

INDIAN HILLS FIRE PROTECTION DISTRICT

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BOARD MEETING MINUTES

Wednesday, April 27, 2011

The Minutes are intended to reflect the discussions that occurred and decisions that were made by the members; they are not intended to be a transcription of the meeting.

MEETING ATTENDED BY:

Fire Protection District Board Members: Paul Pettit — President; Bret Roller — Treasurer; Marc Rosenberg — Secretary; Richard Westerlage; Ron Walton

Fire Department Members: Don Schoenbein — Chief; Emery Carson — Assistant Chief

Non-Members: Anita Fritz — Bookkeeper; Karen Nelson — Recording Secretary

MEETING CALLED TO ORDER AT: 19:34 Hrs.

MINUTES:

Mr. Rosenberg made a *motion* to waive the reading of the March Minutes, which was seconded by Mr. Roller and passed unanimously.

Discussion followed and the following changes were made. Page 6, fourth paragraph, first sentence to read: “Mr. Rosenberg made a motion to have the station assessed for code compliance and the septic system tested at a cost not to exceed \$600 and to then make a decision whether to move forward with the *proposed* station renovation.” Page 6, sixth paragraph, second sentence to read: “Mr. Case shared that the *air pressure* gauge had spiked on a drive the previous night.”

Mr. Rosenberg made a *motion* to accept the March Minutes as amended, which was seconded by Mr. Walton and passed unanimously.

Conversation then turned to Ms. Nemer’s comments regarding the Minutes. Regarding her first bullet about the Board’s approval of an inspection for the proposed station remodel, Mr. Rosenberg noted that the District was not having an inspection for overall compliance. Mr. Pettit suggested that Ms. Nemer was saying what might happen if anything else is discovered to be out of code. Mr. Roller noted that it would have to be catastrophic.

Discussion then followed about Ms. Nemer's comments regarding the Department pursuing 501(c)(3) status. Mr. Pettit noted that Special Districts are nonprofit and that a 501(c)(3) are charitable. He said that Ms. Nemer was simply saying that the District is a nonprofit. Mr. Rosenberg then explained the process whereby the Department was filing for 501(c)(3) status under the name "Indian Hills Fire Department" and read an email from Mr. Gilbert with more clarification on the issue. Mr. Pettit noted that the District/Department distinction had been dissolved and was now being re-divided. Was that necessary for 501(c)(3) status?

Ms. Fritz asked if Special Districts can accept donations. "Yes," answered Mr. Schoenbein. But can a benefactor write off the donation on his taxes since Special Districts don't pay income tax, asked Mr. Roller. If the process goes through, an attorney consultation will be required. Mr. Carson shared that Ms. Nemer had said that there was no donation limit. The only question, Mr. Pettit interjected, is if donations are tax-deductible. Could the Department build a new station and turn it over to the District, queried Mr. Roller. Discussion followed. Mr. Walton agreed that legal counsel was needed.

Mr. Pettit drew attention to Ms. Nemer's comment regarding the similarity of names. Mr. Schoenbein said that "Indian Hills" is not exclusive to the District when googled. Mr. Roller suggested taking the word "Department" out of the name. Mr. Schoenbein proposed "Indian Hills Volunteer Firefighters." Mr. Carson simplified that to "Indian Hills Volunteers." It was noted that the 501(c)(3) paperwork with the "Indian Hills Fire Department" name had not been submitted yet.

TREASURER'S REPORT:

Monthly Reports

Discussion began with a review of the cover page of the financial reports. Mr. Pettit asked if the wildland boots were in. He was told "yes." Regarding the Expense Summary portion of the Executive Summary, Mr. Pettit noted that the 89.94% of budget year to date for total expenses really jumps out, even though he said that he understood it was because of paying off the truck.

Conversation moved to the Profit Loss Budget Performance spreadsheet, where several accounts were briefly discussed before moving on to Checks. Ms. Fritz noted that the Checks report was so long because last month's checks were on the report by accident. The new checks begin with #11488, she noted. Also, there was a new listing of credit card charges.

Mr. Pettit asked about a \$208.80 charge to Carbonite. Was that for all of the computers? "All but Karen's," answered Mr. Schoenbein. Ms. Fritz explained that the credit cards were being paid in full each month. She also noted that the Comcast bill was an autodraft that would occur on the 26th of each month.

Ms. Fritz then asked how to code check #11488 to ADX/Red Comet for one used fire extinguisher at a cost of \$60. Mr. Schoenbein answered that the expense should be allocated to the station maintenance account. Regarding check #11495 to Evergreen Fire/Rescue for \$519.70 for repairs to apparatus 341, Mr. Rosenberg shared that the problem was finally 100% fixed. It took trial and error to fix, he explained.

