

# **WILLIAMS RURAL FIRE PROTECTION DISTRICT**

## **Regular Board Meeting Minutes**

### **July 11, 2023**

Call to Order: 10:00am

#### **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**

Fire Chief – Rick Vetter

Lieutenant Oskar Sundell

Administrative Assistant – Jennifer Vetter

Firefighter Devin Brennan

#### **Public Presence:**

None.

#### **Announcements:**

Board Secretary Heather Glass inquired as to who would like to attend an SDAO Board of Directors training on August 9<sup>th</sup> and included the department staff as it would be good for everyone to participate. Board Chairperson Claudia Pratt was unavailable and all other board members were interested. Chief Vetter stated that he is interested in the SDAO Expectations and Ethics in Klamath Falls September 20<sup>th</sup> as well.

Board Member Bill Ertel stated that Food Share was cancelled and will be back on the regular schedule this upcoming Tuesday. He attended a Chamber of Commerce meeting and one topic was the new sheriff levy.

#### **Board Member Swear In**

Board Member David Applegate was sworn in and accepted the Oath of Office

#### **2023-2024 Board Position Nominations/Elections**

##### **Board Chairperson:**

- Heather Glass was nominated for Chairperson by Brian Barton with a second by David Applegate.
- A nomination of Bill Ertel was made by Claudia Pratt and seconded by Heather Glass

Discussion:

Heather Glass stated that as chair she would make sure the meetings ran smoothly and orderly, staying on topic. Acknowledges that she is one of the 5 with no more power than the others and likes smooth and orderly meetings.

Bill Ertel stated that running a good, smooth meeting is important. Members look to the chair and it requires time commitment more than just coming to the meeting, setting the tone of problem handling. Bill Ertel questions Heather's temperament. Heather stated that she feels even tempered. Bill Ertel hopes that if Heather Glass is elected as Chair that fairness will prevail.

- The motion passed for Heather Glass to be the Board Chairperson with 4 ayes and 1 nay.

**Board Vice Chairperson:**

- Bill Ertel was nominated for Vice Chairperson by Heather Glass with a second by Claudia Pratt.
- A nomination of Brian Barton for Chairperson was made by Brian Barton and seconded by David Applegate.

Discussion:

None.

- The motion passed for Brian Barton to be the Board Vice Chairperson with 3 ayes and 2 nays.

**Board Secretary:**

- David Applegate was nominated for Secretary by Brian Barton with a second by Heather Glass.
- A nomination of Bill Ertel for Secretary was made by Claudia Pratt and seconded by Brian Barton.

Discussion:

None.

- The motion passed for David Applegate to be the Board Secretary with 3 ayes and 2 nays.

**Approval of Prior Board Meeting Minutes:**

- June 13, 2023 Budget Committee Meeting Minutes - Approved
- June 13, 2023 Regular Board Meeting Minutes - Approved
- June 27, 2023 Special Board Meeting Minutes - Tabled

- A motion to approve the Budget Committee Meeting Minutes was made by Brian Barton and seconded by Claudia Pratt. The motion passed unanimously.
- A motion to approve the Regular Meeting Minutes was made by Brian Barton and seconded by David Applegate. The motion passed with 4 ayes and 1 nay.

Discussion: Board Member Claudia Pratt asked when the written posting went out for the hiring of the upstaffing. Chief Vetter and Jennifer Vetter verified that the verbal announcement went out 2 weeks prior to the hiring process and the written went out 5 days before the hiring. Board Member Claudia Pratt expressed that the old policy and procedure book states 10 days, however, in the new policy book there is no stated policy on the process.

Board Member Claudia Pratt stated a formal apology for requesting to know what Jennifer Vetter does in her private time at the last meeting. Board Member Claudia Pratt would like to have Jennifer Vetter set times that she is in the office where currently she has no required dates and times as long as she fulfills her duties. Vice Chairperson Brian Barton does not agree with setting Jennifer Vetter's full schedule but perhaps only one day of week to be available to meet. In Brian Barton's opinion, Jennifer Vetter has been tasked with a job that needs to be completed with a minimum of 32 hours per week and sometimes she goes over. Board Vice Chairperson Brian Barton and Board Chairperson Heather Glass proposed that Jennifer Vetter give a day that she is available to meet. Board Member Claudia Pratt stated that Jennifer Vetter is unavailable and Chairperson Heather Glass stated that she personally has not ever had difficulty. Chairperson Heather Glass verified that Jennifer Vetter is indeed salary and subject to overtime when Claudia Pratt stated that Jennifer Vetter is hourly.

Chairperson Heather Glass asked if anyone would make a motion for Jennifer Vetter to provide routine day/time schedule.

- A motion was made by Bill Ertel, no second was made.

Jennifer Vetter was asked by Board Secretary David Applegate if she could give a schedule and Jennifer Vetter stated that she could provide a day during the week that she could make herself available for board members to come by. Board Secretary David Applegate stated that it is just making her available to be seen. Jennifer Vetter informed the board that they come by unannounced, disrupt her progress on projects and duties, putting her behind on tasks. It takes her longer or even have to start over. Chairperson Heather Glass and Secretary David Applegate agreed that it is a good idea.

Chairperson Heather Glass asked if there was a motion for Jennifer Vetter to provide a day a week for board members to have access for her. No motions were made.

Board Member Claudia Pratt continued on with the discussion regarding the Chief and his evaluation. Board Member Claudia Pratt stated an executive session was scheduled; however, it could not be held. Board Member Claudia Pratt would not allow the Chair to talk and continued that she would like to continue talking. Vice Chairperson Brian Barton stated that this behavior needed to stop. Chairperson Heather Glass clarified that there was a miscommunication. Jennifer Vetter stated that the executive session was discussed, and Chief Vetter did not want an executive session for his review.

