

Minutes for January 19, 2022 Beckwourth Fire District

1. **Board members may attend this meeting via teleconference as permitted by California Law. Members of the public were able to join the meeting via Zoom live streaming or in person. Board Meeting called to order at 6:30 PM by Daniel Smith.**
2. **Roll Call: Board Members:** Daniel Smith – here, Gay Miller – here, Daniel Greenwood – here, Dick Spencer – here, Alyson Ceresola - here. **Board Secretary:** Mercadez Flewell - here, **Fire Chief:** Bret Russell - here, **Safety Officer:** Absent, **Division Chief:** Bruce Lackenbauer, **BFD members:** Scott Thompson, **Public:** John Reynolds
3. **The Pledge of Allegiance:** Recited by all.
4. **Appointment of New Board Members.** Daniel Smith let all parties know that when BFD had posted the board vacancies in October, BFD had posted the two current vacancies and the upcoming vacancy for Daniel Greenwood's vacancy that would be open in December. The County registrar of voters notified us that even though we did not have a meeting scheduled in December that we could not post that opening until his current term expired on December 3, 2021. BFD reposted the board vacancy in January for the mandatory the 15-day posting. BFD did not receive any new letters of interest except Daniel Greenwood's letter. Gay Miller **motioned or appoint** Daniel Greenwood, Dick Spencer seconded. Daniel S. – yes, Gay Miller – yes, Dick Spencer – yes, Alyson Ceresola – yes. All in favor, **motion passed without objection.**

Appointment of Board Member Positions for 2022. Daniel Smith discussed what positions need to be filled and who had been in the position prior. The positions are Chairman, Vicechair, Portola Liaison, Fire Consolidation Committee, Safety Committee, and Auxiliary Committee. Currently the Chairman is Daniel Smith, he has offered to continue to do it this year if no one else is interested, however it will be his last year as the Chairman. Gay nominated Daniel Smith and Dick Seconded. At the moment there is no vicechair as it was previously Denise, Gay is interested, Daniel Smith nominates Gay, all-in favor, there are no objections. Portola Liaison is currently Gay, she is interested in keeping this position. No one objected, Daniel Smith nominated Gay to be the Portola liaison no objections. Fire Consolidation Committee is currently Daniel Smith at the moment no one else is interested however if anyone does become interested just let the board know. Safety Committee is currently the Chief and a few other Fire Department Personnel, Alyson Ceresola is interested in the position, there are no objections. Auxiliary Committee is currently Debbie Hiatt and the other volunteers, at any time the board members can join this committee as well.

5. **Opening remarks.** Daniel Smith introduced an award in commemoration to Denise Downs for her service to the department and her service on the Board of Directors . She has volunteered 25 years of total service as a firefighter and a board member for BFD. The entire department is very appreciative of the sacrifice of her time for two and a half decades of service. Bruce Lackenbauer recounted some of her accomplishments with department and thanked her for always being there. Denise was not able to attend the meeting tonight, we will ensure that she receives the plaque in dedication to her service.

Daniel Smith introduced Dick Spencer to his first meeting as a member of the board and thanked him for volunteering to serve.

Daniel thanked the entire BFD staff for the continued work and support they provide the department. Their outstanding service is the life blood of the department. Over the holidays they responded to a significant number of medical calls and two different structure fires. Thank you for keeping the community safe!

6. **Approval of Minutes** for the Board Meetings held November 18, 2021. There were no edits or corrections needed, Daniel G. **motioned to approve the minutes** from the prior month, and Gay Miller seconded. Daniel S. – yes, Gay – yes, Daniel G. – yes, Alyson – yes, Dick Spencer - yes. All in favor, **motion passed without objection.**
7. **Approval of the Account Revenues, Expenditures, and Balance Sheet for months of November and December 2021.** There were no edits or corrections needed, Daniel S. had a few questions regarding the expense sheet, Mercadez will be contacting the county as well as looking into the tax bill for station 2 and bring an explanation back to the next board meeting. Daniel discussed briefly with the new board members that it is not common to have this large of an. expense on wages. This occurred this period due to paying out wages for the strike team services BFD had worked on during the Beckwourth Complex this year. Mercadez let the board know that so far at the halfway point for the 21/22 Fiscal budget BFD is under budget for wages by \$5,000. Mercadez highlighted that the largest non-payroll expense in this period was the annual flow testing and certification of the department SCBA's, Chief Russell gave a brief explanation of how they are tested and the importance of testing to ensure the safety of the firefighters. Gay **motioned to approve the revenues, expenditures, and balance sheet** from the prior month, and Daniel G. seconded. Daniel S. – yes, Gay – yes, Daniel G. – yes, Alyson – yes, Dick Spencer - yes. All in favor, **motion passed without objection.**

