

DRAFT MINUTES OF WORK MEETING
DAMMERON VALLEY FIRE SPECIAL SERVICE DISTRICT BOARD
1:00 p.m. November 3rd, 2020
Community Association Management

Board Members:

Chair: Mack Sorensen

Vice-Chair: Vacant

Treasurer: Vacant

Clerk: Ryan Andersen

Member at Large: Rick Johnson

Positions to be Appointed: Larry Carlon & Curt Shelley

CALL TO ORDER / ROLL CALL made by Mack Sorensen, Chairman. Other Members present were Larry Carlon, Ryan Anderson, Rick Johnson, and Curtis Shelley. Chief Chet Barnes and Deputy Administrative Chief Dave Aranez were also present. Mack Sorensen stated at the next regular board meeting, a Vice Chairman and Treasurer will need to be officially appointed.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA - Rick Johnson made a motion to accept the agenda as presented. Ryan Anderson seconded the motion and all were in favor. The motion passed unanimously. Mack Sorensen explained the purpose of the meeting is to discuss the budget. In the next 18 months, the County will have plans for the corridor in place. A possible \$450.00 annual fee to be presented in which two to four paid individuals will be in the fire station possibly within 18 months. The atmosphere at the fire station hasn't changed as expected. Based on population, it's roughly a \$3.00 per person per month increase. The County is going to try to go to a mill levy. Everyone would pay a levy on property value vs the mill levy rate. Rick Johnson expressed any mill levy presented by the County should be shut down as he feels it is not fair and equitable.

REIMBURSEMENT TO GENERAL FUND FROM CAPITAL PROJECT FUND discussion presented by Curtis Shelley. A compressor repair was made this year that was critical to refill the air packs was conducted. That would qualify as an expenditure to capital projects and move back as a reimbursement to the General Fund. Curt Shelley proposed to make that accounting change. The repair was done earlier in the year and the adjustment must be made this year. Rick Johnson noted that presently up and down the corridor other departments are dependent on the compressor, and the DVFSSD is expending resources to maintain and repair that item. The total repair cost was \$3,600.00. **Ryan Anderson made a motion to move the stated amount from the Capital Improvement Fund to the General Fund. Rick Johnson seconded the motion and all were in favor. The motion passed unanimously.**

5 PROPERTIES IN DV THAT ARE NOT BEING INVOICED FOR FIRE SERVICES - discussion presented by Curtis Shelley. He explained that there are five properties in the Valley paying property tax, that have not been assessed SSD fees. If they are paying tax, they should be paying the SSD as well. There is infrastructure on these Lots. The DVFSSD provides fire protection for their properties and they are clearly in the SSD. Other properties discovered are not paying property taxes. On that basis, Curt Shelley suggested not assessing the SSD fee. Pace, Century link, PacifiCorp, Questar, and AT&T are the owners of record of the properties paying property tax. Those properties not paying property tax including the SSD, Utah Power and Light, PacifiCorp, the State of Utah, and Dammeron Corp. Dammeron Corp is showing as tax-exempt. **A motion was made by Rick Johnson**

to invoice all properties that have not been previously invoiced for this fiscal year for the SSD payment of \$210.00. The motion was seconded by Curt Shelley. Ryan Anderson was against the motion as he feels retroactively billing is inappropriate. Larry Carlon was in favor. Mack Sorensen was against retroactively billing as well. The motion passed three to two. A motion was made by Ryan Anderson to assess those same properties the SSD fees moving forward. The motion was seconded by Curt Shelley and all were in favor. The motion passed unanimously.

FISCAL OUTLOOK FOR REMAINDER OF 2020 BUDGET YEAR presented by Chief Chet Barnes - There is currently a shortfall of roughly \$16,000.00 in the 2020 budget. No big-ticket items are coming up other than the year-end stipend payments. The Department is up about 63% in call volume. A few line items are way over that will be adjusted. Ryan Anderson inquired if the stipend is paid if payment is also provided by the MOU. Chief Chet Barnes stated if they get the MOU, that doesn't account for the stipend.

