

**CORTEZ FIRE PROTECTION DISTRICT
REGULAR BOARD MEETING
November 9, 2011**

CALL TO ORDER

President Jim Bridgewater called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m. in the meeting room at Station #1. Roll call followed and the board members present were Patricia DeGagne-Rule, Hal Shepherd, Kent Lindsay and Jim Bridgewater, Keenan Ertel was absent. Administrative Assistant Wendy Mimiaga, Asst. Chief Charles Balke and Chief Jeff Vandevoorde were present for the meeting. Hal Shepherd made a motion to excuse Keenan Ertel, Patricia DeGagne-Rule seconded. The motion passed as follows:

Ertel	Lindsay	Shepherd	DeGagne-Rule	Bridgewater
Absent	yes	yes	yes	yes

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

The minutes from the regular meeting held October 12, 2011, were brought before the board for approval. Kent Lindsay made a motion to approve the minutes, Hal Shepherd seconded. The minutes were approved on the following vote:

Ertel	Lindsay	Shepherd	DeGagne-Rule	Bridgewater
excused	yes	yes	yes	yes

BILLS AND ACCOUNTS

The board reviewed the list of bills and accounts. Kent Lindsay noted the check for \$2,105.00 to Highplains, LLC on the supplemental bill listing report handed out at the beginning of the meeting. Mr. Lindsay inquired if the job had been done acceptably. Chief Vandevoorde explained that Highplains, LLC did exactly as they said they would, including cleaning the carpets, and that the job was to his satisfaction.

The board reviewed the financials included in the Board packet. Kent Lindsay made a motion to accept the bills and financials, Hal Shepherd seconded. The motion passed as follows:

Lindsay	Shepherd	DeGagne-Rule	Ertel	Bridgewater
yes	yes	yes	excused	yes

PUBLIC COMMENT

(Note: Mark Dunn of Highplains, LLC arrived after the administrative assistants report.)

Mark Dunn of Highplains, LLC came to follow up on the work he did in the administration building. Mr. Dunn handed out a packet of photographs he had taken while doing the contracted work and explained each. Mr. Dunn stated that he went back in the building a week or two later and could still smell the mold a little bit, but it was substantially less. Chief Vandevoorde concurred that it is much better. Once the mold is out of there and it naturally dries up the smell will dissipate. Mr. Dunn explained there was one small area he could not get around that he treated with chemicals. His only other option was to have Comfort Air come in and remove the whole unit so that he could get behind it. If it continues to be a problem, Mr. Dunn told Chief Vandevoorde that he would replace the floor at no cost. Mr. Dunn continued

that he owes the District three air quality tests that have been paid for, \$190.00. Mr. Dunn believes the spoors are dead and mold cannot grow without water, so it should go away.

Kent Lindsay inquired if Mr. Dunn had fixed the crimped line as shown in the photographs. The line had already been replaced, it was a before picture. Mr. Lindsay asked if the line went into the sewer line, and if there is any way to trap the gas. His concern is methane gas coming back in from the sewer line if there is not a pea trap. Chief Vandevoorde will have Comfort Air come in and make sure there is a trap in the line.

CORRESPONDENCE

There was no correspondence.

REPORT FROM THE ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT

A report was included in the packet. Wendy Mimiaga reported the county treasurers' office distributed a total of \$15,878.87 to the district on November 9, 2011, and that this distribution occurred since the included report in the Board packet. Since the Colo. Trust accounts were transferred to the Citizens State Bank general fund account, the county treasurer will issue a check directly to the district for the taxes from now on instead of depositing them into the Colo. Trust accounts.

Both the First Southwest Bank and the State Farm Bank statements arrived after the report was included in the Board packet. First Southwest bank money market account had a balance of \$250,770.01 with an interest rate of 0.75%, the interest earned for the month of October, 2011 was \$159.68, and year to date \$770.01.

The State Farm Bank money market account had a balance of \$1,024,926.43. The interest rate dropped from 0.95% to 0.90% on October 5, 2011. The interest earned for the month of October, 2011 was \$788.74 and year to date \$3,249.62.

