

South Metro Fire Rescue Fire Protection District
Regular Board of Directors' Meeting Minutes
September 13, 2021

Present:	Jim Albee, Chair	Bob Baker, Fire Chief
	Renee Anderson, Vice Chair	Mike Dell'Orfano, Assistant Chief
	William Shriver, Treasurer	Tobias Kirschke, Assistant Chief
	Hank Eng, Secretary	Kevin Milan, Assistant Chief
	Sue Roche	Jon Adams, Assistant Chief
	Cindy Hathaway	Dillon Miskimins, Chief Financial Officer
	Alison Rausch	Kristin Eckmann, Chief Communications Officer
		Camie Chapman, Human Resources Director
		Bob Cole, Legal Counsel

Others Present: SMFR Staff Members

MEETING CALL TO ORDER

Chair Albee called the Regular Meeting of the South Metro Fire Rescue Fire Protection District to order at 6:02 p.m. and welcomed everyone to the meeting.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Chair Albee led the Pledge of Allegiance to the United States of America.

ROLL CALL

All members of the Board were present in person.

INTRODUCTION

Chief Kirschke introduced new Human Resources Director Camie Chapman. Camie comes from the City of Greenwood Village, where she served for nearly twenty-four years. She is a dedicated human resources professional who loves serving others. Camie is married to a former Littleton firefighter, with two boys, one in college and one in high school, and a Siberian husky named Blitz. Camie and her family love sports, spending most of their time on football or baseball fields.

Chief Milan introduced new Technology Director Alex Sund. Alex's extensive involvement in technology includes both private and public sector experience. Alex earned his Ba and MBA degree from University of Denver where he played Division 1 basketball as a student athlete. Most recently, Alex served for 10 years as the Director of Technology Infrastructure for Denver Public Schools (DPS). During his time at DPS, Alex supported the technical needs of 16,000 employees, 93,000 students, and 151 facilities. He is a consummate professional who leads through collaboration & innovation. Alex grew up in golden, where he still resides with is wife who teaches elementary school in the community. The Sund's have two sons attending college. He is a dedicated Broncos fan and loves all hometown sports teams.

PUBLIC COMMENT

N/A

CONSENT AGENDA

August 2, 2021 South Metro Fire Rescue Fire Protection District Regular Board Meeting Minutes
August 16, 2021 South Metro Fire Rescue Fire Protection District Special Board Meeting Minutes

A motion was made by Sue Roche and seconded by Alison Rausch to approve the consent agenda as presented. All were in favor and the motion carried.

Chair Albee recommended moving the Discussion Items up to allow the audience members a chance to participate without having to sit through the other agenda items.

DISCUSSION ITEMS

Shift Schedules – Chief Kirschke reminded the Board of the background regarding the shift schedule, adding that Lieutenant Brandon and Project Manager Carla Ahrenholtz took on the task to dive deeper into the Line sleep survey and data collection.

Project Manager Ahrenholtz provided a short personal bio and her responsibilities as a new member of the Employee Services Division.

Lieutenant Howard stated that as discussions shifted from changing schedules to finding other ways to address issues, we began the process of data collection from the Line Shift Sleep Survey (shift preference & sleep habits) and Line Station Sleep Survey, identifying areas of opportunity and future research options. Project Manager Ahrenholtz stated that the data was broken into two categories, simple fixes and bigger fixes. The simple fixes are lower cost/effort upgrades to improve sleep at each individual station at an estimated cost of \$1.5 million. The bigger fixes, the ones that are not as easy to make happen, will require construction expertise and budget considerations. Lieutenant Howard stated that he will be walking through each station to determine which easy fixes are needed for each station and once that is compiled there will be a better idea of the cost and timeframe. Project Manager Ahrenholtz provided an overview of 5 pilot test activities that will be taking place between September and December followed by an effectiveness survey and reviewed the timeline for the project.

At Director Anderson's request, Lieutenant Howard confirmed that additional discussion will take place regarding the bigger fixes that are identified.

At Director Eng's request, Lieutenant Howard confirmed that station design continues to improve and Staff is honing in on best practices. Chief Kirschke noted that he has been on the station design committee since the building of Station 47, at which time our attention to sleep features was pointing in that direction however it is an ever-evolving challenge.

At Director Roche's request, Lieutenant Howard stated it is up to the Chief as to if/when a shift time change would go into effect. At Chair Albee's request, Lieutenant Howard stated that there are other factors than preference being considered. There are no specific start times recommended, but science shows that a later start time is beneficial but there needs to be a balance between a lot of considerations to make sure it is not too early or too late & 8 to 9 a.m. falls within the realm of industry best practices and also meets the department's needs.

