

Moab Valley Fire Protection District Commission Meeting

45 South 100 East, Moab Utah 84532

August 19, 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, Administrator Cathy Bonde, Wildland Division Chief Clark Maughan

B. General Business:

1. Approval of Minutes – Commissioner Harrison motioned to approve the minutes from the July 15, 2025 meeting. Commissioner McGann seconded the motion, and it passed unanimously. Commissioner Harrison motioned to approve the minutes from the July 22, 2025 budget workshop meeting. Commissioner McGann seconded the motion, and it passed unanimously.
2. Citizens to Be Heard – None present
3. Approval of Bills – Payment to Blanding City and Grand County EMS in relation to the Deer Creek Fire was discussed. Commissioner Harrison motioned to approve bills. Commissioner McGann seconded, and the motion passed unanimously.

D. Chief's Report:

1. There were 26 calls to service since the commission last met.
2. There has been some progress in relation to northern San Juan County annexation. There are legal, logistical and financial considerations to work through.
3. There are ongoing meetings about the sales tax proposal agreed upon at the last commission meeting. Chief Brewer stated he still feels this is the right direction to go, and that we need to educate the public on it. He added that the issue became public and got social media attention before we could get ahead of it, so it was not introduced to the public in the way we would have preferred. Chief Brewer said that regardless of wording in the resolution, he believes there are good intentions from the county commission. He added that we are very fiscally responsible as a district with checks and balances in place as far as expending funds.
4. We are working on an apparatus replacement schedule and will discuss it further later in the meeting.

5. We have advertised for the fuels crew members we are recruiting. Clark Maughan and Shea Walker are in the process of interviewing candidates, and these positions will be fully funded by CWDG.

E. Old Business:

1. Grand County Annexation - Cathy informed commissioners that the County is still working to find all relevant titles and deeds. The County has not yet paid the \$450,000.00 invoice that is part of the ILA although we are spending funds associated with that allocation. Projected interest for 2025 has been lowered in the draft 2025 budget due to not having the ILA funds in a timely manner.
2. San Juan County Annexation – Commissioner Walker initiated a brief discussion on acquiring property in Spanish Valley for a fire station.

Chief Brewer said it is currently projected northern San Juan County annexation will take place mid-year 2026. The map is agreed upon. Discussion has taken place in relation to funding from San Juan County in the short term. Each party will most likely pay for their own attorney fees in representing each party in the annexation process. Both San Juan County and Moab Fire will need to hold public hearings, and we believe notices for both can go out in one mailing.

We will do inspections.

San Juan County will keep their CWPP and CWS.

3. Sales Tax Initiative – Another meeting is scheduled with the active entities. A marketing campaign is being put together. Cathy stated that the sales tax initiative will involve far more work on our part than a property tax increase through truth and taxation. Statistics and information are being shared for the marketing campaign. Chief Brewer shared an interesting statistic in that call volume has increased 260% from 2015 to 2024. Chief Brewer added we are well on our way to seeing an increase in call volume this year over last year.

F. New Business:

1. Apparatus Replacement Schedule – Chief Brewer stated there has been a request from some members of the Grand County Commission for a five-year plan with the expectation we will need to present annually to them as to our needs for a percentage of the sales tax revenue.

Chief Brewer presented information on each piece of equipment showing its category of service life based on NFPA standards. Clark Maughan has been working on the format, and Chief Brewer asked for feedback as to the ease of useful information for commissioners. Commissioners discussed engine needs and the timeline of getting new engines. Chief Brewer added information on inflation in relation to cost. The BME we just bought was \$605,000, and they are now quoted between \$700,000 and \$750,000.

Current NFPA standards are to refurbish at 15 years and replace by 25 years. Chairman Walker stated if we can no longer find replacement parts, that needs to play into the need to replace equipment.

Chief Brewer said we would like to request CDBG funding for a rescue truck, CIB funding for a ladder truck, and we would like to purchase another BME which would have to be a cash or bank loan funded purchase.

