

Plattsmouth Rural Fire Protection District  
Board of Directors Monthly Meeting  
April 2, 2014

**Calling the meeting to order – Acknowledgement of Open Meetings Law**

President Holdridge called the meeting to order at 7:30 pm. President Holdridge acknowledged the Open Meetings Poster located on the wall of the District meeting room/office and available for review. Notice of the meeting was advertised in the Cass Gram, which is an approved publication of the Rural Fire Board and it was posted at the Post Office and on the front door of the rural fire station along with a copy of the agenda.

Board members present were John Holdridge, Shane Parshall, Lynn Vinduska, and Ken Winters with Doug Stander absent.

**Public Forum – Reception of Delegates**

No members of the public addressed the Board.

**Meeting Minutes**

Minutes of the March 12, 2014 meeting were read by Mr. Winters, Recording Secretary: Motion by Mr. Parshall and second by Mr. Vinduska to approve the minutes as read.

5 Ayes 0 Nays: Motion Carried.

**Treasurer's Report**

The following bills were presented for review and approval: Black Hills Energy - \$405.22; CassGram - \$18.00; Sharp's Cleaning - \$30.00. Total Disbursements for April 2014: \$453.55. (City of Plattsmouth: No new invoices.)

Bank Balances:	PSB – Deposit: \$1,891.70	Balance: \$2,826.00
	CCB – Deposit: \$ 777.61	Balance: \$6,149.45

Mr. Vinduska reported that the paperwork was completed to license the Forestry Tanker. He has the paperwork needed in order to obtain the funds to complete the conversion of the Forestry Tanker for fire department use.

Motion by Mr. Vinduska and second by Mr. Winters to pay all bills and accept the Treasurer's Report.

4 Ayes 0 Nays 1 Not Present: Motion carried.

**Old Business**

**Inter-local Agreement Negotiation Committee Report:**

The City has submitted a single letter in answer to the Board's three letters from August 18, 2012 letters from the District Board. However, the response from the City contains inaccurate information and has been submitted to the District's Legal counsel for review. In the meantime, negotiations continue to be suspended.

**Inter-local Agreement Budget Committee Report:**

The City has submitted a single letter in answer to the Board's three letters from August 18, 2012 letters from the District Board. However, the response from the City contains inaccurate information and has been submitted to the District's Legal counsel for review. In the meantime, negotiations continue to be suspended.

**Worker's Compensation Insurance Coverage for RFD only firefighter:**

The City has submitted a single letter in answer to the Board's three letters from August 18, 2012 letters from the District Board. However, the response from the City contains inaccurate information and has been submitted to the District's Legal counsel for review. In the meantime, negotiations continue to be suspended.

### **Property/Liability/Worker's Compensation/Vehicle Insurance Coverage Committee:**

The committee continues to work with insurance providers in an effort to obtain cost information for insurance coverage. The committee will have a proposal to submit to the Board as a part of the budget process for the next budget year. This will be a discussion topic with the County Treasurer during the RFD Board's Finance Committee for next year's budget development.

### **Plattsmouth Rural Fire District Fire Department Constitution, By-Laws and Standard Operating Guidelines:**

No change from last month. The Constitution and By-Laws have been provided to the President of the Fire Department and are still under review. There continues to be a discussion by the Fire Department officers regarding lowering the age requirements for membership as a means to recruit new members and take advantage of funding sources that will pay for secondary education for a fire science degree if the student maintains membership at a volunteer fire department for two years (STRIVE Program). This program is available through the Nebraska State Volunteer Firefighter's Association. The department officers are looking into the parameters for lowering the age for membership in the department and will be deciding on what will be presented to the membership for a vote. Once this review and vote is taken, the officers will report back to the By-Laws and Constitution Committee and the District.

### **Website Development Committee**

Mr. Winters, Mr. Morehouse, and others continue to work on this project. Mr. Morehouse is developing a list of hardware needs for the desktop computer we will use to have access to the web for updates and members that are working on the project to have access to the site.

