

# **Moab Valley Fire Protection District Commission Meeting**

**45 South 100 East, Moab Utah 84532**

**February 20, 2024 - 4:00 p.m.**

## **A. Call to Order:**

1. The meeting was called to order by Chairman Archie Walker at 4:00 p.m.
2. Commissioners Present: Chairman Archie Walker, Commissioner Jim McGann, Commissioner Charlie Harrison
3. Staff Present: Chief TJ Brewer, Administrator Cathy Bonde, Battalion Chief Brandon McGuffee
4. Also Present: Mike Kelso

## **B. General Business:**

1. Approval of Minutes – Commissioner Harrison motioned to approve minutes from the December 7, 2023 Commission meeting which included the 2023 amended budget and 2024 budget budget public hearing. Commissioner McGann seconded, and the motion passed unanimously.
2. Citizens to be Heard – None wishing to speak.
3. Approval of Bills - Commissioner McGann motioned to approve bills. Commissioner Harrison seconded, and the motion passed unanimously.

## **C. Chief's Report**

1. Chief Brewer reported that a main focus of the staff this year has been to follow through on completing a number of projects that have been in the works for some time. This has resulted in many hours in meetings.
2. We are not eligible for the Community Development Block Grant which we hoped would fund our rescue truck. Many hours were devoted to the process by Shea, Cathy and Mallory Nassau of Grand County. Cathy stated that the low to moderate income percentage we needed to use was slightly outside the range required. This was also the case for a community building project in La Sal and an application for funding in Price. Other grant options are being pursued. Chief Brewer added that through the process we

got specs for trucks and other information that will be valuable in pursuing other funding sources, and he stated we appreciate the County working with us on the grant.

3. Mallory Nassau has contacted us about holding an annexation meeting. Chief Brewer stated that Mallory has been great to work with. He said it would be valuable for those of us who sat in meetings last year, including Commissioner Walker, to get together to reevaluate what we are looking at in terms of annexation. Cathy stated that she let Mallory know it would be helpful to have a proposal from the County for annexation as there seemed to be some pushback from some of the County Commissioners involved in the process last year as to our proposal. Cathy also conveyed to the Moab Fire Commissioners that due to our tax rate falling by 22.1%, the tax revenue the District would receive from annexation has fallen by approximately \$100,000.00 from the figures we were using to budget for annexation last year.
4. Team Rubicon is coming back in March.
5. We had eight applicants for the seasonal positions. Interviews are pretty much wrapped up, and we had really good applicants. Cathy stated the interview committee has moved on to reference checks on the candidates.
6. We had a nasty car crash with two local fatalities, and it was hard on the community of firefighters. Chief Brewer thanked Commissioners for investing in the Cordico app and our process for providing mental health help and resources to our firefighters.
7. We have made Engine 2 a secondary rescue truck and have placed it at Station 2. It is equipped with the older rescue tools. This is viewed as a short term fix until we are able to acquire a new rescue truck.
8. There has been discussion of keeping Engine 10 in reserve once we receive the new pumper engine. Originally we had planned to sell Engine 10 once the pumper engine arrived. Commissioner Harrison stated he didn't think we would be able to sell it for what we have put into it. He stated we should keep it moving as opposed to leaving it parked. Chief Brewer said the engine runs well now, but the new engine put into it seems to have less power than the old one, and it is louder. Commissioner Harrison said the noise could be from insulation being removed that was not put back and may be able to be remedied by putting insulation back in.
9. Chief Brewer reiterated the value of investing in the mental health and wellbeing of our firefighters.

#### **E. Old Business:**

1. Annexation – Commissioners stated they look forward to seeing what Grand County will bring to the table.

Chief Brewer said he and Mack McDonald with San Juan County are working on a map in consideration of annexation to the south. Chief Brewer invited Commissioners to give their input on that annexation. We plan to talk to LeGrand with UASD to find out if spot annexing is possible. Discussion was had on the areas under consideration for annexation.

2. Job Descriptions – Chief Brewer stated job descriptions are part of the process staff has been focusing on. He hopes to have the end product in a couple of months.