Mr. Rosenberg made a *motion* to approve checks #11488-11511, plus automatic payments and bank fees. Mr. Walton seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

Ms. Fritz said that she had more checks to write, but that they could appear on next month's reports. Discussion turned to the Xcel Energy account. Ms. Fritz said that she had missed a bill but had paid it online. She would like to put the account on autopay, she said. Mr. Walton suggested bill pay as opposed to autopay. Mr. Roller reminded that there's no negotiating on the Xcel bill. "Unless the meter's off," added Mr. Pettit.

Mr. Schoenbein noted that the postage for *Smoke Signals* should be allocated to account #6611. Ms. Fritz asked about expenses for meals for firefighters such as the sandwiches Ms. Bauer had bought during the recent house fire. Mr. Westerlage suggested putting it under Meals/Food Expense. Discussion followed. Ms. Fritz said that she could add a line item if so desired. Mr. Schoenbein advised leaving the expenses in account #5155 for now. Mr. Roller expressed that meals at the station were different than meals at a fire site. A line item was needed, he said. Ms. Fritz said that she could add account #5156. Mr. Roller asked if the station was stocked up for such needs. Mr. Schoenbein answered that there was Gatorade and power bars now. It was agreed that it was a good idea to have such items on hand.

DEPARTMENT/OFFICERS' REPORTS:

Fire Marshal — Randy Rudloff

Not present; no report submitted. Mr. Schoenbein stated that Mr. Rudloff was involved along with the County in the investigation regarding the fire along Hwy. 285 by Parmalee Gulch Rd. Mr. Roller then passed around that day's copy of the Courier, which had a story and photos of the Myers Gulch house fire.

Chief's Report — Don Schoenbein

A report was submitted and various items were discussed. Conversation began with item #1 regarding apparatus from Fire Trucks Plus. Mr. Schoenbein stated that the brush truck should be ready within two weeks. The tanker contract would be going to Mack later that week. Mr. Carson asked if the specs had been updated. "Yes," answered Mr. Schoenbein. Mr. Roller asked if he was happy with the truck. "Yes," responded Mr. Schoenbein, who added that the District probably wouldn't have the truck this year.

Discussion moved to item #2 regarding the possibility of purchasing a used Ford Expedition 4 x 4 from the County. Mr. Schoenbein referenced an email attachment where he proposed such a purchase for use as a command vehicle. Mr. Schoenbein explained that the County won't sell used models to the public because they have pursuit engines in them. He further explained that the District was not obligated in any way should the County select the District as a recipient and estimated the price at \$4,000-5,000. Mr. Schoenbein said that the vehicles were well-maintained. Further discussion occurred concerning how such a vehicle could be customized for Department use.

Conversation moved to a wildland training and equipment update (item #3). Mr. Schoenbein announced that the District would go over budget on wildland gear. Mr. Rosenberg interjected that there had been two wildland trainings that month with high turnout from members. On a related note, Mr. Pettit asked how the new brush truck would be equipped.

Mr. Schoenbein responded that most of the gear could come from apparatus 355. There would be no big ticket items required to outfit the new tanker, he added.

Mr. Schoenbein announced that the spring issue of *Smoke Signals* is out (item #4). A copy of the newsletter was attached to the Chief's Report for review.

Discussion moved to item #5 regarding Ms. Bauer's leaving. The station would need a new cleaning person, Mr. Schoenbein announced. Mr. Pettit asked how often Ms. Bauer cleaned. "Once a week," answered Mr. Schoenbein. She also purchased items like toilet paper or sandwiches for the volunteers, he added. Mr. Rosenberg asked about her pay rate. Ms. Fritz said that it was \$17 per hour. Mr. Schoenbein noted that Ms. Bauer goes above and beyond her stated duties. Mr. Pettit suggested screening three or four individuals and then making a hiring decision. Mr. Schoenbein asked if anyone knew somebody who might be interested in the work. Ms. Fritz said that she did. Mr. Schoenbein said that the interested party could be paired with Ms. Bauer to learn what she did.

Mr. Roller suggested that the District should do something nice for Ms. Bauer. Mr. Pettit suggested a plaque and a fruit basket. Mr. Schoenbein advised against a plaque. Discussion followed. Mr. Westerlage noted that Ms. Bauer had lived in her current house for 46 years. He expressed that he thought she would appreciate a plaque. Mr. Roller suggested that it mention her service to the District. Mr. Walton agreed that a plaque was a good idea.

