

AURORA RURAL FIRE PROTECTION DISTRICT

Board of Directors Meeting

Wednesday, March 17, 2021 at 7 pm

Station 900 Aurora, Oregon

Public attendance and participation via Telephonic access

ATTENDANCE

Fire Chief Joshua Williams
 Director Daroll Nicholson
 Director Bobby Meyer
 Director Marc Anderson

Director Paul Ranta
 Director Dawn Depner
 Admin Assistant Emily Murphy

CALL TO ORDER

The Regular Board of Directors Meeting was called to order at 7:00 pm by President Daroll Nicholson. Roll call and the Pledge of Allegiance performed.

ADDITIONS/DELETIONS TO AGENDA – Chief Williams requested to add Budget Calendar / Budget Policy to New Business. President Nicholson acknowledged and accepted the request.

CONSENT AGENDA

A motion was made by Director Meyer to approve the consent agenda for the month of February 2021. The motion was seconded by Director

Roll call vote to accept the Consent Agenda:

Director	Recorded Vote
Anderson	Yes
Depner	Yes
Meyer	Yes
Nicholson	Yes
Ranta	Yes
Result: Consent Agenda for February 2021 passed unanimously	

PUBLIC COMMENT / CORRESPONDENCE AND/OR QUESTIONS – None.

DISTRICT #63 FIREFIGHTER ASSOCIATION UPDATE – VP Nathan Severson reported that there is interest from a few businesses in the community to help with the Easter Egg Hunt on Saturday, April 3rd, if it is allowed to be held this year due to Covid restrictions. Still waiting to hear if it will be happening or not. Also, sweatshirts provided to everyone on the Board as a thank you.

OPERATIONAL REPORTS (in packets) – No questions.

Chief Report – Chief Williams shared information about getting a Master Plan, which would then encompass a Strategic Plan. It's been since 1990's that the District has had one. Contract with ESCI would be a full 360 evaluation. Chief said cost is about \$48k but worth it. If the Board would like, Chief would be willing to get someone to present from ESCI via Zoom

at the next Board meeting. Everyone expressed interest in having Chief look into that.

He clarified that the sole purpose of the SDAO Study was to look at combining services with Aurora, Canby, Hubbard and Woodburn, no planning or projections.

Chief also wanted to mention that we are prepping for fire season. AFD has applied for several grants, including one to provide new wildland gear. Also submitted a grant through FEMA for a water tender in March. Also checking to make sure all our apparatus and gear are in good shape to be ready for wildland fires. Will keep everyone posted on the status.

Great training / education class was recently held on our training grounds. Got a lot of great feedback from volunteers and staff who attended.

Last, has been working with a construction company and concentrating on getting quotes for a building for the training area on Ehlen Rd. It would be a 40 x 60 training building with bathroom, showers and small kitchen and office for those training out there. Will have to wait for a bond if it can't happen due to cost. Have had some issues with theft and vandalism on the property, so recently installed security lights and additional locks on the property.

NEW BUSINESS

- **Skills pay (Director Depner)** – Discussion regarding the skills pay chart of account line item (5100), which Chief Williams explained is where the one-time merit bonuses were budgeted from. Agreed to make sure the line reads 'Skills pay / Bonus' for next fiscal year.

Director Depner requested the Board be made aware prior to bonuses being given. Director Ranta stated that given the position of Chief and the trust of his management over the staff, if it is included in the budget that has already been approved, it is not the business of the Board to be involved in the decision beforehand. Chief agreed to provide all financials as required, he will always be transparent and will only use the money that has been allocated for such and approved during the budget process.

Director Depner stated she wants a threshold to be established due to the long-term liability [such as PERS] since it will affect the district for years to come. She also wants to ensure the line item be listed for 'bonuses' specifically. Chief agreed to label it appropriately for next year. Director Nicholson agreed that the BOD give Chief the discrepancy to do the job he's been entrusted and was hired to do. He added that the decisions Chief has made have been appropriate and reported to the Board at each meeting following, as per what was already approved in the budget.

- **Assistant Chief Job description** – Chief Williams recommended the Board accept the job description as presented so he can post for that position. He explained that Lieutenant Gloy will be moved to an assistant instead of the training officer, trying to do all those requirements during shifts. Operations Chief's last day will be July 30, 2021.

A motion was made by Director Meyer to approve the Assistant Chief job description as presented. The motion was seconded by Director Anderson. All in favor, passed unanimously.