At Director Roche's request, Chief Milan stated that there are sleep number beds specifically designed for the fire service and as the team puts together the list of upgrades, Staff will partner with vendors to determine the costs. Also, part of the Station Sleep Survey data will refine some of the facility needs. At Chair Albee's request, CFO Miskimins stated that funds were placed in the budget for some of the simple station upgrades but the majority of the work will be outsourced and the working number will be based on the number of sleep rooms that need help and match that to what the budget can bear. There will be ebbs and flows along the way. Chair Albee reminded Staff to not let resources be a barrier but rather come up with the right ideas and the right people to get it done.

At Chair Albee's request, Lieutenant Howard provided a couple of big issue examples that will be large scale in both solution and price and that is the reason they would be pushed out to 2023. Chief Milan interjected that within the next 60 days Staff hopes to have the facilities study results back and can begin assessing the needs and solutions.

Chief Baker stated that he purposefully had the sleep study presentation prior to the discussion about the 48/96 schedule. Staff wants to make sure that we are doing what is right to improve sleep quality, and not just shooting from the hip, by creating true barometers in a measured approach. He re-distributed the 48/96 Sleep Study Analyses from 2010 and 2018/2019 depicting crews not getting adequate sleep on both the first and second day of the shift. Chief Baker reiterated that a 48-hour shift is still a risk factor but committed that Staff is doing everything they can to mitigate as many risks as possible for our personnel. Chief Baker reiterated his discomfort with the 48/96 and specifically asked the Board to let Staff know their comfort level with requiring line personnel to work 48-hour shifts routinely.

Director Anderson stated that Chief Dell'Orfano provided some much-improved data and asked that we keep gathering information. Once we have done all of the things we can possibly do, we can determine whether a shift change is necessary. Maybe it will be clearer as to what the best shift schedule would be for our organization. She stated she is still comfortable with the 48/96 schedule the way it is because most of the Line people are comfortable with it & now that we have a baseline for what we can do to make it better.

Director Shriver concurred and also does not feel we have enough information to make a change. Agrees we should continue to collect the data and monitor the improvements. Will be curious to see if the recommended easy fixes reduce the second-day accident numbers.

Director Roche stated that she does not think the 48/96 is an ideal schedule, but the improvements need to be done no matter what the schedule. If we determine that the improvements are not solving the problems we think should be solved, then the schedule change is not off the table.

Director Rausch agreed and stated she cannot say right now she is 100% comfortable with the current schedule but was not convinced the other options were right either. She expressed appreciation for how quickly tonight's information was rolled out. She stated she does not want to table the shift schedule discussion but as we move through discussions over the next year or two maybe the solution will be more obvious.

Director Hathaway agreed and expressed her appreciation that we are moving forward with the improvements. She is not sure what we have is perfect but appreciates everyone's efforts to do what we can to make improvements and do what we can to get things moving faster.

Director Eng stated that if the current schedule is combined with the improvements, we will be able to see how it affects the overall welfare of the service. He would like to see the schedule change discussions continue. Staff has come up with a good amount of recommendations and wants to wait until we get the data to determine the next steps.

Chair Albee stated he is comfortable with the schedule, does not consider it ideal, but it is acceptable. He stated it isn't a settled matter on shift schedules, sleep deprivation and a number of other things. Hopefully this Board and prior boards show that there's more than a willingness to commit to the wellness of our people. He suggested this topic be an agenda item to be presented at new board member orientation because it is one of the most important things to educate our new board members. He hopes this provides the feedback requested & thanked everyone for the enormous amount of work that went into the intent, motivation and effort that went into it.

Director Anderson expressed her appreciation that Staff listened.

Director Rausch added that we are on heels of some budget projections that were very scary, we have some legislation that could affect us in this vein and would love to have this be celebrated by our Communications Team so that the citizens know how seriously we are taking this and if we do need to go back to the public to do something, they know how hard we have been trying.

Chief Baker reported that the members of the Local and E-Team had a few really good days at the retreat and from his perspective the conversations were positive, spirited and sometimes difficult, but always respectful. Seemed like more of a collaboration than a bargaining discussion.

Local 2086 Vice-President DeSalvo agreed, as an Executive Board Member for over 20 years, getting to where we are now has been the greatest thing as a true democracy and always able to come back and find middle ground which makes for a good staff/labor relationship. DeSalvo continued that changing the Line schedule took a lot of conversation and has been a great educational process for all. He stated it has been very interesting to see the change in tide in how the schedules affects people psychologically over the course of their career, so he thinks people are now aware of their sleep hygiene and educating themselves on how to improve their overall health. He appreciates the Board taking time to think about it and allow the changes that are going to be made and their effect.

