



**DEER MOUNTAIN FIRE PROTECTION DISTRICT  
REGULAR BOARD MEETING MINUTES  
6181 COUNTY RD. 28, COTOPAXI, CO 81223  
January 20, 2021 at 6:00 PM**

**CALL TO ORDER:** The meeting was called to order by Sharon Zuidema at 6:00 PM.

**DIRECTORS PRESENT:** Vice-chairman, Sharon Zuidema - Insurance Director, Carl Jones - Treasurer, Sherry Hastings - Communications Director, Joe Watts

**PRAYER:** Led by JR Niblett

**PLEDGE of ALLEGIANCE:** Led by Sharon Zuidema

**CHANGES TO THE AGENDA** - None

**MINUTES:** Sharon Zuidema

- Motion by Sharon Zuidema to approve the December 16, 2020 regular board meeting minutes.  
Second by Sherry Hastings  
Discussion: None  
Vote: Unanimous - motion carried

**TREASURER'S REPORT:** Sherry Hastings (*see attachments*)

- Treasurer's report

Checking account balance as of December 1, 2020	\$ 340,522.12
Month of December deposits	\$ 153,773.51
Income plus beginning balance	\$ 494,295.63
Expenses to date	\$ 29,903.60
Total checking account funds	\$ 464,395.63
Emergency Reserves	\$ 50,429.82
Capital Improvements	\$ 19,839.27
Engine Debit Account	\$ 4,013.34
Total funds available (12/31/2020)	\$ 538,674.46
- January 20, 2021 Bills Report

Checking account balance as of January 1, 2021	\$ 464,392.03
Income thus far in January	\$ 43,890.53
Total income plus beginning balance	\$ 508,282.56
Total expenses to date	\$ 27,526.17
Current checkbook balance	\$ 499,355.68

Motion by Sherry Hastings to approve the December 2020 treasurer's report

Second by Sharon Zuidema

Discussion: None

Vote: Unanimous - motion carried

Motion by Sherry Hastings to accept the January 20, 2021 bill's report

Second by Sharon Zuidema

Discussion: None

Vote: Unanimous - motion carried

- Wildland Income - All payments are complete

**PUBLIC INPUT:** Karen McKee signed up (see attachments) to provide input. The topic was the elimination of paid EMS staff. Additionally, three other members of the public spoke on the subject. Comments are summarized below:

- Budgeted for 2021 EMS Payroll is \$141,000 and an additional \$170,000 reserved for next year's payroll. Reallocating these budgeted payroll funds to the purchase of a fire truck would not be appropriate. The community desires confidence in the board to manage funds.
- Improvement needed to recruit EMS staff to provide vital medical services to the community
- Improvement needed in communication to the Deer Mountain community
- Response time of one to two hours is not acceptable - the community needs timely medical services
- The mill levy request in November 2020 was too high
- Forward motion is needed in the pursuit of grants for EMS
- The board needs to rebuild trust with the community - especially the elderly citizens. Ambulance service is essential and lives are at stake

Note that a CORA request was presented to the board by Sarah Killough

**CHAIRMAN'S REPORT:** Acting Chairman, Sharon Zuidema

- The board decision made in December 2020 to pursue the purchase of another fire truck is void because the item was not on the agenda. No purchase/lease contract has been signed. Sharon Zuidema is against the purchase of another wildland fire truck because it will be used to service those outside of DMFPD. Joe Watts stated that a fire truck purchase could or could not be made, but noted that wildland fires bring in funds for the district. Currently the department has two fire trucks. One truck is aged with 65,000 miles.
- Sharon Zuidema reminded the board that new legislation could require all wages at \$15/hour.
- Motion by Sharon Zuidema to table the discussion of the proposal of a new fire truck purchase to year end when the board has a better understanding of EMS and possible resumption of medical services for community safety. Second by Sherry Hastings  
Discussion: Joe Watts restated the significance of wildland fire income to the benefit of the department. The amount in 2020 year was \$270,000. The mill levy election did not pass. The annual tax income is \$248,000.  
Vote: Unanimous - motion carried
- No new volunteer/EMS applications
- Open Board Position - The board chairman position is open. Sherry Hastings indicated that candidate Bill Mohr is agreeable to that position if appointed to the board.  
Motion to appoint Bill Mohr to the DMFPD board as board chairman.  
Second by Carl Jones  
Discussion: None  
Vote: Unanimous - motion carried  
Bill Mohr was invited to sit at the board table for the remainder of this meeting and will be sworn in at the February 17, 2021 meeting (**ACTION ITEM** for Sharon Zuidema.)

