

**MICA KIDD ISLAND FIRE PROTECTION DISTRICT
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS REGULAR MEETING
December 1, 2015 6:00 PM**

PRESENT:

Chairman Mundt
Commissioner Smith
Commissioner Lindsay
Chief Blubaum
Admin Asst. Saranto

CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Mundt moved to adjourn until Dec 15th due to improper meeting notice since this was not our regularly scheduled meeting. After a brief discussion on the legality of the meeting; Mr. Arhutick verified that the meeting was posted on the MKI web site on Tuesday making this a legal meeting. Chairman Mundt called the meeting to order at 6:05 P.M.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

PUBLIC COMMENTARY

Gretchen Hauser: When was the date picked for this meeting? She was told that she would be notified and she was not. Why can we not receive a phone call? An extra special effort needs to be made to communicate these type of things; this has been an ongoing problem for a long time. Communication is very important, pick up the phone and call people.

James King: Wanted to thank Commissioner Smith and Commissioner Lindsay for the time they gave the community as Commissioners. Does the Fire District take Federal funds? Chief answered no we have not in the last 3 years.

Jim Wilson: During the Nov 3rd election a group of individuals standing near the Mica Grange hall wearing what appeared to be MKI related attire holding signage asking citizens to vote for Chris Shelton and Jim Smith. When I tried to take a picture of them they became agitated and asked why. Clearly based on their reaction, my perception, these individuals knew what they were doing was not appropriate. In talking with various neighbors it appears that not only were individuals in MKI apparel at the grange hall but also down along Kidd Island Rd near the dump site. The only explanation for this behavior is they were trying to imply that MKIFIRE supports Mr. Shelton and Mr. Smith. Many local citizens saw through their unethical and deceptive actions. Over the past 18 months at fire district meetings I have heard the Chief and some volunteers comment that local residents don't trust and appreciate their efforts. When these same individuals condone and engage in deceptive practices it's no wonder that local citizens would lose respect. The Chief and this small handful of volunteers need to become positive role models and quit giving this department and their fellow volunteers a black eye. Simply stated, you can't demand respect you have to earn it. Also I understand that during a recent call a citizen was being hassled for having a particular sign out in their front yard, this behavior should not be allowed.

Our biggest concern is leadership or lack thereof. For the Chief to tell the volunteers they could wear MKI apparel for election campaigning provided that it wasn't owned by the department demonstrates a clear lack of good judgement. Several MKI volunteers and staff brought forth the question of integrity with regards to this election, since Commissioner Smith was directly impacted I would call upon you to initiate at least a written reprimand to be placed in the Chief's file for his unethical actions and breach of public trust. If unwilling to do so Commissioner Smith, I call on the other Commissioners to take action. Our community is watching to determine what this board will or will not tolerate.

MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

Chairman Mundt moved to approve the minutes. Commissioner Lindsay 2nd the motion: **Motion Carried**

TREASURER'S REPORT

Chief Blubaum provided bills and financial reports. Chairman Mundt questioned the invoice for \$600.00 from Chuck Lempesis, Meeting with Chief and MOU. Is this 2 hours for review of the MOU? Chief stated it was the MOU with Worley Highway and an audit letter stating no fraud by the department. Chairman Mundt moved to pay the bills. Commissioner Smith 2nd the motion: **Motion Carried**

Commissioner Lindsay moved to approve the Profit & Loss Budget vs. Actual. Chairman Mundt 2nd the motion: **Motion Carried**

Commissioner Lindsay moved to approve the Balance Sheet, Chairman Mundt 2nd the motion: **Motion Carried**

CHIEF'S REPORT

Chief Blubaum could not provide a chiefs report because our internet has been down; no access to his outlook calendar.

Wind storm; we had 6 pieces of apparatus out that night staffed with at least 2 per vehicle. We had at least a dozen volunteers that spent in excess of 20 hours. We ran somewhere between 35 - 45 calls that night. Dispatch was so backed up that we did not receive all of our calls. Wind event started about 1pm. We cut out driveways / roads so people could get home. We even delivered kids home from the school bus. Couple of the guys almost got squished, but everyone was safe.

We had the station opened that night for people unable to get home until the roads were cleared and we were giving out water for the next couple of days. County damage assessment was between 2-4 million dollars in personal property damages not counting fences or vehicles.

Chief had a chance to visit with Eastside Fire; they do put \$18,000 into a fund that gets divided out at the end of the year according to points earned for events (incidents, trainings etc.). Eastside has 35 volunteer firefighters with a total of 48 members including their paid staff. They do have auxillary volunteers that only provide support for their pancake breakfast and their Christmas party they do not respond to emergency incidents. Their new members go through a probation period 60-90 days, then go to helper status. Once they have done enough training they move on to be full members. The Chief has total control of personnel and operations. The biggest problem they have is the commissioners getting involved in the operations of the district, they actually have policies against the commissioners dealing with the operational stuff. They have a monthly training standard, firefighters are required to attend 2 sessions per month usually 8-10 hours. If their members fail to attend 50% of the training they can and have been terminated.

