

# Seal Rock Fire District

Board of Director's Regular Meeting

March 17, 2022, 5:00 PM

10349 NW Rand Street~~Seal Rock, OR 97376

<https://sealrockfire.com>

**CALL TO ORDER** 5:00 PM

**DIRECTORS:**

Karl Kowalski President

Skip Smith VP

Mike Burt Secretary

Paul Rimola Treasurer

**ROLL CALL:** All directors in attendance. Quorum was met.

**OTHERS IN ATTENDANCE:** Will Ewing, Lynda Engle, Joe Schwab, Mickie Lindquist, Lisa Welch, Jordan Essoe (Yachats News reporter)

**ACCEPTANCE OF PREVIOUS MINUTES:** Minutes accepted.

**GUEST INPUT:** Chief Ewing introduced firefighter Joe Schwab, who is helping to fill the gap of losing two firefighters recently. Joe comes to us from Yachats Fire and is familiar with our District. Another new firefighter(Seth Hedin) will be starting on Friday.

**ORGANIZATION INPUT:** None

**TREASURER'S REPORT:** Director Rimola pointed out that there are two resolutions that have been numbered incorrectly and have been changed. Resolution 21-05 is now 21-05B and Resolution 2021-06 is now 2021-06B. Rimola went over the month's financials (see attached). Chief Ewing said he is shopping around for a less expensive dispatch service and explained how it is calculated from call volume. SRFD is currently at 23.58%. There are other options out there, he said, including Toledo. The firefighter's budget is being looked at and needs fine tuned.

A motion was made by Rimola to transfer \$41,252 from LGIP into the general fund was voted on and passed unanimously.

Director Smith requested a simple 3 word explanation added to the expenses memo column for clarification on what was being purchased. He would like Tom Wilson to attend next month's Board meeting. A reminder that after May's regular meeting there will be a Budget Committee Meeting.

## **UNFINISHED BUSINESS:**

- IGA Director Kowalski recommended that negotiations with COCF regarding the IGA be suspended until their own issues are resolved with Chief Mason. We will stay with the Mutual Aid agreement through May 19<sup>th</sup>. Chief Ewing has sent an email to Chief Mason explaining how the gap in shift coverage is being taken care of since the resignation by two of SRFD firefighters. Firefighter Joe Schwab explained his agreement with COCF to share responsibilities with their staff.
- HIRING OF Chief Ewing Will Ewing has accepted the position, based on a 2 year contract that has been reviewed by legal counsel, Lori Cooper from Local Government Law Group.

Ewing reminded the Board that he can be fired with only his pay to date if they decide he needs to go....no 90 days or severance pay would be expected. Director Smith wants time off put into Chief Ewing's contract and it was decided that 10 days sick leave and 10 days vacation time annually will be added to his contract.

Director Kowalski made a motion to accept the contract to hire Will Ewing. It was seconded and went up for discussion.

Will Ewing stated that it was important to him that if the Board gets tired of Will Ewing they could terminate the Contract for "0" dollars cost to the District.

Director Rimola said that he wanted that statement by Will Ewing to appear in the minutes.

Director Burt said he felt they were moving too fast with hiring a chief. Burt also said that the Job Description approved by the Board needed to become a part of the Contract.

Director Smith explained that the reason they were moving fast was to provide needed stability for the district, to get volunteers back, etc. After discussion it was decided that the Chief's job description for fire chief would be included as an amendment to the contract for Chief Ewing.

Director Rimola made the motion to accept the contract with amendment. It passed unanimously.

- LEXIPOL Director Smith has gone through the policies and reformatted some of it. He concluded that we got our monies worth and pointed out that the policies are a tool for the Chief but are available to all. Chief Ewing will review. The Board has accepted what Lexipol has given the District thus far but it is felt we no longer need to continue paying them further Chief Ewing will decide what should be used at an operational level.
- AUDIT Chief has requested more info from Signe.
- Virtual participation in meetings Chief Ewing is talking with Bobby Rigs (our tech guy) to get us set up to offer electronic participation in the meetings. We need a camera and computer.

- VOLUNTEERS Burt wants to hear from the Board that they're behind the volunteer program. The expose that he handed out at last Board meeting was presented which Chief Ewing has written. It shows how volunteers are much needed as back-up for the paid staff. It was noted by Burt that attendance is down for the volunteer drill training the last couple of weeks. He would like to see a program with some "teeth" in it. Rimola commended Burt and Paul Highfill for working diligently in bringing the volunteers back. The Board voiced their approval and positive thoughts about the volunteer program. Chief will be contacting volunteers in emails soon. He is also interested in starting a cadet program and has one young person already interested.
- MEETING PACKETS Director Smith has requested that the board packets be available at least 2 days ahead of meeting day.

## **NEW BUSINESS**

- AGENDA FORMAT/CALENDAR Smith provided a sample of how the agenda can be numbered with supporting documents referenced to make it easier to follow along. If the packets can be available by the Monday before it would be easier to be well briefed ahead of the meeting date. The Chief's report should be moved to earlier in the meeting, they agreed. The Board Calendar will be saved for further discussion next month.
- FORMAT OF CHIEF'S REPORT
- HEALTH INSURANCE FOR NEW HIRES Rates for new hires and paid staff is being looked into. Chief stated that a salary isn't enough, the firefighters also need insurance and it can be paid out of the FF levy. Chief would also like to put a duty officer program in place; someone who can make decisions. He'd like 3 shifts of duty officers.
- BOARD POLICY REVIEW Burt informed everyone that the review is to be done annually. Director Smith will review the Policy and report back to the Board prior to the budgetary process.
- NEW BOARD MEMBER RECRUITMENT Previous minute-taker, Mary Lou, will be contacted by Director Smith . Other possibilities were mentioned.

## **CHIEF'S REPORT**

- Chief provided a breakdown of last month's calls plus a balloon graph of what his job entails. It had the Board's approval
- Chief Ewing talked about his meeting with Senator Gomberg where he asked him to consider an annual stipend as a gift to the smaller fire districts(5000 OR LESS) to help them cover rising costs.
- There is a "burn to learn" possibility behind the Luna Sea restaurant. It won't be for another about 6 weeks.

**GOOD OF THE ORDER**

- Director Burt talked about how the last 3 fire chiefs had failed to inspire him but that in the 6 mos. since Chief Ewing has stepped in that he is already inspired by him. He called Ewing a man of vision, good leadership and yet a humble man.

**ADJOURNMENT:** 7:12