



Hyalite Rural Fire District

Board Meeting Synopsis Approval Form

The written synopsis of the February 20, 2024 Hyalite Rural Fire District (HRFD) Board of Trustees Annual Board Meeting was approved by motion of the HRFD Board of Trustees on March 19, 2024.

Chair Signature

Justin Miller, Chairman

Printed Name

Secretary Signature

~~Ken Beideman, Secretary~~

Printed Name

Walter Eidack, Treasurer

**HYALITE RURAL FIRE DISTRICT
BOARD OF TRUSTEES REGULAR PUBLIC MEETING
SYNOPSIS**

DATE: FEBRUARY 20, 2024

TIME: 7:00 p.m.

LOCATION: Sourdough Fire Station, 4541 S. 3rd Rd., Bozeman, Montana

In compliance with [MCA 2017 2-3-212](#) and the Hyalite Rural Fire District Bylaws, the minutes of HRFD Board of Trustees open public meetings are comprised of an audio recording and a written synopsis. The audio recording is designated as the official record of a meeting. The written synopsis serves to assist the public in accessing portions of the audio recording and is a good faith attempt to provide the public with another method to be informed about the actions of the Board. The minutes are available to the public at www.hyalitefire.org/board-meeting-minutes/ or at the Hyalite Rural Fire District Administrative Offices, 4541 S. 3rd Rd., Bozeman, MT, during its standard business hours.

TRUSTEES IN ATTENDANCE:

Justin Miller
Walt Zidack
Jason Jarrett
Ken Beideman

STAFF IN ATTENDANCE:

Brian Nickolay, Fire Chief
Chris Dahlhauser, Assistant Fire Chief
Colin Prato, Maintenance Captain
Sheryl Wyman, Administrative Assistant

PUBLIC IN ATTENDANCE:

None

0:00:00	CALL TO ORDER OF HYALITE RURAL FIRE DISTRICT Chairman Miller called the meeting to order and asked for any public comment on non-agenda items. None given. HYALITE CONSENT AGENDA Chairman Miller asks if there are any requests to pull anything from the Consent Agenda for review. None given. Motion: Chairman Miller asks for a motion to approve the consent agenda. Trustee Zidack so moves. Trustee Jarrett seconded the motion. Vote: Jarrett-Yes; Zidack-Yes; Beideman-Yes; Miller-Yes. Unanimous approval.
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	<i>[See January 16, 2024 Board Packet for Consent Agenda items Approved]</i>
	REGULAR AGENDA
0:00:44	<p>Agenda Item 1 – Renewal of Liability Insurance</p> <p>Administrative Assistant Wyman states there is no decision to make since the renewed January 1st. The cost went up approximately \$5,000. This was an increase of approximately 12%. 4% of the increase was due to the increase in value in buildings and building personal property. The overall rate increase was approximately 8%. Trustee Beideman asks if the new trucks will be going into the policy. Discussion is held between the trustees and Chief Nickolay.</p>
0:03:03	<p>Agenda Item 2 – Renewal of Health Insurance Plans</p> <p>Trustee Beideman asks if the staff is happy with their plans. Chief Nikolay informs the board a staff meeting will be held tomorrow to discuss. He feels it is a decent plan and they are happy with the options. Administrative Assistant Wyman informs the board open season is from March 1st through the 31st. If the staff decides to change the specific plan they are on, that might be brought to the board. Discussion is held regarding the renewal.</p>
0:06:17	<p>Agenda Item 3 – Transferring of Funds Into Capital Reserve Accounts</p> <p>Trustee Zidack informs the board the budget committee met with our accountant. They will come back with a proposal to see how much we can transfer. We should have a pretty sizable amount to transfer without creating a cash flow impediment.</p> <p>Consideration is also being given to transferring one of the capital funds - the building repair and replacement fund into an operating fund. Right now we have approximately \$340,000 and would move most of that money into one of the capital funds and reserve a smaller amount (whatever the board decides) and keep a small amount in the unrestricted fund.</p> <p>Trustee Jarrett asks about having enough funds if there is a bad year. Trustee Zidack suggests the board consider keeping more in the unrestricted fund than the minimal \$400,000. This will give us latitude should something come up.</p> <p>Discussion is held amongst the trustees and fire chief. Any decision is tabled until after we hear back from the accounting firm.</p>
0:11:28	<p>Agenda Item 4 – Creating an Out of District Assignment Policy for Staff</p> <p>Chief Nickolay provided a first draft policy which would outline what the board would like to see for out of district details. The policy is broken out in different sections – how we are notified of out of district assignments; how we decide to accept the assignment; agreement/resource order with requesting agencies; and reimbursement packages after assignment.</p>

