

**POLSON RURAL FIRE BOARD MEETING
MINUTES NOVEMBER 12, 2008**

Board trustee members present: Ross Hoyt, Fred Nelson, Alison Meslin, Jim Manley, and Dave Ottun
Board trustee members absent: None
Staff Present: Fire Chief John Fairchild
Guests: Lester Johnson, Rory Horning, Dave Devore, Lee Manicke, Volunteer Firemen Paul Bishop, Jeff Meslin, Jack Clapp, and Chris McGuinness.

Meeting called to order at Big Arm Fire Hall by Chairman Hoyt at 7:00 p.m.

Minutes October 8, 2008 Rural Fire Board Meeting: Fire Chief Fairchild requested the minutes corrected on page 1 regarding fit and housing the recently purchased 1982 Pierce Autocar. The pumper purchased from Central Valley Fire District Belgrade, Montana will fit the door width, although the overhead beam will need to be modified due to the height of the truck. The truck is currently housed at Irvine Flats. Trustee Manley asked Fire Chief Fairchild the best location for the truck. Fire Chief Fairchild requested the pumper housed at Irvine Flats. Trustee Meslin indicated the purchase of the new tender was to replace the tender #319 taken out of service at Station 1 in Polson, therefore the new tender should be used as a rural vehicle at Station 1. She voted on the purchase with the intention the pumper would be housed at Station 1. The 16 mile distance from Irvine Flats and travel on dirt roads is a concern. Fireman Jack Clapp indicated the quick response and the geographical area covered with the truck at Irvine Flats is a positive addition for the district. Currently the truck is housed at no cost to the rural district with care and maintenance along with air, heat, and electricity. Trustee Meslin indicated the board was told the pumper was to replace pumper #319 that was housed at Station 1 and that is what the board voted on. With due respect to fireman Clapp being a very enthusiastic, totally dedicated firefighter, the 26 year old truck will experience a lot of wear and tear traveling on dirt roads, along with winter snow and spring thaws to respond to all calls. Fireman Clapp indicated pumper #327 does not have SCBA capability. Since Irvine Flats has two vehicles, Trustee Meslin suggested it become an official station and as an Irvine Flats Fire Company apply for FEMA grants. The fire company will most likely acquire a new vehicle through the grant process. Additionally a legal document between the rural district and Mr. Clapp should be completed for liability issues regarding housing of fire apparatuses. Chairman Hoyt called for the question to approve the minutes with correction the 1982 Pierce apparatus does not fit into the bay at Station 1 with regard to the truck height. **Motion Chairman Hoyt, seconded Trustee Ottun to approve minutes of October 8, 2008 as corrected. Motion carried unanimously.**

Treasury Report:

Operating Fund Balance	\$	34,716.48
Capital Improvement Fund Balance	\$	86,893.55
Voted Levy	\$	5,503.23

Paid bills in the amount of \$ 113,385.56*

*Expenditure amount includes checks issued October 16, 2008.

Check #3783 to Central Valley Fire District Belgrade, MT \$55,000 purchase used 1982 Pierce Autocar.
Check #3784 to John Fairchild \$198.38 reimburse travel expenses to Belgrade for gas and lunch for crew to inspect the 1982 Pierce Autocar pumper.

Additional checks approved during November 10th meeting to facilitate loan refinancing package.
Check #3803 to 1st Interstate Bank-Polson \$49,210.60 payment #5 on loan #327200126 truck payment.
Check #3804 to 1st Citizens Bank-Polson \$8.00 security agreement filing fee to refinance 2007 Pierce Engine #318.

Check numbers 3783-3804 , both inclusive approved November 10, 2008.

Trustee Meslin reported the actual expenses to budget report includes expenditures July through November 2008, and the cash balance in the operating fund, capital improvement fund, and voted levy fund. **Motion Chairman Hoyt, seconded Trustee Meslin accepted treasury report as presented. Motion carried unanimously.**

Bills: Discussion on following bills: 1) Check #3794 payable to L.N. Curtis \$429.00 for 6-5 gallon buckets of foam Fire Chief Fairchild noted the cost of 4 buckets should be reimbursed; 2) Check #3791 payable to Fire Apparatus Repair LLC \$764.60 for maintenance & repair on Engine #318 and Engine #326; 3) Check #3793 payable to Hughes Fire Equipment, Inc. \$167.46 to replace latches on Engine #319; 4) Check #3788 payable to City of Polson \$2,997.00 Engine #319 DNRC contract on Deep Draw Wildland Fire. The DNRC has the same contract account identification number for both entities the City of Polson and Polson Rural Fire. **Motion Trustee Ottun, seconded Trustee Manley to pay bills. Motion carried unanimously.**

Correspondence: Letter from Irvine Flats resident, Greg Gardner stating the new fire equipment is greatly appreciated. Noting the response time is no longer an issue.