Chief Chet Barnes explained that DVFR is providing EMS for the entire corridor which incurs hard costs. Rick Johnson noted that the DVFR does serve the people outside of the SSD territory because the DVFR is the only department outfitted to be able to respond. Mack Sorensen clarified it is not outside of the SSD service area regarding EMS. Ryan Anderson inquired as to why the County has never been asked to put that in as a budget item to provide funds for other areas as EMS is a huge part of what the DVFR does. He feels the people of the Valley should not carry all of that cost. He additionally inquired about the possibility of determining out of the calls made, how many of the calls are actually in Dammeron Valley and how much of the fees should the SSD be getting assistance on. Chief Chet Barnes explained that the Departments along the corridor combine and share resources. Diamond Valley is putting the SSD firefighters through training. Finding actual accurate data is difficult to determine what resources have been used in which areas. The SSD's licensure covers other townships, and it is indeed a big chunk of the budget to serve outside of the Valley. However, the Valley is getting equal service from other districts for Fire vs EMS. Rick Johnson noted the corridor coverage on EMS is by the DVFR. It has been invaluable for decades. Mack Sorensen agreed to set up a meeting with the County Commissioners in the next two weeks to discuss this topic. Chet Barnes added he would like to increase service rather than decrease it. Ryan Anderson stated service should not be discontinued, but the SSD should be reimbursed for it. Dave Aranez stated that data doesn't exist to go backward in time in regards to tracking call area. If the board directs the department to track calls outside the boundaries, the DVFR could present something for the next calendar year. Chet Barnes added that there is a 2 to a 3-year period where no incident reports were conducted and other data is very inaccurate. Ultimately, out of boundary service calls have been estimated to be about 10% of the budget for supplies, fuel, etc. Curt Shelley inquired if there is anything that would prevent the SSD from billing for EMS services. Chet Barnes answered, there are restrictions on who the SSD can bill, it would have to be an agreement between SSD's.

Chet Barnes presented that \$16,908.00 is the amount needing to be amended to the 2020 budget as the Chief's salary wasn't on the originally adopted 2020 budget. Curt Shelley explained that the financial reports show line items that are way under in some places, and easily over in others. Also, the budget did not allow for the \$20,000.00 contribution to the reserve fund made earlier in the year by the previous Board, therefore, the year started with a deficit. \$16,000.00 needs to be added from the reserve fund to the general fund. Mack Sorensen explained the need for a motion to move \$16,000.00 from the reserve to the general fund for the Chief's salary. The personnel line item needs to be corrected in 2021 so the MOU reimbursement is reflected. Mack

Sorensen thanked Curt Shelley for all of his work on the budget amendment and the 2021 budget. Ryan Anderson made a motion to move \$16,900.00 from the reserve to the general fund to cover the Chief's Salary under the personnel line item.

PRESENTATION OF 2021 BUDGET AND NEXT STEPS by Chet Barnes, Fire Chief - The budget proposed is at \$485.00 per property which covers the basics to give the firefighters the tools and training they need with a minimum response time. The DVFR has to meet certain criteria to ensure the response is being conducted safely and effectively. Rick Johnson requested a further explanation regarding the proposed station staffing. Chet Barnes responded it is coverage on the units to ensure someone is available and can respond. The DVFR needs an EMT/first responder to go out on every EMS call, red card, and certified structure firefighters are also needed. He explained his legal responsibility to provide minimum response times, etc. as there are national laws that govern such. The proposed increase is just to meet the minimums. The DVFR was not a functioning fire department previously. Rick Johnson stated that it was the County that had adopted NFPA 1720. Dave Aranez further explained that in Utah, the law states the Counties are responsible for fire safety. Washington County has elected to do that by using local Boards. In this case, the Chief is transferring liability to the Board, the Board then needs to transfer liability back to the County. Rick Johnson noted that because of the adoption of the NFPA 1720 code and because the Board has been charged with and has done everything in their power to attempt to meet those obligations by bringing in appropriate staffing at present with the Fire Chief, but an additional amount is needed to meet the standard the county has adopted. Thus, funding is going to significantly increase, and the SSD needs to implore the County to help. Mack Sorensen reiterated that the State legislature made the law that it is required by the County. The law says the County must provide adequate protection. Rick Johnson stated whoever mandated it needs to determine where the money comes from. He continued to state, at present, to get it up to a baseline safety level, the SSD levies must increase by 150%, those who have mandated the SSD to provide it need to chip in via a stipend or grant to get us there. Mack Sorensen explained that the County would do it through taxes. Rick Johnson expressed the department has exceeded its responsibilities and the DVFR is the most capable in the corridor.

