



## Grand Lake Fire Protection District Board Meeting Minutes from June 10th, 2020

### 201 W Portal Road, Public Viewing by Video Conference

**Call meeting to order:** Meeting called to order at 1831 hours.

**Members present:** David Craig, Mindy Nelson, Peter Trezoglou, Dick Romshek, Hecky Heckendorf.

**Others present:** Chief Ratzmann, Krystal Steward, Melissa Ratzmann, Seth St. Germain, Dan Mayer, Cindy Southway, Hayden Southway, John Murray, Brian Faith, Joe Mayers, Chief Good, Ray Jennings

**Members Absent:** None

#### Board Chairman's Opening Remarks:

- The meeting began with introductions of board members and those attending in person and via phone or computer log in.
- Chairman Craig relayed that he had a pleasant phone conversation with community member, Steph Wall. She was interested in the business of the board and wanted to express concerns about financial accountability. It was an overall positive conversation.
- In summary of events leading up to yesterday's planned meeting with the Board of County Commissioners; Grand Lake Fire has completed all that the County has asked for regarding the ambulance license proposal. Grand Lake Fire Board asked to be on the agenda for Tuesday's BOCC meeting. Just prior to the meeting a power point was released as part of the board packet that challenged Grand Lake Fire's position. To fairly represent the district, the Board felt it was appropriate to cancel the presentation to review the power point. After the BOCC meeting, Mr. Craig met with EMS Chief Good in a spirit of collaboration and both articulated partnering to get to our goals together. "We need to make it easy for County Commissioners to approve our license." Craig said, the best way to achieve this goal is to have Chief Ratzmann and Chief Good able to stand up together in front of the BOCC and show support for the collective operating plan.
- Chief Good, who was in attendance, was given a moment to speak and clarified that he is here to answer any questions, not to debate. GCEMS is committed to partnering with all the stakeholders in the county for the best interest of the county as a whole.
- Craig presents that to keep the meeting timely, the Board would go through the power point to make sure they understand it and then potentially identify a subcommittee to work through future proposals.

#### Changes to the Agenda:

- None

#### Public Input:

- No Public Comment at this time but as an online format may be difficult for some, the board will continue to take public comment throughout the meeting.

### **Approve minutes from previous months' meeting:**

- The minutes from the May 13th, 2020 were reviewed. A motion was made by Dick Romshek to accept minutes as presented. Hecky Heckendorf seconded the motion, approved by all at 1843.

### **Review/approve bills and financial statements:**

- Mr. Craig asked to have the *percent of budget line* in the Profit and Loss statement changed to show year-to-date and month-to-date variance instead and Mr. Heckendorf concurred. Chief Ratzmann asked Mr. Heckendorf for assistance in the correct formula at the next Treasurer's mid-month financial review.
- Additionally noted: Local mitigation has \$10,000 in unrealized Accounts Receivable. Wildland team has been confirmed as on the national availability board and are prepared to be deployed nationwide.
- April financials were presented, and a motion was made by Mindy Nelson to accept financials as presented. Peter Trezolgou seconded the motion, approved by all at **1852**.

### **Chief's Reports:**

- Chief Ratzmann reports that Year-to-Date calls are up 27%
- To make more bedroom space and give the crews more privacy, temporary walls are being put up creating 4 more bedrooms for the on-duty crew.
- MPH Grand Lake Clinic has shortened hours and Mr. Hochhalter is currently working on GLFPD shifts instead of at the clinic and is on our payroll and not theirs. This a temporary arrangement due to COVID-19 changes and the MOU with Middle Park Health is still expected to be upheld.

### **Fire Marshal Report and Training Report:**

- Assistant Chief St. Germain gave an update on the busy training schedule over the last month. COVID-19 is making it difficult for members to find available spots to take the State's written exams for Firefighter 1, HazMat, and Fire Instructor. Both Chief Ratzmann and St. Germain expressed pride in the team who continues to meet the higher and higher expectations asked of them.
- Dan Mayer expanded on his recent training. Gave an update on the positive direction with the Town and the broad scope of work and responsibility for Short-Term-Rentals fire and occupancy safety inspections.

### **Old Business:**

- The board agrees to renew the Continuation of Local Emergency Disaster Declaration.
- Discussion moved to the EMS Transport License. Mr. Craig highlights that this discussion is in the spirit of fact finding. Staff then begins with a breakdown of the estimated annual budget of EMS costs for Grand Lake Fire based on historical data, financial projections by Marchetti and Weaver LLC, and the current budget. To summarize, the cost for Grand Lake Fire per ambulance annually is approximately \$207,000 to provide ALS care and emergency transport to Middle Park Health. This is with current staffing and apparatus levels and no new ambulance purchases. Alternately, Grand County EMS's annual budget and their power point presentation indicate that it costs GCEMS approximately \$525,000 annually per ambulance. Please note, Grand Lake Fire District's taxpayers currently pay 2 mills, or \$306,247.78 annually to GCEMS for EMS and transport services.
- The next item in the GLFPD - GCEMS discussion was a comparison of the approved 2020 GLFPD Annual Budget and the budget used for the financial projections by Marchetti and Weaver. The comparison confirmed that budget in Marchetti and Weaver's projections is based on our actual budget. The Board and staff discussed budgeted income in the Grand Lake Fire EMS budget, balancing interfacility transport and district response, and billings for levels of care. Highlights from that conversation include the following. One cannot discount the 911 and non-emergency transport revenue that we have not received as being unconfirmed revenue because Grand Lake has not yet been given the chance to receive this revenue by being granted a license. Chief Ratzmann argued that Grand Lake Fire's 3 ambulances that can hold up to 6