### **Forestry Tanker Conversion Committee**

The vendor, Rich Osterloh, was present to give a quick update on the progress of the truck. Due to fire season starting early and having a number of calls, the truck is progressing a little behind schedule, but not much. The tank is off the truck chassis and it is ready to go to sandblasting.

There was also discussion on selling the 1979 Chevrolet 1250 gallon tanker currently listed as Tanker 840. The value of the truck may not be as much as we had hoped. Instead of \$10,000 to \$12,000, it may be half that. The discussion centered on that if this is the case, the fire department may be better served by keeping the truck, making some repairs to it, and continuing its service to the District. The fire chief prefers we keep 840 due to the experiences we have had this spring due to the severe grass fires the department has experienced.

### **EMS Committee**

Mr. Winters and Mr. Parshall are in the process of finalizing options for the District to pursue for EMS operations in the District.

### **New Business**

#### **Fire Chief's Report:**

**832:** 832 is working well with no issues. It is currently being used as the first out truck on both City and Rural fire calls.

**Roster:** No change in the roster except for the promotion of one probationary firefighter to full firefighter status and one new application to the department that has been turned over to the Investigation Committee, so no action is needed.

**Calls:** 18 total calls, 11 District and 7 City. 7 of those 11 rural calls were grass fires and included mutual aid calls. All calls included using the weed trucks on all calls. March 9<sup>th</sup> was the beginning of the burn ban due to dry conditions.

**Dual Response:** Still working with Louisville on automatic dual response procedures.

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**Cass County Mutual Aid Association:** The Mutual Aid Association is looking at forming a Cass County Fire Chiefs Association to meet separately from the full mutual aid association.

**Foam:** The department is in need of Class A foam. Quite a bit of foam has been used this past couple of months due to the grass fires. Costs run from \$85.00 to \$110.00 per 5 gallon pail. Also looking at a dual use foam, Class A-B at a cost of about \$79.00 per pail. Between 35 and 55 gallons are needed.

**Forestry Grant:** Assistant Chief Dudek is working on a grant for new wildland firefighting gear. Motion by Mr. Vinduska and second by Mr. Parshall to approve Chief Dudek to apply for a matching grant for additional firefighting equipment for wildland fires. 4 Ayes 0 Nays 1 Not Present: Motion Carried.

**Grant Writing Service:** Chief is looking into the possibility of seeking grant writing assistance in order to take advantage of some of the grants available to the fire service. He will keep us informed of this.

**Rural Water District Issue:** Chief discussed an issue that arose during a rekindle of a controlled burn that occurred on March 8<sup>th</sup> south of Highway 66 on 42<sup>nd</sup> Street. As per protocol that has been in place for the past 8 to 9 years, Fire Scene Command (Fire Chief) directed the 911 Center to notify the Plattsburgh Rural Water District #1 (RWD) that they were going to use the fire hydrant located at Highway 66 and 42<sup>nd</sup> Street. The 911 Center notified Fire Command by radio that the Rural Water District was denying the fire department access to the fire hydrant. Neither the Fire Department nor the Plattsburgh Rural Fire Protection District was notified at any time prior to this call that any fire hydrant was to be taken out of service for any reason. The Fire Chief did receive an undated letter by registered mail that was sent by the RWD on April 1<sup>st</sup> and signed for on April 2<sup>nd</sup>. This letter noted the fire hydrants were no longer available for fire protection use.

Discussion centered on the Plattsburgh Rural Fire District having purchased fire hydrants for the RWD to install during the construction of the rural water distribution system. At that time, the District purchased 7 fire hydrants for the RWD to install. The particular hydrant that the RWD was prohibiting the fire department to use was one of those hydrants purchased by the RFD. This turned out to be a problem for the fire departments on scene since they needed to resupply their tankers. During the fire, there was a serious discussion between both Plattsburgh Fire and Murray Fire personnel needing to have their tankers refilled. At one point the Sheriff's Office dispatched a deputy to the scene for assistance at the request of the Incident Commander. Eventually, the RWD representative allowed both Murray and Plattsburgh to resupply their tankers and Louisville did not need water at that time. The RWD representative then left the scene.

