

Meridian Rural Fire Protection District

33 E. Broadway, Suite 210 - Meridian, Idaho 83642

Meeting Minutes – October 11, 2021

Call to Order:

The Meridian Rural Fire Protection District meeting for October 11, 2021, was called to order at 4:01 p.m. by Commissioner Ward. Roll call was taken.

Attendees: Commissioner Marvin Ward, Commissioner Derrick Shannon, Commissioner Randy Howell, Fire Chief Kris Blume, Deputy Chief Charlie Butterfield, Attorney John Fitzgerald, Battalion Chief Tyler Rountree, and Councilwoman Liz Strader by telephone

Approval of the Agenda:

Motion was made and seconded to approve the meeting agenda as presented. Motion approved.

Approval of the minutes:

Motion was made and seconded to approve the minutes from the September 13, 2021, MRFPD meeting. Motion approved.

Treasurer's Report:

- Approve and pay bills as follows:
 - ✓ Check #5397, City of Meridian, \$102,748.01, August 2021 A, B, & C Budgets, Inv. #2832
 - ✓ Check #5398, John O. Fitzgerald, II, PC, \$941.24, General Legal services for September 2021, Inv. #2021-10
 - ✓ Check #5399, Kathleen Roma & Assoc. \$418.00, Accounting & Payroll, Invoice #64695 & 64941

Motion was made and seconded to approve and pay checks numbered 5397 through 5399 as presented. Motion approved.

- Current net cash position is currently \$4,304,634.34.
- August US Bank Statement and September LGIP Statement were presented for reconciliation and review.
- Commissioner Howell worked with Kathleen Roma to get payroll set up this past month.

Old Business:

1. Update on possible land donation to the Rural Fire District, Chief Blume. It was discovered that the land donation was conditional upon the City providing utilities including water and wastewater to the area next to the land that was to be donated. At this time the City is not interested in this type of arrangement so they will not be supporting this land donation.

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2. Approval and signature of revised consultant agreement with MRFPD and Fire Code consultants Northwest. Revised document has been received. Attorney Fitzgerald presented Resolution number 21-003 to adopt the revised agreement. Motion made and seconded to accept the revised consultant agreement with MRFPD and Fire Code Consultants Northwest along with Resolution 21-003. Motion approved.
3. Review of proposals for timelines and cost sharing of onboarding new personnel for fire stations 7 and 8. Chief Blume emailed the Commission and Councilwoman Liz Strader options for the Commissioners to review prior to this meeting. Discussion followed on the proposed options for staffing cost assistance; points of clarification below:
 - a. Commissioner Ward confirmed that the request for staffing cost assistance is only for the staffing for Station 7 personnel.
 - b. Deputy Chief Butterfield explained the challenges of bringing on staffing all at once including the hiring process and the training required. He explained the timeline to possibly stagger the hiring, which would result in higher quality candidates and would allow to have the new personnel trained and ready to operate when the stations open.
 - c. Commissioner Howell asked if the City can afford to continue with the cost of the personnel if the District assists in bringing the firefighters on early in FY22. Chief Blume replied that our current CFP, Consolidated Financial Plan, does have a placeholder in FY23 for onboarding the staff for stations 7 and 8. It had not been formally approved yet as it is a future budget year, but it has been brought to the attention of the Mayor, Council and the Finance Director.
 - d. Commissioner Ward asked the timeline for completing the stations. Chief Butterfield replied the plan is for the summer of 2023.
 - e. Councilwoman Liz Strader stated that the Fire District is not required to choose an option presented, that they can decide on what they feel comfortable with. Councilwoman Strader commented that Chief Blume should make the case for each option and make it clear as to when the City can take on the cost.
 - f. Commissioner Ward asked Attorney Fitzgerald if this would be a budget amendment for the District? Attorney Fitzgerald replied yes.
 - g. Attorney Fitzgerald stated for the record that if option 1 is selected, it does not mean that the District is formulating their budget for FY23. That future budget is still subject to hearings and adoption.
 - h. Commissioner Shannon clarified that this is a contribution, not a reimbursable expense.
 - i. Commissioner Howell expressed concern regarding the long-term effects on the District's budget.
 - j. BC Tyler Rountree asked what is precluding the City from doing a budget amendment mid-year in FY22 and why there has been no discussions on record for doing a budget amendment this year? Councilwoman Strader replied that the discussions for building the stations had always included the intent of the Rural District to contribute to the cost of personnel. She would entertain the idea of a budget amendment but was not sure if the Mayor or other council members would also support it.
 - k. Commissioner Howell asked if the District could consider contributing to the station build cost so that they would have an interest in an asset instead of just a contribution to staffing. Attorney Fitzgerald reminded the District, that the City's impact fees cannot be used for staffing, therefore, that is why the District is being asked for assistance in that area. The capital improvement funds are also designated for the building of structures and cannot be used for staffing.
 - l. Commissioner Howell would like to postpone this decision and look at other options and get more information. Commissioner Ward would like to decide today.

