.

Mark Brunner provided a detailed written explanation with options of how the generator could be set up. The generator is a Caterpillar Diesel Unit rated at 350KW, 3 phase, 480 volt. It only has 380 running hours. It is much larger than necessary and the anticipated cost to get it operational is approximately \$2,500 for new antifreeze, oil, filters, batteries, operations manuals, fittings, parts and startup fuel and labor. The second segment would be the building infrastructure for the generator and that cost would be approximately \$21,200. The remaining segment would be to determine if the generator would remain portable or if it would be permanently mounted at the exterior of the La Veta Station. Director Littlefield explained that actual ownership of the generator (either Huerfano County or LVFPD) still needs to be resolved and he will research that issue. Once there is written proof that it is LVFPD property plans can proceed for its use. In the meantime Coleman Glover will work on getting the diesel engine up to initial operational status. The Board thanked David Steffan, Coleman Glover and Mark Brunner for their time and research on the generator project.

- 4) Dave Mower will be rejoining the Fire Department of the LVFPD.

**MSA:** The Board approved appointing Dave Mower as Fire Department Lieutenant.

### **Old Business**

Regarding the Intergovernmental Agreement (I.G.A.) for use of the La Veta Fire Station as an Emergency Operations Center by Huerfano County agencies will continue. Ownership and use of the generator will be incorporated into the building use discussions.

Director Walker stated that there is no progress with the status of the State retirement pension plan. Directors Walker and Nielsen will make an appointment to visit with Stonewall Fire Protection District Fire Chief Loyd Holliman to see how that District is administering their pension funding.

The Memorandum of Understanding with the LVFPD Auxiliary is still pending. Director Walker is the new LVFPD Board Director liaison and he will attend their April 11, 2019 meeting at the Cuchara Station.

Regarding the District Fire Chief's position Director Nielsen advised that he has met with the Beulah Fire Department and he was very impressed with their new fire station and their drone program. Beulah has found the drone project to be a good recruit and retain resource also. Director Littlefield stated that the LVFPD Fire Chief position is currently tabled.

Directors Heikes and Walker are currently conducting interviews with applicants for the District Secretary position. A final decision will be presented at the April meeting for the Board's action on hiring. Director Littlefield has researched using the Century Financial Group in Trinidad for the LVFPD's accounting. District Secretary Pezze has provided them with current financial reports, check registers etc. and they have quoted a cost of \$500 per month for their services. Century Financial Group will be able to handle the accounting, provide monthly financials, bill pay, deposits, budget preparation, and payroll. They will also monitor the required financial special district filings with the various State of Colorado departments. Additional research will be done on this service and how it will affect the District Secretary position.

The EMS Director position was discussed and Director Schmidt has recommended that Eddie Ray be hired as her replacement for the EMS Director position. She is retiring as of May 10, 2019.

**MSA:** The Board approved hiring Eddie Ray for the part time EMS Director position effective May 10, 2019.

Directors Heikes and Jameson will continue researching the cost of used jersey barriers for flood preparedness at the La Veta Fire Station. They will also look into getting additional gravel around the La Veta Station grounds. The Board authorized Directors Heikes and Jameson to move ahead with the projects as necessary.

### **New Business**

Jim Berg advised that he had a productive meeting with Directors Heikes and Walker and he was able to explain his concerns for many aspects of the LVFPD operations and facilities that he has recently been involved with and feels that the Board needs to be cognizant of. Jim's list of items to be aware of included finance, operation and maintenance of both the La Veta and Cuchara fire station facilities, apparatus, firefighters shifts, fire operations, communications, upkeep and replacement of hand tools, protective personal equipment (PPE), portable pumps, continuing training and the drone project. The Board found the information very beneficial. Jim suggested that the Board make a portfolio of the tasks in order to understand what needs to be done and then make sure that it gets done. He feels that not all the items are the total responsibility of the Fire Chief. Some of the duties could become the responsibility of the "shift" personnel. Director Littlefield asked Jim to expand on the La Veta Station facilities. Currently the Makeup Air Unit (MAU) is not operational in the heating mode. Mark Brunner advised that there is an electronic issue with the MAU and he is working on diagnosing and resolving the issue. The automatic lighting and alarms systems also need attention to bring them up to the operational levels that they are capable of. The SCBA fill station also needs to be run at least one hour every week. The Cuchara Fire Station needs exterior staining, and attention given to the loose roof screws. He would also recommend adding a longer concrete apron in front of the Cuchara Station to alleviate the mud issues. Huerfano County Road and Bridge Dept. will be contacted to see if they can provide gravel in the meantime. Communication issues continue with VHF radio and paging systems and the County Dispatch center using the I Am Responding notifications. Mickey Schmidt recommended contacting the Huerfano County 911 Authority Board to see if they would be able to help provide funding for some of the necessary repairs and upgrades. Jim is researching projected costs on an appropriate and quality drone. The Board thanked Jim for his dedication and concern for the District's welfare. Director Littlefield stated that he will review all the topics that Jim listed with the Fire Chief and EMS Director and develop a plan with them and their officers to get the issues addressed and keep the Board advised of progress. District Secretary Pezze was also directed to contact the insurance carrier to look at hail damage on the La Veta Station roof and vehicles.

The current LVFPD Bylaws were developed in 2003 and amended in 2005 and need to be updated. The attorney firm of Ireland Stapleton has stated that they can provide a quote for that service along with an updated Board of Directors Manual.

**MSA:** The Board approved proceeding with the action of updating the LVFPD Bylaws and Board of Directors Manual.

EMS Director Schmidt asked for approval to send Eddie Ray to a leadership conference in Grand Junction on April 18 and 19, 2019. Cost of the conference registration is \$100.00, 3 nights lodging at \$150.00 per night, meals and fuel.

**MSA:** The Board approved Eddie Ray attending the Grand Junction leadership conference and authorized all associated expenses.

**MSA:** The meeting adjourned at 8:19 PM.



Robert L. Walker, Secretary