

Moab Valley Fire Protection District Commission Meeting

45 South 100 East, Moab Utah 84532

May 31, 2024 - 1:00 p.m.

A. Call to Order:

1. The meeting was called to order by Chairman Archie Walker at 1:13 p.m.
2. Commissioners Present: Chairman Archie Walker, Commissioner Jim McGann, Commissioner Charlie Harrison
3. Staff Present: Chief TJ Brewer, Administrator Cathy Bonde

B. General Business:

1. Citizens to be Heard – None present.

C. Equipment Acquisition

1. Chief Brewer presented the proposal and quote for a new type 6 engine from Outback Fire Apparatus.

Chief Brewer went over the equipment issues we have had this year including breakdowns and cost of repairs. With these issues and our aging fleet, he stated it is time to invest in our equipment to avoid any further emergency situations. Also of concern is expansion of the District and covering more distant and remote incidents.

Our rescue truck is in need of replacement, and the type-6 proposed could also be used in an emergency situation as a stand in rescue truck until the current rescue truck is replaced.

The ladder truck is also on the list for replacement.

Chief Brewer reiterated it is time to start moving on equipment replacement. Departments are not selling used equipment as much as in the past. New equipment increases in cost every year we hold off on replacement.

Discussion was had on selling or retaining some pieces of equipment.

Chief Brewer stated build times on new engines are 2-3 years. This proposed Type-6 would be available to us in a matter of weeks. The Department has been very conservative in replacing engines, but that has led to our aging fleet and a lot of repairs and maintenance.

Chief Brewer provided further detail on the type-6 engine proposed, the quote provided by Outback Fire Apparatus, and how the Department would use the engine.

2. Cathy provided information on the financial health of the District. The Capital Project budget currently has a balance of \$309,478.31.

This year compared to last year at this time, our income is up 12% and our expenses are up 22%. Two large expenses incurred this year but not last include the first payment on our new engine, and replacing our air compressor. If we remove those expenses from calculation, our regular expenses are only up 9% from last year. Our fund balance, which is separate from the capital projects fund, has a balance of \$300,000.00 as of the end of 2022, post-audit. There will be funds added to either the fund balance or the capital projects fund after our 2023 audit is complete.

Cathy also reminded Commissioners that the majority of income in our annual budget does not come until the end of the year, so the District needs to have reserve funds to draw on until tax revenue is received.

Cathy added that we have some movie work scheduled that will bring in income not currently in our budget. If the movie uses us to the extent they currently have us scheduled, we will net approximately \$49,000.00 after paying our firefighters for the assignment. Chief Brewer stated that although movie work is not in itself a goal, it fits into his larger goal of finding ways to generate income for the department that help relieve the tax burden of our citizens.

Chief Brewer informed Commissioners that annexation conversations are moving along with both Grand and San Juan County. The District also received a five year grant for fuels mitigation. The purchase proposed fits with the growth and added activity of the District.

3. Discussion was had on paying the full cost of the type-6 engine from current Department funds or using financing. Chief Brewer felt there was no particular advantage to the Department in financing. Cathy added that we have a rescue truck on the CIB loan list which, if awarded, would most likely be a combination grant and loan; giving us another loan payment. A loan with CIB would be low interest compared to a commercial loan for the type-6 engine. Commissioner Harrison stated we should purchase the engine outright if there is no advantage to financing.
4. Commissioner Harrison motioned to purchase the proposed type-6 engine, paying the full cost from the capital projects fund. Commission McGann stated he is not a big fan of taking trucks out of the area, and that was his main concern. Discussion was had on the area parameters of this as well as amount of time during the year that would or would not be acceptable in having an engine out of District. Chief Brewer added that revenue generated from sending engines out of District with the wildland program

allowed us to purchase our water tender and engine 466 with cash. The wildland program also allows us to have additional employees in District to respond to incidents and help with projects. Further discussion was had on the day to day benefit of having additional wildland firefighters on staff verses the net income the program currently provides. Chief Brewer conveyed that Mike Philips, the fire chief in Cedar City, has had a type 6 engine in Texas since mid-February and is earning hundreds of thousands of dollars on that assignment; more than the cost of this proposed engine.

Commissioners discussed the pros and cons of the make and model for a type 6 engine as well as time delay on choosing a different truck.

Commissioner Walker seconded the motion made by Commissioner Harrison. Commissioners Harrison and Walker voted in favor. Commissioner McGann voted in favor with the caveat that the engine stay in District for the majority of the time. Motion carried.

Further discussion was had on time the engine would spend in and out of District, and concerns related to resources with both wildland deployments and County incidents.

D. Staffing

Chief Brewer informed Commissioners of his plan to bringing on 2 more seasonals in the near future to help with fuels mitigation required by the CWDG grant as well as to provide seven day coverage. The Department has funds currently available in the payroll budget and the grant will provide some coverage of payroll costs.

H. Adjourn:

1. Chair Walker adjourned the meeting at 2:09 p.m.

 _____ Date 18 June 2024

Archie Walker, Chair

Attest:  _____

Cathy Bonde, Clerk