Working Agreement – CFO Miskimins provided a Collective Bargaining Agreement presentation, which included Discussion Items: Wage increases for 2022, Additional Vacation Days, 457 Plan Contribution Increase, Retiree Health Savings Accounts, Annual Sick Leave Buyout, Termination Sick Leave Buyout, Holiday Premium, and provided the total cost for all of the changes.

At Director Anderson's request, CFO Miskimins confirmed that there is currently \$2.5 million budgeted for OT and that the proposed additional vacation days cost will be in addition to that number; the figure increases by \$867,994 for 2022 and \$1,794,049 for 2023.

At Director Roche and Anderson's request, Chief Adams stated that there will be an all Paramedic 30-person academy in the Spring and a mixed Paramedic/Firefighter 30-person academy in the Fall. The Fall academy will forego the EMT requirement at the time of hire.

At Chair Albee's request, CFO Miskimins clarified that the additional vacation days necessitate hiring additional personnel – if we could hire the correct people, at the correct time, it would cost less – and that the additional vacation days brings the Line's 56-hour workweek closer to a 48-hour workweek.

At Chair Albee's request, Chief Kirschke explained that the 457 Contribution additions that this percentage would make employees closer to retirement more comfortable with making the move and the newer employees will have enough in their 457 to cover them until they are eligible to tap into their 401A. Chief Baker added that when the conversation went from a 56-hour workweek to a 48-hour workweek, rather than pay above the top wage in the Denver Metro Area, SMFR's total compensation package gets them closer to pay commensurate with the 48-hour workweek. Local President DeSalvo concurred and that this also is a gap filler to help them get to Medicare; if the current legislation were to pass reducing the age that first responders can qualify for Medicare that will help also. Chief Baker reviewed the Total Compensation Comparison, primarily SMFR vs. Denver (since the updated information for the other agencies is not available yet) reflects that regardless of the 56-hour workweek, we are where we need to be to continue as the employer of choice.

At Chair Albee's request, Chief Adams stated that the Sick Leave Buyout Policy was intended to reduce sick leave use. For his entire career he has heard comments asking why anyone would sell back their sick leave for half rather than taking it one-for-one, so the proposed change is intended to change the mindset on the use of sick leave.

CFO Miskimins will send a copy of the Total Compensation Comparison for each Line position to the Board.

ACTION ITEMS

July 2021 Financial Statements – Chief Financial Officer Miskimins reviewed the financial statements, highlighting:

1. Fund balance decreased by \$6.4 million compared to the prior month bringing fund balance to a total of \$106.7 million.

2. Through July, the District has collected \$113.6 million in property and \$5.6 million specific ownership tax revenue, which reflects 98.60% collection vs. 98.32% at this time last year for property taxes, and 64.32% vs. 51.56% for specific ownership taxes. A total of \$767,687 of property taxes have been diverted to TIF in 2021.
3. As of July 31st, the District has expended \$77 million in the General Fund related to operations or 55.3% of the annual budget not including Capital Project transfers.
4. Ambulance transports are on trend to meet budget expectations in 2021. In July, the District saw the highest number of transports since 2019, at 1,842 transport calls. Overall, the District has made 1,380 more transports year-to-date this year than in the same period last year and 1,194 transports over our expected amounts. The District's net revenue is \$529k over the year-to-date budgeted amount and \$1.6 million more than the same period last year.
5. The bond market environment has caused investment income to be drastically under budget largely due to losses in the value of our portfolios. In July, the District has collected \$31k in interest income and had a market gain of \$26k bringing our year-to-date actuals just under \$52k.
6. Plan review fees are trending \$224k under budget due to lower than expected plan reviews and inspections to date. A chart of historical permitting activity has been included on page 14 of the update.
7. The District has billed \$300k in reimbursements for wildland deployments which brings the total amount billed to \$457k.
8. Fuel costs are running over the budget by \$114k due to higher than anticipated prices. The District will most likely end the year over budget in this line item.
9. The District paid \$91,700 in insurance premiums to the Colorado Firefighter Heart and Cancer Benefits Trust for the Heart Award Coverage that will be reimbursed by DOLA.
10. In July, the District sold \$134,750 of assets which brings the total sale of assets to \$398,621. Most of this amount is due to liquidating the existing fleet and parts that are no longer in use.
11. Through July, the District has expended \$2.86 million or 44.47% of our total budgeted expenditures in the Capital Fund. The negative \$73.7k expense in the current month is due to the \$100k reimbursement for the Station 20 alerting system received from the Douglas County Emergency Office. The schedule of expenditures from the capital projects fund is included on page 13.

At Director Anderson's request, CFO Miskimins confirmed that the last payment on Station 20 was released three weeks ago.

A motion was made by Hank Eng and seconded by Renee Anderson to accept the July 2021 Financial Statements as presented. All were in favor and the motion carried.

