



Hyalite Rural Fire District

Board Meeting Synopsis Approval Form

The written synopsis of the October 8, 2024 Hyalite Rural Fire District (HRFD) Board of Trustees Annual Board Meeting was approved by motion of the HRFD Board of Trustees on November 19, 2024.

Chair Signature

Justin Miller, Chairman

Printed Name

Secretary Signature

Ken Beideman, Secretary

Printed Name

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

DATE: OCTOBER 8, 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
Pete Geddes
Walt Zidack
Jason Jarrett
Ken Beideman

STAFF IN ATTENDANCE:

Brian Nickolay, Fire Chief
Sheryl Wyman, Administrative Assistant

PUBLIC IN ATTENDANCE:

Kade O'Brian – Vol Firefighter
Anna French – Vol Firefighter
Johanna Ficcadenti – Vol Firefighter

0:00:01	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: Trustee Geddes moves to approve consent agenda as presented Trustee Zidack seconded the motion. Vote: Jarrett-Yes; Zidack-Yes; Beideman-Yes; Miller-Yes; Geddes-Yes. Unanimous approval.
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	<i>[See August 20, 2024 Board Packet for Consent Agenda items Approved]</i>
	REGULAR AGENDA
0:00:31	<p>Agenda Item 1 – Discussion and Decision – Updated Final Budget Presentation</p> <p>Trustee Zidack presents the history of the State Taxable Valuations. The numbers came back from the State and we were informed by the County that no adjustment was needed to our budget.</p> <p>Chief Nickolay says the revised numbers didn't change that much. No action is necessary by the board.</p>
0:01:45	<p>Agenda Item 2 – Discussion and Decision – Potential Hire of New FTE</p> <p>Chief Nickolay doesn't have a lot of information. He is working with the current staff to work on a five year and ten-year plan in regards to staffing. Staffing is going to improve soon. We are getting a couple of Captains are coming back and we are promoting to Captain in the next month or so. As we continue to grow there is certainly room to improve in the efficiency of staffing.</p> <p>Areas of possibility is to add a position which would be a break-off of Colin's position in maintenance and creating a logistical position that would take facilities off of his plate so he can focus on equipment and apparatus. Another area we are looking at is the academy and add support in that area. We have more interest in volunteering but we don't have the manpower to train more individuals. He is looking to apply to grants to add additional positions.</p> <p>Trustee Beideman asks about Fort Ellis and what they can bring over and there staffing. Trustee Beideman asks what the limiting factor is to bring more people on. Chief Nickolay states it is coaching. We can only bring on six people with the two coaches. We expand to eight trainees in the spring because of nicer weather. With more coaches we could expand to eight to ten in the Fall and ten to 12 in the spring. Chief Nickolay will write up a plan to present to the board.</p> <p>Trustee Jarrett states he feels training for the volunteer personnel should be top priority. Chief Nickolay states a backlog is being created once the volunteer completes the academy they are immediately place in driver/operator training. It has been a challenge getting the 14 volunteers driver trained and pump operator trained.</p> <p>Chair Miller asks for any public comment.</p> <p>Volunteer Firefighter Ficcadenti states the hire of an additional trainer would really help with D/O training. The difficulty arises when you have volunteers who are working full time jobs trying to help with training. Volunteer Firefighter French</p>