- No motion was made for the June 27 meeting minutes and they were tabled until next meeting.

Discussion: Board Member Claudia Pratt brought up Jennifer Vetter's job description and wanted clarification on her job description. Board Member Claudia Pratt wants to break her description into 4 different job descriptions. Jennifer Vetter informed to the board to recognize equal pay jobs and exempt vs non-exempt positions. Board Member Bill Ertel thinks it is 'weird' and he is unclear on the topic of Jennifer's job description. There was some back and forth what a job description is for Jennifer Vetter and Board Member Claudia Pratt stated that the description for Jennifer's position is not a job description. Vice Chairperson Brian Barton made a comment for the record... "Just from sitting and watching what is going on, we have a fire department that is running quite well. We have more volunteers, more EMTs, get lots of grants, no one is stealing or taking equipment home. This is the best department we have had the whole time. Why as a board are we wasting time picking on the administrative assistant. We are wasting time when we should be making sure we have the proper equipment, training, and that our volunteers know what they are doing. I am tired of this nit-picking". Board Member Claudia Pratt went back to the job description that was board approved 2 years ago. Board Member Claudia Pratt told Jennifer to search for those minutes. Board Member Claudia Pratt accused Jennifer for being snit-picky when she refused to cater to the request. Board Member Brian Barton stated it is his observation that Board Member Claudia Pratt has been picking on the Chief and Administrative Assistant the last few months and would like to see them and the department be left alone to do their jobs. Vice Chairperson Brian Barton doesn't care what Jennifer Vetter does on her time off and bets that he can prove she spends a lot of her time working.

### **Chief's Report:**

Discussion: Board Member Claudia Pratt requested the Chief to read the last 2 paragraphs of his report out loud and she stated that Board Member Brian Barton would not like her request. In his last 2 paragraphs he noted good things about the organization of faster emergency response times, good equipment and facilities, qualified people and great relationships with mutual aid partners and land owners. He also noted the disruption and chaos regarding his evaluation in

regards to a harassing and opinionated document that was not part of district record in which he asked to see investigated. Chairperson Heather Glass stated that she contacted SDAO and Chairperson Heather Glass was interrupted by Board Member Claudia Pratt who insisted to continue to address the Chief. Chairperson Heather Glass stopped Board Member Claudia Pratt to let her know that her personal review is invalid as no single board member can work outside the board on their own without Board direction. Board Member Claudia Pratt's personal review of the Chief is dismissed. Chief Vetter wanted Board Member Claudia Pratt's review looked at. Chief Vetter asked Board Member Claudia Pratt to please stop cutting him off so he could finish explaining that the document supplied by Board Member Claudia Pratt was totally opposite of the formal evaluation that was submitted to the Board. Chairperson Heather Glass stated that the board can do several options. Board Secretary David Applegate stated that the board can have a standard procedure/process and one form that everyone follows. Firefighter Devin Brennan interjected and referred to the department policy and procedure manual. Discussions of a workshop before the next regular meeting and to include the internal controls. Board Member Bill Ertel stated that he understands the last 2 paragraphs of the Chief's report and that the Board should get an "F" for how they handled the review and understands the Chief's frustration.

#### **Lieutenant's Report – Operations:**

- Response time under 2 minutes
- Suggested someone with legal background write the agreement for the bladder bags and landowners
  - Board Member Bill Ertel will draft something

#### **Captain's Report – Training:**

- 5 new volunteers in the onboarding process
- Driver Rodeo Training
- Structural Firefighting Tactics
- Weekly Trainings on Wednesday
- Lt. Sundell passed the NREMT
- EMS Renewals are complete
- Met with new volunteer applicants

#### **Safety Committee:**

Nothing to Report.

## **Administrative Report**

Nothing to Report

## **Chair's Report (given by former chairperson, Claudia Pratt)**

- Safe Haven
  - Jennifer Vetter explained her discussion with DHS and that we have access to supplies if needed.

## **Museum:**

Nothing new to report.

## **By-Laws Discussion:** Tabled

Discussion: Board Member Bill Ertel stated that he had asked if IV Fire had by-laws and were sent a policy manual.

## **Chief's Evaluation:**

Board Secretary David Applegate stated that he wanted to get to know the Chief and establish what the Chief has done for the year. Overall, it is felt that the Chief accepts his review and Board Secretary David Applegate is asking for the Board to support the Chief and guide him.

- A motion to approve the Chief's Evaluation was made by Brian Barton and seconded by Bill Ertel.

Discussion: Board Member Bill Ertel stated that the Fire Chief's ratings are excellent and good. Board Member Bill Ertel added setting goals could be added for the next year. Board Member Claudia Pratt wanted to recommend the Fire Chief Tool Box that is in the policy. Chief Vetter said it is recommended and will see if it is beneficial.

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

The motion passed with 4-eyes and 1 nay.

Board Member Bill Ertel proposed and recommended a bonus for the Fire Chief. This would be discussed at a later date.

**Deputy Clerk Job Description:**

Move to Unfinished Business

**Treasurer's Report:**

Clerk/Treasurer reports for June 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: Jennifer Vetter advised the Board that she has requested to opt in to Unemployment Insurance for the District. She is awaiting a rate amount.

Next regular board meeting is August 8<sup>th</sup> at 10am with a Board Workshop at 9am.

- Motion to adjourn the meeting was made by Vice Chairperson Brian Barton and seconded by Board Secretary David Applegate.

Meeting Adjourned: 11:34am

Respectfully,

---

Heather Glass, Board Chairperson