

CHRISTOPHER KOHL'S FIRE DISTRICT
MINUTES OF BOARD MEETING
MAY 11, 2009
STATION 51

Meeting called to order at 7:02pm, 11 May, 2009. Pledge of Allegiance.

In Attendance: Deborah Dawson, Chairman
 Margot Holmes-Fish, Vice Chairman
James Oliver, Clerk/Treasurer
 Electra VanEckhoutte, Fire Chief
 Department members attending were identified.

Agenda Item 3.

- A. The Minutes from the 13 April, 2009, Board Meeting was approved by the Board after a motion by Mr. Oliver and a second by Mrs. Holmes-Fish.

- B. The status of the District Bank accounts for April, 2009, was given by Mr. Oliver. Mr. Oliver stated that tax collections were running \$40,000 short with the due date for second payments being 1 May. Mr. Oliver said transfers to the Capital account will be made in June to wait for late payments. Mrs. Dawson accepted the Treasurer report as read.

- C. Chief VanEckhoutte gave the Chief's report and discussed the status of the Department and activities of the members of the Department. Chief VanEckhoutte thanked Chief Hatch of Hellsgate Fire Dept. for his assistance with recent ALS calls, and for his presence at this meeting. Chief VanEckhoutte said that the Department had a new volunteer who is an EMT. Mrs. Dawson and Chief Hatch discussed one of the recent EMS calls.

Mrs. Dawson, giving a summary of a current event, said that Mr. Oliver did not include several agenda items that she requested onto the posted agenda. She felt that any Board member had the ability to place items on the agenda, and objected to her items not being included. She said that she had intended to discuss them during the agenda item for the budget, and that they would have given the public more information on the budget.

Agenda Item 4. Information/Discussion/Action on Resolution #101. This Resolution is to approve the Lease/Purchase agreement and to authorize Chief VanEckhoutte to sign the Lease Purchase agreement and other necessary papers with Government Capital Corporation for the new engine on order. Chief VanEckhoutte gave information on the new engine, with a delivery date around 15 June, 2009. Mrs. Dawson said that that Mr. Dalton with the County Attorney's office need a copy of the agenda and minutes of this meeting, and a copy of the Resolution so that he could issue the needed letter required by Government Capital. The minutes could be in Draft form. Mrs. Dawson said that she had a meeting scheduled with Mr. Dalton to review the contract provisions. Mr. Oliver said the purpose of the Resolution was to approve the agreement and authorize the Chief to sign the multitude of papers necessary. Mr. Oliver made a motion to approve Resolution #101, approving the agreement and authorizing Chief VanEckhoutte to sign the necessary papers with the provision that all requirements of the County Attorney would be complied with. Mrs. Holmes-Fish seconded. The vote was unanimous in favor of approval, the motion passed, and Resolution #101 is adopted. Mrs. Holmes-Fish discussed the interest rate with Chief VanEckhoutte. Public comment was taken. Mr. Sundra had a question on the Treasurer's report. Mr. Schmidt questioned the purpose of the new vehicle. Chief VanEckhoutte responded. Mr. Zaleska asked about overhauling the old truck at Kohl's Ranch. Mr. Hagen asked about the crew that the vehicle could carry. Mr. Daniels asked about driver training. Chief VanEckhoutte commented on their questions. Mr. Hagen asked why the truck was going out of District to Kohl's Ranch. Mr. Oliver said that Kohl's was in our District. Mr. O'Neal said that the lease agreement with the Forest Service and the use out of District on wildland fires with Scott VanEckhoutte on the truck was a conflict of interest. Mr. Oliver commented that was a topic for a future agenda item. Mrs. Dawson commented on the

need for the truck. Chief Hatch, Hellsgate FD, commented that there was no conflict of interest with the use of the vehicle on wildland fires, saying that all wages were paid by the Forest Service. Mr. Hatch discussed the use of Hellsgate trucks on wildland fires. Mr. Egger asked Chief Hatch about engine boss qualifications, to which Chief Hatch responded. Mrs. Marazza commented on the need for the truck. Mr. Zaleska commented on double dipping on wildland fires, to which Chief Hatch responded. Mr. Daniels commented on paying with federal dollars that the District may not receive. Mrs. Dawson explained that no federal money was involved, but that tax collections were running behind schedule, approx. \$40,000.00 from that expected by this time. Payment by the Forest Service or BLM for the use of the truck was explained by Mr. Oliver. Mr. Jacobs asked how property taxes paid for the Truck. Mr. Hagen gave an explanation.

Agenda Item 5. Information/Discussion/Action on possible locations and alternatives for a Department radio repeater. The use of Promontory tower had been discussed in the previous meeting of 13 April, 2009. The use of the new cell tower was discussed, and Chief VanEckhoutte had no information on prior Board or Department actions in regards to the Promontory tower. Chief VanEckhoutte said that the company servicing the radios has not been able to investigate the location for suitability. Mrs. Holmes-Fish made a motion to table this item, Mr. Oliver seconded, and the motion carried unanimously.