	<p>This does not include mutual aid assignments. The needs of the Hyalite Fire District will be a priority in considering a request for assignments. Chief Nickolay goes through the policy and the provision of each section.</p> <p>Discussion is held between the trustees and Chief Nickolay. Trustee Zidack has concerns about the responsibility we have to our constituents. He would like to see a review of the requests. Trustee Jarrett suggests looking at the assignments in an emergent situation. Trustee Jarrett offers to help with the policy along with Chief Nickolay.</p> <p>Chief Nickolay discusses the different opportunities to go on deployments. Hyalite hasn't gone out of State other than the Chief's latest two deployments. Trustee Beideman asks about the Forest Service. Chief Nickolay explains our agreements with the Custer National Forest and how the regions of the forest service gets help when needed.</p> <p><i>[See Attachment A – Draft Policy]</i></p>
<p>0:30:10</p>	<p>Agenda Item 5 – Fire Chief's Report</p> <p>Chief Nickolay goes through his fire chief's report. We had 68 calls in January. The roster has 41 members. We are still struggling with volunteer command. Working on getting volunteers trained up to move into command positions. The Chief has exhausted every option to work with neighboring agencies. There is a lack of interest in working with Hyalite on staffing. Staff is continuing to cover extra shifts. The three paid captains are also working to fulfill the needs.</p> <p>Chief Nickolay discusses the resident staffing at each of the stations.</p> <p>The spring academy will start in mid-March.</p> <p>Chief Nickolay gives details about his EMAC assignment to Hawaii and the benefits he received.</p> <p>Mutual aid training was held with Fort Ellis, Amsterdam and Bridger Canyon. All mutual aid agencies are invited to those trainings.</p> <p>Hyalite responded to a residential structure fire and a chimney fire.</p> <p>Coordination between Pintler and Pinion is ongoing with the ambulance billing.</p> <p>We had one firefighter require reporting to the Montana State Fund due to an exposure to bodily fluids from a patient. All proper reports were filed and treatment provided. We don't see any further needs.</p> <p>All apparatus are in service.</p> <p><i>[See Attachment B – Fire Chief's Report]</i></p>

0:48:03	Trustees' Activities <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There were no more applicants. March 4th is the last day for write-ins. After March 4th the election will be cancelled for Hyalite trustee positions. • Trustee Jarrett is going to the Northern Rockies Board of Directors meeting February 21, 2024.
0:48:48	Announcements None
0:49:54	Moved to Executive Session Pursuant to 2-3-203.

HYALITE RURAL FIRE DISTRICT

OUT OF DISTRICT WORK ASSIGNMENT POLICY

Purpose – The purpose of this policy is to provide direction to trustees, staff, and volunteers on the process of accepting out of district work assignments. Out of district assignments can be beneficial to members of the fire district in providing experience and knowledge in responding to and operating on different events. These work assignments can include mutual aid for emergencies, area recovery or administrative work details. This policy does not address mutual aid requests within Gallatin County.

Policy -

How assignment notifications are received –

- Interagency Dispatch Centers
- Local or State Office of Emergency Management
- Other Local Government Agencies (Montana Mutual Aid)

How decisions are made to accept assignments –

Chief officers of the fire district will weigh the impact of deploying resources, either personnel or equipment. The decision to deploy resources will be made based on available resources to fulfill the needs of the assignment, qualification of personnel, and backfill needs of the Hyalite Fire District. The needs of the Hyalite Fire District will be a priority in considering request for assignments.

Agreement/resource order with requesting agencies –

When accepting an out of district assignment, a resource order must be signed and in place prior to mobilizing any equipment or personnel. Having an agreement or resource order will protect the Hyalite Fire District from financial costs associated with an out of district work assignment. Out of district assignments will require the Hyalite Fire District to front the cost for the assignments. Agreements may be short or long term. Examples of agreements –

- DNRC option three annual agreement for personnel and equipment
- EMAC agreements
- Montana Mutual Aid Blue Book

Some short-term assignments may not offer any reimbursement such as Montana Mutual Aid. For these requests policy needs to be followed in the Montana Mutual Aid – Blue Book.

Reimbursement packages after assignment –

Reimbursement packages for payment must be submitted in the time allocated by the sponsoring agency. Personnel deploying on assignment must follow through with the reimbursement package to ensure repayment is made to the fire district. An agreement in allocated should be stated in the agreement with the sponsoring agency.



Hyalite Rural Fire District

Fire Chief's Report

February 2024

Prepared by: Fire Chief Brian Nickolay

1. The Hyalite Fire District responded to a total of 68 incidents in January 2024.

- Total Calls January 2023 - 59
- Total Calls January 2022 - 60
- Total Calls January 2021 - 58
- Total Calls January 2020 - 37
- Total Calls January 2019 - 45

2. Our current roster is at 41 members (effective 2/1/2024).

- 1 Career Fire Chief
- 1 Career Assistant Fire Chief
- 3 Career Captains
- 5 Volunteer Captains
- 2 Volunteer Reserve Captains
- 1 Volunteer Lieutenants
- 10 Volunteer Firefighters
- 12 Volunteers Apprentice Firefighters
- 0 Volunteer Recruit Firefighters
- 2 Volunteer Recruit Driver/Operators
- 3 Volunteer Reserve Firefighters
- 1 Volunteer Reserve Driver/Operator

