

ROCKVILLE/SPRINGDALE FIRE PROTECTION DISTRICT
BUDGET WORK MEETING
P.O. Box 159
Springdale, UT 84767
November 18, 2014
Firehouse

1. **CALL TO ORDER AND ROLL CALL** – Chair Michael Plyler called the meeting to order at 4:25 p.m. with the following members of the Rockville/Springdale Fire Protection District Board present: Luci Francis, Louise Excell and Barry Rhodes. John Callahan was not present. District Clerk Elaine Harris recording. Also present was Chief Joe Barker.

2. **WORK ON THE TENTATIVE 2015 BUDGET FOR THE DISTRICT**– Chair Plyler stated the District constructed a budget in order to determine what the Standby Fee increase was going to be. Since we passed the Standby Fee increase, Chief Barker noticed that for \$2,000 more than our starting point budget, we can provide 24/7, two firefighters on call even during Monday thru Friday business hours. The Chief's concern was that, in actuality, on Monday thru Friday from noon to five we could expect, at best, one person for sure to be able to respond. For the \$2,000 extra we can provide 24/7 fire and EMS (2 ea.) services 365 days of the year. However, in doing that, Chair Plyler noticed there is no deposit into the reserve account and he is not okay with that. Chair Plyler, Luci Brantley and Chief Barker worked on the issue earlier in the day and came up with paying EMS an hourly wage and eliminating the additional pay for responding to calls. This would 1) make payroll less complicated; and 2) will mean as a board going forward into the future, when a budget is constructed, we have fixed labor costs based on hours instead of additional unknowns. That hourly wage is proposed to be \$9/hr. instead of the originally proposed \$10/hr. to allow for a deposit into the reserve fund. That is \$1.50/hr. increase from the \$7.50/hr. they are now receiving. Even if we paid them \$10/hr. that would still be \$5/hr. less than our competitors. It was felt the difference between \$9/hr. and \$10/hr. probably isn't going to make the difference between people wanting to work for us and not work for us. By paying them \$9/hr. we pick up \$17, 520 that can be directed into reserves.

It would also be beneficial to the budget if the new Chief also fulfilled the Fire Marshal duties as a part of his salary.

Louise Excell asked if the hourly pay for EMS had been discussed with them to see if it was palatable. Chief Barker stated it was and, overall, their feeling was they would be losing the possible additional pay for the calls. But, presently there is no guarantee anyone will have the opportunity to respond to a call on their shift and make the additional pay. They felt it was more beneficial to have the hourly increase.

Pay for EMS varies throughout the County from \$10/hr. to \$15/hr. and some with benefits. Barry didn't see anything positive about the proposal other than making it easier for payroll and the Board. He felt people would still take preference to work a shift for another agency at a higher rate of pay.

Chair Plyler stated if we want to pay them \$10/hr. we have to find the \$17,000 for reserves somewhere else in the budget. Chief Barker felt that every year there could potentially be an amount that was budgeted and not expended that could be placed in reserves. The Clerk reported there was \$230,000 in the unrestricted funds as of the end of October. Discussion took place relative to the need for that reserve to sustain the District until the next quarterly billings and also the annual billing in June of next year.

Luci Francis reviewed the changes that took place from the time the Board received their packets and the updated budget that was presented at the meeting.

REVENUES

Line 2 – We have documentation from Springdale that we can expect to receive \$114,270 in TRT distributions.

Line 8 – This line will be \$4,000 and is dependent on \$3,000 reimbursement for business inspections done by the Fire Marshal and \$1,000 reimbursement for plan reviews and follow up construction inspections. The Fire Chief will do the business inspections as a part of his duties but we may have to contract out for the plan reviews and follow up inspections. That amount will be budgeted as an expenditure.

Line 9 – We are pretty assured of receiving an EMS grant and the guesstimate was \$2,000.

Our start point in July for the budget was \$696,487. Presently, we are at \$695,780. With all the changes, we are still pretty close to the starting point.

EXPENDITURES

Line 43 – This item was corrected to reflect the actual radio count and where they are assigned.

Line 58 – The vehicle fuel for Fire is \$3,000. Chair Plyler commented the total fuel budgeted for 2014 was \$8,600. The projected for 2014 is \$4,880. The tentative budget for 2015 is \$7,000. Gas is lower than it has been in a long time and all the predictions are that it will continue to go down. Chief Barker explained the reason we are budgeting more than the projected for 2014 is the number is entirely dependent on the number of calls we receive, and if we continue with the current volume, that will be a realistic figure.

Line 81 – After discussion, it was determined this line should not be for capital improvements, only for equipment purchased to go in the firehouse. Capital improvements will be listed under line 179, Firehouse. Line item 81 will include the washer and dryer and any other equipment that should be needed such as a refrigerator and stove. The proposed modifications to the building (extending the kitchen wall into the bay) would go under capital improvements. At one time, the estimate was that this project could be accomplished within the projected \$5,000.

Discussion took place regarding the fact that the turnouts need to be washed and a commercial washer is needed to handle the heavy load.

Line 127 – This line now reflects the wage of \$9/hr. instead of \$10/hr. and also includes extra coverage for holiday weekends or events where large visitation is expected.

Line 137 – The Fire Marshal has been reduced to \$1,000 as that is what is anticipated if we contract for plan reviews and follow up inspections.

Line 138 – The business inspections is now at zero because that function will be absorbed in the Chief's salary.

Line 142 – The liability insurance projection has increased from \$8,600 to \$10,000. This may go down. Our liability insurance is determined by our operating expenses less payroll.

Line 149 – This amount has been adjusted to \$13,200 utilizing the calculation obtained from our insurer. Luci is awaiting a call to confirm this figure as well as the liability insurance.

After lengthy discussion, it was decided to keep the amount of \$23,376 in Contribution to Fund Balance and at the end of the year determine whatever that actual figure is to be allocated to specific reserves. This will be done instead of budgeting actual amounts for the reserve funds and contributing that amount throughout the year in monthly increments. .

In response to The Chair's question as to, overall, how the Board felt about the budget – Barry felt it was as close as we are going to get to something that is able to function; Louise was fine with it as long as Chief Barker feels secure that we are not going to have a mass exodus of paramedics (Chief Barker felt we would not – lengthy discussion took place about the fact that they are now guaranteed an amount for a shift, whether they respond to a call or not.).

Discussion took place regarding the fact that we are planning on having a firefighter that is on call at the firehouse assisting with a medical call and driving to the hospital if needed. We have indicated to the public that the increase in the Standby Fee was to provide firefighters on call at the firehouse and that would not be the case if one of them left. If that were to happen, another firefighter would be called in and the others would be notified that the one on call was required to leave to drive the ambulance. If it was needed, the Chief would have to be available.

It was the Chair's hope that as Springdale pursues their path of growth, we will generate more Standby Fees without raising the fees of the existing users. Discussion took place regarding approaching the Town of Springdale to possibly renegotiate our TRT agreement.

Discussion took place whether or not having 24/7 firefighters on duty and their upcoming certifications would affect our ISO rating and possibly lower fire insurance. Our last rating was in 2004/2005. That is something that could be researched.

- 3. ADJOURN** – Louise Excell moved the meeting be adjourned. Barry Rhodes seconded the motion and a roll call vote indicated all those present voted in favor of the motion.

Meeting adjourned at 5:45 p.m.

Minutes typed by:

Elaine M. Harris
District Clerk

APPROVED:

John Callahan
John Callahan, Vice-Chair