

Mosier Fire District Budget Meeting

By Zoom

Tuesday, April 27, 2021 at 6:00pm

MINUTES

In attendance: Phil Evans (Board president), Todd Reeves, Barb Ayers, Joanne Rubin, Steve Fisher, Kris McNall, Wade Root, Joe Sacamano
Staff: Budget Officer Chief Michial Renault
Public: none

Call to Order 18:06 by Evans

Comments from the public: none

Budget Meeting:

Phil opened the meeting and turned it over to Chief Renault.

Budget Message:

Upon request, Chief Renault explained the changes from last year's budget as outlined in the budget message. Some costs are higher, in particular fuel. Some service costs are lower. Our communications costs will be lower because MFD was able to jump onto a Wasco County grant for pagers and purchase 5 pager with a 10% cost share, thus costing the district \$40 each. Unemployment insurance will be substantially higher due to the pandemic.

Regarding the right sizing of equipment, Chief Renault explained that he hopes to allocate \$10,000 from one of the UP funds to further fix deficiencies in smaller items such as fittings, adapters, and PPE. Last year's budget also included money for rightsizing that included purchasing new helmets, nozzles, and flashlights. He has \$5,000 budgeted for single items that we discover we need. In addition to the turnouts for new members that the SAFER grant should cover, Chief Renault stated that he plans to purchase properly fitted turnouts for long time member Firefighter Goter.

He stated that MFD does not know whether we will receive the OSFM or RFA-VFA grants.

The Committee made the following suggestions:

- Put the new totals for each of the line item changes in the message along with the changed amount.
- Barb requested that Chief Renault include information in the budget message about the big picture of MFD's finances, including the total dollar amounts of all budgets, the total dollar amount of various capital funds, and the total dollar amount of our operational budget. Although this information is available in the various forms, she wanted it to be more accessible to people reading the budget message.

Chief Renault then moved on to the budget forms.

LB30 and LB20:

- Todd Reeves pointed out that the LB30 has the budgeted vs actual numbers in the historical data column for 2019-20. Chief Renault said he would put the actual numbers in that column for next time.
- The LB20 was missing from the original packet. It was shown during the meeting and will be posted to the website. The group noted that the cash on hand has increased to \$200,000 from less than \$44,000 last year. There were many questions about the source of the additional cash. Chief Renault will work to get more information from the bookkeeper about how our cash on hand on line 1 of the LB20 has increased so much. Phil suggested that we may be able to understand more by looking at the balance sheets from this past year.

- Kris noted that last year we balanced the resources from the LB20 with the expenditures in the LB30 by using the Unappropriated Ending Fund Balance. The committee wanted a reminder of the definition of this item so Kris said that she would look up the definition of this line item for the group for the next meeting, and that this was where we would enter the amount to balance the LB20 and LB30.

Chief Renault pointed out that the LB30 allocated approximately \$5,000 more than last year's budget. The group pointed out that the total amount allocated is actually around \$10,000 more than the expected revenue. Chief Renault stated that we have never gone over budget and always spend less in some category so he is confident that we will not overspend. In addition, he pointed out that we usually receive more in back taxes than we expect. The committee noted that this discrepancy is much better than in years prior to 2020-1, but stated that MFD should not allow the budget to keep creeping upwards. Given that this year's budget is quite similar to last year's budget the group was fine with the actual budgeted amounts.

Grant Fund:

Chief Renault explained that this fund has included \$360,000 for a tender grant that we did not receive as well as the SAFER grant.

- The Committee said this was confusing and asked whether we could remove that \$360,000 from this form, or perhaps add a note explaining it.

The remainder of this form is for line items concerning the FEMA SAFER Grant. Chief Renault explained that the budgeted amounts for next year are currently smaller because the grant ends in November. If we are able to get an extension on the grant we can file a Supplemental to the budget.

- The committee asked whether the actuals in the prior years' columns should be zero, as no money was spent. The committee recognized that in prior years we had put the budgeted but unspent amounts in those columns, but believes that to be a mistake, and asked Chief Renault to consider changing those amounts to zero.

UP Dry Hydrant Fund:

Chief Renault explained that he had budgeted \$30,000 from this fund in case other items were needed to facilitate pumping, or a pump needed replacement. However, he believes that the new pumping system that was purchased should be ready to use.

- The committee noted that the proposed budget has a clerical error in that the the Reserved for Future Expenditure line should be \$150,000. There was discussion about how to use this remaining money from this fund, with the Joint Use Facility being a likely option.

UP Equipment/Derailment Reimbursement Fund:

Chief Renault stated that the \$10,000 allocated was for rightsizing equipment as described previously. Barb stated that this fund was the sort of money that was intended to be used as it was for equipment used during the derailment, and suggested that we prioritize using money out of this fund rather than spreading it out to multiple funds.

UP Joint Use Facility Fund

- The form for this fund was not updated for this budget year. It needs to have the proper headers and historical data.
- Any interest we received needs to be put into the proper columns.

Giswold Bequest Fund:

Chief Renault allocated \$2000 to give to volunteers as incentives.

Capital Reserve Fund

There was some discussion regarding this fund and our total available funds. MFD has approximately \$500,000 in various capital reserves and \$750,000 available for the Joint Use Facility.

- These numbers were not obvious to the budget committee. There was discussion about adding some general information to the budget message.

This year, interest rates have been very poor for our funds. The district is paying more on interest for the squad than we are making. Todd expressed concern that we have not increased our capital reserves other than through the derailment monies, that are expected to be a one time event. He stated that we will have additional costs when the Joint Use Facility is built and that MFD should work to get grants so that we can use the UP money for the JUF.

Chief Renault stated that he thinks that MFD couldn't be in a better spot with apparatus. There are one or two things he'd like to change, but that might not happen right away. His first priority would be to replace Brush 13 so that we can get rid of the pickup truck style brush rigs and have proper brush apparatus. Our oldest vehicle is a 1991 that only has 11,000 miles on it.

Next Meeting:

The group decided to hold the next meeting at 6pm May 18. Chief Renault committed to publish the next budget by May 10.

Public Comment:

Phil asked for public comment and there was none.

Adjournment. 20:43

Mosier Fire Board Meetings are accessible to persons with disabilities.