

Minutes of the Meeting of the Daggett County Commission Public Hearing held on **Wednesday, October 21, 2020** in the Commission Chambers at the Daggett County Courthouse and through electronic means. Commissioners Randy Asay, Jack Lytle and Matt Tippets were present in person. Auditor/Recorder Keri Pallesen and Clerk/Treasurer Brian Raymond were present in person. Attorney Niel Lund was present online. The meeting was called to order at 6:00 pm by Commissioner Asay.

Present In Person: William Rylander, Mayor Coombs, Greg Scott and Randy Browning of the Manila Town Council, Harriett Dickerson and Mayor Sandy Kunkel of the Dutch John Town Council, Hank Gutz, Jean Dickinson, Dwayne and Billee Benson **Present Online:** Bret Reynolds of CIVCO Engineering, Kym Slagowski

Introduction: Commissioner Tippets was given the floor and explained the purpose of the hearing and that there is a lot we still do not know about the formation of a Local District for Fire and EMS. The first reason to do this is there is a need and the Commission wants to solve the problem. Tippets also explained that the County has hired Darin Johnson, who was a flight paramedic, to help set up needed improvements for EMS including new equipment that is being ordered. The District could help with improving EMS. Another reason for this district is that there is State PILT money that needs to go into a district so that it doesn't negatively affect our Federal PILT payments. Commissioner Tippets then read Resolution 20-10. Attorney Niel Lund provided information regarding an adequate protest that has to be submitted within 60 days of the last hearing and be signed by 25% of private real property or equal to at least 15% of the taxable market value, or 25% of the voters that participated in the most recent election prior to adoption of the resolution.

Public Comments: Commissioner Tippets opened the floor for comments. Bill Rylander asked about the representation on the board for the towns and Commissioner Lytle asked before or after the Town's join? Niel asked for some time to get the code up. Commissioners Tippets and Lytle addressed the question while Niel was booting up his computer saying that in the initial board the members would be residents of the county not the towns. Niel said that the Code section states that the trustee shall be a resident or land owner within the boundaries of the district.

Chief Randy Browning of Manila Fire Department was the next person to comment. He thought all in all we are going in the right direction, but he had some questions and especially on the appointment of board members. All would be appointed at first and then they would be staggered so that three would be up for election in two years (2022), and two more in the following two years (2024). Randy then asked about the plans for the fire department as he would like to continue on as a firefighter. Mr. Browning thought that he and Chief JayDee Guymon of Dutch John should at least be advisors if not board members and Darin Johnson should also be involved in the District. Commissioner Asay said Jeremy Raymond in the Uintah Fire District could also provide input to help in getting this set up. The district could add board members if either town decides to join. There was some talk of having fire chiefs in each community and maybe it's a possibility as there are lots of options and chances for input. If the towns do not join would you have five board members then change it afterwards? Would you be willing to wait a month or month and a half for the towns to catch up. Commissioner Lytle did not think so and then asked if that was Randy's recommendation. Niel said he didn't think that things will change over time as how the district operates and it would all depend on what the towns want when they join. It won't be a negative for the towns not to join right now..

Sandy Kunkel had the same questions as Randy. She thought that Niel said the board has to approve the addition of the new areas and how many new board members there are. Niel said that is

correct, but the Commissioners said the intent is to be inclusive and during interviews for being on the board the idea is to pick those people who look out for the best interests of the whole county. Niel said there may be a way to put some of that language into the formation of the board.

Hank Gutz, Daggett County resident, said he can't vote in the town elections. He asked about the Forest Service and he thought they operated a memorandum of understanding. Where does EMS services get provided and when does it stop, Lucerne or the campgrounds? What are we going to exclude in this for Fire or EMS, what about search and rescue or recovery. Forest Service and PILT were discussed. Sweetwater gets a lot more PILT than Daggett County and what do they do when we respond for them. Access is a challenge on federal lands. With the increase in visitation will the Federal Government provide us with additional PILT?

Jean Dickinson, a landowner in the eastern part of the County asked how do you see the new EMS Director and his interaction with the board? She thinks it is a good thing you are trying to do. She also brought up the issue of PILT and working with the neighboring counties because the North Slope is a fire hazard and it is not if, but when a fire will affect our drinking water, ag water, for other counties and states. You should reach out to the Forest, BLM, Dominion Energy to ensure that the MOUs are in place and preparing now for emergencies that could be coming. Jean encouraged the towns to stay involved and work together with the county.

Commissioner Tippets remarked that he views the district as most successful if everyone is involved as there is strength in numbers. Jean addressed the subdivisions like Taylor Flat and there is a need to get them involved so you can use their resources. Commissioner Tippets said that the Commission thought the EMS Director would be a resource, maybe an executive director or some other position to work for or with the board.

Hank said there are two towns and the County and the towns have all the toys. Do the towns give representation to the county residents? Commissioner Lytle said that the County is in contract with both Towns already.

Sandy Kunkel noted that Dutch John residents are residents of the County and asked if they were in the wrong meeting and it was stated that this hearing is open to all residents of the county including those who live in the towns who also pay County taxes.

Commissioner Tippets addressed that one of the things he likes about this district is it is not about east or west, but it's about all of us.

Randy Browning thought that was a good comment and said the Town of Manila has a lot invested into their fire department and asked the Commissioners about their thoughts for the finances of the district. Will the District take on bonds to buy everyone out or something else. Niel thought that the district was not expecting that the towns would just donate their resources to the district. The County would donate resources or dollars to build the district. Commissioner Lytle said it could remain as contractors and over time the district will replace equipment that is district owned. It will not be super flush and so it's not going to be huge amounts of money to start out. Randy said the Town has spent \$40,000 on two different trucks in recent years. The Commission and Niel explained there are lots of options and there is no requirement to sell or give away equipment. This could be good to have enough ambulances that we don't have to fly everyone out of here. The district would have the option of taxing, but it's up to the board and it's one of the tools, but is not required. Randy thought this was a good idea and he would like to have multiple options for services.

Mayor Coombs said there are four members of the Town Council here tonight and he has expressed his opinions previously. The town councils were thanked for participating.

Hank Gutz asked about the rate (.0008) and what if it's not enough. That rate is the maximum rate, but the entities can contribute beyond any tax rates. As a county citizen Hank asked about how the county intends to use money currently in the budget for EMS and Fire.

Randy Browning asked how the County will reallocate resources if the district is set up and he was told the intent is to not leave the district high and dry, but to make sure it is successful. The County has hired a new EMS director and purchased \$180,000 in equipment, so there is a large commitment to see things improved.

Niel said there are 60 days that the county has to wait to see if there are adequate protests and then they can pass a resolution that specifies how the board will be set up and. The intent and instructions can be added to that, but are not required. Within 10 days after filing it has to be sent to the Lt. Governor's office.

Harriet Dickerson said as a private citizen that at one point in time there was an agreement that 30% of the gross funds from sale of property in Dutch John would go towards Fire and EMS for everyone in the County.

Commissioner Asay adjourned the meeting at 7:29 pm.

/s/ Randy Asay

Commissioner Randy Asay

s/ Brian Raymond

Clerk/Treasurer_Brian Raymond

/s/ Jack Lytle

Commissioner Jack Lytle

/s/ Matt Tippetts

Commissioner Matt Tippetts