	seconds the comments. She feels having another hired position would help lighten the load across the whole department.
0:16:03	<p>Agenda Item 3 – Discussion and Decision – Sale of Used Engines</p> <p>Chief Nickolay presents the background. We have two engines on order that should arrive March of 2025. We will surplus or sell the older engines 6-2 and 6-3. Design of the new trucks are identical to the engine we ordered in 2019. We will now have three engines that are the same and make training that more efficient. We will have an odd ball engine in the 2011 Rosenbauer engine. He found a company based out of Alabama that has a 2014 used Pierce for sale which would be similar to our three new engines. The Chief is looking at trading the old twins and the 2011 for the used 2014 engine which is for sale. The current price for the 2014 engine is \$495,000. The value of the 2011 engine is \$295,000. The old engines would be valued at \$100,000 apiece. The capital replacement recovery cost for those engines is currently \$20,000. The real benefit is we would have four engines similar in configuration and would go from needing people on four engines to training people on 3 ¼.</p> <p>Chair Miller asks questions about the proposed engine. Discussion is held between the board members and the Chief regarding value of the old engines.</p> <p>No decision is needed from the board until more numbers are provided by the Chief. Direction is provided to the Chief from the board.</p> <p>Chair Miller asks for any more board discussion. None given. He asks for any public comment. None given.</p>
0:25:21	<p>Agenda Item 4 – Discussion – Possible Partnership with the Fort Ellis Fire Service Area</p> <p>Chief Nickolay hopes this to be a running agenda item. Meetings have been held between the Chief, Trustee Geddes and Zidack and Fort Ellis. The debt service will need to be figured out that has been accumulated by Fort Ellis. They are currently working with the county on ideas. Trustee Zidack informs the board the budget for Fort Ellis is currently around \$900,000 of which \$400,000 of that is dedicated to debt service. The remaining \$500,000 would not cover the cost per call. He states the easiest solution would be a straight consolidation based on the statute used when Rae and Sourdough consolidated. However, without having some sort of pre-arranged arrangement to take into consideration the debt held, the debt would have to be spread to everyone and we would need an increase in our mills.</p> <p>Discussion is held between the board members regarding taxable valuations and possible mills.</p> <p>Chief Nickolay goes over the fire chief situation at Fort Ellis and possible timelines. One possibility would be an interlocal agreement with the thinking it would be a temporary fix until a merger could be complete. If it shows it wouldn't be a benefit it could easily be terminated.</p>

	<p>Further discussion is held regarding the pre-existing debt. Trustee Jarrett makes comments. Discussion is held regarding the increase in taxes for both areas. The benefits at this point aren't outweighing the costs. Trustee Geddes doesn't see the growth to the east versus the growth which is happening to the west.</p> <p>Discussion is held between the trustees. Questions are asked about their apparatus status. They currently have two notes towards their new station. They have one part-time administrative assistant as their only paid staff. The debt needs to stay in their district rather than be carried by our district. Discussion is held regarding ISO ratings and issues with the Fort Ellis area. Trustee Zidack makes the point we need to be fiduciary responsible to our taxpayers.</p> <p>Chair Miller asks for any public comment. None given. Chair Miller asks for any more board discussion. None given.</p>
1:00:10	<p>Agenda Item 5 – Replacement of Rae Fire Station – <i>Standing Agenda Item</i></p> <p>Chief Nickolay was a meeting with ThinkOne next Tuesday (10/15). At the last meeting we went through the needs list and plugged it into a square footage space and it will fit on the land we expect to use. They brought four different layouts. The next meeting will to refine the needs list. The current size is at 15,000 square feet which should be able to made smaller. There will be two areas, the fire station and onsite housing. We need to look at a dollar figure that we will be thinking of as a ceiling before we ask the voters for funding.</p> <p>Questions and comments are made by the board. Trustee Geddes states we are trying to fix the housing problem not the fire station so that should be our focus.</p>
1:08:37	<p>Agenda Item 6 – Fire Chief's Report</p> <p>Chief Nickolay discusses the Fire Chief's report. We had 77 incidents in August. At the end of August, we had a yearly total of 495. The current roster has 47 members. We will have a full resident program starting next week. The academy is going strong and will wrap up in December. We've been responding to grass fires. No new developments with the county EMS program.</p> <p>Money is coming in from the ambulance transport program. No injuries in August. Apparatus is back in service due to the work of Captain Prato.</p> <p>Questions are asked by the board members. Chief Nickolay goes over the trip to Kootenai County to view how their ambulance transport program works. There is a committee with the county to work on ideas for a county EMS program. It will have to be a levy to the taxpayers for it to go forward. This would include those agencies that currently have an ambulance transport program to make it county wide.</p> <p><i>[See Attachment A – Fire Chief's Report]</i></p>
1:17:07	<p>Trustees' Activities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pancake Breakfast is discussed. Approximately 700 people attended.

