

La Veta Fire Protection District

**La Veta Fire Station
100 Birch Street
La Veta, Colorado
Minutes**

September 16th, 2023 @ 1:00PM

Present: Directors Schmidt, Alt, Lacy, Brunner, Valdez.

Staff: Fire Chief Ron Jameson / Mark Worgan / Sue Alt / Dave Mower

Guests: Grace Brunner. On-line: Christina Guadagnoli / Brian Jameson

Call To Order – Pledge – Roll Call

The meeting was called to order at 13:01, the Pledge of Allegiance was given, and roll call was taken for those present. All Directors were present.

Amendments to the Agenda:

None

Approval of Agenda

- Alt motioned, Lacy seconded. Unanimous motion to approve the agenda.

Minutes

August Minutes:

Edits to minutes:

Treasurer Bonded (Not Treasury) and is bonded per the insurance policy

Typos: Trevor Holiday – Joel – Mickey needs an E

“Take the issue” in Old business to “take the issue to the voters”

Mike Lacy doesn’t have an E in Lacy

Under New Business – Mike Lacy took motion to accept resignation from Eddie Ray
(State his name)

Amend section 9A of the bylaws (Motioned made by Schmidt?) Need to recheck

Call for review of the recording by Schmidt

Brunner made the motioned, Alt seconded, move the approval of August 17th Minutes until minutes can be reviewed for accuracy. They will be tabled until the next meeting and then will be entered into the official record. Unanimous motion.

Public Forum:

- **None**

Guests, Correspondence, Presenters:

- **Per Agenda, letter from Norma Mower was presented.** During the 8/17/23 meeting, Eddie Ray said he did not forward the letter to all the Board members – the letter has now been forwarded to all the Board members. Subsequent to receiving that letter, Norma and Dave met with Eddie to discuss the contents of the letter. Schmidt asked that the Board respond to the letter so as not to insinuate negligence in any sense. The letter was reviewed point by point by Schmidt.
 1. The Board affirms Article 7, Section 13 referenced by Norma.
 2. The Board affirms the language in Article 7 1A that they understand and agree with it
 3. How is training documented? The question was answered in the meeting with Eddie
 4. Points out the problem – titles should be determined by the function that the individual is performing.
 5. We would need a motion to amend the SOP.
 6. Responders only make more than shift people if they run more than one call a day. Conflict of interest addressed elsewhere
 7. Administrator advised on this point. Eddie felt that the Board had voted to change this – he could not find evidence of this. Response to Norma: Board needs to review that and the SOP needs to reflect the Board's current policy on that.
 8. These sorts of issues should be handled through a chain of command.
 9. All members are of value to the district.
 10. The Board welcomes all input to influence it's decision making.
 11. Point taken.

If those responses are satisfactory, Schmidt would draft a letter to Norma answering her concerns. Brunner suggested that the letter be circulated to the rest of the Board before it's sent. Schmidt confirmed that this would happen and that it would be open to discussion and re-draft prior to signing and sending.

Treasurer's Report:

- **Month of August presented by Alt**

Received Property Taxes / ownership taxes / minor amount of interest. Checking account interests / capital reserves interest. \$250 in donations for the month. EMS Department charges based on calls made. Total Revenue. Expenses – administration costs. Major cost was the monthly loan to San Isabel Electric. Fire Department expenses. EMS Department expenses. No expenditure for grant writing or grants.

Slightly behind the curve in revenue, slightly ahead of the curve on expenses. Behind the curve on expected donations. Fire Department charges – comes from a fire where La Veta Fire actually charges. (Spring Creek Fire, for example.) When they bill for accidents on the road, extrication, putting fires out, for vehicle incidents.

Way behind on grants, as well as projected income. At 53% of expected revenue.

Expenses – Administration 99,000. Fire Department - \$42,000. EMS – 77,000.

Grants – Only spent \$5k pursuing grants.

Bottom line – Income \$150k. Alt said that “through August, we’re doing quite well.”

\$10k transfer from operations account. Anticipation of bills that needed to be paid by Eddie Ray. How is this done? Calling up Stacey and asking for money to be transferred. Loan to San Isabel updated.

List of expenses was looked over – Alt set the minimum at \$250 for review. Door expenses, brake expenses, medical supplies, etc.

Last sheet – Rolling Trend Sheet Overview as created by Jim Alt.