8. **Public Comment:** Bruce Lackenbauer thanked all board members for their service and that he is appreciative of all the work that has been done in the crazy previous year of 2021.
9. **Consent Agenda: None**
10. **Chief's Report:** Bret expressed his gratitude for all the loyal first responders on the department. There was a total of 41 calls in the month of December, 33 in the Portola division and 8 in Beckwourth. The majority of calls were for medical assistance. The department conducted its second advanced training event at the Washoe County Regional Training center on December 11th and 12th. It was an improved training event than the previous year. Chief John McFarland was able to attend and observe the training, he is the fire expert that was hired for the Fire Consolidation study we are participating in. This was a great opportunity for him to see our staff in action. To improve the response of our staff the department has issued a number of take-home emergency vehicles that are strategically placed to improve response times for calls. BFD has had quite a few calls so far into January, there has been 24 so far into this month. There have been two structure fires that have been addressed in a very professional way and both structures are still standing. When it comes to the training that the first responders are getting, it truly shows up on these structure fire calls. Thanks to the staff for their hard work and dedication. It is a national problem where the fire service is struggling with personnel and the extreme call volume we are experiencing around the Country. It is becoming more imperative that we engage with our partners such as the Ambulance service, Sheriff's dispatch, local Fire services and coordinate a tiered dispatch system to eliminate no emergency calls to our fire department. As a volunteer agency this is the only way we will be able to survive and retain volunteers. The update on the SCBA grant is that we are about two months away from BFD receiving the actual SCBAS. Daniel Smith let Bret know that BFD will need to coordinate with the other departments on receiving payment for their 5% share from them when the equipment is delivered. Bret also thanked Gay for being the Portola Liaison, she has done a wonderful job and he is extremely appreciative.
11. **Secretary's Report:** Mercadez has done some research into a new printer for the department. With the separation from the county the current printer can be retained for a check printer. The department print volume has increased dramatically over the past two years due to more staff and the addition of the Portola contract for service calls. The cost of ink for the type of printer we currently have is more than half of the cost of a new and more efficient printer under a contract for ink and maintenance included. If the fire consolidation does proceed the demands for increased printing capability with further increase. Mercadez worked out a current cost analysis comparing the cost for our current printer versus a new contract printer service for the board to review as well as a spec sheet of two different Sharp Printers. She has been working a local company called Smile Business Products, Inc. Daniel Smith asked Mercadez to do some more research on a third option of a slightly smaller printer that will still be able to handle the printing load required, and report back to the board next month. On November 16th, 2021, BFD had posted two pieces of Apparatus for Sale on our website per department policy for sale of surplus equipment. BFD has received a bid for the water tender that was posted. Daniel Smith opened the sealed bid; the bidder had followed all procedures correctly and the board accepted his bid of \$10,000. BFD will be sure to contact the bidder and let them know they were accepted and when funds have cleared the bank, they may pick up the equipment. Mercadez also brought the 700 forms that board, board clerk, and fire chief will all need to fill out and bring back by April of 2022. The form 700 is to disclose and type of business you may be apart of our own that might cause a conflict-of-interest while serving on the board.
12. **Discussion and Possible Action:** Resolution to separate finances from the county. Daniel Smith went over briefly the issues BFD continues to run into with the county handling BFD's finances. There have been constant late fees and items not paid on a timely basis to our vendors and vendors refusing service due to slow payments, additionally payroll issues have been numerous, checks are late amounts paid are incorrect and, in some cases, pay claims for staff are lost. Also, as part of this resolution BFD will need to appoint a treasurer in place of the County. The board will appoint Chief Russell to act as the Treasurer for the department. The resolution also states that the department understands and has put in place procedures and policies to protect the finances of the department and protect against conflict of interest in disbursing department funds. Daniel G. **motioned to accept the resolution to separate finances from the county and appoint a treasurer**, and Gay Miller seconded. Daniel S. – yes, Gay – yes, Daniel G. – yes, Alyson – yes, Dick Spencer - yes. All in favor, **motion passed without objection.**
13. **Discussion and Possible Action:** Appointment of Treasurer. Please see item 12
14. **Discussion and Possible Action:** Authorized Signature Page for Account with Plumas Bank. Daniel Smith covers the bank account that BFD will need to open since we are separating from the county. All pay claims will need the chief's signature as well as a board members signature in order for the clerk to process the checks. There is a signature authorization card that is required for all Board members and the Chief to sign checks. All checks will require two signatures, the Chief and one board member or two board members if the Chief is not available. . None of the board members had any questions or concerns. Daniel G. **motioned to open a bank account** and Gay seconded. Daniel S. – yes, Gay – yes, Daniel G. – yes, Alyson – yes, Dick Spencer - yes. All in favor, **motion passed without objection.**

