

WILLIAMS RURAL FIRE PROTECTION DISTRICT
Regular Board Meeting Minutes
August 15, 2023

Call to Order: 10:06am

Roll Call:

Board Members Present

Position 1 – Heather Glass
Position 2 – Brian Barton
Position 3 – Claudia Pratt
Position 4 – Bill Ertel
Position 5 – David Applegate (10:30am)

Williams Staff Present

Fire Chief – Rick Vetter
Lieutenant Oskar Sundell
Administrative Assistant – Jennifer Vetter

Public Presence:

None.

Announcements:

Board Chairperson Heather Glass stated that these meetings are business meetings and will be treated as such. If the meeting turns to personal attacks or anything impedes on being productive, the meeting will be adjourned.

Agenda Additions:

*Adding Board Member Claudia Pratt to the Agenda

- A motion to add Claudia Pratt to the agenda to address the Board, Chief Vetter, and Jennifer Vetter was made by Bill Ertel and seconded by Claudia Pratt.

Discussion: Bill Ertel stated that we are all equal and should be heard. Board Chairperson Heather Glass stated that we have all heard this already and we could keep discussing this until each of our terms end. This has nothing to do with financials or policy and Board Chair Heather Glass stated she would like to move forward and end this back and forth. Board Member Claudia Pratt stated that her thoughts are that not everyone has heard and only one side has been shared and she is willing to move this to a workshop. Board Vice Chairperson Brian Barton stated that he does not need to hear anymore. There are two people who agreed to mediation to solve the problem. He is going to give Claudia and Rick the information to pursue this on their own through a non-profit company who can come out to the station to perform the mediation. Board Member

Bill Ertel thinks it is a terrific idea and is concerned that it may become a policy that a board member's future concerns could be squashed. Board Chairperson Heather Glass stated her concern is where does this end? The last previous minutes for many months consisted of back and forth between both parties and this needs to stop. Board Member Bill Ertel stated that Board Chairperson Heather Glass' addressing this to move forward is a very good point. Board Chairperson Heather Glass stated is a good idea to fill out a formal complaint and address it in that manner and perhaps it may be more productive. Board Member Claudia Pratt stated that she doesn't have anything wrong with Chief Vetter but what he writes in his Chief's report. She feels like she doesn't get to rebuttal. She felt that she was uninformed about the mediation and feels everyone should be mediated and that the Board as a whole should have a mediation session. She also states that she did not receive information regarding a mediation but it was just announced in the meeting. Board Vice Chairperson Brian Barton stated that notifications were given by text and email and by giving a phone number to Board Member Claudia Pratt. Board Member Claudia Pratt felt entrapped by the way it played out. Board Chairperson Heather Glass stated that this was talked about for the last 2 meetings.

- ✚ Heather Glass – Nay
- ✚ Brian Barton – Nay
- ✚ Claudia Pratt – Aye
- ✚ Bill Ertel – Aye

The motion tied 2-2 and no win, motion died. Board Member Bill Ertel is asking to move this to the workshop. Claudia Pratt requested that this be added to a workshop down the road and Board Chairperson Heather Glass stated that she is not going to do that.

*A request to add Release of Records Policy to the agenda.

- A motion to add Release of Records Policy to the agenda was made by Bill Ertel and a second by Heather Glass.

- ✚ Heather Glass – Aye
- ✚ Brian Barton – Nay
- ✚ Claudia Pratt – Aye
- ✚ Bill Ertel – Aye

Discussion: None.

- The motion passed with 3 ayes and 1 nays.

A request to add a workshop of Mission, Vision, and Goals with everyone in favor will be added to next month before the Regular Meeting and the evaluation discussion could be added to that.

Approval of Prior Board Meeting Minutes:

- June 27, 2023 Special Board Meeting Minutes – Tabled
- July 11, 2023 Regular Board Meeting Minutes

Discussion: Board Member Bill Ertel stated he could not remember what was agreed to and didn't print it.

- A motion was made by Brian Barton to approve the Special Board Meeting Minutes, no second was made. Tabled to move to the next meeting.