Purchase of Nine (9) 2022 AEV Medic Units – Chief Milan reminded the current SMFR Fleet Capital Replacement Schedule reflects re-chassis funding for five medic units in 2021 & five medic units in 2022 for a total of \$1,997,499. Fleet Manager John Frank reported that after completing the RFP process with four vendors in June of 2021, we have selected a medic (ambulance) vendor with exceptional warranty, safety, and value. We can purchase new medic units at a cost within the "re-chassis" estimates included in 2021 budget. SMFR also gains local dealership support for warranties and parts which is not available from the current vendor. Supply chain challenges resulting from COVID will prevent delivery of medic units in 2021, pushing delivery of 2021 units into mid-2022. By combining purchases of budgeted 2021 & 2022 medic units provides additional savings. All nine units will be placed into service in the 2022 budget year.

AEV RFP Unit Price \$201,038 EA
 Order of Nine AEV Units Price \$197,021 EA
 Pre-Payment discount \$3,450/Unit
 Total after all discounts \$193,571 EA

Chief Milan added that Fleet Manager Frank and EMS Chief Curtis visited the vendor's factory to make sure we are getting a comparable unit and they were very impressed by the support offered after the sale. Chief Curtis added that his participation was more about the consistency of the units, FM Frank did the majority of the work.

Staff recommends approval of the purchase of nine (9) AEV Medic units for \$193,571 each, totaling \$1,742,130. The remaining funds budgeted for \$255,360 allows for any factory change orders and any operational or technical equipment needed to upfit the units for service. The all-in total for all nine units, service-ready will not exceed the budgeted amount of \$1,977,499.

A motion was made by William Shriver and seconded by Sue Roche to approve the Purchase of Nine (9) AEV Medic Units as presented. All were in favor and the motion carried.

INFORMATION ITEMS

Correspondence items in the Board's packet are summarized below as well as other information items that were communicated:

- July and August Dispatch Dashboard & KPI Reports, along with the Special Operations Deployment Report were included in the packet.
- Chief Baker reviewed the Special Operations Deployment weekly report.
- Chiefs Baker and Adams attended the Arapahoe Rescue Patrol fundraiser last night, which raised \$57,000.
- Chief Baker informed that paramedic Tony Palato has been battling cancer for some time now, the cancer is terminal so he is currently in hospice care & will be handled as a line of duty death. He and Chief Adams delivered to him his 20-year service ring and he seemed very happy.
- Chief Dell'Orfano reminded that there is land dedicated for a station on Hess Road. The process is now complete for relocation and rezoning further south on Chambers. Everyone seems happy with the new location.
- Chief Dell'Orfano stated that Staff has been talking for some time about becoming the sole owner of the Metro Fire Training Center. Paperwork has been signed and we have closed on the transfer of property ownership from West Metro, Littleton will be next and Englewood needs to go through their final readings for approval.
- Director Hathaway informed that the Littleton Business Chamber will be running a Candidate Forum on Wednesday, September 30th at the Riverwalk Community Center. SMFR will be receiving an invitation. This is the first time the Mayor will be elected from constituents rather than the council.
- Director Anderson stated that she and Director Rausch will be at the SDA Conference and unable to attend the Partnership of Douglas County Governments that takes place on Wednesday. Chief Kirschke will attend on their behalf.
- Chair Albee asked the impact from Douglas County creating their own health agency. Director Anderson stated that Jefferson County already has its own health agency. Chief Curtis replied that it could affect us if they decide to do business in a different way, he anticipates a mix of procedures between the two departments. Chief Adams added that Douglas County may still have some interactions with Tri County for things like restaurant re-openings.
- SMFR collected \$106,147.79 for MDA over the Labor Day Weekend, greatly exceeding the goal of \$75,000. Thank you to Pierce Jacoway and Nick McKibbin for coordinating the efforts.
- A thank you letter to the crew at Station 15 from an appreciative grandmother for assistance provided when her grandson was in excruciating pain during recovery from a recent surgery.
- A thank you letter to the crew at Station 44 for hard work providing lifesaving measures to a 15-week-old baby that unfortunately did not survive.
- A thank you letter was received for all of the crews that responded to a barn fire in the Ponderosa Hills neighborhood in Parker.

EXECUTIVE SESSION (UPON MOTION)

N/A

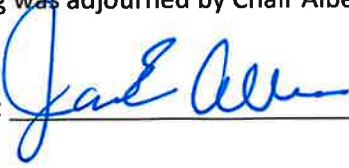
NEXT MEETING

The next Special South Metro Fire Rescue District Board of Directors' meeting will take place on September 20, 2021 at 6:00 p.m. at 9195 East Mineral Avenue, Centennial, CO.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned by Chair Albee at 9:03 pm.

Attested by: _____

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Joel Albee", written over a horizontal line.

Date: _____

Oct 4, 2021