 GTLVFD/FSA BUSINESS MEETING MINUTES

Meeting Date:  March 18, 2024 6:23

Location: GTLVFD Fire Station #1

1234 Fire Lane

Anaconda, MT  59711

Attendance:

GTLVFD Board Members: Fred Bjorklund, Fire Chief

Bob Logue, Assistant Fire Chief

Mike Hayes, Director

Michelle Hall, Secretary (absent)

John Orrino, Director (absent)

FD Membership Present: Allen Clark

Tom Dunne

Bill Hall

Brad Hand

Chip Hogenson

Bob Logue

Steve Peters

Rex Young

Mike Zugg

Minutes of Previous Meeting

Secretary Michelle Hall provided meeting minutes to the board members prior to the meeting.   A copy of the minutes were provided to the general membership at the meeting.  Allen Clark moved to accept the meeting minutes from the GTLVFD Meeting on August 31, 2023.  Bill Hall seconded the motion and the motion was unanimously carried.  Accepted copies of the meeting minutes were filed to Granite County and Deer Lodge County.

Treasurer’s Report

Accountant Shelly Finnegan reported on finances for July 2023 through February 2024. Copies of documentation provided by Shelly have been attached.

There was discussion about money being routed through Anaconda Deer Lodge and Granite counties.  Fred asked Shelly to break down the differences between money received from Granite County and Deer Lodge County.  Shelly said she would do a breakdown for the next meeting.

There was discussion regarding separating fire department funds from FSA funds.  There are GTLVFD CD’s in Southwest Bank and First Montana Bank holds the GTLVFD’s spending account.  When the credit cards that are attached to First Montana Bank are used, funds are pulled from the Glacier Bank account to pay the bill.  The funds in Glacier Bank are tax funds.  Allen Clark made a motion to merge the Southwest bank account and the First Montana account.  Bob Logue seconded the motion and it was unanimously carried.  There was some discussion that a separate bank account be established for fire department business only that was different from the fire service area bank account.  Allen Clark made a motion to establish a separate bank account with a corresponding credit card for fire department business only.  It was seconded by Bill Hall and unanimously carried.

In reviewing the financials, Mike Hayes noticed that Engine 2 was still listed when GTLVFD no longer owns it.  It is currently owned by Philipsburg Volunteer Fire Department.  Also, the QRU and Engine 4 were not listed on the asset sheet.  These changes need to be made for the next meeting.

Fred explained that the fire department has saved more than $250,000 which is over the FDIC insurance limit.  There was discussion on whether they should split the funds by putting them in separate bank accounts so the full amount would still be insured by the FDIC.  The suggestion was made that the money should go into three CD’s because the interest rate is approximately 4.8%.  There is a penalty for early withdrawal of the CD’s.  It was discussed that three $50,000 CD’s be purchased a month apart so that they would be rolling over in consecutive months and no penalties would be incurred in case the fire department needs the money.  Steve Peters made a motion that 3 $50,000 be purchased at Glacier Bank in the next three months.  The motion was seconded by Rex Young and unanimously carried.  Bob Logue said that after the FSA approves the purchase of the CD’s, he will work with Glacier Bank to get them purchased.

There was discussion regarding how the fire department can become more organized and begin to establish an annually adopted budget with a plan on how monies will be spent in the future.  There was some discussion regarding the equipment replacement plan the fire department currently has and the need for an actual budget.

 Mike Hayes suggested that money be spent on buying a stainless water tank for Truck 6.  He said that the tank on Truck 5 is old and has corrosion on it because it is aluminum.  Mike said that it will take some time to get the tank built so he thinks the department should submit an order as soon as possible.  Also,he would like to buy another 916 and if that was purchased, the new tank could go on it. Mike Zugg wanted to know if it would be cheaper to get two built at the same time. Mike Hayes said that it would and Rex Young agreed that they should be purchased.

Fred Bjorklund said that the tenders all leak and need to be replaced.  There is corrosion in the tanks and there is a hydraulic leak.

Bob Logue stated that there were some safety concerns that need to be addressed as soon as possible.  The department has some communication/radio issues, the turnouts will no longer protect against fires and hearing protection is necessary.

There was significant discussion on where funds need to be spent and it was finally determined that a budget needs to be established by the end of June. Allen Clark suggested that there be a separate meeting to discuss future spending.

Regarding purchasing new turn-out clothing, Fred Bjorklund stated that he would like to see what several different vendors have available.  Bob Logue said he would look for vendors and get some samples in addition to looking for available grants to help fund the purchase.  Fred Bjorklund discussed retrieving turn outs from members who no longer attend training and other fire department activities.  Mike Zugg pointed out that we would be collecting turnouts that we are already talking about replacing.  Mike Zugg and Bob Logue discussed the possibility of applying for grants to purchase new turnout clothing.

Tom Dunne said that it would be a good idea to get radios that are the same.  Bob Logue said that he would like to see radio chargers on the rigs because Fred Bjorklund mentioned members were having trouble with batteries and taking responsibility for making sure their radios were operational when responding to calls. There was discussion regarding whether members were currently using pagers.  Some members still like the pagers and others use their cell phones exclusively.  Fred Bjorklund said that it is acceptable to use either method and there were no plans to eliminate the pagers.

There was also some discussion regarding upgrading the QRU or adding a rescue vehicle.  Currently there is not a good way to transport all of the department’s rescue equipment.  Fred Bjorklund would like to see all of the rescue equipment on a single rescue vehicle. There will be continued discussion when completing the budget and planning.

Unfinished Business or Updates

Fred Bjorklund said that we should probably sell the suburban because it is not used. He added that the Ford needs to be sold as well.  The need for a spending meeting was reiterated and it was decided to get some direction about future finances by June.  Allen Clark said that the fire service areas should list the suburban and ford with an auction company so that the appearance of impropriety could be avoided.  Allen Clark made a motion to request approval from the FSA to auction the suburban and the ford.  The motion was seconded by Mike Zugg and passed unanimously.

Mike Zugg said that Granite County Medical is charging $130 for the physical required to maintain a CDL.  There was some discussion regarding the need for a CDL.  Allen Clark made a motion that the Fire Department pay $130 for a physical to maintain members CDL’s.  It was seconded by Mike Hayes and unanimously passed.

Fred Bjorklund explained that we lost in the judgment regarding Granite County v. Jack McCloud.  The court ruled that Granite County should have exercised their right to inspect within one year and they didn’t. They now don’t have a water source for firefighting.

New Business

Bob Logue said that Dan (McLaughlin)? wants the Fire Department to set up a Venmo account so that monies can be received more easily.  Tom Dunne made the motion that the Fire Department needs to set up a Venmo account Bill Hall seconded the motion, and it passed unanimously.  Bob Logue is going to set up the Venmo account.

Fred Bjorklund said a member of the community called and offered another house to burn down. Everyone said it was a great training tool.  Philipsburg Volunteer Fire Department is going to burn a pile of rubble on Saturday - everyone is welcome.

Allen Clark moved for adjournment, seconded by Steve Peters and the meeting was adjourned at 7:47.