Discussion: Board Member Claudia Pratt wants to have the word 'declined' changed because she did not decline to attend SDAO training but could not attend. Board Chairperson Heather Glass stated the word could be changed from 'declined' to "unavailable" per Board Member Claudia Pratt's recommendation.

- A motion was made by Brian Barton and seconded by Bill Ertel to approve the Regular Board Meeting Minutes of July 11, 2023.

Discussion: Board Member Bill Ertel asked for page numbers on the minutes. Board Member Bill Ertel stated that he received an IV Fire policy instead of By-Laws. Board Chairperson Heather Glass stated that board members can make appointments with staff instead of dropping in. Board Member Bill Ertel stated that he would be interested to know if there is an article he should read on Equal Pay. Board Member Claudia Pratt stated that she was told to look up Jennifer Vetter's hours and she found that a motion from earlier, in a previous year, was made to increase Jennifer Vetter's salary to \$35,000 per year and increase her hours to 35 hours per week (passed with all ayes) which is considered full time. Board Member Bill Ertel asked if there is an amount dedicated for Unemployment Insurance and Jennifer Vetter stated that she is still awaiting a reply from the Unemployment Department.

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

- The motion passed 4 ayes and 1 nay.

Chief's Report:

Chief Vetter went over his report to include the call volume, volunteer firefighters' duties, and the upstaffing grant from the OSFM. He is also looking for a flammable locker for SDS chemicals to include cleaning and automotive products.

Looking to paint the buildings on the other side of the old fire station.

Filled Community Relations Coordinator positions: Ash Martell

Filled a newly developed position, Firewise Community Coordinator: Allison Cleveland

- Meetings: Coffee with the Chief – Firewise
- JoCo Sheriff regarding BLM – held at the fire department

Support Team hosted Fourth of July Parade and BBQ at the fire station which was very successful.

Discussion: Board Member Claudia Pratt inquired about a conversation she had with Allison Cleveland that the volunteer position doesn't come with pay. Chief Vetter stated that the department is looking into stipends and grants and other ways to understand what is available to offer.

Board Vice Chairperson Brian Barton inquired about an email that Chief should have received, Chief will look into finding it.

Board Member Bill Ertel stated that the Chief could bring to the Board new positions that are created and suggested that Ash and Allison come by the next board meeting to say 'hello' and meet the Board.

Grants Discussion: Board Member Bill Ertel inquired about the \$30,000 reserved for newsletters. Chief Vetter has been discussing this with Chief Wolfard and although Applegate Fire has a newsletter in tandem with Williams Fire, Chief Vetter is investigating options that have some cost savings. Deputy Clerk Jennifer Vetter suggested to follow up with Evans Valley Fire to see how they produce their newsletters or mailers.

Firefighter Brennan interrupted the meeting regarding a possible car fire – Lieutenant Oskar Sundell and Firefighter Jennifer Vetter temporarily left the meeting to tend to a possible car fire

Chief Vetter was requested by Board Member Bill Ertel to bring in Applegate Fire's newsletter to see the example.

Board Member Bill Ertel inquired about the trailers. Monies have been received but not spent yet per Chief Vetter.

Captain's Report – Training:

Discussion: Board Chairperson Heather Glass inquired, “When do the volunteers begin to receive stipends?” Chief Vetter stated that they have to go through the orientation process, physical, academy, etc. before volunteer compensation begins. This upcoming academy will most likely happen in-house as opposed to sending them to an external training facility. This can take about 6 months to get through the onboarding and onto the roster.

Board Member Claudia Pratt inquired if the department is up do date on the physicals. Chief Vetter stated, yes! Everyone passed the course and one has not taken it yet.

Board Member Bill Ertel inquired what is the average attendance to training. Chief Vetter informed the Board that there are 2 trainings on Wednesdays. Some attendees show to the morning and some to the afternoon trainings, making it available as much as possible so everyone can attend.

Safety Committee:

Chief Vetter and FF Jon Scaroni are working on the Safety Committee getting together and getting a courtesy OSHA Safety Inspection done.

