

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

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

**June 17, 2025- 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, Battalion Chief Brandon McGuffee, Administrator Cathy Bonde

## **B. General Business:**

1. Citizens to Be Heard – None present
2. Approval of Bills – Commissioner McGann asked about a larger bill from LN Curtis. Chief Brewer stated the bill was for turn out gear.

Chief Brewer informed commissioners there was serious consideration last week in purchasing a rescue truck with a cascade system from an auction. Ultimately, we did not bid on the truck.

Conversation was had on cascade systems for Moab and Thompson stations.

Commissioner Harrison motioned to approve bills. Commissioner McGann seconded, and the motion passed unanimously.

3. Approval of Minutes – After a review of the minutes, Commissioner Harrison motioned to approve the minutes from the May 20, 2025 meeting. Commissioner McGann seconded the motion, and it passed unanimously.

## **D. Chief's Report:**

1. Chief Brewer reported 73 calls to service since the last commission meeting, with 274 to date for the year.
2. The department has 32 members.
3. Total losses under \$500,000.00, total saved over \$1,000,000.00
4. The FEPP Truck has been put into service. Discussion was had on the use of the FEPP truck. Chief Brewer anticipates the truck will primarily stay in county. As an FEPP truck, it is compensated at a lower rate on wildland fires.
5. Engine 161 has been sent to California on a resource order.
6. We were asked to go to Blanding to assist with fire and choose not to due to wildfire conditions here.
7. Clark and Ricky are in Boise doing the final inspection on the BME Engine 131. Cathy informed commissioners that the loan process required an attorney opinion. The attorney we used in the past now works for the attorney general office and therefore

could not represent us. Another attorney was secured, and a \$4,000.00 retainer was required.

8. Chief Brewer stated Engine 466 is in the shop again with an EGR failure. Commissioners discussed the issue and repair.
9. Due to summer heat, we have begun doing more public relations work with CWDG as opposed to fuels mitigation. Staff has been manning booths with information outside the grocery stores.
10. Chief Brewer received a call about potential hazmat at Harley Dome and will be going there with some other agency representatives on Monday.
11. We have had citizens call with concerns about fire safety issues at the Kane Creek development with the intent of shutting the project down. Moab Fire will follow state and local code and does not have comment on the project itself.
12. Upcoming events and trainings include a fire instructor and emergency apparatus driver training put on by UFRA and taking place in July.
13. Chief Brewer debriefed commissioners on a structure fire on Spanish Valley Drive. We were dispatched and had 2 engines there within 5 minutes, had water on the fire within 7 minutes, and had the fire knocked down in 10 minutes. Moab Fire cleared the scene about an hour after dispatch. Impressive times and response. The firefighters showed compassion and humanity. They rescued a dog from the structure who unfortunately passed away, but firefighters did start CPR on the dog. They helped secure other animals and communicated well with the residents.
14. Commissioner Walker asked for an update on Engine 261 that had the engine replaced. Chief Brewer and Brandon McGuffee informed commissioners on a filter issue that is still being resolved. The filter does not appear to exist, even with the company that is labeled on the filter. Valve issues on Engine 1 were also discussed.
15. Commissioner Walker asked about response protocol. Chief Brewer said it is basically done. We are now working out issues that arise in putting it into action in real life based on the dynamics of a combination department.

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

1. Annexation - Cathy informed commissioners that the County is working to find all relevant titles and deeds. The County has been invoiced for the \$450,000.00 that is part of the ILA. We have not yet received those funds.

Discussion was had on the Thompson property and potential additional access.

Further discussion was had on repairs to the Thompson station including HVAC, water heater, and mold issues.

2. San Juan County Annexation - Cathy stated there was nothing new to report. San Juan County is being billed for another year of fire service. Commissioner McGann asked when the service year is up, and Cathy stated it is up now. Commissioner McGann suggested we renegotiate the fee for services, citing 2022 numbers of the value being \$80,000.00. Cathy said we currently have no idea what the value of the properties are in the proposed annexation area but that we did access value based on calls and our fee schedule as we did with Grand County. Chief Brewer clarified that the \$80,000.00 came from San Juan County's calculation based on property value at the time, and they

did not want to pay that much for service. Commissioner McGann suggested we renew the MOU with San Juan County for the value of the property tax revenue in the proposed annexation area. Chief Brewer said San Juan County would have to take the lead on that as we do not know the property values in the area. Cathy added that the area we are looking at annexing is greater in size than the MOU.

Discussion was had on the best timing to annex northern San Juan County based on other variables. Chief Brewer said the next step is to meet with representatives from San Juan County.