Chief Chet Barnes stated he has been able to lay it out what it looks like going forward. There are only a couple of costs found to be in need immediately. Rick Johnson stated funds have already been appropriated for the delinquent air packs. Chet Barnes explained next year's plan is not equipment, it is staffing and PPE. There is a lot of potentials to offset costs. Ryan Anderson inquired if DVFR members are going to be cross-trained in regards to EMS, wildland, and structure fires. Chet Barnes affirmed the possibility, however, there are some people only interested in EMS. He wants to cross-train all who are capable. Rick Johnson had anticipated getting a budget breakdown as it seems as though that trained staff needs to be in place before the addition of the other bits and pieces. Chet Barnes explained he has a strategic plan to ensure there is proper coverage by providing staffing. The ultimate goal is to have a paid fire station. Rick Johnson stated that because the SSD has been mandated without the ability to do so, we need to be held harmless until that level of staffing is not only adequate but is self-sustaining. Looking at the budget, it seems as though doubling plus of the fees, exceeds that of \$15,000.00 EMT classes, etc.

Chet Barnes explained his salary is already a 50% increase. He further explained that all expenses are way up as the Department is catching up for no proper budgeting over the previous years. Dave Aranez explained the driver operator program to have reliable response to drive the engines, in which there are nine participants currently who will be doing an obstacle course this

month as well as a pumping class. Mid-December a huge component will be having people in the Valley that can drive the trucks. Rick Johnson explained his questions are rhetorical in many cases, to have a proper record to be able to respond to the community as a Board. Dave Aranez further explained that the Department wants to monetize the fire station by working with EMT Utah who provides training and offered an opportunity to monetize the fire station to get a discounted rate for the EMT class. Chief Chet Barnes has also worked with another entity to put ten people through at no cost at all. There is a reliable base of seven people total in Dammeron Valley right now that are locals. Dave Aranez continued to explain that platooning involves staff agreeing to make themselves available to respond in the Valley. Recruiting is currently in progress in the red card program right now, which is what is needed to fight wildfires and get paid for it. There is a deficiency for structural firefighter one and two. There currently is not a pool of candidates nor time to make that happen. Rick Johnson inquired how many volunteers there are currently.

Chet Barnes stated there are 23 volunteers on the roster right now, however, the amount that shows up for calls is different. Rick Johnson inquired how many on the roster meet the requirements of NFPA 1720. Chet Barnes stated a plan is being developed for that. It depends on a brush fire, structure fire, etc. There have to be properly trained people doing the things they are trained in. The Department has been operating outside of what is acceptable. There are six on the roster, but only three that show up on the calls. The difficulty is getting volunteers to respond. Dave Aranez reiterated that the Department is resource-poor in firefighter 2, which will be the focus by staffing. Rick Johnson expressed with a community with an average age of 50, younger individuals need to be recruited, trained, and commit them to longer terms. Rick Johnson inquired if state institutions are teaching EMT courses where State scholarships could be explored for participants who have committed to service. Dave Aranez added that there is a liaison for legislative issues that are well connected at the State level who will be bringing these issues to the State.

Rick Johnson clarified that a self-funded NFPA 1720 compliant fire department is going to drastically adjust the funding. He expressed concern that the Board previously indicated to the public that it will not cost much more. Mack Sorensen stated that the Board inherited a money problem that went unaddressed. Two to three years ago, the SSD cut funding and has not had a fire department since. Ryan Anderson agreed the fire department has been underfunded for a lot of years and the current Department is trying to catch up on years of neglect. Ryan Anderson added that he has two properties in the Valley and understands the sensitivity to such an increase, however, agrees the SSD needs to give the Department the resources they need to allow the Chief to do the job he has been hired to do. Rick Johnson has reviewed the most recent budget, and he wants to understand what he is voting for.

Chet Barnes stated he is requesting \$485.00 per household per year. Larry Carlon expressed the fact that the SSD has received little to no wildland MOU money before this year. Dave Aranez directed the Board to have the Chief present the needs of the fire department to the Board and the Board present the number needed to fulfill the Department's needs. The Chief is to present only the conditions of the past present and future and not the number. Dave Aranez reiterated that the Chief does not report to the public, only to the Board, and the public is not to ask the Chief any questions. He is not to present to the public and the public does not get to ask the Chief any questions. Dave Aranez added that the Board cannot defer any questions to the Chief. Curt Shelley explained that if the Board is left to explain the department's deficiencies, it will be difficult if

they are not qualified to answer. Rick Johnson added that the Board needs a full understanding of the proposed budget if they are to present these answers to the public.

SCHEDULE BUDGET HEARING - Tuesday, November 10th, at 7:00 PM; Regular Board Meeting to be held the same day at 6:00 PM.

ADJOURNMENT - Ryan Anderson made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Rick Johnson seconded the motion and all were in favor. The motion passed unanimously.