- 15. Discussion and Possible Action:** Creation of a reserve account for Strike Team payments for Firefighters. Daniel Smith went over the funds that BFD has received so far from strike teams that have been sent out on fires in the summer of 2021. What the board and BFD would like to do, is take some of those funds and put them to the side for this coming summer and be able to pay the firefighters a small portion of what they are making prior to getting the payout from the State or Cal-OES. Daniel Smith would like to start a reserve fund of \$25,000.00. Gay Miller expressed that this fund is necessary to help with the moral of the firefighters. Scott Thompson expressed that this is a good idea, but this shouldn't be an incentive to get the firefighters to go and do strike teams. Scott also acknowledged that there are a handful of firefighters that do take time off of work to do these and it would help them but there are also the firefighters that aren't expecting the funds. He wants to encourage people to do it to service their community and not have it be about the money. Scott had also questioned where the other funds go, Daniel Smith let him know the basic structure of the accounts that have been established for the funds to help improve the department. Bruce Lackenbauer also believes that the creation of this fund is beneficial to the department. Gay Miller **motioned to create the reserve fund for Strike Teams** Dick Spencer Seconded. Daniel S. – yes, Gay miller – yes, Daniel G. – yes, Alyson Ceresola – yes, Dick Spencer – yes. All in favor, **motion passed without objection.**
- 16. Update of:** Auxiliary Group Activities, and prioritized list of needs. No update is available, Debbie Hiatt who coordinates the auxiliary group has been out and unable to meet with Bret to discuss the priority list.
- 17. Update of:** QuickBooks setup and Conversion. Mercadez let the board know that Susan Scarlett has almost finished the QuickBooks setup and BFD is now at the point of purchasing the payroll option and training the clerk on how to use the program. Mercadez also plans to shadow the clerk at Grizzly Ranch who uses the same system.
- 18. Update of:** LESSG Consolidation Project. Daniel let everyone know that the consultant was in Portola from December 10-12 to review the stations and equipment. The consultant is in agreement that the consolidation is beneficial to the area. Currently the group is working with LAFCo on the new Fire District draft boundaries. The next step will be to complete the structure of the new department including staffing, budget, equipment, stations and number and type of apparatus. There is an update with Sierra Valley Fire Department, Vikki has stepped down as Fire Chief and Duncan Cameron is the new Fire Chief. Duncan is on board with the consolidation and was able to work with the consultant as well while he was in town. This project will be ready to go out to the public around April. Bruce asked how the votes will work and what the rate for the vote is. It will be a 2/3 vote and the public will vote. California law only allows the agencies to inform the people of what is going on but is not aloud to lobby for the consolidation.
- 19. Update of:** Portola City Council Liaison Monthly Report. Bret provided Gay with information for the city council meeting and things went very well. The city was happy with the report.
- 20. Update of:** Report on Coronavirus/Policies and Procedures. BFD's Policies and Procedures remain the same.
- 21. Update of:** Report on water use from Grizzly Ranch. No usage for November and December 2021
- 22. Department Reports:** Bruce Lackenbauer let the board know that there is an EMR class currently in progress, after that there will be a HAZ-Mat class, and once that ends there will be a wild land class. Bruce also brought up that the fire investigator that came to review the fire that happened January 8th was appreciative of Mercadez professionalism and helpfulness over the phone, he let Bruce know that she was one of the most helpful persons he has ever worked with via phone.
- 23. Directors Reports:** Daniel Greenwood asked when BFD is able to start looking into building improvements and maintenance as he feels Station 1 needs some work. Dick Spencer has offered his help as well he has a contractor's license and could help to improve the station. BFD will need to make a list of prioritize what needs to be done first.
- 24. Old Business: None.**
- 25. New Business:** NEXT BOARD MEETING: Wednesday February 16, 2022. There will be an ethics class (January 26th) and sexual harassment (February 15th) training coming up that the board, Bret, and Mercadez will all be attending.
- 26. Closed Session:** Discussion of the Fire Chief's annual evaluation.
- 27. Report out on Closed Session:** Report out on any action taken. The Fire Chief's evaluation went well. BFD has extended the Chief's contract based on his above average performance and given him a 3% raise based off his base salary for 2022.
- 28. Adjournment of Meeting:** Daniel S. adjourned meeting @ 21:45

I, MERCADEZ FLEWELL, SECRETARY OF THE BOARD, DO HEREBY CERTIFY THAT THE FOREGOING MINUTES OF SAID **BOARD MEETING** OF THE BECKWOURTH FIRE DISTRICT HELD ON **January 19, 2022**, ARE CORRECT AS RECORDED.

Mercadez Flewell, Secretary of the Board

BOARD OF DIRECTORS' APPROVAL SIGNATURES: Minutes for January 19, 2022

Daniel Smith: _____ Date: _____

Gay Miller: _____ Date: _____

Daniel Greenwood: _____ Date: _____

Alyson Ceresola: _____ Date: _____

Dick Spencer: _____ Date: _____