Ms. Mimiaga also updated the board on the state contribution to the Volunteer Firefighter Pension Fund. A letter from the Department of Local Affairs was distributed to the board, which indicated that the fund will receive \$41,791.00 from the state again this year.

At the last board meeting, October, 12, 2011, Mr. Ertel had inquired if we could lower the contribution to the pension fund in order to try to balance the budget. Upon talking to DOLA, based on the way they calculate the state contribution, we could lower our contribution and still receive the same amount from the state. We could, however, in the future end up underfunding the pension fund due to the fact that we pay well over the \$300 recommended maximum pay out by the state. We will do a new actuarial report in 2012.

Chairman Bridgewater stated that we should get an idea, over the next five years, of who will be eligible to receive a pension. Chief Vandevoorde commented that he does not see many more twenty-year volunteers in the future. A few volunteers with seven years of volunteer service have stated that they just want to put in their ten years and retire. The board discussed having Frank Dobis at Actuarial Solutions run a few different scenarios to see if we can get a better idea of what the pension fund contribution should be.

Kent Lindsay inquired about the letter from Montezuma County Treasurer Sherri Dyess about the treasury fees refunded. She had referenced an order number, 0-12-10, from the county commissioners to refund the treasurers fees, and that she would "need another order number before she could refund the remainder for 2010." Mr. Lindsay wanted to know why the total amount for 2010 was not refunded. Chief Vandevoorde explained that \$7,537.65 had been

refunded in October, 2010, and that they had to meet with the County Commissioners again to get the remainder of \$16,336.37 refunded in November, 2010.

Discussion then reverted back to the contribution to the pension fund. Hal Shepherd suggested that a survey be done to see approximately how many years the volunteers anticipate working. This would help the actuarial report figure the amount the Board will need to contribute to the fund. The actuarial report is based on everyone putting in 20 years, they have to figure the amounts based on the worst-case scenario. Kent Lindsay asked what the contribution would be if we reduced it to $\frac{3}{4}$ of a mill. We are currently contributing one mill, \$146,771, so at $\frac{3}{4}$ of a mill it would drop to about \$100,000+, thus putting about \$40,000 back into the budget, which would help the budget deficit. There are no regulations that disallow a board from reducing or increasing the contribution to the pension fund. The state statute (CRS 31-30-1110) states that not more than one mill can be set apart. It was reported that the pension fund account at Edward Jones is doing well and that the year to date income earned is about \$55,000.

REPORT FROM THE FIRE INSPECTOR

Chief Vandevoorde included a report on the inspections he has done, and permits that have been issued. Chief Vandevoorde updated the board that the Axis Medical building has installed the five additional emergency lights that were missing, and that he will be doing a sprinkler inspection later in the week to get them ready for a temporary C.O. so they can start moving furniture in.

Chief Vandevoorde also reported that the department had assisted two elderly couples with controlled burns. This is not standard protocol, but the chief felt that, due to the age of the couples, it would be in everyone's best interest.

REPORT FROM THE ASST. CHIEF

Asst. Chief Balke went over his report that was included in the packet. Asst. Chief Balke reported that a training was also done with dispatch and the helicopter company. We assisted in landing air care, the new dual patient helicopter. 8-9 flights were done that day to help the dispatchers better understand what goes on in the field.

The Citizens Fire Academy started on October 27, with ten participants and there has only been positive feedback on the program. The program has consisted of an overview of the fire district, communications, which is an ongoing theme throughout the program, hands on practices which included using fire extinguishers, extrications, car fires and using a fire hose, and going over the apparatus. Upcoming this week will be haz-mat, wild land fires, and then the CPR and First Aid course. The next week will be graduation. The participants have gotten an appreciation for everything the fire department does.

There are 11 applicants for the volunteer program, we have put together an updated written and agility test. The schedule and syllabus for Firefighter I and II have been done and the classes will start after the first of the year. We will also open the class up to neighboring agencies.

New map books and pre-plans are being worked on. Asst. Chief Balke and Chief Vandevoorde surveyed several of the trailer parks with Sam, from the city, to look at some of the deficiencies in addressing to put in the map book.