- **Audit RFP** – Chief Williams shared some information regarding another auditor and recommended the Board approve the Audit RFP as presented and allow Chief to advertise for auditors.

A motion was made by Director Anderson to approve the Audit RFP as presented. The motion was seconded by Director Ranta. All in favor, passed unanimously.

OLD BUSINESS

- **Budget Calendar / Policy** – Calendar provided. Chief stated it's a standard budget calendar same as previous years with just different dates. Chief recommended the Budget Calendar be adopted and the Fire Chief be appointed as Budget Officer.

A motion was made by Director Meyers to approve the Budget Calendar and appoint Chief Williams as Budget Officer. The motion was seconded by Director Anderson. All in favor, passed unanimously.

Chief wanted to let the BOD know that he will be advertising for one person to fill a 2-year appointed vacancy on the Budget Committee this year. Doesn't require a motion, but all were in favor.

- **Bond measure discussion** – Chief stated it's time to go for a bond to get a new fire station, since we are working out of 70+ year old stations currently. It will be very expensive. He contacted Peck Ecklund, the architects from 2012, to find the plans he receive no response. He just wants to get direction from the board at this point. Question from Director Ranta regarding ESCI – only 90-120 days. Chief isn't asking to go for bond until May of next year (2022). If Board is okay to explore this, Chief could have SDAO come and explain the process of the bond. Director Anderson inquired about RFQ (turn-key) buildings and Chief said he's looking into all options.
- **Ehlen Rd project update** – Already done earlier during Chief's report.
- **Civil Service advertising** – Chief requested the Board allow him to advertise again as there has been no response. Everyone agreed.
- **IGA update** – Chief provided a sample he'd been working on. The current IGA that we've been working with Canby under since February 2019 expires June 30, 2021. In February, Canby's Fire Chief had their Board approve an IGA without input from Aurora or Chief Williams. He stated that this is not the way he wants to do things, and will not continue to go back and forth if this is the way they want to do things. As far as he can tell, the insistence of Aurora adopting the Springbrook program seems to be the point that is causing the friction. There is no need to incur the cost of a program that we don't need. What AFD is currently using has been upgraded recently and is sufficient for what the size of our agency needs, doesn't incur implementation or annual fees, and isn't going to be forced on us. Director Depner asked why the cost of Springbrook would not be paid for by Canby as part of the IGA? Chief explained that as two separate fire districts, we cannot 'share' the program and they are not going to pay for a \$25k program with a \$10k per year fee. At this point, Chief is not encouraging continuing an IGA. Discussion continued regarding what exactly Canby is still doing now that our Administrative Assistant, Emily, and our Accounting Manager, Dani, are

handling all accounting and financials, except running of payroll and some budget assistance. Woodburn switched to Springbrook only because they were already using an outdated, broken 'system' and have a much larger organization than our district. Director Nicholson said he was recently contacted by the Board President from Canby Fire District and was pushing Springbrook. President Nicholson stated that maybe it is not the direction we want to go, as we don't have to mimic Canby if there is no benefit for our district. So it seems time for Aurora to pull out and no longer have IGA, rather than renew it.

A motion was made by Director Meyers to discontinue with the IGA. There was no second to the motion, motion failed.

Discussion regarding the startup cost of Springbrook being around \$29k and then another \$10k annual fee to keep it going. Directors Ranta, Anderson, Meyer and Nicholson all agreed that if it's only \$400 for Quickbooks, we have no need to spend that kind of money on a program that's not required for Aurora; it's just not an expense we need to worry about. Chief said there is also a relationship issue and he will never allow another Chief from any other district to push [Aurora] around. He does not want this contract to take away from other things we want to do as a district, and he's starting to feel that it's heading that direction and does not want that. He is not going to encourage wasting taxpayers money and that's what going to Springbrook would do. Chief Williams agreed to get additional costs, pricing, and information to provide for review for the next board meeting

Director Ranta made a motion to table this issue until next month, after further information (costs) provided, and further discussion. Director Meyer seconded the motion. All in favor.

NEXT REGULAR BOARD MEETING: Date: Wednesday, April 21, 2021

Time: 7:00 pm

In person meeting at Station 900 scheduled for Board members

****Public will continue to attend via phone****

Motion by Director Meyer to Adjourn the meeting, seconded by Director Anderson. All in favor.

ADJOURNMENT: Meeting adjourned at 8:30 pm.

Approved: _____



Bobby Meyer, Board Secretary/Treasurer

4/21/21

Date