Staff Report: Training in water shuttle. The delivery maintained 500 gallons per minutes for 30 minutes. The state fire school instructor was impressed with the performance.

Old Business:

REFINANCE EQUIPMENT NOTE – Clerk Bonnie Manicke presented background information for the request to refinance the current equipment loan at 1st Interstate Bank. A debt service tax levy approved by the electorate and an annual budget amount of approximately \$15,000 in the general operating tax levy represent the amount necessary for the loan payments. Montana Code Annotated 7-33-2139 states if a municipality annexes property from a rural fire district, the annexed property is liable for any bonded indebtedness of the rural fire district existing as of the date of annexation to the same extent as it would have been liable if not withdrawn. Therefore, by MCA the future amount of the voted tax levy is collected at the time of annexation; while no provision is available to request the budget amount in the general operating tax levy. In a two year period, the city annexed 25 properties. Recently the city reviewed an annexation plan to square up the city limits, therefore, a loss of tax base for the rural fire district. Early payments on the current loan represents an interest savings of \$4,650; the interest rate caption from the current 4.88% to 4.00% will represent an additional savings of \$11,155. The refinancing interest rate quotes are: 1st Interstate Bank exceed 5.00%; Bitterroot Valley Bank Lolo, Montana Frank Stock, Agent 4.20% fixed; Glacier Bank 4.09% fixed; 1st Citizens Bank 4.00% fixed; Community Bank indicated the current rate is reasonable (no quote); State of Montana Intercap Financing 4.25% variable rate with rate change annually February 16th, 10 year average is 4.10%. The refinancing amount is \$340,000 for a term of 4 ½ years semi-annual payment \$41,798.46 with final payment on or before June 15, 2013. Trustees also reviewed and signed Resolution Number 9 authorizing the chairman and secretary-treasurer to sign the loan document. The board thanked Bonnie for recognizing the decrease in the interest rate and negotiating the loan.. **Motion Trustee Meslin, seconded Trustee Manley to adopt Resolution Number 9 to refinance loan with 1st Citizens Bank at a fixed interest rate of 4.00% with semi-annual payments for a term of 4 ½ years with final payment on or before June 15, 2013. Motion carried unanimously.**

CONSULTANT BIDS – Trustee Manley reported the request for proposals (RFP) regarding the consultant does not require legal notice. Attorney Robert Long was also contacted for an opinion and Mr. Long is of the same opinion. Due to the time limit constraint, Trustee Manley suggested consultants

contacted by a request for proposals. Trustee Manley prepared a RFP for consultant services regarding placement of new rural fire station. The volunteer membership also completed a RFP. The consultants are requested to submit proposals before November 25th. The board will meet November 28th to review bids and make a decision soon thereafter. Interim City Manager Mike Lies indicated during a City Commission Meeting the volunteers and rural board committed to share the fee for the consultant. Trustees Manley and Meslin indicated the board has never committed to one-third or \$3,000 of the suggested fee for the consultant. During the October 8, 2008, the board voted to request bids from consultants regarding location of a proposed rural fire station. The vote was three for, two opposed with the motion carried. Currently the volunteers voted to participate in the cost of the consultant's fee at one-third or up to \$7,000. Trustee Manley voted to get bids and not to commit funds. Fireman Paul Bishop reported the \$9,000 budget established for the consultant in the proposal is normal while the consultants are requested to provide a scope of work description which will fit within the fee cap. Paul questioned the urgency of the time frame to complete the report. The report should address not only the location of the current proposed station but also the location of future station(s) with the growth of the city. The completed report should be placed on the website for the general public to comment. Trustee Manley suggested one question analyzed. Is the fairgrounds the best place for a rural station? Trustee Meslin noted the city commission voted favorable with the impression the rural board had committed funds. The expenditure will need to come out of a line item in the operating fund; capital fund transfer can only be used for capital purchases over \$5,000. Trustee Meslin suggested a public survey with specific suggestions. The volunteers would like a more adequate place for training and it is recognized addition space is needed to house equipment. The bridge repair is a concern. Trustee Manley indicated the board should progress by sending out the proposals and then review the bids. Trustee Nelson suggested the city present a proposal. **Motion Trustee Meslin, seconded Trustee Nelson to accept Trustee Manley's RFP for consultant bids, review the bids and then decide if the board will commit funds for a report with the suggested completion date for the project January 1st, 2009.** Resident Rory Horning suggested the scope of work should include all the questions and give the concerns to the professional. Public safety should come first. **Motion carried unanimously.**