“We might make about \$80k for the year.” Jim Alt

First National Bank – Operations and Checking Accounts

- Replace the previous Board Members with the current Board Members as well as Bernadette Cappellucci and Stacey Byrd. They do the bulk of check writing.
- Reserve Accounts with Colo Trust - same suggestion, per Alt. (Replace the previous Board Members with the current ones.)

Question presented - is it common that we have all Board Members as signatories? Yes – it made it easier to get signatures when needed.

No questions for Alt.

- **2 Resolutions, 2023-09-16-02 and 2023-09-16-03**
Read by Schmidt into the minutes (see attached resolutions)
- **Motion to adopt resolution 2023-09-16-02, Resolution to change the list of signatories (Mike's name needed to be changed) for First National Bank in Trinidad accounts.**
Alt motioned
Lacy seconded
No discussion
Roll call vote – all yes. Motioned carried.

Form given to each Director to be filled out and delivered to First National Bank.

- **Motion to adopt resolution 2023-9-16-03, Resolution to change the list of signatories for COLOTRUST accounts**
Chair entertained motion
Brunner made that motion
Alt seconded
No discussion
Roll call vote – all yes. Motion carried.

Alt will send Lacy updated resolutions.

Fire Chief Report:

- **Month of August.** Century ride / Auxiliary. Normally brings in around \$3,000.00. Equipment needs. Had funds available since the Spring Creek Fire – inflation is eating away at it. **Suggested that we purchase a new truck with these funds.**

Four door cab. Transfer pump/hose reel unit from old truck to new one. Plans to sell old truck and put it towards this new one. The four door cab aids in aiding other districts.

- **Upgrade old equipment for new equipment.** Chief Jameson thinks they can get 15k-25k for the Armadillo. **He sent out pricing on the new truck to the Board.** The funds from the Spring Creek Fire need to be used. Directors believe he can lower the price a little bit. This would be a 4th Brush Truck, getting rid of the Armadillo. Package would be removed from that truck and put onto the new one. Pump and our tools will be removed. Does the Brush Truck from Huerfano need updates? It only needs maintenance. No government discount as Ford has the government contract – Dodge’s prices have been beating the government contract and they have stock.

Do we have grants we can apply to this? No. Only the Spring Creek Fire money. \$75,000 in that currently. Is there one truck on the lot? This wasn’t discussed.

- **Motion pursuant to this request to purchase the truck for use as Wildland Fire Vehicle at a top price of \$85,764.45.**

Valdez made the motion

Schmidt seconded the motion

Discussion on Motion:

Mark Brunner – is now a good time to spend this money with four trucks? What about later looking towards getting a grant and using this money. The Spring Creek money has been struggled over and wasn’t earmarked for use just on a Wildland Fire Vehicle. Brunner wants to support a grant that would be used towards a new truck. Moving forward, looking back at the expenses and reserves, we want to move forward as strongly as possible. “There’s money out there to be granted if that’s our priority.”

What else could we spend that \$75k on? “Depends on who you ask apparently.” – Schmidt

Is there history on this money? Earmarked account for Wildfire fund according to Treasurer’s Report.

Alt – operationally we might have some challenges coming up. But that’s what reserve accounts are for. Perhaps we approve this and also pursue a grant for something like this. Jameson – “my hands are tied and I haven’t been looking for

a grant.” Continues to suggest that this is best use of the Spring Creek Fire money, as inflation is “eating a hole in it.” Believes this money still has some “buying power,” still.

Alt pursued the “hands are tied” comment. Jameson feels that Brunner tied his hands in terms of spending money and pursuing grants and now is waiting for the Board to make decisions instead of him. He feels that restrictions were put on him “through the SOP stuff.” Eddie Ray and Ron Jameson worked on grants together. Previous Boards weren’t throwing a lot of restrictions on him for “smaller grants.” “The ground rules changed what previous Boards were having us do.”

Had a previous desire to expenditure more money so that grants looked at the department but felt that he was shut down despite no changes being made to the SOP.

Schmidt determined that this discussion was a rabbit trail, but determined that future discussions about getting grants was more profitable. Jameson believes it’s impossible to get a grant until next year.

Alt asked what the newest brush truck was – a 2004. Almost all of the trucks are 20 years or older, and almost everything was bought used or given to the department.

Brunner believed that this was a funding issue. Wildfire earmark versus truck earmark. Can that be possibly used for a future position? Valdez and Schmidt said that this wasn’t possible.