The next day, the hydrant at Highway 66 and 42<sup>nd</sup> Street was bagged and taken out of service without notifying the Fire Chief, the RFD, or the Sheriff's Office 911 Center. The hydrant closest to the highway at Chasemore was also bagged and taken out of service at that time. This was the only hydrant on that water main that serves the Chasemore addition to be taken out of service. This hydrant, and the remaining hydrants in Chasemore, was required by the Planning Commission and the Plattsburgh City Council to be installed and provide fire protection services to those residents as a condition of approval for the development of that housing addition. Now the RWD took one of those hydrants out of service.

There was considerable discussion that took place with residents of the District also in attendance speaking up to express their serious concerns that these hydrants were removed from service, jeopardizing their homes and property as well as the potential to increase their property insurance costs. (Note: A local television station was also present to report on the meeting.)

The Fire Chief stated he was going to meet with his command officers to develop a new response guideline for fires in the District and that it would include drafting water out of Copper Dollar Cove Lake and driving all the way to town for water. He would also need to automatically need to mutual aid Murray and Louisville for assistance, which is a concern since that would remove firefighters and equipment from those fire districts to assist our district in the event of a fire.

President Holdridge offered to respond to the letter from the RWD and to also attend their next scheduled meeting.

Motion by Mr. Winters and second by Mr. Vinduska to approve the Chief's Report. (No action is needed regarding the department roster since this has not changed from the previous month.) 4 Ayes 0 Nays 1 Not Present: Motion carried.

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**EMS Director's Report:**

There was no report from the EMS Director as he was not present at the meeting nor did he send a representative from the EMS Department. The last meeting the EMS Director attended was the October 2012 meeting. In early 2012, City Administrator Erv Portis obligated Mr. Wood to attend at least 4 Rural Fire District Board meetings per year.

Mr. Parshall has met with the EMS Director and discussed some information the District would like to see in the future regarding billing and collection data.

The Fire Chief did note that the fire department was going to purchase new LED landing lights to use when the medical helicopter is called to any responses in City or the District to show the helicopter where the landing zone is.

**Plattsmouth Volunteer Firefighter's Association:** Nothing to report.

**Nebraska Volunteer Firefighters Association:** Motion by Mr. Winters and second by Mr. Parshall to join the NVFFA in order to get member discounts on attendance to the annual fire school, to be eligible for a life insurance policy through the association, and receive the newsletter. Mr. Winters discovered the District was not a member at this time and should become a member of the association. The membership begins July 1<sup>st</sup> and costs \$25 per member. Currently, the firefighters are already members and the only people we would need to pay for are the board members and the rural only firefighter. 4 Ayes 0 Nays 1 Not Present: Motion Carried.

**Executive Session:** Motion by Mr. Winters and second by Mr. Parshall to go into executive session regarding correspondence from the City of Plattsmouth regarding negotiations. 4 Ayes 0 Nays 1 Not Present: Motion carried at 8:27 pm.

Exited executive session and reconvened the regular meeting at 9:10 pm. Motion by Mr. Winters and second by Mr. Vinduska to respond to the letter from the City once the District legal counsel has had an opportunity to review and advise the Board. 4 Ayes 0 Nays 1 Not Present: Motion Carried.

#### **Board Member Comments**

No Comments

#### **Next Meeting**

The next regular District Meeting will be held May 7, 2014 at 7:30 pm.

**Motion to adjourn:** Motion by Mr. Winters second by Mr. Vinduska to adjourn. Motion carried at 9:36 pm.

Respectfully submitted by:

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Ken Winters, Recording Secretary