

**MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING OF THE  
ELBERT FIRE PROTECTION DISTRICT  
MARCH 11, 2014**

The regular meeting of the Elbert Fire Protection District Board of Directors was held on March 11, 2014, at Elbert Fire Station No. 1, 24310 Main Street, Elbert, Colorado, at 7:00 p.m.

Attendance: Directors in attendance were:

Lawrence Catlin  
Dennis Chamberlain  
Doug Rufenacht  
Tim Look  
Dale Rosburg

Absent:

None

Also in attendance:

Mike Harrower, Fire Chief  
Brandon Homer, Asst. Fire Chief  
Carolyn Homer, Administrative Assistant  
Robert L. Tibbals, Jr., Attorney  
Member of the public, as identified by their signature on the attached sheet

At 7:05 p.m., the regular meeting the Elbert Fire Board was called to order.

Minutes:

The Board first considered the minutes from the regular meeting of February 14, 2014. There ensued discussion regarding omission of names of the public who were in attendance at the last meeting. Ms. Homer hand wrote those names into the official minutes and offered additional corrections, which were also entered by hand. To prevent future omissions of names, an attendance sheet was circulated. Upon motion made by Director Rosburg, seconded by Director Chamberlain, the minutes were approved as amended.

Public Forum:

Lissa Look raised a question regarding Michelle Skolyak receiving a computer in exchange for website maintenance when she was replaced as web master. Ms. Look also inquired as to the new Department logo asking whether it had been approved by the Board and noting that the new District website was not as user-friendly as the past website. Ms. Look next inquired about a response to her subdivision on April 9, 2013, noting that from information she had received, the Elbert Fire Department showed up to the scene an hour late after the Peyton Fire Department. She noted citizens in the area expressed dissatisfaction with service to the point of considering excluding from the District.

In response, discussion by the Board noted that Ms. Skolyak was given the laptop computer she used, as partial consideration for her work after all District information had been removed. Assistant Chief Homer noted the District secured a new personal computer for use in the Station on which all District financial information had been placed. With respect to the website, Chief Homer noted that only a month had lapsed since the new website was put in service and that bugs were being removed and features added. He further noted logos are a preference decided by the members and that no District funds were used.

Chief Harrower noted he would address the issue of El Paso responses later on in the meeting.

Chief Homer expressed concern that certain information which he was led to believe was part of discussion in Executive Session, was made public, which information reflected negatively on him. He asked the Board to take into account the need to maintain confidentiality of all matters discussed in Executive Session.

There next ensued discussion regarding respect by all members and the Board of the “chain of command” manner of operating the Department and the District. It was the consensus of the Board that all parties and members should respect the chain of command, unless extraordinary circumstances arise.

There was a question about executive sessions. Mr. Tibbals explained the circumstances permitting executive sessions are established by State law.

Correspondence: None.

Chief's Report: Chief Harrower reported that he had conferred on the scheduled completion of the school and it should be finished on schedule and under budget. He noted the School Board would be conducting an auction for fundraising and related to suicide awareness. Minutes of the members' meeting were distributed to the Board for review. With respect to the District's new website, Chief Harrower noted the most pertinent information and transparency notice were part of the website and that changes are implemented as necessary. Chief Harrower noted the firefighters would be taking a Hazmat test, for which they had been preparing for some months and which is a difficult test. He commended all who put in the effort for that.

Chief Harrower reported there were 10 calls in the last month; 7 medical; 3 fire with no transport.

ECCA Report: There next ensued discussion of need for a landline with CenturyLink in order to allow for local 9-1-1 dispatching in the event main lines to the area were cut. It was noted a hard wire landline with CenturyLink is available for that purpose. Director Look explained that at the ECCA meeting, Douglas County Dispatch told ECCA Members that Douglas County would send out representatives to dispatch locally in the event main lines were severed.

Attorney's Report: Mr. Tibbals noted he would discuss legal matters in accordance with issues set on the Agenda.

Financial: The Board next considered financial statements provided by Ms. Homer, who explained all of the updated methods used in reporting the District's current financial condition, the year-to-date budget-to-actual numbers and the check register showing expenses by checks prepared for execution and delivery.

After discussion and deliberation, motion by Director Rufenacht, seconded by Director Chamberlain and unanimously carried, the checks were approved. Next, upon motion made by Director Look, seconded by Director Rufenacht and unanimously carried, the Board accepted the interim financial and budget reports presented by Ms. Homer. Ms. Homer stated she hoped to have a finalized version of all financial and budget reports available at the next regular meeting.

Ms. Homer next explained the need to adopt a Financial Policies and Procedures Manual, setting forth the various methods to address handling of financial matters and report same. There next ensued discussion of the need to hold a separate work session to review such policies and procedures. Upon motion made by Director Rufenacht, seconded by Director Look and unanimously carried, the Board set a work session for Wednesday, March 26, 2014, at 7:00 p.m.

There next ensued discussion regarding the ColoTrust account. Ms. Homer reported that in order to access the account, the Board needed to approve her participation, add Director Rufenacht as a signatory, as well as delete the names of former Board members and Michelle Skolyak. Upon motion made by Director Rosburg, seconded by Director Look and unanimously carried, the ColoTrust account signatories list was amended as recommended.