1:18:07	Announcements <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Next Board Meeting – Tuesday, November 19, 2024 • Night with Santa – December 4, 2024 – 5-7pm, Sourdough Station
1:18:17	Adjournment



Hyalite Rural Fire District

Fire Chief's Report

September 2024

Prepared by: Fire Chief, Brian Nickolay

1. The Hyalite Fire District responded to a total of 77 incidents in August 2024. This brings our calls for the year to date to 495.

- Total Calls August 2023 - 63
- Total Calls August 2022 - 65
- Total Calls August 2021 - 41
- Total Calls August 2020 - 47
- Total Calls August 2019 - 53

2. Our current roster is at 47 members (effective 10/1/2024).

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

3. We are continuing to work on our overnight command coverage shortages. We are at 3 of our needed 7 volunteer captains. One of our volunteer captains is on summer leave but will be returning in the month of October. We are starting a volunteer captain academy this fall which will include 3 new captains. Our hope is to then start an additional 3 captains in the spring. We have started to implement overtime shifts for our 3 non exempt paid captains. This has significantly helped myself and Assistant Chief Dahlhauser. Myself and Assistant Chief Dahlhauser are continuing to work extra to provide coverage at night where we lack availability. Overtime pay has been kept within what we budgeted for the fiscal year.

4. We currently have 8 resident firefighters living at the Sourdough Fire Station.

- Current Sourdough Residents -

- Allie Kuntz, Sophie Smith, Riley Wilson, Tyler Palmer, Nick Blommel, Kade O'Brian, Jack Vincent, and Evan Jones
 - Sourdough resident firefighters continue to fill weekend shifts Friday 7pm – Monday 7am.
5. We currently have 4 resident firefighters living at the Cottonwood Fire Station.
- Current Cottonwood Residents –
 - Brennan Lyle, Tyler Newell, Robert Bole, and Zakkar Tusken.
 - 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 3 resident renters at the Rae house.
- Current Rae Renters -
 - Caitilin Fueg, Sam Chui and Kate Brownell
7. Non-resident volunteer firefighters continue to cover 6 hour shifts at the Sourdough Fire Station on Monday – Friday 7am – 7pm. With our current level of staffing we are able to cover 7 of our 10 day shifts with at least 2 volunteers.
8. We continue our regular multi company fire and EMS training every Wednesday night and command training twice a month. On September 30th we hosted a mutual aid command training. We had participation from the Bozeman Fire Dept, Fort Ellis Fire Service Area, Bridger Canyon Fire District and the Gallatin County 911 center.
9. Our fall 2024 recruit firefighter academy started at the beginning of September. We welcomed 6 new recruit firefighters and 1 new recruit driver/operator. Captain Templeton and Malone are working with our new recruits. The academy is predicted to be completed in December.
10. On August 1st we assisted the Fort Ellis Fire Service Area with a grass fire.
11. On August 23rd we assisted Gallatin County with a grass fire in the Maudlow area. We assisted on this event for 2 days.
12. On August 29th we responded to a grass fire in the Hyalite Foothills area. Along with our auto aid partners we were able to keep the fire to less than 3 acres.
13. The fire district is continuing to be involved with an EMS discussion going on in Gallatin County.
14. I am still on the Board of Directors with Montana State Fire Chiefs Association as a combination section director.
15. I am still on the Montana State Fire Chiefs Wildland Fire Committee.

16. 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.

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

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

19. 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

20. We had no firefighter injuries in the Month of August.

21. Captain Prato completed the pump overhaul of Engine 6-3. The project was a complete pump rebuilt after a failure. Engine 6-3 was out of service from July 17th until September 11th.

22. Water Tender 6-1 was out of service from August 21st through August 31 with a failure of the turbo on the chassis motor. The repair was completed by Best Rate Diesel Repair.