

ROCKVILLE/SPRINGDALE FIRE PROTECTION DISTRICT
P.O. Box 159
Springdale, UT 84767
April 23, 2014
Firehouse

PRIOR TO THE MEETING, THE OATH OF OFFICE WAS ADMINISTERED TO LUCI FRANCIS, APPOINTED TO THE BOARD BY THE TOWN OF ROCKVILLE

1. **CALL TO ORDER AND ROLL CALL** – Chair Bob Orton called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m. with the following members of the Rockville/Springdale Fire Protection District Board present: Michael Plyler, John Callahan, Luci Francis and Barry Rhodes. Also present was Chief Steve Christian, Assistant Chief Tyler Ames, and EMS Captain Vince Wood. Elaine Harris recording.
2. **APPROVAL OF AGENDA** – John Callahan moved the agenda be approved. Michael Plyler seconded the motion and a roll call vote indicated all those present voted in favor of the motion.
3. **PUBLIC COMMENT AND QUESTIONS** – Barry Rhodes stated that on April 4, 2014, he had an ex-parte conversation with Springdale Council Member Adrian Player at a party and at that time Barry suggested that Mr. Player be given the opportunity to make that information available to the entire District Board.

Adrian stated his presence at our meeting was due to the fact that Springdale's new mayor felt it would be nice if Adrian attended our meetings. The Town of Springdale offered in December and January to help with the billing, since they bill the majority of our accounts, and felt they could take it over and make it part of Springdale's utility billings, adding the few that were not in their system already. Springdale also offered to provide some assistance in a methodology for arriving at an increased standby fee, which, Adrian believes, needs to be done if the District is going to continue to operate.

Adrian felt he had not received the greatest goodwill feeling; he felt like he had alienated the Board. The offer is still on the table. There is currently a ten-year, negotiated contract with Springdale for the Transient Room Tax. The Mayor and Council would have to negotiate with the Board to change that contract, and that is a possibility. No one on Springdale's Council, nor their Mayor, wants to see the District suffer. They believe the Standby Fee needs to be increased and they could help and are willing to provide any support they can.

Chair Orton assured Adrian that the Board appreciates the offer and they have taken some of Rick Wixom's suggestions and incorporated them in our work on the Standby Fee. There are currently two committees working – one on the 2015 budget and one on the Standby Fee increase.

The Board has not given up the idea of coming to Springdale and presenting some issues for help, but as of right now we are working hard toward getting everything ready to present to the public.

Adrian stated that no one wants to see this service go away, so whatever it is going to take under a negotiation process and under a working together process, it needs to take place.

4. **DISCUSSION AND ACTION ON OBTAINING PATIENT CREDIT CARD INFORMATION AT THE TIME OF AMBULANCE SERVICE** – Chief Christian indicated his preference to not pursue this type of action. He has never heard of this process before with any other services. It is hard enough to do good patient care in the back of an ambulance without having to worry about obtaining credit card information.

Our billing service does not recommend this process. Barry Rhodes stated that when the ambulance service first started under the Town of Springdale, they had to do this process and it was extremely difficult to have to ask for a credit card. Chair Orton responded to John Callahan's question which was: Was this issue brought up because Springdale has requested us to do this process? When you look at the books relevant to ambulance collections, you can see why it is being discussed. The Town of Springdale has not requested this.

Michael Plyler stated the concept was not to increase revenues, but to collect the revenue due for the service.

In response to Luci Francis's question as to what is the alternative, Clerk Harris responded delinquent accounts are sent to collections after a period of time when our billing agent is unable to collect the charges.

It was the consensus of the Board that since they aren't presently following this process, there is no desire to institute it now.

5. **DISCUSSION AND ACTION ON A METHOD OF PAYMENT FOR THE CONTRACT WITH ZION NATIONAL PARK RELATIVE TO THE PORTION OF UTAH COMMUNICATION AGENCY NETWORK (UCAN) INVOICES FOR PARK RADIOS** –

Clerk Harris reminded the Board that just before Chief Barker left, we signed an agreement with Zion National Park to pay for UCAN services on their radios and them bill them as the Park cannot have an agreement with UCAN.