Conversation segued to item #6 regarding ambulance billing and collections. Mr. Schoenbein referenced an attachment with detailed ambulance billing numbers. Discussion then turned to the District's policy on not forwarding residents' delinquent accounts to a collections agency. A detailed conversation followed whereby the history of the policy was recounted: locals were not sent to collections when Ms. Cross was the office manager. Then they were forwarded to collections when Ms. Corsaut held the title. Ms. Nelson stated that she had not sent any residents to collections because she had been told policy was to not do so. But she expressed frustration with residents who ignored all correspondence attempting to set up a payment plan.

Board members expressed their individual opinions on the matter. Mr. Schoenbein said that incidents could be handled on a case-by-case basis. Mr. Roller expressed that he thought there needed to be one policy for all residents. Mr. Walton said that he liked the current policy of not sending locals to collections. Ms. Nelson explained that Ms. Eigel had shared that Elk Creek does send its residents to collections when their accounts become delinquent because their taxes are to cover fire protection services; not medical treatment and ambulance transportation. Ms. Nelson offered to survey neighboring departments to get an idea of how other area districts handle delinquent accounts.

Discussion moved to item #7 regarding the closure of Base Camp. Mr. Schoenbein shared that a tattoo parlor had opened on the third floor. Conversation followed about the reasons and timing of the Base Camp closure.

Regarding item #8 (station remodel), Mr. Schoenbein said that the topic would be discussed later in the meeting.

Mr. Schoenbein moved to item #9 concerning call percentages for personnel. He referenced an attachment with the percentage for each volunteer. Mr. Westerlage asked what the minimum requirements were. Mr. Schoenbein responded that it was 20% for members and 25% for officers.

Mr. Schoenbein concluded his report with a summary of calls for the month, which totaled 15. He stated that the District was on track for a heavy call year and on pace for more than 180 calls before year's end.

Assistant Chief's Report — Emery Carson

Mr. Carson began with item #1 regarding apparatus repairs. He explained that apparatus 341 was still having rear brake regulator problems. The replacement part has been ordered and should arrive in two weeks. Mr. Carson added that the chassis manufacturer had been uncooperative with Mr. Fosler at Evergreen Fire/Rescue.

Discussion moved to item #2 regarding the radio system. There are still problems with toning from Evergreen dispatch, Mr. Carson explained. He said that he was working with Frontier to resolve the problem. Mr. Pettit asked if both repeaters were at the Mt. Lindo site. "No," answered Mr. Carson. Mr. Pettit asked where the other repeater was. Mr. Carson responded that Mr. Hall has it. Mr. Pettit expressed that the repeater needed to be put at Smokey Hill site. There are times that communication can't be heard on calls, he said. Mr. Schoenbein added that there are problems in the canyon. Putting a repeater at Smokey Hill would help Inter-Canyon as well, said Mr. Pettit. Mr. Westerlage interjected that he thought it had been agreed to put a repeater at Smokey Hill. Mr. Pettit explained how the setup would improve performance. He said that he'd like to speak directly with Mr. Hall.

Mr. Rosenberg said that Evergreen Metro District would like to donate two frequencies and a few hand-held radios to the District. The frequencies are paid through 2015, he said. Mr. Pettit suggested that the frequencies could be linked in the 450 band. He said that he had the equipment to link the transmitters. Mr. Roller asked what needed to be done to proceed. Mr. Rosenberg said that the frequencies were free but that there may be an expense associated with the rest of the gear. Two frequencies had been lost last year on the 150 frequency, he reminded. Mr. Pettit said that he'd like to talk with both Mr. Carson and Mr. Hall. Mr. Carson said that he'd set up a meeting for the following week.

Mr. Rosenberg said he could come to the next Board meeting with an inventory list of the truck-mounted radios. He said that he'd let Evergreen Metro District know that Indian Hills wanted the frequencies and radios, especially since the Department couldn't effectively communicate with Evergreen. Mr. Carson reminded that he was in the process of fixing the problem.

Discussion turned to a mobile repeater that runs on batteries. Mr. Pettit recalled that the District used to use one and said that one could be put in the command vehicle. Mr. Rosenberg reminded that apparatus 341 goes to every call. Conversation followed about the positives and negatives of a mobile repeater. Mr. Pettit raised the possibility of solar power. He shared that South Metro is installing it on all of its vehicles. Mr. Roller said that he wouldn't want to rely on solar power. Mr. Walton suggested that it wasn't the primary power source but a backup.

Fire Captain's Report — Steve Bruns

Not present; no report submitted.

Rescue Captain's Report — Bob Fager

Not present; no report submitted.

Mr. Pettit called for a break at 21:00. The meeting was called back to order at 21:08.

