

## Minutes for February 20, 2020 Beckwourth Fire District

1. **Board Meeting called to order at 6:30 PM by Daniel Smith.**
2. **Roll Call: Board Members:** Daniel Smith – here, Denise Downs - here, Donald Ball - here, Dwight Ceresola - here. **Board Secretary:** Patty Venable, **Fire Chief:** Bret Russell, **Fire Fighter/Safety Officer:** Brendan Pratt, **Public:** John Reynolds, Gayanna Miller, Floyd Meyers, Pat Morton.
3. **The Pledge of Allegiance:** Recited by all.

In honor of our long-term Board member, George Bundy, we had a minute of silence. Daniel Smith thanked all who attended.

4. **Approval of Minutes** for the Board Meeting held January 16, 2020. Denise Downs **motioned to approve minutes, as transcribed, from the meeting held on January 20, 2020** and Don Ball seconded. Daniel – yes, Denise – yes, Donald – yes, Dwight – yes. All in favor, **motion passed without objection.**
5. **Approval of the Account Revenues, Receivables, Expenditures, and Balance Sheet** for the months of December 2019 and January 2020. Under Accounts Receivables Denise asked if Fire Recovery submits the old items, from years past, to collections? She asked Patty to investigate that. Also, the item from 12/15/17 USFS: Nervino Forest Service Station – Tom Dunavent should be removed from the list because that location is in our district and we should not try and collect on it. Under Expenditures Patty was asked to update the line item Travel. It shows a negative balance, but in parenthesis it states we received \$1,000 from our insurer GSRMA. Patty will adjust that to show an actual positive balance.

**Monthly Budget Updates for Board:** It was noted that the percentages are off on the Monthly Updates, so Patty will find the error and correct it, and bring it back to the Board next month. Denise **motioned to approve the financials for the months of Dec. and Jan.** and Don seconded. Daniel – yes, Denise – yes, Don – yes, Dwight – yes. All in favor, **motion passed without objection.**

6. **Public Comment:** none
7. **Consent Agenda Items:** none
8. **Chief's Report: EMR course:** many problems, 2 instructors were terminated from their positions which made them ineligible to teach, but we were able to adapt with surrounding personnel. Ed Ward, Chief of Graeagle is co-teaching with Bret, Don Bliss is helping, Steve Waldeck too. Upcoming Fire Academy: we are sending 4 new firefighters, and Bret will teach as much as he can. **Air Compressor:** is up and running. It's been a long road, but it has all come together. Daniel reminded everyone that at the start of the year, we were prepared to spend \$40,000 on a new compressor, but thanks to Bret he was able to secure this compressor for free. We had a **brush fire** this past week that was 120 acres, unheard of in February normally. Denise shared that several years ago Beckwourth had several evacuation sites set up. The rest stop west from us on Hwy 70 was chosen, but it is closed in the winter. We used to have signs noting this, but not anymore. Bret said he would look into this. John Reynolds suggested we talk with Sue McCort, she may know. Dwight suggested we talk with Cal Trans to see if we can get a key for the rest stop in the wintertime.
9. **Secretary's Report:** Patty told the Board the Form 700's are here, and they need to fill them out. They have until April 1 to do that and return them to our office. Dwight mentioned that he was in the office one day watching Patty try and make copies which took an enormously long time. Dwight would like her to research new ones and go ahead and buy one.

- 10. Discussion and Possible Action: Appoint new Board Member:** Daniel reported that we have a vacancy on the Board since the passing of George Bundy, and we had one person submit a letter of interest: Gay Miller. Daniel explained that the Board can appoint a person in this position to fill the remaining term that George held. Gay is a resident of the district, her husband is on the CSD board, and they both are very committed to the community. **A motion was made by Denise to vote Gay Miller to the vacant position on the Board,** Don seconded it. Daniel – yes, Denise – yes, Don – yes, Dwight – yes. **All in favor, motion passed without objection.**

Gay Miller was sworn into office by Patty, Board Secretary. Patty gave Gay an orientation packet for new Board members, along with the book Robert's Rules of Order. The Brown Act, Gay said she can read online.

Daniel shared his thoughts about appointing new board members. Daniel would like all of us to make an effort to recruit new board members, since we may have another opening coming up soon. California has an exception regarding volunteer firefighters serving on the board. It is allowed, but it is very unusual. It can be very difficult for small districts to find people to serve on the board, and that is why they allow volunteer firefighters to serve. Daniel said this is the law, but he thinks it is not a good idea. It is a conflict of interest. In our case, the firefighters work under the Chief on the one hand, and if they are on the board, the Chief now works under them. In our department, we have a firefighter whose spouse is also a firefighter with Beckwourth. This can create an even bigger conflict of interest for the Chief. Daniel wants to make it clear that he did not say our firefighters cannot be on the board. He is merely giving his thoughts on this, but if the board votes a firefighter on the board, then the person will be on the board. It is not Daniel's decision.