Motion is revisited.

Schmidt – capital expense budget for the district is one place that the money could come from. To be honest, he doesn’t believe we can get \$15k for the old truck but we’ll “get what we can get.”

\$11,000 is required on top of what is in the reserve funds. (No sales tax required.) Alt suggested that whatever is gotten for the old truck should be put into a reserve fund – this would put it out of budget considerations and would earmark it for a “Wildfire” use down the road.

Jameson said that he plans to negotiate with the Dodge dealer.

Call for the votes – roll call vote.

Alt - Yes

Lacy - Yes

Valdez - Yes

Schmidt - Yes

Brunner – No

Motion is carried. Chief has been authorized to purchase this vehicle for no greater than top price of \$85,764.45.

Jameson: Reported on lengthy discussion at Fire Department meeting about how to bring the Department together, how to utilize more firefighters when EMS is shy, how to make the department more of a team instead of two separate entities. EMS could use drivers?

Sue Alt – maybe the department meeting shouldn't be before the Fire Training so that EMS people can also attend. Jameson said that meeting could be possibly changed – wants to make it accessible for both departments. Wants to create a Brotherhood, not two separate clans. Jameson wants to improve having Fire Department personnel interested in interests of EMS department.

Jameson wanted to bring this to the Board's attention. Alt said that the meeting before the Fire Training has always been viewed as a Fire Meeting by EMS personnel. Jameson suggested more cross-training. Wants to strengthen organization.

911 Board. New agreements from County on the Salamander and IDs distributed to the Board through a separate email. Increase in price. \$480 for that program per year. Seems high to Schmidt. Might be able to do this on our own instead of doing it through the county. Table this and do more investigation into what an inventory program would cost. (Barcoding things.) Salamander does personnel, inventory, etc. Supposedly an all-in-one-program. If county will do personnel and we do a different inventory program, it could be cheaper.

Firehouse Inventory Program. Jameson considering researching this. Wants to sign the agreement on the badges.

- **Motion presented by Schmidt to ratify that agreement with the county to generate ID badges. \$5 per card.**

Valdez made a motion

Brunner seconded

All in favor. Unanimous motion. Motion carried.

Door for North side of building. Price suggestion: \$920.00. "The door has gone bad and has missing parts in it." Brunner believes this is **covered under Houston warranty and is going to call on that.**

Auxiliary Taco Night
\$6000 generated by that.

Jameson :
52 hours
182 miles

Breckenridge conference – Jameson learned a few things but won't be going back. This was paid for, except for travel.

Has the department been paid for the Trujillo Peak Fire by the County? The paperwork was submitted by Brian. How long ago? Two months ago. Alt is willing to pursue it if the information is forwarded. Jameson is going to ask Sue to help with National Fire Reporting Service.

Alt hasn't heard anything – asked if Brian could send him information.

- 8 Fire Calls during the month of August

EMT Director's Report - Given by Mark Worgan

- Maintenance performed on Rescue 2
- **Busy month in August (29 calls) - Nearly one call a day**
- Main narcotics storage safe combination was changed and all narcotics have been accounted for. Maintaining a strict access on that – paramedics should have access to that? Dave Mower requested access to that. How many people have access to that code?

Brunner - Mimicking the policy that Dr. Elias has with Spanish Peaks – officers have access to that main storage safe. All units have accessible selections of narcotics. Main Safe – Mark Worgan / Mark Brunner – current individuals that

have the combination. Who had the combination during Eddie Ray's term as EMT Director? Eddie Ray / Dave Mower / Mark Brunner.

This policy needs to be reflected in writing somewhere.

- **Billing system:**
System has been signed. QuickMed Claims was the old company. Divorcing from them entirely. Waiting for the final bank paperwork to deal with the direct deposits.
- **Faith Brunner** submitted paperwork for membership and recommend to the Board that they accept her membership. Attended recent EMT class hosted by Eddie Ray and got her State/National certification.

Chair entertains motion to accept this membership.

Alt makes the motion to bring Faith Brunner on to EMS Department.

Lacy seconded the motion.

All in favor. Brunner abstained. Motioned carried.

Faith is now a member of the district.

- Dr. Elias and Mr. Whitely, head of Spanish Peaks Ambulance. Met with them to communicate desire to take care of the community.
- **Recommend to promote Sue Alt to position of Lt. as another Lt. is needed.**
Chair entertains a motion to that effect.
Lacy motioned
Brunner seconded.

