**February 21, 2024**

**3:00 P.M.**

**MASONIC HALL, DOWNIEVILLE**

1. **CALL TO ORDER:** Chairman Frank Lang called the meeting to order at 3:00 p.m.

**Roll Call:** Roll Call completed by CC Gelatt, Recording Secretary. Quorum established.

**Commissioners Present:** Frank Lang, Chairman; Greg Johnson, Vice Chair; Cherry Simi, Treasurer; and Diane Wharff; Member

**Commissioners Absent:** Liz Fisher, Risk Manager

**Staff Present:** Robert Hall, Fire Captain; Jenny Varn, Bookkeeper; and CC Gelatt, Recording Secretary. EMS Captain Steve Folsom and Paramedic & EMS Ops Manager Tegan Harrington joined at 4:50 p.m.

**Staff Absent:** Joyce White, Dispatch Supervisor

**Others Present:**  None

* **Approval of February 21, 2024 Agenda:** Commissioner Johnson motioned to approve the Agenda and Commissioner Wharff seconded. Motioned passed 4.0.0.
* **Approval of January 10, 2024 Minutes:** Commissioner Simi motioned to approve the Minutes and Commissioner Wharff seconded. Motion passed 4.0.0.
1. **PUBLIC COMMENT OPPORTUNITY:** None
2. **ANNOUNCEMENTS AND CORRESPONDENCE:** None

1. **FINANCIAL REPORTS:**  **Cherry Simi, Treasurer and Jenny Varn, Bookkeeper**

**Treasurer’s Report:** Treasurer Simi handed out the Bank Statement of Accounts Summary and verbally reported as follows:

Total Available Balance of Cash Accounts $681,002.66

New Firehouse Fund $293,320.30

Paramedic/ALS $150,409.15

Urgent Care $ 26,847.17

Building Reserve $ 15,025.92

Ambulance $ 5,002.64

Apparatus $ 109,275.98

DFPD Checking $ 81,121.50

Outstanding Credit Cards $ 2,091.98

Treasurer Simi advised the balance of the $2,000 donation for apparatus warming mats was put into the DFPD Checking Account. Commissioners decided to move these funds out of the Checking Account and into the Building Reserve Account to be used as needed for future structural repairs to the Foundry Building. Chairman Lang noted the $20,000 donation was put into the Urgent Care account which can be used for the upcoming insurance payment in June.

**Bookkeepers Report:**

Commissioners reviewed Bookkeeper Financial Reports. Chairman Lang asked Bookkeeper Varn to add a monthly Payments Report that shows payments made to include check number, dollar amount and payee.

Telephone Expense Category: Bookkeeper Varn pointed out the high expense for telephones due to four Verizon cell phone accounts. Commissioner discussion revealed these are most likely associated with the rigs and were in agreement these accounts could be eliminated since personnel use their own cell phones. Commissioner Wharff will discuss further with Paramedic Harrington. Options discussed were switching to AT&T who provides better coverage at a lower cost. Fire Captain Hall advised DFPD could sign up for First Net using the AT&T tower in Downieville and noted the service is free. He will email the form to Secretary Gelatt and asked her to create a list of employees for use in proving documentation of employee’s eligibility to use this service. Chairman Lang asked Bookkeeper Varn for a breakdown of cost per unit, i.e., district office, fax, dispatch, cell phones, internet, etc.

ACH Utility Payments: Bookkeeper Varn proposed switching utility payments to Automated Clearing House (ACH). She identified the benefits of this switch as: 1) eliminating the time-consuming process we have experienced lately in dealing with utility companies over lost checks, incorrect crediting to our accounts, and notices of account closure; 2) reduced cost associated with writing checks as ACH does not charge a fee if payment comes out of DFPD account; 3) elimination of loss of service for non-payment; and 4) reducing Payables from a twice-a-month task to once a month. To affect the switch to ACH payments, ACH requires DFPD Checking Account Number plus the utility company account numbers. Once the ACH account is opened, DFPD will receive a Payment Due Email as well as a Payment Confirmation Email. Bookkeeper Varn would create passwords for these accounts and make them available to the DFPD Treasurer and DFPD Secretary to ensure access. DFPD Secretary would also have Admin login capability. Vice Chair Johnson motioned to start paying utility bills via ACH and Commissioner Wharff seconded. Motion passed 4.0.0.

Closing 2023 Books:

Bookkeeper Varn advised she spoke to Andrea Drew in Auditor Larry Bain’s office regarding help in closing the DFPD 2023 books. The initial quote of $150.00/hour for a 2-hour job increased to $3000.00. Bookkeeper Varn informed her she wasn’t authorized to approve that amount and Ms. Drew suggested going through the QuickBooks manual. Bookkeeper Varn contacted Loryce Ashby for help who also suggested using the QuickBooks manual. Bookkeeper Varn asked the Commissioners for their advice and it was decided she will check again with Loryce and others familiar with QuickBooks, as well as QuietTech in Grass Valley. Chairman Lang asked her to bring a plan for closing the books to the next Commissioner Meeting in March.

