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## SCIO FIRE DISTRICT

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P.O. Box 1 Scio, OR 97374 \* 503-394-3000

### BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING MINUTES November 21, 2023

The Board of Directors of the Scio Fire District met at St. 91 located at 38975 SW Sixth Avenue, Scio Oregon.

**Board of Directors:**

- Paul Dykast, President
- Sioux Ellis, Vice President
- Larry Brown, Secretary/Treasurer
- Pat Traeger, Director
- Katrina Clouse, Director

**OTHERS IN ATTENDANCE:**

Fire Chief Kyle White, Administrative Assistant Amy Watson, Xea Sprague, Demetrius Pate, Tiffany Weber, Mark and Terrie Barker.

**CALL TO ORDER:** The meeting called to order at 7:00 pm by President Paul Dykast.

**ATTENDANCE:** Roll called. Quorum established.

**FLAG SALUTE:** Flag Salute led by President Paul Dykast.

**PUBLIC COMMENT:**

Tiffany Weber addressed the Board directly regarding an incident that happened at the last board meeting, whereas she was video tapped.

Ted Park addressed the Board regarding an incident that happened with a current Board Member. The Board Member addressed a task member leader on a conflagration fire he was on.

Zack Ellis addressed the Board letting them know what an excellent job the chief is doing and keeping the public informed.

Mayor Debbie Nuber advised that the citizens of Scio should all come together as a community, and that they should support the volunteers. She continued to say that we need to move on as a community.

At 7:10pm the Administrative Assistant left the meeting and did not return due to being visibly upset.

Andi Park addressed the Board to stop harassing the district and its volunteers and to please allow people to do their job.

Steve Boros addressed the Board about the tremendous positive change since Chief White has been in his position.

Mike Traeger addressed the Board that the public has not reached out to him for context on the current situation.

**CONSENT AGENDA: Katrina Clouse moved to accept consent agenda which consisted of minutes of October, payment of bills, check review, and 2023-24 expenditure sheet. Larry Brown seconded the motion. Motion carried. (Yes – Dykast, Sioux Ellis, Brown, Clouse)**

**ADDITIONS OR DELETIONS TO THE AGENDA/ APPROVAL OF AGENDA: Brown moved to accept the agenda. Clouse seconded the motion. Motion carried. (Yes – Brown, Dykast, Ellis, Traeger, Clouse)**

**INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS:** Director Brown introduced Sherrie Sprenger the County Commissioner and Mayor Debbie Nuber. Sherrie announced that she lives in Scio and is a member of the Scio Fire Protection District.

**CORRESPONDENCE:** *Chief White-1*) We received a \$50 donation from Patrick and Joyce Kohls.

**STAFF REPORTS:**

*Chief White* – 1) Chief, Sioux Ellis and Katrina Clouse attended the OFDDA Conference in Seaside. 2) Volunteer Handbook – He is currently working on a handbook that will be distributed and will discuss policies and expectations of being a SFD volunteer 3) Policy Manual – this policy is being created to go over rules that are expected from the SFD volunteers. This is something the Board would need to approve before it being distributed 4) Apparatus Binders – There will be a three-ring binder located on all the rigs. This will be used for rig and inventory checks. 5) Open House – Held on Halloween night, where fire prevention swag was handed out to the children that was provided by the OSFM Grant. We also had a station set up for children to practice their knowledge of basic first aid skills. 6) Burn House – A Scio resident was generous in donating a house for us to use as a Burn To Learn as a training facility. This resident is in no hurry to have it burned all at once, we can use different drill nights to practice our skill sets. 7.) Address signs – We are currently still handing out address signs and these are free to the public. These address signs are part of the OSFM Grant, the first sign is free, and any additional signs are \$20 each. 8.) Retention and Recruitment Grant – This is grant that is shared with the Jefferson Fire Department. We have submitted our receipts to FEMA and are awaiting reimbursement from them. This last reimbursement we received was for \$68,303.22 and \$6,529 is the actual amount that was sent to Jefferson.

