

Bigfork Fire District Trustee Meeting

February 26th, 2019

Trustees: Anderson, Elwell, Sliter, Price, Borges (by phone)

Guests: Chief-Mark Thiry, Jeremy Patton, Peach and Gary Graeff, Tom Pauley

Opened at 17:31

1. **General Public Comment:** None
2. **Review/Approval of meeting minutes January 29th, 2019:** A motion was made to approve January 29th, 2019 meeting minutes. Elwell (1st), Price (2nd) all in favor, none opposed.
3. **Review/Approval of Purchase Orders:** None to approve
4. **Review Reconciliation of Financial Statements and Bills Paid:** No comment. A motion was made to approve Reconciliation of Financial Statements and Bills Paid. Price (1st), Elwell (2nd) all in favor, none opposed.
5. **Fire Chief Report:** See attached.
6. **Apparatus Committee Report:** Thiry informed the Board that the title and plates were transferred to the recently acquired ladder truck. The ladder truck will be getting new decals on Thursday and the radio installed next Tuesday.
7. **Old Business**
 - A. **Department Credit Card Update:** The current credit card now offers a cash back option so a request to raise the credit limit was submitted and approved. The new credit limit is \$10,000 for each card. Currently Thiry and Patton are the only personnel with credit cards.
 - B. **Department Network/Server Update:** Patton advised the Board that all the hardware has been received and Glacier IT is preparing the equipment for installation. The installation will hopefully begin within the next week.
 - C. **Volunteer/Paid Status Discussion:** Tom Pauley stated that he had spoke with his previous 2 departments and both no longer had any volunteers. Everyone was now paid. He stated that in speaking with other fire department employees from other areas of the country, that most paid departments are transitioning their volunteers over to paid employees for numerous

reasons and that fire departments are either a paid department or volunteer department but not usually both. The Board discussed the advantages and disadvantages of being paid versus volunteer. The Board decided not to take action and to leave the volunteer position as it is.

8. New Business

- A. **Glacier Bank ACH Agreement/Security Review:** Anderson had signed off on review prior to the meeting. For informational purposes only and to be entered into the records.
- B. **Retirement Plan:** Thiry advised the Board that we have no contact for our current plan and there is no contact in the state of Montana, so a request is being made to the Board to change the current retirement plan. Patton stated that he had spoken with the plan's previous administrator and a third party was being contacted to handle this situation. Anderson suggested contacting Glacier Bank for advice. Sliter suggested checking into a 401K SIMPLE.
- C. **Policy 220.01 & Appendix 400-I:** Chief Thiry presented the policy and appendix and explained this will set the base wages for the Department. This will be the first of three readings.
- D. **Transition to 3 Part-Time EMT with Endorsements Permanent-In House:** Thiry explained the need for the positions. The Board asked if there was anything negative with this proposal. Thiry stated that some of the personnel who only work one shift per month or less may not receive any shifts. Thiry also stated that there would be an interview process for the new positions that would be conducted by third party interviewers. The Board agreed that the Department would greatly benefit from this proposal. A motion was made to approve hiring 3 permanent part time EMT's with endorsements. Price (1st), Elwell (2nd) all in favor, none opposed.
- E. **Discussion on Vacation Payout Mechanism for Part-Time Personnel:** Thiry explained that there is currently no mechanism for a part time employee to use vacation pay. It continually accrues with the current policy. The Board would like Thiry to rewrite the policy and present it at the next Board meeting.
- F. **Discussion on Property/Building (Mick):** Borges informed the Board that he was approached by Peach and Gary Graeff about securing land for a future building for Bigfork Fire. He then turned the comments over to Peach and Gary. They said that they have been in contact with a county commissioner concerning this topic. They suggested that the Board try to secure land soon before it is taken by development. They mentioned that at the BLUAC meeting,


Thiry did a great job of presenting the need for land. The Board agreed that they should start looking for land soon.

9. **General Public Comment:** None

10. **Motion to Adjourn:** Price (1st), Elwell (2nd) all in favor, none opposed.

Meeting adjourned at 18:51

Minutes Approved:  _____, Chairman -Zack Anderson

 _____, Recorder- Jeremy Patton