- 11. Discussion and Possible Action: Robert Johnson, Auditor – new 2-year contract:** Rolled over from last board meeting. We discussed the benefits of using a new auditor after several years, and Daniel researched some possibilities. Every other auditor he found was more than double the price of our current auditor. Daniel suggested as we put out a Request For Proposal and use the CSDA service to put it on. We may get more data than before, but can we afford it? Donald **motioned to hire this auditor, Robert Johnson,** for the next two years by signing his letter that was previously sent to us; Denise seconded. Daniel – yes, Denise – yes, Donald – yes, Dwight – yes. **All in favor, motion passed without objection.**
- 12. Discussion and Possible Action: Proclamation** – to dedicate Engine #9424 in memory of George Bundy. Bret read the proclamation: Let it be known that the Beckwourth Fire Department in honor of George A. Bundy, retired engineer #9408, in tribute to his extraordinary service to the Beckwourth Fire Department, the Fire Board wishes to dedicate engine #9424 in his memory. Denise made a **motion authorizing to ratify this proclamation,** Don seconded, all in favor, motion passed without objection.
- 13. Discussion and Possible Action: Policy and Procedure 2020 and 2020a:** Bret thinks we should look at what the auditor suggested, i.e. separate the PTO between sick time and vacation time. Patty would like to see PTO changed to: 2 weeks off for vacation time, and 3 days off for sick time, per the mandated Family Leave Act. Currently we get 2 weeks combined sick and vacation off. And the 2 weeks equal how many days each person works in a week. For example, Captain Dillard works 3 days/week, Patty and Bret work 4 days/week. Patty would like to look at the budget to see the impact of our department offering 2 weeks of vacation and 3 days of sick time per year. Patty would break it down into hours for each person because she works a five-hour day, Ed works a nine-hour day and so does Bret. Also, Patty suggested that if a person has an extended illness and has available vacation time remaining, that could be used for sick leave. But not the reverse. If a person has sick time that has not been used in a year, they cannot add that to their vacation time. The board agreed that Patty would look into the cost, and how it impacts our budget and bring it back to the board next month. If the budget is not too impacted, then we will draft a new policy and have our general counsel check it to make sure we are compliant with the law. **Form 2020a:** The only changes Patty suggested is removing the reason an employee is requesting time off. Currently our PTO is combined for either sick time or vacation time, so it seems unnecessary to denote why an employee must define the reason. Brendan Pratt mentioned his past employment as an HR person, and he said these reasons are not being “requested” because by law an employer must give a person time off for these reasons. This item will be rolled over to the next meeting and Patty will calculate the budget impact of making these changes, and then the board will decide.
- 14. Discussion and Possible Action: Air Cylinders Purchase:** Bret reminded us of the background: Our air cylinders are expiring. They have a 15-year shelf life and they are very expensive. Formerly our department spent

\$1,115 apiece on them, and we now need 20 of them. Bret has tried to get a grant with surrounding fire districts but has not had success with finding a good grant writer until now. Bret found a company called Dalmatian Fire and they sell used cylinders for purchase. They are refurbished and last only 1 year for \$330/cylinder. In working with LN Curtis company, Bret discovered a fire department selling 33 used cylinders for \$100 each and they last 3 years. Bret spoke with him and asked if we could buy 20-25 but not all 33. After this person checked into it, he called Bret back and told him that he would give all of these to us for free. He will deliver these to us by March 13<sup>th</sup>. Dwight suggested we start to build into our budget each year a set amount to go toward new cylinders and add 2-3 each year.

15. **Discussion and Possible Action: Local Emergency Services Study Group:** Dwight and Bret attended the last meeting, and Dwight gave an update. Dwight advised the group we were there to give support and observe at this time. They elected a Chairman, Vice Chair, Secretary and named the group. He feels some people were rushing the process. He feels the concept is good, but they do not have goals and steps to achieve those yet. They're being cautious about press releases. The next meeting is on March 24<sup>th</sup> at City Hall at 9:00 a.m. Dwight said this meeting may not happen if they have nothing new to discuss. Dwight hopes the next meeting establishes goals and costs to each district. Daniel shared that his impression was different in terms of what they would do, and what we would do, so he wanted clarification. The MOU we signed stated the six agencies would come together with no confirmed outcome but that we all agreed to look at consolidation. Most of the board agreed. Daniel feels one of the issues we have is that our overall service to the community could be improved. If the agencies worked together this could improve those services. Dwight agreed and said he stated in the meeting basically that point. Daniel was concerned that this group is not ready to work with the public on this, and Daniel feels that is where we should start, by including the public in the process. Dwight said they are concerned how they put information out and that the wording of it is clear. Denise added that this process will take time, perhaps 3-5 years. Pat Morton, City Council member, added it's a study group, and that's the first step. As we know, she said, it's difficult to get qualified volunteers, and achieving consistency among the different fire departments. She would like to have standardization, and it will take a few years at least.
16. **Discussion and Possible Action: IIPP Officer:** Our current Safety Officer, Jennifer Langston, resigned. Brendan Pratt, new volunteer firefighter has stepped up to take the position.
17. **Division Chiefs' Reports:** none
18. **Battalion Chiefs' Report:** none
19. **Safety Officer's Report:** none
20. **Directors Reports:** none
21. **Old Business:** Harassment Training deadline extended for compliance to January 1, 2021. Denise will contact Mimi to see if they are offering a training anytime soon. Daniel will check with BBK too.
22. **New Business:** NEXT MEETING DATE: **March 19, 2020 at 6:30 p.m.**
23. **Adjournment:** Meeting adjourned at 8:28.

I, PATTY VENABLE, SECRETARY OF THE BOARD, DO HEREBY CERTIFY THAT THE FOREGOING MINUTES OF SAID **BOARD MEETING** OF THE BECKWOURTH FIRE DISTRICT HELD ON **February 20, 2020** ARE CORRECT AS RECORDED.

---

Patty Venable, Secretary of the Board

BOARD OF DIRECTORS' APPROVAL SIGNATURES: Minutes for February 20, 2020.

Daniel Smith: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Denisce Downs: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Donald Ball: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Dwight Ceresola: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Gay Miller: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_