## **G. New Business:**

1. Wildland Program Presentation – Clark Maughan was going to present on the wildland program at today's meeting, but the swim team that his daughter is on placed in State, so Chief Brewer told Clark he should participate in the parade through town with the team. He will present at our April meeting.
2. 2023 Financials – Cathy gave a review of the District's 2023 profit and loss statement pre-audit. Highlights include:

We received some unexpected and greatly appreciated donations at the end of the year. One was from Moab Base Association for \$3000.00. This made donation income higher than we had budgeted.

Miscellaneous Tax was lower than budgeted. This is due to the fact that personal property and fee in lieu are collected at the previous year's tax rate but then adjusted for the current year's tax rate. Since our tax rate fell by 22.10%, we received \$5,572.46 less.

General Tax is much lower than the budgeted amount. The County had a lower collection rate than usual. Those collections when paid will show in our 2024 Delinquent Tax line item, and we can expect that income to be higher than our current budgeted amount for 2024.

Interest income was higher than originally budgeted as tax rates increased. Our line item is higher than the year end amended budget partially due to interest earned on taxes prior to disbursement throughout the year.

We did not receive a grant for extrication tools, so we purchased those out of our budget which put our specialty rescue expense line item at 170.27% of budget.

At the end 2022 we entered a bill for Capital Equipment we were going to purchase from Curtis Tools and wanted expensed to 2022. We ultimately did not purchase some of the equipment costed to 2022. Because our 2022 audit was complete, we could not adjust this purchase in our 2022 books, so the unspent funds were credited to our 2023 Capital Equipment budget line item. This equates to an additional \$19,335.35 available for Capital Equipment purchases in our 2023 budget.

We planned to purchase equipment for our new pumper engine but have found a grant opportunity, so we did not expend those funds resulting in expending only 34.96% of our Capital Equipment expense line item.

Our pre-audit net income stands at \$137,143.60. In the event we do not receive the equipment grant, a majority of 2023 net income can be rolled into our 2024 budget for purchase of that equipment.

Our Reserve Fund balance post 2022 audit stands at \$300,857.01. These are funds accumulated since 2018. The funds in reserve equate in value to 16.19% of our 2024

budget. Some organizations will set a standard for how much should be held in reserve based on budget. This is something the Commission can consider in the future.

Any post audit income from 2023 can be moved to our Reserve Fund, rolled into our 2024 budget, or put in our Capital Projects fund. The Capital Projects fund currently has a balance of \$309,478.31.

**3.** Salary Survey – Commissioner McGann stated a salary survey would be a good way for us to find out where our pay rates are in comparison to similar positions in the State as well as where we stand in relation to Grand County. He also stated it may help us as we develop job descriptions. The information would be valuable as we grow and consider hiring more people. Commissioner Walker inquired as to cost for a salary survey. Commissioner McGann said it varies. The Bureau of Labor Statistics will do it for free, but that process may take more in-house work. Other sources may be \$1,500.00 to \$2,000.00.

Commissioner Harrison stated that if the cost was several thousand dollars he felt it would be a waste of money. Conversation was had on the possibility that a salary survey could show employees are underpaid and how the District would deal with that potential outcome. Commissioner McGann stated there would be value in knowing where we are at regardless of the survey's outcome. Commissioner McGann offered to look into companies that could do surveys and their cost.

**4.** Discussion was had on billing for extrication and the difference between extrication and hazmat billing, as well as internal labor and external billing agencies needed to bill for extrication. Cathy stated we would want to look at the cost benefit in billing for extrication. A larger discussion was had on generating revenue.

**5.** Commissioner Walker asked about getting a quote for our annual financial audit from Larson & Company. Chief Brewer stated we are currently in a 3 year contract with Smuin Rich and Marsing and can make a request for quote when we are in our last year of the current contract.

**H. Adjourn:**

1. Chair Walker adjourned the meeting at 5:00 p.m.

**Date** \_\_\_\_\_

**Archie Walker, Chair**

**Attest:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Cathy Bonde, Clerk**