Agenda item 6. Information/Discussion/Action on the fiscal year 2010 budget. The Board will discuss the posted budget, alternatives will be presented, and the desired level of service for the District will be discussed. The budget was approved for publication at the 13 April, 2009 meeting, and a formal public hearing is scheduled for 8 June, 2009, at 7:00pm. Chief Hatch, Hellsgate FD, is present to answer questions. Gene Zehring gave a presentation to the use of contract paramedic/firefighters instead of using employees. Mr. Zehring said that people are available, benefits do not have to be paid, and cost to the District is reduced. Automatic and mutual aid was discussed. Contract personnel are given 1099's instead of tax withholding according to Mr. Zehring. Mr. Zehring, Chief Hatch, and Chief VanEckhoutte discussed the issue at length. Mrs. Christenson asked about Mr. Zehring's qualifications. Mrs. Dawson asked about overtime. The Board and Mr. Zehring discussed overtime, lodging, cost savings, advantages of employees, and other issues. The Board and Mr. Zehring discussed employee cost on a per person basis. Mr. O'Neal said that the retirement system cost was incorrect. Mr. Oliver explained why the cost shown was correct. Ms. Thornton commented on advantages of full time personnel, saying someone will be paid, and she would rather they be full time. Mrs. Christenson said that no decision has been made on hiring paramedics and several people did not want the increased level of service. Mrs. Dawson responded saying that she was offering alternatives. Mr. Oliver commented on the requirement to pay workman's compensation for the personnel, which Mr. Zehring said was not necessary. Mr. Anderson commented on the need for the increased level of service, relating it to car insurance. Mr. Egger asked about the tax collection shortage and said that his taxes kept going up unlike Maricopa County. Mr. Oliver explained the tax collection situation. Mrs. Holmes-Fish addressed the tax situation in Gila County. Mrs. Lusson said she had comments from 62 people throughout the District protesting an increase in taxes, and read some of them. Chief Hatch was asked about taxes with a merger. Chief Hatch said that he had tried the contract employees that Mr. Zehring addressed and said he could not make it work, commented that he thought our tax rate was still too low. He did not know how a merger would affect the tax rate. Mr. Hatch felt the District was playing catch up from years of low tax rate. Chief Hatch addressed the method of preparing a budget, and felt that a public forum was not the best method to develop a budget, but should determine level of service. Chief Hatch said the District rate would keep going up to about \$2.50 or \$2.60, and he felt there was too much interference in Department operations. Mrs. Dawson asked Mr. Hatch about population of Hellsgate FD and his budget projections. The population was given by Mr. Hatch, and said his budget stayed the same, using all the capital and expecting an increase next year. Mr. Oliver was asked by Mrs. Dawson why his long range plan has changed. Mr. Oliver said lack of volunteers was the reason. Mrs. Dawson discussed volunteers with Mr. Hatch. Mr. Daniels said that there were many discrepancies in Mr. Hatch's comments and discussed lack of budget workshops. Mrs. Ronan said that the solution was to recruit volunteers and asked Mr. Hatch for his procedures. Mrs. Lusson commented on merger plans of Mr. Hatch. Ms. Tolle said she was for the increased level of service, and thanked the Department for its efforts. Mr. Bowns asked Mr. Hatch to explain the difference between ALS and BLS medical response. Ms. Keown asked Mr. Hatch about the recent call and stated that Hellsgate tax rate did not affect homeowners as much as Christopher Kohl's because there were more houses. Mr. Oliver said the cost to the homeowner was the same

for the same rate, independent of the population. Mr. Daniels and Mr. Hatch engaged in conversation concerning response of helicopters. Mr. Eggers commented on his assessed value. Mr. Harris said that he wanted better service and the Board should make a decision. Mr. Hagen said temporary personnel was the solution. Mrs. Dawson asked Mr. Oliver about conducting workshops. Mr. Oliver said he was against a workshop, had been working with the budget for 4 months, and knew what the issues were. Mrs. Dawson asked Mrs. Holmes-Fish about workshops. Mrs. Holmes-Fish said that Chief VanEckhoutte was running the Department very well, had submitted a budget, and did not see the need for a workshop. Mr. Oliver stated the procedures for budget preparation as outlined in the District Bylaws. Mr. Lloyd compared past years budgets with the proposed budget, and said there should be no raises. Mrs. Thornton said the Board had been elected because people trusted the members, and now the Board was trying to micromanage the Department and asked for the Board to do its job and get this over with. Mr. Gourdoux said the meeting had been a waste of time, the Board didn't listen to the folks last time, and asked for the Board to do its job. Mr. Zaleska asked for the Board to listen to the people.

Agenda item 8. Future agenda items. Mrs. Dawson asked changing the Public Hearing next month, and Mr. Oliver felt that it would have to be re advertised and posted. Mrs. Dawson asked if the agenda could reflect that she may participate by telephone. Mr. Hagenduffer was allowed to speak, and said that more than 50% of the people were against the tax increase, said there was no need for a new engine, and didn't know how Paramedics could afford to live here. He said that we were getting along fine and asked how many fires the District had. Mrs. Holmes-Fish said the issue was medical response, and the increased level of service required. Mrs. Holmes-Fish described recent calls. Mr. Schantz said that there was a need for ALS. An unidentified audience member gave his comments. Mrs. Dawson and Mr. Schantz discussed the comments of the County Supervisor saying it was up to the District to determine level of service and other issues. Mrs. Dawson spoke to the raises for personnel and voiced her opposition.

Agenda item 9. Call to the public. Mrs. Christenson thanked the Fuel Break committee for its work, and asked the community to help maintain the fuel break.

Mrs. Dawson adjourned the meeting at 9:18 pm, 11 May, 2009

Submitted : 15 May, 2009, by James Oliver

Approved: _____ Chairman _____, 2009