BUILDING ACQUISITION - Trustee Meslin reported eight architects were contacted. The city requires architect drawings for a wood frame building and an engineer design for a metal building. The engineer design and specifications are generally part of the metal building kit. Architect fees quoted were 1). \$50,000 plus; 2). 4% on finished item; 3). \$90,000 or less; 4). 6% on total cost of building.. A tentative floor plan was used to acquire prices for a metal building. Eleven companies were contacted with five quotes received. Quotes varied according to company and whether the interior of the building is finished. Quotes on a metal building were 1). \$307,000 ; 2). \$143,000 no interior finish; 3). would also quote a wood frame building which will be less; 4) finished turnkey 4' longer than floor plan \$189,000; 5). \$115,000 no interior finish; complete turnkey with hookup to utilities \$225,000 or less.

APPRECIATION LETTER TO FIREMEN – Chairman Hoyt requested the trustees sign an appreciation letter to the volunteer membership for their dedication during the wildland fire season.

REPLACEMENT OF TENDER #319 - Trustee Meslin asked Fire Chief Fairchild plans to make Polson Station 1 suitable to house the 1982 Pierce Autocar. The finances and renovation to cut into the beams is not feasible at the present time. The best service is in the Irvine Flats location with volunteers Clapps and Swopes a ready response team. Trustee Manley indicated by statute the furnishing and housing of equipment is a decision of the board. The obvious concern is the wear and tear on the truck

on dirt roads along with winter weather conditions. Fireman Jack Clapp indicated three points of access are available out of Irvine Flats for quick response. The location of engine #327 was not questioned when housed at Irvine Flats. Fire personnel respond to the station in a personal vehicle. Trustee Meslin personally feels the vehicle should go back into the Polson central station. Would like to see Irvine Flats become a fire company. Mr. Clapp agrees a formal agreement should be entered into regarding housing of equipment at a private residence. Chairman Hoyt suggested Trustee Manley and Jack Clapp draft an agreement between the Polson Rural Board and Jack Clapp regarding housing of fire equipment for review at the December 2008 board meeting. Trustee Manley thanked Mr. Clapp for housing the fire equipment.

New Business:

REFURBISH ARMED FORCES MEMORIAL BRIDGE - Trustee Meslin reported on the workshop with Montana Department of Transportation. One lane will be kept open unless needed to move equipment. Half of the bridge will be refurbished in April/May and the second half in the fall. Each side will take 29 working days scheduled work six days a week. Emergency dispatch will be in contact with site managers at all times. Access across town will be 4th and 3rd Avenues. Peak traffic flow will be 3:00 to 6:00 p.m. DOT will facilitate a public meeting November 19th at the KwaTaqNuk.

COMPLIANCE TO MONTANA STATE CODES – Trustee Meslin indicated the board should reestablished the Big Arm Fire Company as it legally exists. A copy of the legal by-laws were passed out for review. The company should elect a President, Vice-President, Secretary-treasurer and Fire Captain. Trustee Manley suggested a committee appointed to review the Big Arm by-laws. Fire Chief Fairchild noted segregation of fire units is not feasible. Due to proper training, the volunteers are now aggressive to attack fire suppression. Training needs to be provided at one station. Trustee Meslin indicated the Big Arm Fire Company is unique group of people and should have some flexibility to reestablish Big Arm Fire Company with guidelines. Different levels of activities should be available to volunteers. Trustee Manley indicated the by-laws followed or amended with goals to find creative way to recruit and train volunteers. Fireman Paul Bishop indicated the standards should not be watered down and all volunteers need to function at the same level. Fire Chief Fairchild provided the names of Big Arm Fire Company volunteers and is willing to assist with new recruits and training. Chairman Hoyt appointed a committee Trustees Manley and Meslin, Fire Chief Fairchild fireman Jack Clapp and Big Arm volunteers to review the by-laws and report back to the board.

Comments from public: None

Meeting adjourned 9:20 p.m.

Ross Hoyt, Chairman

Alison W. Meslin Secretary-Treasurer