Commissioner Lindsay asked if we had a policy that keeps commissioners from getting involved with the operations of the district. Chief answered no we don't. Chairman Mundt and Commissioner Lindsay requested a copy of Eastside Fire's policy.

Commissioner Lindsay along with most volunteers do not want to be paid or receive a stipend. He likes the idea of appreciation which we have done pretty well with the Christmas party and white elephant gift exchange. How much do we spend on the gifts? Chief; less than \$20.00 each. Commissioner Lindsay would not be against raising that amount to \$50.00. Since this is a part of the budget process it will have to wait until next budget workshop.

OLD BUSINESS

- a. Fleet: Chairman Mundt has been monitoring the auction web site; there has been nothing we would be interested in. The only thing going through are the 916A1's with around 50,000-60,000 miles, \$14,000 min bid selling for around \$30,000. 916A3's are selling for the same price with less miles. They have sold 12 that are shipping out of Hawaii. We have heard nothing from IDL.

Chief emailed the commissioners information on the process and bid splitting 59-1026 and 67-2806.

Lake City Ford state bid 2016 Utility Police Interceptor, white for \$33,931.00 available in 16-24 weeks or Lake City Ford state bid 2016 Police Interceptor, black for \$34,785.00 available in 2 weeks.

Chief's command vehicle is a 2007 Dodge 1500 with 123,000 Miles. Chief would like to move his pickup to U299, something that could be used for running errands and local trainings.

Chairman Mundt is not in favor of purchasing anything right now; need to wait for the newly elected commissions to take office, purchasing something now before they take office is inappropriate. Purchasing a tender should be first before purchasing a command vehicle.

Commissioner Lindsay; then we should just quit now, step aside and not be commissioners? I'm a lame duck? That's silly, I'm still a commissioner.

Commissioner Lindsay moved to purchase 2016 Utility Police Interceptor, white for \$33,931.00.

Commissioner Smith also believes that we need to purchase a tender before a command vehicle.

Chairman Mundt would like to see what is available for a used command vehicle.

Brush255: needs all season tires (Les Schwab), bumper repair and radio installed (General Fire), Chairman Mundt also suggested tire chains. Chief would like to surplus the tires that are taken off the truck.

Chairman Mundt moved to purchase new tires, chains, bumper repair and radio installed. Commissioner Lindsay 2nd the motion: **Motion Carried**

- b. MOU with Worley Highway District; \$600.00 a month for 576 Square Feet of office space, bathroom and kitchenette. Terminate within 60 days' notice, move in date Dec. 1, 2015. We will need to frame in a couple of doors, add a couple of small walls and paint. We will also need new carpet and office furniture.

Commissioner Lindsay moved to approve the MOU with Worley Highway District, Chairman Mundt 2nd the motion: **Motion Carried**

NEW BUSINESS

- a. Executive Session to discuss personnel per Idaho Code 74-206(B)
Chairman Mundt moved to go into Executive session to discuss personnel per Idaho Code 74-206(B), Commissioner Lindsay 2nd the motion: Motion Carried

Roll call vote:

Chairman Mundt: Aye

Commissioner Lindsay: Aye

Commissioner Smith: Aye

Commissioner adjourned to Executive session at 7:02 p.m.

Chairman Mundt moved to end the Executive session and return to the Regular session, Commissioner Lindsay 2nd the motion: **Motion Carried**

Roll call vote:

Chairman Mundt: Aye

Commissioner Lindsay: Aye

Commissioner Smith: Aye

Commissioners returned to regular session at 7:36 p.m.

Commissioner Lindsay moved to give Carmen Saranto Admin Assistant a raise to \$17.00 per hour starting next pay period. Chairman Mundt 2nd the motion: **Motion Carried**

Commissioner Lindsay: it came to our attention that back in March 2015 we voted and approved to increase Chief Blubaum's vacation days from 5 to 10 days. This vote was not entered into the minutes. Commissioner Lindsay moved to increase Chief's vacation days from 5 to 10 days per year. Commissioner Smith 2nd the motion. **Motion Carried**

PUBLIC INPUT

Randy Opp: Appreciated Jim Wilson's comments and thought they were right on. He was disappointed the commissioners did not comment on the inappropriate and ethical stance of the department. Commissioner Lindsay stated they would comment under Commissioner's comments.