Clerk Harris met with the Chief Ranger and a payment process was set up through the Invoice Processing Platform (IPP) which would be extremely labor intensive. After the setup was complete, Chief Ranger Purcell asked if we took credit cards, to which the Clerk responded yes, through our billing agent for ambulance service. The District is charged a percentage for credit card payments. It was doubtful the Park Service would pay that additional fee. Michael Plyler felt it could be invoiced to include that credit card fee and will consult with Chief Ranger Purcell.

The Clerk had researched what the cost would be to do the billing through the government process compared to utilizing the credit card and what that cost would be. At 3% to use the charge card, the annual cost would be a maximum of \$37.68. If the Clerk did the invoicing through the IPP it may cost \$78/yr. in labor.

Michael Plyler moved the Board accept the Park Service's credit card, whether we absorb the charges or are able to add them to the cost of the radio service. Barry Rhodes seconded the motion and a roll call vote indicated all present voted in favor of the motion.

Michael will check with Chief Ranger Purcell.

6. **DISCUSSION AND ACTION RELATIVE TO UTILIZING THE ROCKVILLE COMMUNITY CENTER FOR DISTRICT MEETINGS** –

Chair Orton pointed out that the bay is going to be extremely uncomfortable during the summer months and the heaters in the winter make it difficult to hear. It would be beneficial if the Board was able to meet someplace where the temperature and noise can be controlled. The Rockville Town Council felt that \$300/yr. flat fee for all meetings would cover their utility costs.

Discussion took place about how much it would cost to utilize Springdale's facilities. Their community center appears to be pretty busy; Chair Orton was unsure about their meeting room. Rockville's meetings would not interfere with ours as they are on different days. John Callahan felt we should pursue the cost and availability of the Springdale facilities.

It was suggested that the Board set their meeting for May in Rockville while researching the Springdale option. All agreed with that proposal, but Barry Rhodes felt the Board should just accept Rockville's offer because it doesn't matter how many meetings are held, the \$300 is a flat rate. Barry knows of several scheduling issues that have come up in the past with utilization of the Springdale facilities. Barry also felt holding them in Rockville gives a little to them as part of the District.

Barry Rhodes moved the Board accept Rockville's offer to hold as many meetings as needed in their facility for \$300/yr. Michael Plyler seconded to motion and a roll call vote indicated all those present voted in favor of the motion.

7. **DISCUSSION AND ACTION RELATIVE TO CHARGING LAW ENFORCEMENT AGENCIES FOR AMBULANCE CALLS GENERATED BY SAID AGENCY** – Chief

Christian stated that he contacted his brother, who is a police chief, and also contacted a sheriff from an agency other than the Washington County Sheriff. None of them had ever heard of this process. We deal closely with three agencies – Washington County Sheriff, Zion Canyon Police, and the fire department. Advice Chief Christian received was that either the agencies are not going to call you unless they absolutely have to have your service, they will start charging us back for their services, or raise taxes to cover the fees. Chief Christian felt it would bring bad morale between the agencies.

Chair Orton felt that the necessity for us to assist law enforcement is not a regular thing. Discussion took place relative to different scenarios that would require a call.

Chair Orton stated that fire, ambulance and police are all emergency services and they shouldn't be charging each other. Charging back and forth, even with an agreement appears, to be counter-productive.

Barry Rhodes moved this item be tabled until we are able to get some additional information. Michael Plyler seconded the motion and a roll call vote indicated all those present voted in favor of the motion.

8. **DISCUSSION AND ACTION RELATIVE TO A PROPOSAL FOR XERISCAPING THE FIREHOUSE GROUNDS** – Rosalind and Stephen Roth have come up with some ideas to improve the appearance of our grounds. Chair Orton reported that Stephen has repaired the irrigation line that had broken. This line runs under the driveway. We can now utilize the irrigation water in the front, but the back will have no water.

Gifford Park has been taking care of the portion on the west side of the wash. Rosalind felt a few evergreen trees would be appropriate in the area bordering their property. Various suggestions were made.

It was felt since there was plenty of volunteer help for mowing, the front will be watered and maintained.