[The Board took a brief recess at 8:53 p.m., and reconvened at 9:00 p.m.]

Old Business: Director Rosburg, Ms. Homer and Mr. Tibbals collectively reported the meeting with CPA Tim Mayberry regarding District financial matters, went very well. One of the main points made was the need to finalize current status of District financial affairs for the last two years and to develop a consistent series of reporting requirements and the manner in which the Fire Officers and the Administrative Assistant handle bookkeeping and reporting.

Mr. Tibbals and Chief Harrower reported that the election calendar was being followed and that notice of the election would be published. Chief Harrower continues to work with Ms. Geri Scheidt, former Elbert Elections Clerk, to comply with all requirements.

Chief Homer noted that many District records had been collected and deposited in the Station and that he, Chief Harrower and other firefighters have been reviewing those records to straighten out, consolidate and eliminate records, as necessary. Chief Homer also explained the need to adopt a records retention and disposal policy, as set forth in the draft policy forwarded to the Board. Mr. Tibbals noted the policy provided by the State Archivist should be adopted as the policy of the District. It was also noted additional records were now available for review by Ms. Garrett. Director Chamberlain inquired as to the status of the heating system improvements. Director Look stated the District's financial situation dictates a hold on that until engineering review is completed. There next ensued discussion regarding use of the siren and its location. A new digital siren was desirable, but expensive. Location of the existing siren is contingent upon three-phase power and a sufficiently strong base to hold it, due to torque generated by use.

New Business:

The Board first discussed need for a new computer. Chief Homer noted that a new personal computer had been acquired at a cost of \$400.00 and is in use at Station No. 1, as noted earlier. There ensued discussion regarding the District's web page. Chief Harrower noted the membership application and transparency notice had been placed on the site, with the District paying for the hosting of the site. Chief Harrower noted he is responsible for the content. After discussion, it was the consensus of the Board that the website was for members' content, as approved by the Chief and to meet all statutory transparency notice requirements.

Response Inquiries: In response to an earlier question and report from Ms. Look, in which Elbert Fire was criticized for late response to two calls in a subdivision within the District, but located in El Paso County, Chief Harrower provided details as to the nature of those calls and a response by Elbert Fire Protection District.

[Ms. Look had left the meeting by this time.]

On the first call referred to by Ms. Look, the initial E 9-1-1 call was placed with El Paso County Dispatch. Review of the dispatch records showed that El Paso delayed contacting Douglas County Dispatch (the agency handling communications for Elbert Fire, as part of ECCA) and only then after that delay by El Paso, was Douglas County Dispatch able to direct Elbert Fire to the scene. While en route, Elbert Fire personnel were ordered to stand down and returned to the Station accordingly. Therefore, Elbert Fire was without fault, first in the delayed contacts and second, in failing to respond, since District responders were ordered to stand down.

On the second incident referred to by Ms. Look, again, the initial call went to El Paso County Dispatch, with the result that there was no radio contact between El Paso County Dispatch and Elbert Fire. As a consequence, there was incomplete information as to whether the El Paso Sheriff's Department would be responding, since the call required law enforcement to secure the scene. Nonetheless, Elbert Fire personnel responded, were first on scene and in a hold position until the El Paso Sheriff Department could provide security. The AMR ambulance was actually the second unit to arrive, after Elbert Fire.

Chief Harrower reported that there are continuing concerns about El Paso County Dispatch operations as they affect Elbert Fire responses due to delays by El Paso County in contacting Douglas County Dispatch. All parties are working to improve these lines of communication. Chief Harrower also noted for all concerned, that response times of all units are recorded.

Finally, he noted that all delayed calls are still added into and averaged with all other calls in checking Elbert Fire average response times.

Board Comment: Chairman Catlin wanted to expressly raise the issue of maintaining confidentiality of all matters which the Board discusses in executive session, noting that all Board members and others asked to join, should be mindful of their duty regarding confidentiality.

Mr. Tibbals also emphasized the need to maintain confidentiality, particularly where attorney/client matters are discussed in executive session.

There being no further business to come before the Board, upon motion made by Director Look, seconded by Director Rosburg and unanimously carried, the meeting was adjourned at 9:47 p.m.

Respectfully submitted:

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Recording Secretary to the Board

Approved:

Reviewed (N/A):

By: \_\_\_\_\_

By: \_\_\_\_\_

By: \_\_\_\_\_

By: \_\_\_\_\_

By: \_\_\_\_\_

## ATTENDANCE

LEE SHERMAN - RESIDENT

Lissa Sook - President

Robert Randall - resident

Wanda Randall - Resident CR 5

Diana Edstrom - President CR 41

Beth Shelly WECO/Ranchland News

Debra Sherman resident

Phil Brown res.ident

Irene Brown resident

Kim Homer Member

Joseph Marchase Member

Ric Poston Member

Ryan Knox Member

Brandon Homer member

Mike Harrower Fire Chief