Mike Dawson: Tuesday the night of the wind storm there were several volunteers out helping people in the community for most of the night. On Wednesday they returned to help clear trees out of roads and driveways. We did help several people in our community. We did receive several comments like "why are you out here doing this?" To help our community, most were positive and grateful.

Jim Wilson: Appreciate the efforts of the Fire District.

Terry Montanye: Was not here for the election, he was in Australia but wanted to comment on some of the prior comments. He didn't understand their comments, he thought that you had a right to freedom of speech, not everyone is going to feel the same way.

Nancy King: She was wondering if the fire district was getting a new command vehicle because it wanted a new one or because it needed a new one and what determines if the current one is unreliable. Most people use their vehicles with more than 100,000.000 miles on them. You mentioned new office furniture. Why are you not taking these desks over to the new office? To address the legalities of Fire District attire being worn while campaigning, there is a court case where expenditures of government funds to support candidates is a violation of the law. Even if it's not illegal, it's unethical.

Jim King: The one-time occurrence where a 911 call was made and responded to and a heated argument took place, it's a one-time occurrence, but when it happens more than once it's a reoccurring behavior, what liability do we have? Commissioner Mundt talked to the individual and it will be handled administratively. This is a personnel issue. If that kind of insult was done to a person in the community then we do need to apologize. The volunteers wearing MKI sweatshirts gives the community the idea that the fire district supports the candidate their campaigning for. In a prior meeting he cautioned the Chief about legal and ethical behavior during an election and was assured that it would not happen this time. He believes a letter should go out to the community apologizing for our behavior during the election, the election's office was hammered with calls from our community.

Devon Riske: I organized the volunteers campaigning on Election Day. I checked with the Elections office and legal counsel prior to Election Day and was told that as long as we were not in MKIFIRE gear purchased by MKIFIRE, and it was something gifted to us it was legal. Never did we stand within a 100 feet of the Grange. The sign across the street from the Grange was illegal, there were signs on some people's properties that were illegal. I know for a fact that people down at the elections office told people that if you have a problem with it then go stand next to them with your own sign. I apologize for hurting some people's feelings, but we did nothing wrong. Firefighters have been endorsing commissioners for a long time.

COMMISSIONERS COMMENTS AND/OR CORRESPONDENCE

Chairman Mundt; There are a lot of feelings going on in the community and we just need to speak our minds and move on. Everybody is going to benefit if we can have peace in the community and that's what I am going to try to do. I think that the new commissioners are going to try and find a way to balance all the issues. We need our volunteers, we need to work with them and I am going to find a way to do that. As far as the things that happened, the responsibility comes back to the board, so personally I will apologize to the community for whatever part that I did or didn't do to set this up so there would not be so many hard feelings. I am sorry that it came to this and I think we should try to find one common purpose and I think that's what we're trying to do. During the wind storm all political ideals went away and you went out and did what you did for the community and they were grateful. To the community I do apologize, the buck stops here we are going to work on policy and training.

Commissioner Lindsay: Frustrated on this issue, Jim King came here last meeting and cautioned us on it and I regret as a board we didn't step up and get a memo out to the volunteers explaining to them exactly what we can and can't do. I feel like we didn't step up and I regret that we didn't stop this issue from happening. Chief did take steps to tell people not to wear MKI apparel while campaigning, and at that point he did send out a group text saying nobody is allowed to wear MKI gear while campaigning. Did the chief do enough, I don't think so, but we didn't do enough either. The chief did not encourage it, did he discourage it enough? I don't think he did. Was it inappropriate? I love freedom of speech. Devon I know that you talked to a lawyer and he said it was ok but does that make it appropriate? I can tell you that it has an appearance of impropriety, it does make us look bad in the community. I, like Larry, hold us responsible. We should have done more. Nobody violated the policy in my opinion. We need to get past this, should the volunteers be

reprimanded, no they thought they were doing the right thing, they are good men. You all have my apology for not stepping up on the issue.

Commissioner Smith: I don't think that I can match Larry's or Kelso's talk, it's true, so ditto that. I apologize if anybody was offended on my behalf and I thank Jim for bringing that up. I just feel that what the commissioners said was right on and I just hope that you would take our apologies for that and hopefully we do get it settled with some policy making. I want to thank the volunteers for everything that they did the night of the wind storm.

Commissioner Lindsay: Chief was out of town at an Idaho arson investigators class when I called him, but he did make efforts to tell the volunteers to take off their sweatshirts.

MOTION TO ADJOURN

Chairman Mundt moved to adjourn the meeting, Commissioner Lindsay 2nd the motion. **Motion carried 08:05 P.M.**

Respectfully Submitted,



Administrative Assistant Saranto

Approved,



Chairman Larry Mundt

Approved,



Commissioner J. Kelso Lindsay

Approved,

Commissioner Jim Smith