*Administrative Assistant* – Not present.

*Volunteer Association* –

*Chief White spoke on behalf on the SCBA Association – Christmas basket applications will go out the public on November 1<sup>st</sup> and the deadline is November 25<sup>th</sup>. Feed the Boot is a fund raiser December 9am-12pm and the Santa Night will be at 7pm St. 92 Crabtree Station. On December 17<sup>th</sup> 11am-3pm Christmas Gifts and Food Baskets will be distributed at Station 91. The Chief acknowledged the generous donation from citizen Laurie Davis. Laurie handmade crocheted fifty-six sets of potholders for the Christmas gift basket program.*

**OLD BUSINESS:**

*Chief White* – Generator Update: Generator at Station 91 has been repaired. Engine had a cracked block and Hughes and installed the generator and Peterson CAT came out to test the transfer switch. This is completed and the bill is approximately \$17,500. Station 92 Roof – Contractor came out to fix the ridge on the leaky roof. The contractor recommended that the front half of the station needs a new roof, they are unsure if it will make it through the winter. We are expecting two quotes, one for the comp roof on the front and the other to lay metal on the front. Final bill for Engine 91 – Transmission computer lost connection and the final bill is \$13,800.



## **NEW BUSINESS:**

Accuity Audit Findings – the first two findings are recurring due to lack of staffing. The third finding is due to previous administration entering into duplicate deposits. This will not be an issue going forward.

Discuss Moving Public Comments Period to the End of the Meeting – On the Agenda, Director Clouse would like to move “Public Comments” to appear after “New Business.”

**Clouse moved to move the Public Comments on the Agenda to appear after New Business. Traeger seconded the motion. Motion carried. (Yes –Dykast, Ellis, Brown, Traeger, Clouse)**

Chief White will update the Board Policy “4.2 Board Meeting Agenda” to reflect the new changes to the agenda line up.

Chief White is asking the board to give Administrator permissions to the QuickBooks/Intuit account. Currently listed on the account are district employees of previous administration that need to be removed. He is asking to add himself and Administrative Assistant Amy Watson as the only Administrators on the account. This is to be able to remove the previous employees who are listed to the account.

**Clouse moved to add Chief Kyle White and Administrative Assistant Amy Watson as Administrators to the QuickBooks/Intuit account. Traeger seconded the motion. Motion carried. (Yes –Dykast, Ellis, Brown, Traeger, Clouse).**

Locked Door Policy – Chief White states that a citizen of Scio entered the station and was aggressive in nature in questioning the Administrative Assistant Amy Watson relentlessly. The Chief intervened in the questioning of the citizen and asked that all questions be directed to him. According to the Chief, she did not talk to the Chief but instead continued to focus all her questions on Amy Watson in an aggressive manner by loudly shouting and sternly asking questions. The Chief dismissed Amy and as she proceeded down the hall, the citizen loudly stated that she was being videoed and on camera. According to the Chief, Amy is visibly upset by the incident and is not currently sitting here today. After the Chief spoke with the citizen, he then contacted our attorney who advised him that the public is entitled to information, but it must be done in a respectful way. The attorney drafted a letter in which the Chief put on letterhead and signed. The letter stated that “in the future you need to make an appointment with the Fire Chief and you are not to stop by the station without making an appointment first. If you do stop by the fire station without an appointment, you will be escorted off the premises by the Linn County Sheriff’s office.”

