

GOLD HILL FIRE PROTECTION DISTRICT

August 21st, 2023, 7:00 pm – unofficial minutes

Next meeting, Monday, September 18, 2023, 7:00 p.m.

MEETING BUSINESS

President Kent Coghill called the meeting to order. Present were Kent, Acting Chiefs Bret Gibson and Chris O'Brien, GH Board Members, Chris Dirolf, Boyd Brown, and Max Yeager (Jess Brookhart attended by Zoom), plus community members Rick Sheingold, Marcus Moench, and Recording Secretary Gretchen Diefenderfer.

Minutes of the 7-7-23 Meeting – approved as published as there were no corrections or additions.

FIRE CHIEF'S MINUTES

Operational Updates – New Campfire SOG is in effect and volunteers have been trained in strategic approach, de-escalating any situation and how to monitor. The first goal of our new protocols is to make sure there is not a wildfire heading to town, responders should go in pairs (Minimum of 2 FFs). We will be responding the majority of the time. Sheriffs will monitor our radio traffic, which will improve our interactions with them and they will back us up.

Upcoming Training – with Fourmile, Lefthand, and Sunshine are upcoming. They will get the certificates for last years' UTV class and will set up another – most likely in October. Bret reported on the last mutual training with Sunshine, which was a round robin of engines with the goal to touch every engine and produce water. He was impressed with the problem solving and is confident that we know how to trouble shoot.

Task books have been distributed and hopefully tasks will be completed in the next 3, 4, 5 months.

Bret brought up some sort of reward/recognition/end of year gifts for volunteers – something with our logo to encourage volunteers and say thank you.

MAINTENANCE

Station Maintenance and Update on improving accessibility for apparatus – Regarding the flooding, Max didn't see the actual situation, but did see the aftermath. Additionally, during the clean-up, the tank behind bay 1 overflowed from overfilling creating another problem. The principle point of entry for the flood is a leak at the corner seam back by the bathroom where the addition was added. The work being done behind the firebarn did not cause the flooding. He's taken out loads of trash. The actual property line is some 30-40' west of the fence and the corners have been identified. We are in the flood plain for Gold Run Creek and the County has put in a big culvert. With the renovation for the UTV addition, we could consider putting in a dike.

Leslie dropped off old plans for addition/renovation possibilities with the bay doors facing South – could be grade and propane line issues. Bret reported that the Wall Street Station took 3 years and, in those days, there was a lot of donated money and free labor. The Poorman Station was a 10 year project. We do have to follow the State legal building codes, but not so much the County. At this point, the main goal is to house the UTV – maybe a shipping container? We'll continue to work with the engineer and move forward – would hope to get the UTV inside by winter. Kent will send an email requesting ideas/solutions.

Garage doors – new ones that would provide much better access for the trucks to get in and out could cost \$7800-\$10,000 each, but we can continue to make do as we have – we've gotten by for years. Bret pointed out that if the smoke and exhaust system in bay 2 was repositioned it would make more room.

Jess was asked how the budget is going with the latest maintenance. Max still has invoices to send to Jess. She reports that we do have some money to spend and will update her report when she

has the additional invoices. The budget is still healthy. 5439 cost around \$7,000 and everything being done is absolutely imperative.

Kent suggested waiting until the next meeting to discuss our options. Bret suggested we work on strategic planning before looking at new station options.

OPERATIONAL READINESS:

Strategic Planning – Max and Boyd report that the meeting with Robert Constable went well. He's willing to help with our process, volunteering his time. Bret met with Chris Finn to get his historical perspective about who we are and where we're going. We need to put together a 5-6 person committee: Boyd and Max plus someone with an educated perspective on the fire department, a member of the community, and an administrative person to develop the planning process beginning with SWOT: evaluating our Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats. Strengths include that we have a town/community which brings resources and reasons to buy into the process. Weaknesses include our facility/infrastructure. Opportunities – we have Chief O'Brien with a lot of knowledge about grants and how to leverage money, plus Bret, plus a good bunch of firefighters. Threats are just the things that hold us back – inertia, etc. Robert will meet with us again when we have a committee to start this SWOT/visioning process.

Next Steps – get a general email going to work on the additional 3 members, which could rotate, with the goal to stay open and realistic. The committee will bring ideas to the Board for approval.

Boyd would like to ask people who would like to participate to get in touch with him (his email is boydbrown1949@gmail.com) and have the initial committee built by the next board meeting or sooner.