Board Member Claudia Pratt inquired about getting gravel in the smoking area. Chief Vetter is considering getting extra gravel for the parking lot as well.

Chair's Report

Board Chairperson Heather Glass stated that after much research she found that the discussion of the Deputy Clerk position came up in the past and it was motioned on and died. Board Member Claudia Pratt asked if the Chairperson had read the policy and the Chairperson stated “yes” she has. Board Chairperson Heather Glass proposed that the Board stop beating up the Deputy Clerk position as this has been brought up to vote twice and has been voted down (April 27, 2023 and July 11, 2023). Board Member Bill Ertel stated that when Jennifer Vetter was first employed that she was initially asked to update the website and do the board meetings and some bookkeeping that was worth 10 hours per month. Over the years, he stated, that the department has grown and not gotten a professional review on what all is going into this job. Board Chairperson Heather Glass asked, “we just had a good review on Jenny, she received good marks, why do we have to keep rehashing this and micromanaging Jenny??” Board Member Bill Ertel responded that he doesn't see this as micromanaging. Maybe, he says, the Board is overpaying her or underpaying her. He is mentioning that she has a title of HR and that it was claimed without the Board's vote. Board Chairperson Heather Glass stated that this was discussed before and Board Member Claudia Pratt stated that she wants to see the motion where the Board gave Jennifer Vetter the title. Board Member Bill Ertel protested that Jennifer Vetter uses Human Resources in her email signature and introduces herself as HR manager for the desk that she manages. Board Member Bill Ertel stated that Williams Fire is a small agency that does not need a Human Resource Department. Board Member Claudia Pratt agreed with Chief Vetter's

statement that this fire department is no different than any other fire department as it has and uses all the functions that any other department has. Board Chairperson Heather Glass stated that the Board will attempt to schedule a workshop after the next scheduled board meeting.

Lt. Sundell and FF Vetter returned to the meeting

Board Chairperson Heather Glass stated that one of the Board Members should have a key to the district files in case she is unavailable. Board Member Claudia Pratt stated that there is a key in the lock box. Deputy Clerk Jennifer Vetter discussed the file management and privacy issues and that it would be prudent to have multiple check points and a sign-in sheet.

Lieutenant's Report – Operations:

- ISO (Insurance Service Office) Rating Meeting was held and the ISO review will happen in a few months.

Board Member Bill Ertel asked what is entailed in an ISO review and Lt. Sundell described the process of testing and how detailed it is from what Williams Fire has to what mutual aid has to provide.

- Water Bags

Board Chairperson Heather Glass stated that we are awaiting additional information from the insurance to put onto the form to put them into service. Board Member Bill Ertel and Lt. Sundell will be moving forward with the installation of the water bags and will later ratify the action with the Board.

- Donated 50,000 gallon fuel bladder bag, military grade

Lt. Sundell explained that this will be used for holding water. There will be some ground grading to accommodate the bladder placement.

A discussion of gym equipment ensued that perhaps there are members in the fire district that have extra equipment in good condition that could be donated. The General Store has a jar for donations at the counter. Chief Vetter stated that he is investigating mats vs carpet for the gym.

Administrative Report

The Herb Pharm has donated \$2,500 to the department.

Museum:

Electrical is done and the inside is cleaned up. Ying Yang Painting gave a bid of \$2,000 total for paint and labor; \$600 to stain the stairs.

By-Laws Discussion: Tabled

5-year Plan: Chief Vetter will reach out to Chief Holmes to inquire about IV Fire’s draft to utilize for Williams Fire

SDAO Board Training:

All board members attended except for Board Member Claudia Pratt who was unavailable.

Internal Controls:

Needs to be reviewed every year. Board members will review the document until the next meeting.

Chief Bonus:

Board Member Bill Ertel proposed a \$2,500 bonus to the Chief for the past fiscal year.

- Board Member Bill Ertel made a motion seconded by Brian Barton for the Chief to receive a bonus of \$2,500 for FY 2022-2023.