Discussion:

Schmidt – how many Lts. are there? That would be 2 with Sue Alt. How many Lts. are needed on the EMS department? The chain of command isn't used on calls – medical qualifications apply on calls. Officers have a key, the ability to check things like narcotics. Will Sue Alt have the ability to check narcotics? This will be determined by the EMS directors. Schmidt questions if having two Lts. will make things confusing. (Mark Worgan is absent for two months starting on Friday.) Valdez brought up the fact that Mark Worgan "travels a lot and is frequently gone." Worgan was only gone at Christmas-time and will be gone now.

Brunner - Yes

Lacy - Yes

Valdez - Yes

Schmidt – Yes

Alt abstained.

Motioned passed. Sue Alt has been promoted to the position of Lt.

- Report for number of calls and number of people on those calls given by Worgan.

- **EMS Billing Company**

Did we get switched over? Switching process is currently going – banking information all had to be moved over. Hopes to get this done within the next week.

Systems Design West is the new company. Paperwork has been done for the District – waiting on them.

EMS Director Position – Discussion

Schmidt proposed that the Job Description go back to the original Job Description before Eddie Ray. Brunner and Lacy presented the split Job Description for the EMS Director versus Administrator that Schmidt previously requested. Brunner believes this new description to be more precise than the old (outdated) description. Valdez suggested that the Board needs to decide what to do with the position before the Job Descriptions are finalized.

Schmidt – do we want to separate this position or have one position like Eddie Ray was? He feels that this position needs to be split into a Director and an Administrator. Valdez agrees. EMS Director and a Secretary. Alt questioned this distinction between Administrator and Secretary. Valdez – it's some of the duties and it's not a full-time position. She doesn't feel that it needs to be called an Administrator. She doesn't feel comfortable to combining the administrative and secretarial duties.

Alt – I believe it's about economics. What are we willing to pay somebody to do this? Valdez – we don't have a lot to pay. Alt – I believe we have to start with the Job Description. Valdez believes that it isn't prudent to have one person with all of the duties because of difficulties once they leave/part ways with the district.

Brunner – Attached letter.

Valdez asked what the numbers in the letter reflected. Eddie's pay / shift pay / Chief's salary. \$92,500. Wages / benefit package. Brunner looked at other special districts – \$117k-\$160k for Administrative Directors (full-time). This includes smaller districts. Looking for an Administrative Chief.

Schmidt – the shift pay was included in Eddie's salary pay. "You can't say you were paying him that money and a different pot of shift money." Brunner – we still show shift pay in our incentives and salaries. That's not all taken up by administrative pay. "We're going to have to spend some money to attract someone who is able to do all of this."

Schmidt – "Sounds like a pie in the sky." Believes that there is inflammatory "crap" in the letter. (Arguing ensued about inflammatory nature of the letter.) Believes that spending a lot of money on a person that isn't known won't help the discontent within the district. Brunner – "we are broken right now." "Someone with a history with this district would know what's going on in this district." – Schmidt

Schmidt – do we want to separate these two jobs right now? What the Board want to do.

Alt – sat down with Eddie. Feels that the district is going to "slip" quickly. Bills won't get paid on time. People won't get paid. Feels that there needs to be an Interim Administrator before getting an EMS Director. Schmidt feels that getting both is more important.

3 paramedics are still responding within the EMS Department.

Schmidt – "Still has a problem with Mark bossing the EMS Department and being on the Board." Feels like it's a "conflict of interest and not the best look." Schmidt believes that Mark Brunner being a captain is disputed. (SOPs) Brunner does not actually have a captain's position, but is a member.

Schmidt makes a motion using his Job Description in his motion –

Motion made (by Schmidt) that we offer the EMS Director's position to Dave Mower if he'll accept it for the wage of \$1000 a month plus shift pay if he wants to accept on an Interim Basis.

Valdez seconds that.

Discussion:

Valdez – doesn't believe Brunner or Alt should participate in discussion/vote because of conflict of interest. She believes they should abstain. Schmidt – "it's a no-brainer"

(Mark Worgan exited.)

Brunner – believes that many of the EMS responders wouldn't respond if Dave Mower is the EMS Director due to past hurt.

