

WILLIAMS RURAL FIRE PROTECTION DISTRICT

Special Board Meeting Minutes

April 22, 2024

Called to order: 14:03pm

Roll Call:

Board Members Present

Position 1 – Heather Glass

Position 2 – Brian Barton

Position 3 – Claudia Pratt - Absent

Position 4 – Bill Ertel

Position 5 – David Applegate

Williams Staff Present

Interim Chief Nicco Holt

District Fire Marshal Jon Scaroni

Firefighter Devin Brennan

Firefighter Jasmine Williams

Community Members Present:

Applegate Fire Chief Chris Wolfard

Dan Defenbaugh – Community Resident

Zoom Attendees:

Illinois Valley Fire Chief John Holmes

Announcements:

Board Secretary David Applegate gave praise to Chief Wolfard for the newsletter. Board Member Bill Ertel spoke of the Safer Josephine County Banquet and stated it was nice and that the department was well represented.

Chief Wolfard Assessment

Everyone received a copy of the assessment. Board Member Bill Ertel discussed the recommendations and asked of Interim Chief and Captain Nicco Holt if the department has weekly standard meeting with staff and volunteers. Interim Chief and Captain Nicco Holt stated that those meetings are the weekly drills and that there are no set formal staff meetings at this time.

Board Member Bill Ertel asked about Chief Wolfard's recommendation of Interim Chief and Captain Nicco Holt working 40 hours per week. Chief Wolfard stated that there are full-time and part-time employees that there is a need for a full-time chief. The fire district runs over 200 calls per year, 240 last 2023 year. Board Member Bill Ertel stated that some supervised staff are from grants and is unsure if the need for a full time will still be there later after the grants end. There are currently 4 full time staff, a part-time Captain and part-time coordinator. The fire district operates 24hours. Per Interim Chief and

Captain Nicco Holt, if the grant positions no longer on staff, the current positions would likely still need to be working and likely working more.

Board Member Bill Ertel stated that it makes sense to move the Administrative Assistant under the Fire Chief. Because Jennifer Vetter assists the Board, if the position were to be moved, does the Board look to the Fire Chief to make the performed tasks for the Board happen? Chief Wolfard stated that the Fire Chief could delegate or the job description could be written that an estimated number of hours could be delegated to the position for job duties and the x number of hours per month taking minutes, agendas, etc.

Board Member Bill Ertel inquired about the attached memo example for agenda items. Chief Wolfard stated that it will provide detail information about what is on the agenda at the upcoming meeting so that the Board can prepare and think about questions and it is more transparent to the public about what the agenda item means.

Board Member Bill Ertel inquired about a volunteer firefighter association. Chief Wolfard stated it is a time for them to come together and communicate with staff. If they want to fund-raise the association can get a non-profit status. Chief Wolfard stated that if the Board does afford the opportunity for firefighters to have a standing report in the board meetings that it isn't used as a complaint process around the chain of command. Board Chair Heather Glass stated that she will open a spot for firefighters to speak at meetings.

Board Member Bill Ertel inquired about board meeting structure to allow public comment. Chief Wolfard stated that receiving public comment before voting would be appropriate as opposed to waiting after the board votes on a matter. Board Secretary David Applegate inquired about the current reply process in place now of waiting for the next meeting to hear a board response to public comment. Board Chair Heather Glass stated that a workshop can be held to discuss this and see how the Board would like to change this. Chief Wolfard doesn't feel it is harmful for individual board members to provide personal answers to the public at meetings although there is a risk of back-and-forth interactions.

Chief Wolfard feels comfortable with Williams Fire entering into an Inter-Government Agency (IGA) with Applegate Fire.

Board Member Bill Ertel stated that the line personnel are the best. With the larger staff comes more challenge.

Board Chair Heather Glass stated that Board Member Claudia Pratt would like conveyed in her absence that if there is a motion to accept the letter the only thing she would be recommending is excluding the statement about billing. Board Chair Heather Glass stated that this won't be voted on today.

Interim Chief and Captain Nicco Holt will get back to the Board on his compensation. He thanks Chief Wolfard for the support and he states that communication will be worked on.

- A motion was made by Bill Ertel to accept the assessment provided by Chief Wolfard from the Applegate Valley Fire District. The motion was seconded by David Applegate.

Discussion: None.

- ✚ Heather Glass – Aye
- ✚ Brian Barton – Aye
- ✚ Claudia Pratt – Absent
- ✚ Bill Ertel – Aye
- ✚ David Applegate – Aye

- Motion passes with 4 ayes and 1 absent

Chief Wolfard provided a thank you to the Williams Board and his recommendations are what he would be doing and stated that the bullet points can be done without him being Interim Chief and solely recommended.

Community Member Dan Defenbaugh provided a comment that he feels he understands some of the discussion. He discussed a meeting he attended in Applegate regarding a levy and the public was able to hear how the board members felt individually.

A motion to adjourn was made by Brian Barton was seconded by David Applegate.

The meeting was adjourned at 14:31pm

Respectfully,

Heather Glass, Board Chair