**VICE-CHAIRMAN'S REPORT:** Sharon Zuidema

- The resolutions that passed in December 2020 have been posted to the website.
- The final invoices for the November ballot measure have been received and will be paid. The total cost was \$6142.60. The board thanked the Fremont County Elections Office for their assistance.

**COMMUNICATIONS REPORT:** Joe Watts

- Radios - The 800 MHz radios will not change and new radio purchases will not be necessary. Currently there are 3 to 4 radios in need of repair and new batteries are needed. It was noted that lithium batteries will hold a charge longer, use the same charger and cost \$10 more.

**INSURANCE REPORT:** Carl Jones - no report

**COMMITTEE REPORTS**

- Oversight Committee - Rachel Vinson: No report
- Station 3 update - JR Niblett: No progress. Still awaiting legal advice.
- Station 4 update - JR Niblett: County advised that the adjacent property owner must remove the fence from DMFPD property. Attorney Dan Slater advised that an easement or road does not come under eminent domain. He suggests sending a letter to said property owner to move the fence and/or trailer (dependent on property address) within two months. Per Fremont County, the property boundaries must be resolved prior to substation construction.  
**ACTION ITEM** for Sharon Zuidema to obtain Building Committee paperwork from Patrick Smith in reference to Station 4. Karen McKee was asked to provide the 2018 SRU documents to the board for review.

Motion by Sharon Zuidema to delay sending a letter from attorney Dan Slater to the adjacent property owner to station 4 until more information is obtained and reviewed.

Second by Carl Jones

No further discussion.

Vote: Unanimous - motion carried.

#### **STATION REPORTS: FIRE & EMS: JR Niblett**

- EMS training hours & runs: 6 MVA runs and 12 EMS runs for a total of 79.5 hours; 75 hours of EMS training.
- Fire training hours & runs: 7 calls with 44.5 hours; 59.5 hours of fire training
- Wildland update: Refresher course is planned. Two staff members have left the district.
- EMS contract: One staff member is attending EMT school. The cost is approx. \$2500. Request for the board to pay this cost in return for two years of EMS service from that staff member. A formal contract needed to include the exact cost and stipulate the extent of district service in addition to other specifics.  
**ACTION ITEM** for JR Niblett to work with the attorney to develop the defined details of the contract to present to the board for consideration on February 17, 2021.
- EMS service: Staff does not live close (30 to 45 minutes away) to the station. EMTs are overtasked and coverage on nights and weekends is not possible. Only one EMT remains. Payments for medical services are in arrears.

Q: In order to be able to provide 24/7 service, how many EMT staff are required?

A: Six weekday staff plus six weekend staff at a cost of approx \$600,000 (wages, overtime, insurance, supplies, gas etc.)

**ACTION ITEM** for JR Niblett and Sharon Zuidema to develop a defined schedule of shifts, paid and unpaid, that would be sustainable with the current budget. The schedule would be used to recruit new staff.

An ad campaign suggested (via website, radio, mailbox boards) to gauge local interest in EMS staffing and training.

**ACTION ITEM** for JR Niblett to write up information (as soon as possible) about the need for EMT staff.

Motion by Sherry Hastings to ask the two EMTs, out of Westcliffe, if they would work at Deer Mountain a few days during the week depending on their work schedule.

Second by Sharon Zuidema

Discussion: JR Niblett oversees operations including this staffing request from the board. He understands that any EMS coverage would protect residents of the Deer Mountain community. However, the fire chief will not tolerate staff inactivity and will again review job responsibilities with these EMTs.

Vote: Unanimous - motion carried.

#### **OLD OR UNFINISHED BUSINESS:**

- Auxiliary - No activity due to COVID-19.
- Bingo - No activity due to COVID-19

#### **NEW BUSINESS:**

- None

#### **ANNOUNCEMENTS:**

- Next regular board meeting on February 17, 2021 at 6:00 PM

#### **ADJOURNMENT**

Motion to adjourn by Sharon Zuidema

Second by Joe Watts

Vote: Unanimous - motion carried

Meeting adjourned a 7:41 PM

Respectfully submitted,  
Anita Gregg, secretary

*(Supporting documentation to these minutes available upon request.)*