#### **F. Budgets:**

**1. Cathy went over highlights of the draft 2025 amended budget. Current changes include:**

- Removing \$50,000.00 in income from the CWDG grant that would be moved to the 2026 budget. Funds in 2026 would be used to hire 2 seasonals in the Spring and Fall for fuels mitigation.
- General tax revenue is increased based on preliminary numbers from the state. The increase is due to new growth and property tax valuations. Our tax rate did drop, but not by the amount anticipated.
- Delinquent Tax is increased based on actual outstanding tax.
- State of Utah Wildland is increased as we are already close to our budgeted income. It is increased by the approximate amount of 2 more deployments.
- Inspection income is decreased. There are a lot of development projects out there, but Brandon McGuffee stated that COVID impacted implementation of projects, and they are doing a lot of starting, stopping, and starting again so it is hard to predict which projects will impact the 2025 budget.
- Payroll adjustments are based on actuals as well as 2 seasonal fuels personnel for the Fall. Overtime/Part Time increased to match 2 additional rolls for wildland. In addition to wildland overtime, this line item includes holiday pay, temporary employees we had in the spring for fuels mitigation, and any non-wildland overtime.
- Other Professional Services increased due to the \$4,000.00 retainer for legal opinion on our loan.
- Fire Prevention increased due to the summer camp we held.
- Wildland Travel increased for another 2 full rolls. These expenses can vary greatly depending on whether deployments have hotel stays and meals on their own, or if they are out in the field with no hotels and rooms provided. We are reimbursed for any costs associated with this line item.
- Auto & Truck Repairs & Maintenance increased. Chief Brewer went over repairs needed including rebuilding the front ends of the water tender and the rescue truck
- Building Repairs & Maintenance increased for gravel and road base at Stations 2 and 3 and repairs to the Thompson fire station.

- Equipment Repairs and Maintenance is increased as we are currently over budget. The majority of expenses in this line item are for annual service on equipment such as Hurst tools, the Mako compressor, and flow testing on SCBAs.
- Shop Tools & Equipment and Appliances and Tools for Engines are increased due to expenses to date and anticipated needs.
- Capital Equipment-Fuels Mitigation is decreased to reflect the actual cost of the fuels truck.

The draft amended budget as presented is very close to being balanced.

In relation to building repairs and maintenance, Commissioner McGann asked about the \$450,000.00 from the County in the ILA. Cathy stated the County has been billed for the amount but it is not known when we will see those funds. She added that those funds are already in our budgets including in the Grand County line item of the general fund budget.

3. The draft 2026 budget has changed little since the last commission meeting. CWDG funds were moved from the 2025 draft budget to the 2026 draft, and we added 2 fuels mitigation seasonal employees. The general tax revenue has been increased to match the preliminary numbers we have received from the State Tax Commission. The changes decreased the deficit slightly from the previous draft budget.

Chief Brewer suggested discussion on what Commissioners would like to see from Moab Fire Department including operational readiness, the future of Moab Fire Department, how we operate, and what we need to be prepared for. He would like Commissioners to schedule a budget workshop.

Commissioner Harrison asked what specialty rescue equipment we don't have but need. Chief Brewer stated we do not have equipment necessary for trench rescue nor do we have the training. Hazmat training is primarily at awareness level with some trained operationally, but we are not a tech level response hazmat team. We don't have the equipment to train on. Conversation was had on SAR's training and responsibility. Commissioner Walker mentioned other type of rescue including water and ice. Cave and mine rescue was also mentioned. Commissioner Harrison stated he didn't think we could have it all but asked what do we need? Discussion was had on the types of incidents we have had including trench and swiftwater rescue. Commissioner Harrison said we should have basic training on all incident possibilities. Commissioner McGann added that the training is important for the safety of our firefighters. Chief Brewer stated if an incident is not a medical emergency or law enforcement issue, the fire department gets called. We are the catch-all service. Training, time, money and personnel are all required. Discussion was had on having the personnel. Chief Brewer said he felt we are tapping out our volunteers. Demographics are changing, people have multiple jobs, spouses have multiple jobs. We attract family-oriented people for the most part, so they have other obligations and are busy.

Chief Brewer stated we should not only focus on specialty rescue. The question is larger as to what commissioners expect from Moab Fire Department.

Commissioner Walker stated it is historically the same 10 people who take on larger commitments with the department. Commissioner McGann said his concern is spreading us too thin.

Commissioner Walker supported Commissioner Harrison's statement in having at least basic training in all incident possibilities.

Discussion was had on partnering with other agencies.

3. Budget Workshop – Scheduled for July 22 at 1:00 p.m.

**G. Adjourn:**

1. Chair Walker adjourned the meeting at 5:37 p.m.

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

**Archie Walker, Chair**

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

**Catherine Bonde, Clerk**