

WILLIAMS RURAL FIRE PROTECTION DISTRICT

Special Board Meeting Minutes

October 24, 2023

Called to order: 09:05am

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

Williams Staff Present

Administrative Assistant – Jennifer Vetter

District Fire Marshal – Jon Scaroni

Firefighter Devin Brennan

Chief Vetter (late arrival at 9:33am)

Community Members Present:

Allison Cleveland – Williams Resident and Fire Prevention Community Coordinator

Karen Rogers – Williams Community Member and Williams Fire Support Team Secretary

Announcements:

Board Member Bill Ertel discussed his health and challenges. Tomorrow at Rotary the featured speakers will be the Mayor and City Manager.

Grant Administrative Funds Distribution

Board Chair Heather Glass recognized the policy of timed speaking that was approved in another meeting.

Board Chair Heather Glass asked if there is a motion to allocate expenses as allocated in White Paper #001. Board Claudia Pratt inquired if that is what it is really called and Board Chair stated that this is what had been asked for in a previous meeting. Jennifer Vetter stated that this is a new form and Board Chair Heather Glass stated that it was requested to be made.

Board Vice Chair Brian Barton made the motion to allocate the administration expense as outlined in White Paper #001 for the two paid board positions and allow the left-over allocations to be assigned by the Admin and Fire Chief and the motion was seconded by David Applegate.

Discussion: Board Member Bill Ertel asked if the grant amount of \$23,800 is going to be paid to two positions. Board Chair Heather Glass stated that these monies are allocated to administrative and that there will be left over after compensating the admin and the Fire Chief. Board Member Bill Ertel asked if the \$750 will be given to the administrative assistant above her current salary and what does record-keeping and oversight mean? Jennifer Vetter explained the workload and the possible audit of the records. Board Member Bill Ertel went on to say that “at

\$750 more a month will make Jenny the highest paid employee in the fire district.” Board Chair Heather Glass stated that isn’t true. Board Member Bill Ertel continued to ask about Board Chair Heather Glass’ analysis. Board Member Claudia Pratt asked if it is over the 3 years or how long the grant lasts? Board Chair Heather Glass confirmed this along with COLA and stated to Bill Ertel that this amount is negotiable. Board Member Bill Ertel asked if the Fire Chief would get an additional \$250 and that this is the Board Chair’s recommendation. Board Member Bill Ertel stated that these are numbers picked out of a fly on the wall. Board Chair Heather Glass asked Board Member Bill Ertel to recall that in fairness he asked her to develop a White Paper and these are her recommendations. Board Member Bill Ertel asked when the COLA increase will happen and yet confirmed to Board Chair Heather Glass that he is familiar with that. Board Member Bill Ertel stated that all this money is being fenced around overhead and not going to volunteers. Board Chair Heather Glass stated that this is the OSFM Grant with the hires and yes the volunteers that are hired are getting paid with the grant and all we are discussing is the overhead. Board Secretary David Applegate asked if the \$23,000 is per year. Jennifer Vetter clarified that what Board Member Bill Ertel is suggesting with only two employees benefitting is incorrect. The Fire Chief will be delegating of those administrative funds to his own employees and this discussion is around the only two employees the Board manages. Board Member Claudia Pratt asked if the two employees get part of the \$23,800 and Jennifer Vetter stated that the other employees will also benefit in compensation as the Fire Chief delegates. The Chief’s staff will benefit as well and Board Chair Heather Glass explained that the two board employees cannot allocate funds to themselves. Board Member Bill Ertel accused that the Fire Chief will have hidden funds and Board Chair Heather Glass confirmed that it is not hidden for the Lt. and Captain for their administration. Board Chair Heather Glass attempted to assure Board Member Bill Ertel that there are no hidden funds but that the Chief will control how he pays his employees. Board Member Bill Ertel stated that it seemed bizarre that the Board has no say in how the Fire Chief pays his employees. Jennifer Vetter stated that human assets are no different than the \$5000 water bags that there were no questions about Board Member Bill Ertel having any say in the water bags. Board Member Bill Ertel stated that it is eerie that the Fire Chief has exclusive compensation over his employees. Board Chair Heather Glass recognized that every year they receive financials and work on the budget every year and Board Secretary David Applegate agreed. Board Member Claudia Pratt recognized that the Board is not responsible for the Chief’s employees and it is his responsibility yet wants to know the amounts and the employees to be named that would be receiving the monies. Board Member Claudia Pratt did a calculation and said she came up with a figure that later Board Chair Heather Glass disproved. Board Member Claudia Pratt recognized her miscalculation. Board Secretary David Applegate stated his interpretation is that the administrative portion to be allocated, the Chief is keeping track under documentation where the money is going.

Chief Vetter joins the meeting

Board Member Bill Ertel says he is “surprised that Lt. Sundell and Captain Holt are getting a bump in pay”. Board Chair Heather Glass stated that the compensation is grant funded and different than regular pay. Board Member Bill Ertel and Board Chair Heather Glass agree that all monies are monies of the District. Board Member Bill Ertel is concerned that grant money is exclusive to

how the fire chief and the administrative assistant want to use the money. Chief Vetter asked Board Member Bill Ertel what his concern about how the money is appropriated as long as it is within the budget, within reason of public dollars, and appropriated ethically? He went on to say what is the concern when it is within the budget, we have never gone outside the budget, never misappropriated funds, everything has always been accounted for. Chief Vetter recognized that board meetings are always contentious. He asked Board Member Bill Ertel if he isn't doing a good enough job? He asked of the Board Members if there is a reason why only one board member is making remarks of not liking the direction of the department. Chief Vetter stated he is getting tired of having to defend things every meeting. Board Member Bill Ertel stated "no comment".

Board Member Claudia Pratt said she had a comment about her and the Fire Chief going to a mediation and in an elevated voice asked where did this get set up for her and the Fire Chief to go into mediation. Board Member Claudia Pratt took the talking timer/hourglass and laid it on it side and continued to ask about a mediation for all the board.

A motion was made by Brian Barton to adjourn the meeting and it was seconded by David Applegate; it was approved by 3 ayes.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:37am

Respectfully,

Heather Glass, Board Chair