

Mosier Fire District Board Meeting

Thursday, April 14th, 2022 at 6:00pm
Held as a Zoom meeting

Minutes

Attendance

- **Board members:** Phil Evans, Todd Reeves, Steve Fisher, Kris McNall, Joanne Rubin
- **Staff:** Chief Mike Renault, Maggie Goter
- **Others:** Witt Anderson, Barb Ayers, Carol Goter

Call to order at 1802

Agenda additions or corrections: The MOU review was split in two with most board discussion at the end of the meeting.

Comments from the public: None

Consent agenda

- Renault answered questions on financials: Brindlee Mountain Fire Apparatus is broker fees for selling the squad. Cascade Fire and Sea Western invoices are mostly billable to SAFER. Special Districts invoice is insurance, some of which can be billed to SAFER.
- All SAFER expenses have to be logged to grant fund.
- Dues and subscriptions: \$4,600 over budget. Renault says biggest items are fire codes and NFPA standards.
- UP Equipment purchases: that fund is actually empty. We can't purchase from it and it will be zero'd out soon.
- **Motion:** Reeves moves to accept, Fisher seconds. All in favor. None opposed. Motion carries.

Business:

1. Update on Business Oregon loan application - Evans & McNall

McNall: Loan application is submitted as of 3/31 to lock in best interest rates. 2.16% for 30 years.

It's structured as a line of credit which we can draw up to \$800,000. The application is contingent on the budget committee raising the tax rate to \$2.00 per thousand.

There are more undeveloped lots in the city than we thought. That means we can rely on greater-than-standard growth for a handful of years, which means we should be able to afford this loan as well as O&M and our apparatus plan.

We don't start repayment until the year after we last draw from it. We have 3 years to start drawing down. Current plan is to not draw down until closer to the end of construction. We'll have to raise the tax rate this year to get the loan, though. We may not hear back from Business Oregon for quite some time.

2. JUF operations & maintenance MOU review - Reeves & Anderson

Witt Anderson spoke about the draft agreement. The draft had the city owning the property and all buildings and having final say in many matters - that didn't make sense to him, so he changed that language. We're a partnership.

Also added language on solar panels - that's joint equipment. Building insurance also has to be part of this.

We're at 60% design. Next phase is construction documents. After Construction Documents we'll be 95% through design. After that we can get a guaranteed maximum price.

The Operations & Maintenance MOU was a requirement for the loan application. We need to have an agreement before we start construction, so we have some time.

Prices are up; other fire stations are over \$500/sqft. We'll have an update on price after next meeting May 3rd.

McNall: Last meeting there were comments about the Fire District possibly approaching the state for funds. What should the fire board be doing? Wants to help but doesn't want to freelance. There were comments in a prior meeting about fire board members not doing enough.

Discussion ensued about how to coordinate on this.

3. Invoice policy - McNall

McNall requests a policy change: she wants the board to get pictures or scans of all invoices with funds & categories written on them. This would save time at the beginning of board meetings, would solve the problem of losing invoices, and allow the board to provide better financial oversight. She can set it up using the Notes app so it's all automatic. Our audit found some issues, including invoices being coded to the wrong fund.

Discussion ensued about the process of getting invoices to the bookkeeper and the least onerous potential change to the Chief's current process.

The board agrees this doesn't require an official motion or vote. The board directs the Chief to provide a monthly copy of all bills with coding provided by the Chief. The copy should be electronic but the specific manner in which this is accomplished will be left up to the Chief.

Board would also like to see bank statements monthly.

Renault will work with the bookkeeper on the best way to make this happen.

4. SAFER update - Goter

Stipends will be paid by the bookkeeper soon, although some paperwork still needs to be tracked down from volunteers.

Website is almost ready to go live.

We have several months of expenses to submit to FEMA.

Still waiting on some turnouts but we have most of the invoices we need to submit.

Chief is ordering duty uniforms. We've got money for shirt, pants, hat, boots.

Chief Renault says we have one prospective volunteer who will be joining soon.

We just finished the bid process to hire a professional photographer and he will work on a number of photography and videography projects for the district.

We need to have paid for all items by May 24th but can submit reimbursements to FEMA through August. Goter commits to finishing paperwork even after salaried portion of grant ends.

5. Stipend policy - Goter

See draft policy. The board requests the draft policy be amended so that it is effective at the start of the grant in Nov 2017 and sunsets before the end of the grant on May 24th.

We have about \$116K budgeted for stipends and will probably spend close to \$80K.

Motion: Reeves moves to accept the policy with time limitations described above. Rubin seconds. All in favor. None opposed. Motion carries.

6. Conflict of Interest policy - Goter

See draft policy.

Goter: We need a Conflict of Interest policy to comply with SAFER requirements around hiring a vendor. The draft policy is mostly copied verbatim from ORS. As far as we know, we don't have a Conflict of Interest policy in the Lexapol policies we've purchased. Also can't find one in Board documents on shared Google Drive.

Motion: McNall moves to approve the Conflict of Interest policy as presented. Rubin seconds. All in favor. None opposed. Motion carries.

Board agrees that we need to look into policies we may already have on Lexapol and board manual.

7. MOU Review: continued discussion.

Reeves solicited written input from board members on draft MOU.

McNall: three themes we're discussing are ownership, control, & costs. City and fire district have different needs. Fire does not want to be in the business of running a community center but the City does. 50/50 might not make sense - maybe the city pays a higher portion of costs for the community center part of the building but then in return gets more of the revenue from running that business.

We can't just edit the MOU document - it's a legal document, and also editing a shared doc together runs afoul of public meeting law.

All agree we need to get rid of the termination clause.

The board discussed various ways to split control and cost, and the degree to which the Fire District may want to give up control, revenue, or priority in shared spaces in order to save money. McNall is willing to give control and revenue to City to lower our costs. Rubin & Evans agree.

If we draw the full \$800,000 loan we will owe \$36-37K per year on that, in addition to our costs for operations & maintenance.

There has been a consistent sense that the City has added criteria & costs without input from the fire board. Rubin: it's felt like we've been bullied into accepting more than we want. Lots of hard feelings between the city and fire department. It would be good to do more joint meetings with Fire Board and City representatives to work this out.

Current spending on soft costs has been \$1.1 million. We expect the total cost estimate to increase at the next meeting.

Rubin: as a ballpark construction costs are often 30% over final estimate.

Board discussed some other possible ways to cut costs.

8. Chief's report – Chief Renault

See written report. There will be a budget meeting next week.

9. Volunteer report: No volunteer report this month.

10. Committee reports

a. Budget Committee - Renault

The Committee is meeting next week.

11. Correspondence: none

Comments from the public: None

Adjourned at 2055

Next month's board meeting will be on May 12th.