OLD BUSINESS:

Station Remodel Update

Mr. Pettit started discussion by saying that he had given the station remodel idea a lot of thought since the last meeting. He had put together a list of questions/ideas that included the following:

- Why remodel?
- How inadequate is the current station?
- How much money would existing repairs cost?
- What are the possibilities for solar power?
- What are the possibilities for wind power?
- What would the lifespan be for a remodel?
- What would the lifespan be for a new building?
- Would it be better to move?

Mr. Carson announced that since the last Board meeting, a decision had been made to look at scraping the current station and constructing a new one. Mr. Pettit said that he had talked to Maverick, a steel building manufacturer. There were a half a dozen companies the District could get quotes from. A 75 x 100-ft. shell, for example, costs \$100,000, he explained.

Mr. Schoenbein then passed around a packet detailing the new Foothills fire station on Rainbow Hill Rd. He said that he had visited the station earlier that day. A lengthy discussion followed about the details of the new construction. Mr. Schoenbein shared that the fabricator for the project was Olympia Steel Buildings, the erector was Colorado Steel Systems and the concrete contractor was Concrete Management Systems. Foothills was happy with both Olympia and Concrete Management Systems, Mr. Schoenbein said. Discussion followed about the size building that would be required for the District and how it might be laid out. Mr. Schoenbein said a complete second floor was being considered for meeting rooms, offices, exercise facilities, and a kitchen.

Conversation moved to costs. The total cost for the new Foothills station was approximately \$300,000 with a four-month build time. Mr. Schoenbein explained that the Foothills station had much less finish inside than the District would require but had a lot more concrete. Mr. Schoenbein said that he anticipated needing five wide bays.

[Mr. Case arrives at 21:20.]

After much discussion, Mr. Pettit stated that he thought scraping the present station and purchasing a steel structure made more sense than trying to reinvent the wheel with the present building. He questioned how a kitchen would work on an upstairs level. Mr. Rosenberg said that he appreciated all the work Mr. Carson had done but said that he thought this was the direction to go. It would be a good long-term investment.

Mr. Schoenbein shared that the price would include demolition costs. Mr. Carson noted that Foothills didn't have to deal with a septic system. And, added Mr. Schoenbein, the Foothills facility didn't address living space. But, Mr. Carson reminded, the District wouldn't need as much concrete. It may be a wash in terms of cost, suggested Mr. Roller. Mr. Schoenbein advised staying with a single-pitch roof. Mr. Walton said that he liked the idea. A plan is needed before going out for bids, said Mr. Pettit.

Mr. Carson noted that Foothills served as its own general contractor on the project. Mr. Rosenberg said that Indian Hills had plenty of personnel with experience to do the same. Mr. Carson suggested that perhaps Noble or Parmalee Elementary could be asked for an additional 20 or so feet for more parking and the septic system. It was decided that Mr. Roller, Mr. Carson, Mr. Rosenberg, and Mr. Schoenbein would serve on a committee to move the project forward.

Mr. Carson reminded that there was property available down the street for \$90,000 per acre that could be considered. Mr. Roller volunteered to back off the committee and let Mr. Walton take his place. Mr. Roller asked about the possibility of an additional ambulance barn. Mr. Schoenbein admitted that he hadn't explored that possibility. He did say, however, that he'd like a second station by the post office with just heat and electric. There are a large number of volunteers who live in that area. A station there could cut response times by a factor of three, he added. There's a problem finding property there, though, Mr. Schoenbein continued. It was noted that Mr. Atkinson at Geneva Glen could be approached about donating land for a pole barn with electric service. Mr. Roller agreed that it was a good idea that he didn't want the District to lose sight of.

NEW BUSINESS:

Pension Board Meeting

Mr. Pettit noted that a pension board meeting needed to be scheduled. One was supposed to be held once a year with member comprising both Board members and Department volunteers. Mr. Rosenberg stated that Ms. Sears and Mr. Humber were the appointed Department members.

MEETING ADJOURNED AT: 21:38

There being no more business to discuss, Mr. Rosenberg made a *motion* to adjourn the meeting, which was seconded by Mr. Walton and passed unanimously.

President:

Secretary:

MOTIONS MADE AND PASSED:

- To waive the reading of the March Minutes. *Motion made by Mr. Rosenberg; seconded by Mr. Roller; unanimous.*
- To accept the March Minutes as amended. *Motion made by Mr. Rosenberg; seconded by Mr. Walton; unanimous.*
- To approve checks #11488-11511, plus automatic payments and bank fees. *Motion made by Mr. Rosenberg; seconded by Mr. Walton; unanimous.*
- To adjourn the meeting. *Motion made by Mr. Rosenberg; seconded by Mr. Walton; unanimous.*

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