9. FIRE CHIEF'S REPORT – FIRE SERVICE

- a. Report on fire activity since the last Board meeting – Chief Christian reported since the last meeting, there have been two fire alarms (cancelled) and one brush fire, but it had actually be given a permit. There were five medical assists.
- b. Consideration and possible approval of applicants for the Fire service – The Chief had one application for possible approval for the fire department. The Chief has been trying to get three more firefighters on the roster, preferably local applicants. The name is Ashley Averett from LaVerkin and the Chief will present a full application for the next meeting. The hope was to be able to utilize Joe Barker's gear.
- c. Training update – The plan is to begin a Wildland Firefighter Class next month to enable our crew to be certified. Chief Christian is working with the State to set it up. The Firefighter I and II class, which was started last winter, has been postponed until the fall.
- d. New business to include requests for budgeted expenditures – Tender '91 has been taken to St. George to have it plumbed and put back together. There was \$2,500 budgeted for this vehicle. We supplied boxes of parts from the station. The problem is that it sat out in the weather for many years and the hope is that the sun didn't do too much damage to the pump and tank.

The Rescue has been taken down to have the replacement light bar installed.

- 10. FIRE MARSHAL'S REPORT** – Chief Christian reported they have begun the annual business license inspections for Springdale; there are just over 100 and they have done 11. The goal is to have them completed by July.

There are two outstanding projects in Rockville – residences for Rob Dias and Jonathan George.

Chief Christian gave an overview of the burn policies of the State and their relevance to the District. There are two burn windows for the southern counties. 1) March 1 – May 30 (or until the District deems it is too dry; 2) September 15 – November 15 (which also has some discretion by the District). Previously, it has been the District's policy to allow burning throughout the winter, but we need to start moving people to conform to these two windows. It is state law, and we can be fined for allowing burning outside of these parameters. As a Board, this policy may need to be set by an action. In order to qualify for agricultural burning, the property has to be zoned agriculture.

Discussion took place regarding the grant for new fire shelters, which has been completed and submitted.

Assistant Chief Tyler Ames gave a presentation on the Knox boxes for allowing access into a business. The business mounts the box on the exterior of their building and the fire department has a key that enables access to the keys for the building. This is utilized in the case of an emergency and prevents the necessity to break in through doors or windows. We are trying to educate the businesses for the need and encourage them to participate. The application process can be completed on line.

11. FIRE CHIEF'S REPORT – AMBULANCE SERVICE – Report was given by EMS Captain Wood.

- a. Report on EMS activity since the last board meeting – Captain Wood reported there were 12 call outs this month, four of which were transports; eight were cancelled or refused. The majority of the cancelled ones were lift assists.
- b. Consideration and possible approval of applicants for the EMS service – Captain Wood has taken the Chief and Assistant Chief off the schedule for EMS as their time is being dedicated to their positions. Therefore, Captain Wood is seeking more EMS personnel.
- c. Training update – Training this month was dedicated to learning about new equipment and a training is set up for the next day with Mercy Air out of Mesquite, NV. We will be joining the Park fire and EMS down at the Park training grounds by Coal Pits Wash.
- d. New business to include requests for budgeted expenditures – There was no new business or requests for budgeted expenditures.

12. CHAIRMAN'S REPORT – Chair Orton reported that he, John Callahan and Chief Christian have been working on the 2015 budget and have it just about completed. Michael Plyler and Barry Rhodes have been working on restructuring the Standby Fee. Clerk Harris has been assisting both committees.

Chair Orton thanked the Chief and Assistant Chief for the excellent job they have done since taking over the positions.

13. STANDBY FEE BILLING REPORT TO INCLUDE UPDATE AND POSSIBLE ACTION ON DELINQUENT ACCOUNTS – As of the end of March, there was \$4,955.27 which was 120 days past due, a decrease of \$312.02.

14. CLERK'S REPORT

- a. Account balances – It was clarified for Chair Orton that the balances in the ambulance and fire truck savings were correct.
- b. Ambulance accounts receivable report to include action on any requests for an adjustment in charges – As of the end of March, the accounts receivable was \$34,132.34, a decrease of \$3,647.52.
- c. Approval of expenditures for March 2014 – Michael Plyler moved the expenditures for the month of March be approved. Barry Rhodes seconded the motion and a roll call vote indicated all those present voted in favor of the motion.

15. APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES OF THE MARCH 26, 2014 REGULAR MEETING – Luci Francis moved the minutes for the March 26, 2014 regular meeting be approved. John Callahan seconded the motion and a roll call vote indicated all those present voted in favor of the motion.

16. GENERAL BOARD DISCUSSION – Michael Plyler seconded Bob's comments regarding the job the new Chief and Assistant Chief have done.

Luci Francis questioned when the Board was going to be prepared to do a presentation on the Standby Fee restructure. Chair Orton explained that we are in the process of reclassifying categories (residential, undeveloped land, business) so they are more equitable. An example would be a small home with one bedroom was paying the same fee as someone with a half-million dollar home. The budget has taken some time, but it has not been as labor intensive because it is pretty much known what is needed.

We will need to have a public hearing but the plan is to have at least one informational meeting prior to the public hearing. It had also been suggested to put out a printed information sheet prior to the informational meeting.

Michael Plyler clarified some of the statements made earlier by Adrian Player. Springdale Town Manager Rick Wixom had done a spreadsheet and Adrian was offended because it was felt the Board had totally ignored the work. Rick had a formula for the Standby Fees and what we have done is taken aspects of Rick's number crunching and added other factors. Rick's was totally based on property value and that won't work for every scenario. We have created a combination of strategies to arrive at the fees and also create categories. This is what has taken so much time. Once it is done, it will be a system that will be in place that will, hopefully facilitate it from this point forward and there won't be a need for so much work to implement a raise.

The goal is to be able to meet our budget needs for 2015 plus build a reserve. The needs will have to be constantly evaluated and increases implemented when needed.

Luci offered any assistance that may be needed; writing and preparing documents, etc. She would be willing to research the possibility of renegotiating our TRT contract with Springdale.

In response to Luci's question as to how the Board feels about accepting Springdale's offer to assist with the billing, Chair Orton stated that it gets complicated. They don't have all our accounts in their system and a monthly billing can be a bookkeeping nightmare. The Board wants to offer quarterly payments, for a small fee. Michael Plyler stated that if Springdale did the billing, it wouldn't lessen any work for the District and just creates a layer between us and the revenue. The initial discussion was for them to do the billing for free because they are already sending out utility bills, then it was proposed there would be a fee. We would be paying them and also our Clerk to keep track of the accounts. We would also be at the mercy of new administrations as to whether or not they desired to keep or change the process.

The best thing to do to keep a relationship between the Town and the District is to keep everything out in the open.

In reviewing our past budget, John Callahan asked if we still had any findings that were still open. Chair Orton stated he didn't think so, but our audit for 2013 will be available next month.

In response to John's question to Chief Christian relevant to the lack of records for our firefighters and our ability to apply for grants, Chief Christian stated that, yes, those records are required but have not been kept in the past. It needs to be mentioned that just because there is a grant, it may not be for something we need, so we would not apply. Assistant Chief Ames is constantly seeking grants that are available for things we need. Many grants are also competitive and some require matching funds.

Chief Barker had started an inventory list and that is in the process of being completed. A five-year plan is also being developed.

Luci asked about the interaction between the personnel and the Board and how it can be determined if the Board is happy with them and if they are happy in their positions. Assistant Chief Ames responded that they have not heard anything negative. Everyone is in a transition stage. The attendance seems to have dropped off, but the tourist season is starting and people are busy; they are volunteers.

Luci wondered if a Board Member could be available to talk to if any personnel had a problem they wanted to take directly to the Board. There is a chain of command which states our personnel should speak first to their captain and then the chief.

17. **IDENTIFICATION OF ISSUES FOR FUTURE AGENDAS** – Elect a Chair and Vice-Chair.
18. **ADJOURN** – Barry Rhodes moved the meeting be adjourned. Michael Plyler seconded the motion. A roll call vote indicated all those present voted in favor of the motion.

Meeting adjourned at 8:15 p.m.

Minutes typed by:

Elaine M. Harris
District Clerk

APPROVED:

Robert W. Orton, Chairman