Discussion: Last year’s Chief’s bonus for FY2021-2022 was \$2500; This year a bonus will be given for FY2022-2023 of the same amount. The bonus is being based on the fiscal year and not on the hire date. The SAFER Grant will end on December 9, 2023. Discussions ensued that there are funds in the budget.

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

- The motion passed unanimously with 5 ayes

Mobile Home Update (given by Claudia Pratt):

During the walkthrough, there is some sagging from water on the back door due the home sitting with the halves un-married for so long. For materials and pre-hung door, parts and labor, \$1600 to repair the back door.

- Bill Ertel made a motion to approve \$1600 to repair the mobile home back door and was seconded by Claudia Pratt

- ✚ Heather Glass – Aye

- ✚ Brian Barton – Aye

- ✚ Claudia Pratt – Aye

- ✚ Bill Ertel – Aye

- ✚ David Applegate – Aye

- The motion passed unanimously.

Board Member Claudia Pratt discussed of their being only one water spigot and one exterior electrical plug on the mobile home and suggested getting an estimate for more spigots and exterior plugs. The money could come out of the mobile home income. Board Member Claudia Pratt will proceed to getting an estimate. Board Vice Chairperson Brian Barton doesn't feel the home needs those two items but encourages to get the estimate.

Discussion of Release of Records Policy: Board Chairperson Heather Glass discussed this with a lawyer at the SDAO training and provided a sheet for the board to review stating the all requesters are treated the same. Board Member Claudia Pratt stated that she has received audio copies up until recently. Board Chairperson Heather Glass stated that we will give out the minutes in the manner in which they are kept, which is written. Deputy Clerk Jennifer Vetter stated that she was wrong for providing Board Member Claudia Pratt with preferential treatment. She does not provide audio to the public. Board Chairperson Heather Glass stated in response to Board Members Claudia Pratt and Bill Ertel that even though there are different interpretations of what or how something is said that voting on the minutes for approval is the reason why the written minutes are approved for formality. In terms of the recorded minutes, it is for use of making the minutes by the drafter and should be discarded soon after.

Treasurer's Report:

Clerk/Treasurer reports for July 2023 were reviewed by the board members. Deputy Clerk Jennifer Vetter answered any questions about revenue and expenses for the previous month's expenses previously distributed electronically. Items of review in the financial reports included spending on district credit cards, payroll, regular monthly bills, employee benefits package, station maintenance/repairs items, donations, grants, and reimbursements.

Each of the reports reviewed included:

- District credit cards
- The Umpqua Bank Account

- Profit and Loss Statements
- LGIP Account
- Modular Home Lease Report

Other Discussion: Monthly time clock subscription is now occurring for the grant personnel. The time clock subscription is paid by the grant and requires physical presence in order to clock in with a fingerprint. Board Member Claudia Pratt inquired if Jennifer Vetter clocks in since she has a portion that she is paid by the grant. She wants to know how Jennifer Vetter separates her time out. Board Chairperson Heather Glass asked if Jennifer Vetter is administering the grant along with others that are receiving administrative pay, why does it matter? The others who are receiving administrative monies from the grant don't have to clock in. Board Chairperson Heather Glass asked if Board Member Claudia Pratt felt that it was unfair and Board Member Claudia Pratt stated that she just wanted to make sure Jennifer Vetter's grant compensation wasn't considered double dipping. Jennifer Vetter stated that all the hours she puts in for the grants that she gets paid out of are on top of the hours that she puts into her regular job. Board Member Claudia Pratt stated that was all she wanted to know.

There were radios and chargers that were purchased. Chief Vetter stated that the department bought radios and did not receive a grant for it.

Board Member Claudia Pratt inquired about the Fire Chief's Tool Box and Chief Vetter stated that he did not find any information on the program and will check into it.

Board Member Bill Ertel likes the Quarterly Volunteer Report stating that he likes to see the comparison of volunteer response with staff response.

Next regular board meeting is September 12th at 10am with a Board Workshop at 9am.

- Motion to adjourn the meeting was made by Board Member Bill Ertel and seconded by Vice Board Chairperson Brian Barton.

Meeting Adjourned: 12:15am

Respectfully,

Heather Glass, Board Chairperson