Asst. Chief Balke was given approval from Dr. Turbin for frontline medications for cardiac emergencies, which he will start carrying.

Asst. Chief Balke and Justin Lindsay are working on an EMS grant for a cardiac monitor and AED's, Automated External Defibrillator. The AED's will be for the public and a few for the Fire Department.

The AFG grant is still pending. The funding agency is looking to have the first round of notifications done by the end of 2011. They had a delay due to a change in the process. We are currently in the electronic scoring. There is \$405 million for Fire and EMS Operations for fire fighting and emergency vehicles and Fire Prevention Safety Grants. There is another \$405 million for SAFER grants, but we only applied for the Operation Safety Grant.

Public education has been busy this month with Fire Prevention week. Also, went to Cortez High School for a career presentation.

REPORT FROM THE FIRE CHIEF

Chief Vandevoorde went over the report he included in the agenda. Among the meetings he attended, he had a meeting with Roy Lane and Gay Hall, personnel director for the city, about the 120-day notice for the Fire Inspector position. The letter from Roy Lane is included in the Board packet.

Chief Vandevoorde informed the board there were 126 calls for October. The total calls for this year is 1324, at the end of October, 2011 and about 1368 as of November 9, 2011.

Chief Vandevoorde requested that since the City of Cortez has decided to take over the Fire Marshall position, the Board have the attorney, Kelly McCabe, write a letter relinquishing the Cortez Fire Protection District from any responsibility for Fire and Life Safety inspections in the City of Cortez as of February 17, 2012, the end of the 120-day notice. This would legally cover the district for any problems from future inspections. The Board discussed the issue and felt that the letter is a good idea, but would rather have Chief Vandevoorde write the letter, and not pay the attorney to do so. Hal Shepherd suggested that the letter be sent to the City Manager and copied to Mayor Dan Porter, City Attorney Mike Green, and the Cortez Fire District Board of Directors. There was discussion of publishing the letter as a legal notice, but decided against to not incur the cost. Chief Vandevoorde contacted the new city manager to set up a meeting to talk with him about the Fire Department and how it operates.

Chief Vandevoorde reviewed the state guidelines for volunteer firefighters to receive a discount on the purchase of new tires. A retired volunteer had requested the use of the discount program, however, you have to be an active volunteer and use your vehicle to respond to fire calls. If the program is abused, we could lose the privilege to use it.

OLD BUSINESS

Item A - Property at 928 S. Broadway – Chief Vandevoorde thought it would be a good idea to have someone in the Real Estate business look over the contract and thus took a copy of the real estate agreement to Carol Click. Ms. Click said it looked good to her, but suggested the District have their attorney, Kelly McCabe, look it over or go to a title company, which would be about \$1,000. The Chief did check with the city and the county and found that there were no liens on the property. The taxes are up to date as far as can be determined. Chief Vandevoorde also contacted the insurance company to make sure we have liability insurance on the property. It will be insured as a training building, and there will not be an increase on the policy. The property will come in handy for future trainings, especially with the Firefighter I & II classes starting after the first of the year. No motion is necessary for action as one was passed at the October 12, 2011 Board meeting.

Item B – 2012 Proposed Budget – Chairman Jim Bridgewater opened the public hearing for the proposed 2012 budget for the Cortez Fire Protection District at 6:58 p.m. Chief Vandevoorde reported that no one came in to request a copy of the proposed 2012 budget. It was listed in the paper 3 times, in the Cortez Journal on 10/25/11 and on 11/01/11 and in the November issue of the Four Corners Free Press. Chief Vandevoorde noted that the only changes that were made to the budget since the October 12, 2012 Board meeting were the Fire Inspectors contract increased from 0 to \$4,734 for the first 48 days of 2012, included in the 120 days notice, which then decreased the amount transferred from the Capital Reserves from \$77,145 to \$72,411.

Hal Shepherd expressed his concern about the \$300,000 in the Capital Reserve Fund for facilities. It had been discussed at a previous Board meeting to hire an architect in the next year to talk about a new administration building. Mr. Shepherd would rather have the money go to equipment and personnel, and was concerned that the funds would have to be used only for facilities.