Chief Brewer said he would like guidance from Commissioners on how they would like to see the apparatus replacement schedule implemented so that replacement isn't something that needs to be revisited every time a piece of apparatus ages out.

Commissioner Harrison said that if a truck is costing the department money. Then it should at 15 years, we should get rid of it. Chief Brewer agreed there will be exceptions to the NFPA replacement standards. Commissioner Walker supported NFPA standards with exceptions as referred to by Commissioner Harrison.

Commissioner McGann agreed and added he thought we would see more issues with the trucks sent out of district. He felt those may need to be replaced more often. Commissioner Harrison added there will also be issues if an engine just sits.

Chief Brewer stated if we consider a tire rotation schedule, looking at replacing engines between years 20 and 25 would make sense.

Clark Maughan stated the wildland engines as well as command trucks see more use. With wildland engines, it is recommended that the NFPA replacement standards be shortened by 5 to 10 years. Discussion was had on the use and wear and tear on wildland engines.

Discussion was had on sale and disposal of apparatus. Commissioner Harrison suggested a raffle.

Discussion was had on replacing apparatus with multi-use apparatus such as the BME engine.

Chief Brewer stated we would put a 25-year replacement schedule into our strategic plan. He added we cannot meet that goal in the immediate, but we will work toward it. He stated in the immediate we need to replace the rescue truck and the ladder truck. We can work on getting quotes.

G. Budgets:

1. Cathy stated Commissioners had three budgets in their packets. The only change to the draft 2025 amended budget is increased income for the wildland program and some associated increased cost in expenses as well as the addition of the fuel mitigation crew for Fall. At some point we will want to discuss how we would like to handle any net income we may have in 2025. For 2026 there is the draft 2026 budget we have presented at previous meeting as well as a draft 2026 budget in the event the sales tax is not approved. This budget is cut to bare bones, still has a deficit, and is not sustainable.

Commissioners were also presented with information from the Transparent Utah with the Utah Office of the State Auditor. Chief Brewer compiled a list of compensation packages for Grand County employees for comparison to our district compensation packages. The information is from 2024 and does not include COLAs or pay increases for 2025. Chief Brewer is the lowest paid head of a first responder agency in the city or county. Chief Brewer said there is a glaring difference in compensation between our employees and the sheriff's department, city employees, and the airport. He also said we ask a lot of our

employees. Chief Brewer pointed out that someone coming in as a base salary new deputy is making more than our employees that have been here for 5 or more years.

Cathy presented an updated wildland program revenue and expense spreadsheet. Discussion was had on having a fully separate budget from the general budget for the wildland program. Chief Brewer stated we are currently using revenue from the wildland program to supplement our general budget. Cathy added that the wildland program is currently covering the cost of 9 of our employees to date. The majority of those employees are hired as wildland employees. Chief Brewer stated that if we separate out the wildland budget, we would either need to pull the wildland net income back into the general budget to cover expenses there, or we would need to increase property tax to cover what the revenue from the wildland program is currently covering in our general budget. Cathy stated that we have non-wildland employees go on deployments, so it would be difficult to separate out the same employee into both a general budget and a wildland budget. The two budgets are not mutually exclusive. She stated the wildland revenue and expenses spreadsheet she currently provides to commissioners is the wildland program budget.

Commissioner McGann asked about seasonal wildland employees becoming fuels mitigation seasonals. Chief Brewer stated the wildland employees do fuels mitigation when they are not deployed. Clark Maughan added that the wildland seasonals and the fuels crew seasonals have offset seasons. Cathy added that a seasonal employee times out after they hit 1040 hours. Once they hit that, they cannot continue as a seasonal employee. Clark stated the fuels crew seasonals will be red carded and can go on off-season wildland deployments.

H. Adjourn:

1. Chair Walker adjourned the meeting at 5:56 p.m.

Date _____

Archie Walker, Chair

Attest: _____

Catherine Bonde, Clerk