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- m. Chief Blume stated that the approval by Council to build fire station 7 was based on the understanding that the Rural would participate in contributing to the staffing costs for that station.
- n. Attorney Fitzgerald stated for the record again that if the District makes a motion or votes for any option, it does not mean that the Rural Fire District is formulating or making their budget for fiscal year 2023. Meaning they would not be committing their budget for fiscal year 2023. The District could either make a motion to vote on an option or make a motion to set it aside for a month.
- o. Commissioner Howell suggested the District propose another option, Option 6, to just commit to funding the staffing in FY22 starting in the summer of FY22 and stopping October 1, 2022, so as to not commit to any contribution in FY23.
- p. **Motion made and seconded for the Meridian Rural Fire Protection District to proceed with option 1 for onboarding 12 firefighters for fiscal year 2022 with a budget amendment of \$442,863.00 and then possibly adding to their budget in fiscal year 2023 \$1,098,714.00 as we move forward in support of the Meridian Fire Department.** Commissioner Ward called for any further discussion. Commissioner Howell expressed his concerns again about selecting option 1. Attorney Fitzgerald stated again for the record, that the District is not conducting a budget hearing and they are not creating a budget amendment for fiscal year 2023.
- q. Commissioner Howell stated for the record that he is supportive of committing to fiscal year 2022 but would still like to plan to evaluate the needs for FY23. Commissioner Howell does not want to promise the City that the District is committing to 18 months.
- r. Commissioner Shannon asked if Meridian Fire is prepared to move forward with the timelines proposed? Chief Blume stated that he cannot commit a future city budget, the same as the District can't, but the positions for both stations have been added into our CFP and have been identified as fundable. The timelines in the proposals are well documented with the mayor and council. Commissioner Ward asked if there were any further questions or comments. Hearing none, Commissioner Ward called for a roll-call vote:
Roll call vote:
Commissioner Ward: Yea
Commissioner Shannon: Yea
Commissioner Howell: Nay
Motion passed.

New Business:

1. Repayment expectations discussion regarding repayment from the City of Meridian to the MRFPD, including but not limited to land, buildings, amounts and timelines for reimbursement specifically related to the Overland and Lake Hazel properties. CFO Todd Lavoie has placed \$220,000 for the Overland property and \$250,000 for the Lake Hazel property in our CFP as a placeholder for budget forecasting purposes. Commissioner Howell suggested the District review past meeting minutes and determine if there were any agreements for repayment and then determine appropriate amounts and timelines for repayment. Commissioner Howell will research past meeting minutes to see if there were any agreements or discussion for repayment in place for those properties.

Motion was made and seconded to adjourn the October 11, 2021, meeting of the Meridian Rural Fire Protection District. Motion approved. The meeting was adjourned at 5:50 p.m.