3. We are continuing to work on our overnight command coverage shortages. We are at 5 of our needed 7 volunteer captains. Assistant Chief Dahlhauser and Captain Malone will be working this spring to promote additional captains. Our current volunteer captains have really stepped up to help cover the open shifts. I am concerned we will face a burnout situation with our captains at this rate. Our hope is to promote additional captains this spring to get us where we need to be. Myself and Assistant Chief Dahlhauser are continuing to work extra to provide coverage at night where we lack volunteer availability. We have been paying overtime to our paid captains to provide overnight coverage if myself or Dahlhauser are unavailable. Overtime pay has been kept within what we budgeted for the fiscal year.

4. We currently have 7 resident firefighters living at the Sourdough Fire Station.

- Current Sourdough Residents -

- Jack Pemberton, Tyler Newell, Sophie Smith, Robert Bole, Allie Kuntz, Luke Maxwell, Riley Wilson
 - It was great to see Allie Kuntz, Luke Maxwell and Riley Wilson move into Sourdough in January.
 - Sourdough resident firefighters continue to fill weekend shifts Friday 7pm – Monday 7am. With the reduced staffing of our Sourdough Resident Lieutenants, we have had non-resident leadership (Martin Blake and Ted Yewer) step up to fill weekend shifts.
5. We currently have 3 resident firefighters living at the Cottonwood Fire Station.
- Current Cottonwood Residents –
 - Caitlin Fueg, Brennan Lyle and Kate Brownell.
 - Zale Filce moved out of Cottonwood in February and moved into the Rae House. Zale recently became a full time Paramedic with AMR and it was easier for him to fulfill his resident requirements at Rae.
 - Cottonwood resident firefighters continue to fill weekday night shifts Monday – Thursday 7pm – 7am. Non-resident volunteers have stepped up to fill the open shifts when needed.
6. We currently have 2 resident renters at the Rae house.
- Current Rae Renters -
 - Steve Kerbel and Zale Filce
7. Non-resident volunteer firefighters continue to cover 6 hour shifts at the Sourdough Fire Station on Monday – Friday 7am – 7pm.
8. We continue our regular multi company fire and EMS training every Wednesday night and command training twice a month.
9. We are in full recruitment mode for our spring 2024 firefighter academy. Captain Templeton has been very busy at recruitment events at MSU. We expect the spring academy to start in mid March.
10. I recently returned from an EMAC assignment to Maui, Hawaii. The assignment was from Jan 22nd to Feb 12th. I deployed as part of a team from Montana to assist in Maui County Emergency Management. Our team was composed of 3 people from Gallatin County, 2 from Missoula County, 1 from Yellowstone County and 1 from Jefferson County. Our mission was to assist Maui County with their ongoing recovery work after the August wildfire which burned a majority of the town of Lahaina, Hawaii. We were also tasked with helping rebuild the structure of Maui County Emergency Management (MEMA). MEMA experienced nearly 100% turnover of their staff after the August fire. Our team was able to provide policy and procedures related to responding to emergencies. We were able to offer a lot of insight into operating with not a lot of resources. We were able to tie a lot of similarities to what works in Montana to available resources in Hawaii. We received feedback of being the most useful help MEMA has received

since the event in August. My position on the assignment was Operations Chief for MEMA in Lahaina.

11. We hosted a mutual aid command training on January 29th. We had participants from Fort Ellis Fire, Amsterdam Fire and Bridger Canyon Fire. The training was very helpful to those involved.

12. We assisted the Gallatin Gateway Fire District with a residential structure fire on February 1st.

13. We responded to a chimney fire in the Hyalite Fire District on January 19th. The fire was contained to the chimney. Our crews did amazing work in reducing the damage to the home.

14. The fire district has been heavily involved with an EMS study going on in Gallatin County. Gallatin County has contracted with Fitch and Associates to complete the study. The study is wrapping up and we expect to see recommendation results this spring. The study is an effort to address a best practice of delivering EMS services in the county in the future.

15. I am still on the Board of Directors with Montana State Fire Chiefs Association as a combination section director.

16. I am still on the Montana State Fire Chiefs Wildland Fire Committee.

17. I continue to sit on the board of the Gallatin County Fire Council as Vice President. I also continue to chair the Gallatin County Fire Council communications committee.

18. Assistant Chief Dahlhauser continues to chair the training committee with the Gallatin County Fire Council.

19. I am still a Gallatin County Deputy Fire Warden as well as a Gallatin County Deputy Emergency Managements Officer.

20. Our ambulance transport plan is complete and we are actively transporting patients to the hospital. Income has begun to come in from Pintler Billing for our transports

21. We had one firefighter in January require reporting for an exposure to bodily fluids from a patient. Proper reports were made with Montana State Fund and treatment provided. We don't foresee any further needs.

22. All Hyalite Fire apparatus are currently in service.