Chief White states that he contacted the Linn County undersheriff whose advice to the district is to lock the doors. Chief White was leaving for the OFDDA Conference for a few days and Amy stated she does not feel safe working here alone. Chief advised her to keep the doors locked while she is in the station alone. Chief White states that he is concerned about the aggressive nature of the citizen and the safety of the district employees. Chief states that in the 5 months he has been here the district has received approximately fifty Information Requests from the same family. On November 1<sup>st</sup> Amy was seeking assistance from the Chaplain and when the Chief talked to her afterwards, she was crying. Chief states that he is unsure what the result of this situation is or what the future will look like. The current situation that the district and its employees is not sustainable, and it is not something that we can continue to do. Volunteerism is down due to the drama that surrounds the district. This is putting the Chief in a bad position because of the drama and it needs to stop. He states that we need to find a way to come together as a community and get passed this. That way we get this district moving forward and focus on the future. For right now for the safety of Amy and her mental well-being the doors will remain locked. Director Ellis asked if cameras inside the station would be beneficial. Chief White said he needs to consult the attorney first. Director Clouse stated she talked to Amy about being distressed from both sides of the situation. She told Amy that the Fire Board was here for her to consult with her regarding any issues with the district. She asked Amy to reach to the Board for any issues that maybe of a stressful nature. She said she is here to support Amy and the Fire Chief. Director Ellis stated that Director Clouse overstated her position as a Board Member, as one Board member is only a citizen. The Board Members are here for policies and procedures and not drama. President Dykast stated that Board Members cannot talk to community members, only as a private citizen. Director Traeger would like an independent investigation and get the facts on this situation that happened. Chief White questioned what type of facts would change the story and



how this is making Amy feel about the way she was treated. Amy stated that she is concerned for her safety and Chief is unsure of what type of independent investigation would change that statement or feeling that she has. President Dykast stated the district's attorney and SDAO attorney had a conference call. The attorneys stated that if an employee stresses that they feel they are in a hostile work environment, it is not for others to decide that it is not. The district is responsible legally if they do not respond. In the future that can work on a reconciliation. Per President Dykast he spoke to the female and she does not wish Amy any harm. In Amy's current state she is a long way away from reconciliation and in the future would require baby steps. At the moment the Board of Directors does not have a choice but to offer her some sort of protection and counseling. Chief White will consult SDAO to see what is available. Director Clouse reintroduced the cameras inside the station to protect the volunteers, per Chief White HIPPA might be a concern. Chief White is asking for all of us to find peace and civility and figure out a way to all get along, and President Dykast and Director Clouse agreed.

Staff Cell Phones – currently the Chief and Administrative Assistant are given an \$80 stipend monthly for cell phones. The Chief is asking the Board to agree to issued District cell phones instead. Verizon will be giving us iPhone 13 cell phones for free and the monthly cost is \$40 per month, per line. This will be a savings of \$40 per month, per phone. His current contract states the \$80 stipend which would also need to be amended.

**Brown moved to have Chief Kyle White and Amy Watson district issued cell phones. Clouse seconded the motion. Motion carried. (Yes –Dykast, Ellis, Brown, Traeger, Clouse).**

**Board meeting moved into executive session at 8:03 pm.**

**Board meeting resumed at 9:27 pm.**

President Dykast stated the Board has decided to schedule an additional Special Executive Session to further discuss the Chief's evaluation. They decided that the evaluation form does need to be changed.

**AGENDA SUGGESTIONS:**

Director Clouse wants an update on all pending investigations to always be on the agenda items.


**GOOD OF THE ORDER & BOARD COMMENTS:** Director Ellis reminded the Board that they are there for policies and procedures only. If there is an issue with someone on the Fire Department to go to the Chief. Director Clouse disagreed with some of the Board members that they should not go to the Chief but go to the Board instead.

**NEXT MEETING:** Board Meeting on January 16th, 7 p.m. Station 91 – 38975 SW 6<sup>th</sup> Avenue, Scio OR

**ADJOURNMENT: Brown moved, and Traeger seconded to adjourn the meeting. Motion carried unanimously.** Meeting adjourned at 9:32p.m.

Submitted by:

  
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Amy Watson, Administrative Assistant

  
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Katrina Clouse, Secretary/Treasurer