QuickBooks: Bookkeeper Varn was advised by Quickbooks they are moving from a desktop platform to an online platform after July. Our subscription will double to $1250.00/year. She will work with Treasurer Simi in preparing a printout of different platforms and their pricing and bring a recommendation to the Commissioners March meeting.

Vice Chair Johnson motioned to accept the Financial Reports and Commissioner Wharff seconded. Motion passed 4 .0.0.

1. **OFFICER’S REPORT: Robert Hall (Hand Out)**

Fire Captain Hall passed out copies of the Officer’s Report. Additional comments are as follows:

**Item 3: Ruby Bluff Repeater:** Captain Hall advised he will install a repeater in the District Office in Downieville for now and decide later where it will be permanently placed.

**Item 4: Grants Update, Quarterly Updates Completed**: Captain Hall will write to Sheriff Mike Fisher regarding their surplus vehicles and send a copy to Secretary Gelatt.

**Item 4b: California Fire Foundation:** Bookkeeper Varn will look at Cal Rise Grant numbers and provide to Chairman Lang.

Captain Hall advised there is federal money available from the Forest Service and they are giving away slide-in tanks for #6 units. He will apply for that.

**Item 5: Strategic Plan:** Captain Hall passed out a Draft Strategic Plan for Commissioners review and asked for comments and suggestions for updating. He said the Mission Statement was last updated in 2019 and should be condensed.

**Item 6: Type 3 Search:** Captain Hall passed out a separate document “New Fire Engine” showing the types of trucks that may be available. Chairman Lang advised we have a donor who wants to support a new fire engine and we need to be ready with specifics on our preference of apparatus. Captain Hall will get firm prices on three or four vehicle options, including shipping costs, and rank them in order of preference. He wants to get rid of #81 as it is dangerous to drive and we’ve never used it. It currently serves as our backup. Vice Chair Johnson motioned to surplus #81 after we find a replacement and Diane Wharff seconded. Motion passed 4.0.0.

**Item 8: Station 2:** Captain Hall said the heating pads are working well. They are underneath #81 and #91. He will buy a new thermal temperature gauge.

1. **COMMITTEE UPDATES: Frank Lang**

New Firehouse: Vice Chair Johnson has created a Notebook and sent out requests for support letters. Chairman Lang advised he has still not heard back from the Forest Service regarding a meeting. He further advised he had sent a request to Representative Kevin Kiley asking for his help and support in moving this issue forward. Chairman Lang reiterated we all need to get working on the New Firehouse and directed Treasurer Simi to investigate available options for financing (local, federal, etc.) and also asked her to talk to whoever responds to his letter to Representative Kiley. He also noted Representative Kiley’s office sent out a notice announcing they are working with another Federal agency on a grant for building fire stations in rural areas. Treasurer Simi will also talk to Bruce Cueno regarding plans for the new Fire House.

New Apparatus: Discussed in Item #5: Officer’s Report.

Structural Repairs on Foundry Building: Fire Captain Hall will organize a work crew to clear out the blackberry bushes at the back of the building so Robert Eiremann can complete assessment of structural repairs needed.

Ambulance Run Report: Commissioner Wharff explained she is still working on obtaining Title III funds. Bookkeeper Varn will assist her in creating an Excel spreadsheet that can be used in requesting reimbursement from the County. Commissioner Wharff also noted we very rarely get paid the $350 ambulance charge from the AMA patients we see.

1. **BUSINESS ITEMS OLD: Frank Lang**

Yes on Measures A&B Committee: Paramedic Harrington reviewed the data in his report.

Retention Schedule: Pending

1. **BUSINESS ITEMS NEW: Frank Lang**

AT&T COLR Issue: Chairman Lang noted the letter of opposition he sent to the CPUC. Commissioner Simi said she looked online at a company called Community Telephone that doesn’t require AT&T or the internet and is for land line use only. It is being used in Plumas County. She sent the link to Sierra County Supervisor Lee Adams and will send it to Chairman Lang.

1. **DISCUSSION:** None
2. **NEXT BOARD MEETING:** Wednesday, March 20, 2024 at 3:00 p.m.
3. **MOTION TO ADJOURN:**

Vice Chair Johnson motioned to adjourn and Commissioner Wharff seconded. Motion passed 4.0.0. Chairman Lang adjourned the meeting at 4:56 p.m.

Minutes Respectfully Submitted,

CC Gelatt, Recording Secretary