patients and are more than sufficient to run multiple transfers a day while still maintaining in-district service. In a district of 110 square miles, each ambulance has a coverage area of only 37 square miles, while GCEMS's 9 ambulances need to each cover 208 square miles. Having more ambulances available in the county is a benefit to all. Grand Lake Fire will never choose revenue from an interfacility transfer over providing emergency service to our constituents.

- Chief Good was given the opportunity to explain his Power Point. Most of the conversation focused on financial information including what billing write offs and discounts they provide and their other partnership agreements. He discussed the formula used to establish their collection rate at 70% . Chief Good said the results would need to be explained further by his accountant to the Board, since the figures presented seemed to indicate less than 50% successful collection. Ultimately, his primary concern was the potential fracturing of a county wide EMS system and competition between GLFPD and GCEMS for Middle Park Health interfacility transports.
- Craig asks for Good and Ratzmann to both explain how they envision a collaborative system working. Mindy Nelson has been directed to work on the collaborative effort with a subcommittee including Hecky Heckendorf. The Board discussed a shift in focus onto emergency transports in district and only non-emergency transports that originate at MPH Grand Lake Clinic versus also including transports originating out of district. Chairman Craig and Chief Ratzmann both underscore that the taxpayers have taken the position that they understand that GCEMS has to post ambulances where they are most likely to be used, but the community has expressed a desire for a higher level of care and service than what GCEMS is currently providing. This is the need that Grand Lake Fire is tasked with filling.
- Community member, Cindy Southway asks about an update Chief gave to the Board about expanding borders and becoming "Grand Lake Fire Rescue". Chief explained that this would be a 10 year plus goal and indicated the department name would not change its official business name from Grand Lake Fire Protection District. Craig reminds that a border change would require board action and should be presented to the board prior to making public comment. Chief Ratzmann concurred.
- Growth Analysis – Strategic Needs Assessment presented by Assistant Chief St. Germain  
Assistant Chief St. Germain begins by noting that it is an ever-growing document and gave information on the nationwide industry data collection and study groups specifically NFPA and USFA and their Fire and Emergency Service Needs Assessment. The long-term needs assessment will include personnel and capabilities, facilities, personal protective equipment, community risk reduction, communication and advanced technology. The presented portion of the need's assessment is focused on personnel and their capabilities and facilities. Per NFPA and USFA, the optimal number of full-time qualified staff for our type of department is 8 per shift. This increase requires more living quarters. Their training needs are evolving as industry standards evolve, and members need a training facility that matches this need. Additional concerns include traffic hazards at this location and additional road use and higher usage of the building putting a strain on things like the boiler. Board members who were present as volunteers when this building was built, realize this is the exact same conversation as 20 years ago when they outgrew their past building and spoke in favor of continuing this process. Board is to look more closely at the provided document and is to be thinking of how to solve the needs identified through all other potential resources and how to communicate effectively with the community.

## **New Business:**

- Staff and Board reviewed the June newsletter and plans for distribution and future issues of the newsletter. Craig is looking for a designated sections templated format.
- John Murray was given a moment to express an opinion on a perception developing in the community that Grand Lake Fire is outgrowing needs of the community. He states this is based on doubling of budgeted expenditures. He appreciated the needs assessment presentation. Are we growing the department faster than what the community needs? Chairman Craig asks where Mr. Murray is seeing this perception? To which Mr. Murray responds that he talks with lots of different people with his different roles in the community and references the historical data regarding number of volunteers vs paid staff, size of budget etc. Chairman Craig suggests that perhaps Grand Lake Fire can address the growth to the community in the forthcoming newsletter or consider creating a survey to obtain further community feedback. He underscores that the

Board never wants to lose sight of the fact that we work for the taxpayers and need to be tuned to their perceptions, education, financial concerns and property and life safety needs.



**Executive Session:**

- None

**NEW Business after Executive Session:**

- None

**Adjournment:**

- Mindy Nelson made the motion to adjourn the board meeting and Peter Trezoglou seconded. Approved by all. General meeting adjourned at **2055**.

**The next Board of Directors regular meeting will be held on Wednesday July 8th, 2020.**

**Future Board meeting dates for 2020:**

July 8<sup>th</sup>

August 12<sup>th</sup>

September 9<sup>th</sup> (Pension Board Meeting)

October 14<sup>th</sup> (Budget Workshop)

November 11<sup>th</sup> (Budget Presentation)

December 9<sup>th</sup> (Budget Ratification)