Dave Mower – made comments about this time and time again. "We were told we weren't wanted to respond." (Patient care issue from the past.) "When we were told we weren't wanted, we stepped back." Claims that Schmidt made the motion unsolicited. "I have responded, I will respond, and I will continue to respond." Said Mower.

Discussion on Schmidt's motion.

Schmidt – motions that someone be in charge that isn't on the Board on an Interim basis, per the old Job Description he included. If the motion passes, this is an offer. (Extended to Dave Mower per previous motion description.)

- **Roll Call Vote on previous motion: Motion to offer Dave Mower the Interim EMS Director's Position based on the Job Description provided by Schmidt for the salary of \$1000 per month and entitlement to shift pay.**

(Previously made motion - Motion made (by Schmidt) that we offer the EMS Director's position to Dave Mower if he'll accept it for the wage of \$1000 a month plus shift pay if he wants to accept on an Interim Basis. Valdez seconded that.)

Valdez - Yes

Schmidt - Yes

Lacy – No

Alt – Abstained

Brunner – No (Brunner's vote was not recognized by Schmidt)

Schmidt called this an affirmative vote – Brunner can "challenge this if he wants to."

Two yes – one no – one abstentions. Motion passes.

Administrator's Report

- **Need to go over Job Descriptions sent by Valdez and Alt about the Administrator position.** Schmidt suggested that time was needed to digest these descriptions and the details such as hours, pay, etc. Discussion was tabled until 9/18/2023 for an Emergency Meeting @ 18:30 – Alt suggested that everyone take a copy of the descriptions, mark them up, and come back to the meeting with suggestions as this needs to be decided soon. “Review of Job Descriptions.”
- Ron Jameson exited.
- Schmidt asked if a timeline was going to be given for Dave Mower’s proposal. Another item is going to be added to the Emergency Meeting Agenda – determine timeline for Dave Mower’s Interim EMS Director Agreement.
- Jim is going to forward the V4 Document of the Administrator Job Descriptions

Old Business

- **Asset Accountability**
Nothing new to report.
- **Condition of the building**
Dan Corsintino came down and touched up the paint on the outside of the building. Two roof leaks remain.
- **Update on the Firehouse Grants**
No update
- **Division of Fire Prevention**
No update

New Business

- **Set the date for 2024 Budget Workshop (Preliminary due October 15th)**
Alt suggested that other districts operate these meetings with a Treasurer, one other Board Member, and a department Head. Agreement that this is all that’s needed for a preliminary Budget to present to the Board.

Jim Alt, Mickey Schmidt, Ron Jameson to attend this preliminary workshop. (Date: TBD)

- **Tuition Agreement with Eddie Ray**

Eddie Ray requested to remain a member in good standing of the EMS Department. Affirmation that he needs to respond to a certain number of calls – 30 responses within the first year, and one EMS shift per month. He already has 60 responses for the calendar year.

Discussion about agreement between Eddie Ray and the District. Dave Mower said that there is a signed agreement between Eddie Ray and the District. The agreement between Eddie Ray will be the same for both years – 30 responses and one EMS shift per month. His second year will be over in April 2024.

Schmidt said that the signed copy of the agreement needs to be found and confirmed to ensure that Eddie Ray isn't in breach of contract.

A follow-up on this will be added to next month's agenda.

- **North Door Lock replacement**
It's under warranty.

- **Agreement with Grace Brunner for contract secretarial help**

Schmidt confirmed that it would be good to get emergency help with some of the computer work/Zoom work that needed to be done prior to the meeting.

Discussion was limited ahead of time because of the emergency nature of the situation – Schmidt said he was willing to take “all the fire” for the situation but felt that help was needed.

The scope of her help would be technical support.

Mike Lacy made a motion to hire Grace Brunner to help for the next 90 days for a maximum of 10 hours a month at \$30 an hour for IT Support.

Jim Alt seconded the motion.

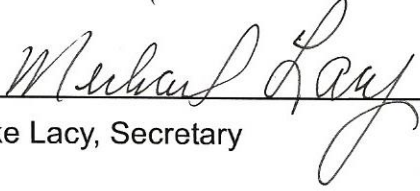
No discussion.

3 Yes – 1 No – 1 Abstention – Motion carried.

They will extend this offer to Grace Brunner – Mike Lacy will run point on this.

Executive Session – none required

Jim Alt motioned to adjourn / Mike Lacy seconded / All approved
The meeting adjourned at 4:36PM



Mike Lacy, Secretary