Kent Lindsay inquired about the figures for administration under operating expenses. Back in August, 2011 the Board was given a report that the previous Board had done, giving an automatic 2 ½% pay increase, Mr. Lindsay wanted to know if the increase was built into the budget, which it is. Mr. Lindsay stated that he had a problem with automatic pay increases without an evaluation. It was explained that the 2 ½% increase is a cost of living increase (COLA). A merit raise would be tied to the employees' evaluation. In the past, a 3% bonus was given at the end of the year, but was eliminated in 2008. Hal Shepherd stated that in his past employments, when there was a salary freeze initiated, it also included COLA increases. Mr. Lindsay commented that he is not opposed to raises, but that they should be attached to evaluations. Chief Vandevoorde explained that evaluations had not been done in the past, but that he has already put together an evaluation form to start using. Patricia DeGagne-Rule stated that it is up to the Board to schedule and evaluate the Fire Chief, and that they need to start upholding their end of the evaluation procedures.

No members of the public attended the Public Hearing, November 9, 2011, and thus no comments were made. Chairman Bridgewater then closed the Public Hearing at 7:30 p.m.

Discussion then continued about public education. Hal Shepherd inquired about the columns, Tools of the Trade, Asst. Chief Balke had started publishing in the Cortez Journal. Asst. Chief Balke informed the Board that he had submitted a new column to the paper and hoped that they would publish it soon. Chief Vandevoorde updated the Board about the questionnaire he and Asst. Chief Balke had been working on. They are planning to send it out to all parcels in the Cortez Fire District to get feedback on the question of a mill levy increase in the upcoming election, and to inform the public of all the services the fire department performs. The recipients will be able to return it to the Fire Department or go on the Fire Department website and fill it out there. Chief Vandevoorde read the questions to the Board. They all thought the questions were good, and the information would be helpful.

Item C – 2012 Pension Budget – Administrative Assistant Wendy Mimiaga reported to the Board that the \$1,800 that had been budgeted and supposedly spent in the 2011 budget, under Expenditures, for an Actuarial Valuation Report, was incorrect. After going through the Pension accounts, this amount, \$1,800, was not expended in 2011. An actuarial report will need to be done in 2012 and, upon speaking with Frank Dobis of Actuarial Solutions, we will need to budget \$2,100 for 2012. Ms. Mimiaga also noted that the total for, Expenditures, Pension Payments should be increased to \$161,000 from \$155,000 for 2012 due to the possible addition of two more 10 year retirees that could add another \$5,940 in payouts, thus increasing the yearly payouts from \$154,737 to \$160,677 for 2012. The Board agreed that the proposed changes be made to the budget.

NEW BUSINESS

Item A – Class B Uniforms – Asst. Chief Balke presented a proposal to purchase and issue Class B uniforms to the active members of the Cortez Fire District. This would include a shirt, nametag and badge. Having these uniforms would give a more professional appearance in formal and public events and allow the public to see the fire department as the professional entity that it is, on and off duty. There is an Organizational Dinner planned for January, 2012, and it would be nice to have the uniforms by then. A policy will be written on when and how the Class B uniform will be worn. There is still over \$7,000 in the budget for Clothing Allowance. The total cost for the uniforms would be \$3,158.10. Hal Shepherd made a motion to approve the purchase of the Class B uniforms, Patricia DeGagne-Rule seconded. The motion passed as follows:

Lindsay	Shepherd	DeGagne-Rule	Ertel	Bridgewater
yes	yes	yes	excused	yes

EXECUTIVE SESSION

There was no executive session.

ADJOURNMENT

Having no further business to come before the board, Hal Shepherd made a motion to adjourn the meeting, Kent Lindsay seconded. The motion passed as follows:

DeGagne-Rule	Ertel	Lindsay	Shepherd	Bridgewater
yes	excused	yes	yes	yes

The meeting was adjourned at 7:38 p.m.

Jim Bridgewater – President

Attest:

Keenan Ertel – Secretary/Treasurer