Budget – Jess reports that she will get the budget to the board by the October meeting to be approved in November and submitted by December. We can modify it, but need to put it out as close to realistic to submit for 2024. She will send out the 3 column 2023 budget.

SDA Membership – Kent reports we need to get them the budget. Bret suggested he talk to Ron Beebe.

VEHICLES

5439 – Max reports it's still being fixed – the output seal was leaking. He thinks this is a good, suitable truck for protecting the town.

UTV – Kent has conferred with Dave Sturtz. Rick used it on Sunday to support the race – the radio worked great – still needs lights mounted (not on top). Max has some leds, Chris O'Brien has ~6 leds – they're bright and good for getting peoples' attention. Sturtz will finish up. Stickers were removed for better placement. Bret pointed out that it's important to carry registration and proof of insurance.

INVENTORY

PPE – Steffi reports we're low and Bret volunteered take her on a tour of their closet to fill in the gaps. Kris is working on a PPE grant.

Building Maintenance – Max has a plumber coming in to replace the structure to tank propane line. Bret suggested putting in a T for future needs (Possibly for the UTV shipping container) and Marcus asked about running a generator, also.

GENERAL

Parking concerns – Kent reports a lot of concerns in Gold Hill regarding the parking situation, particularly for emergency access. There is more traffic than ever and the parking creates a lot of one-way access issues. The Boulder County Road Engineer is coming next Monday (Aug. 28) to look at problem areas and possible solutions with us. We need to brainstorm – won't be a quick easy fix. Boyd added that part of what has brought the congestion is the success of both the Store and the Inn and all the events. Used to be 2 nights a week and then the people would leave. Now it

seems like they're staying until 11 or 12 and sometimes there are events from Wednesday through Sunday. A lot of people are getting frustrated. Boyd reports that at the GHTM there was a lot of focus on finding solutions as a community, hopefully without getting the Sheriff involved. Plus, the Sheriff's Department is understaffed as well. Bret adds that the 1985 Fire Code doesn't really address parking, although it does address occupancy limits. The 2021 code rules that fire lanes have to be kept open. Any enforcement is a long drawn out legal process. We do have the power to call Marv's. We need to come up with constructive solutions and get the business owners involved. What about a curfew? Occupancy limits? It's not a single source problem. Most of the Board and several others plan to attend the meeting.

Event Permitting – There have been questions from the public about permitting for the last event – the Sunset Trail Running Race. Two FDs ok'd it, plus Boulder County and the Forest Service. Maya had asked where the money should go – to the FD or the TM. Boyd pointed out that the TM has much less money and could really use it.

End of Year Party – will be addressed next meeting.

ADMINISTRATIVE

Timeline for the MOU – Originally planned for one year, but Bret pointed out that there is flexibility. He thinks we need to make progress on our strategic planning first. Max thinks we should keep the end of the year as a goal. Both Lefthand and Fourmile have a vested interest in our being optimally functional.

OTHER BUSINESS

Grants – Kris is working on a District Distribution Grant for \$20,000 – no match required. Nothing else at this time.

Mitigation – Boyd, Chris D, and Kent are working to set up 2 days for community wood from the cutting at the Ashram this Saturday and September 16th, beginning early and getting done by noon. Fire Department personnel are the only people allowed to use chain saws. They're working on logistics for vehicles so it doesn't get jammed up. Eventually all the wood on the north side will be cleared out, but wood cut this Spring will have to dry out until next year. On the Ashley property, the contractor and Bustamante are taking everything out, so no community firewood will be available from there. There is a small BLM area at the top of the watershed – 45 acres – more info to follow.

Collaboration – CWPP – Chris D. reports there will be a big meeting in December. They're working on more defensible space. There is a new pilot project with Wildfire Partners – get 5 properties together and can get free chipping. It's 1A funded.

Boulder West is keeping the CWPP projects moving. There will be a fall meeting in September. Wildfire risk reduction is alive and well. The capacity to address more areas in collaboration with the Watershed, etc. is building. Virginia Schultz is also a member of Boulder West.

Tool Library – Bret adds that they're also working to come up with a tool library to provide needed tools to communities within the CWPP area.

Pension Board Elections – Jess reports that there were only the two candidates, Val and Leslie, so at the January meeting they will be appointed. Matching funds from the State will get done – Jess will submit the paperwork.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted, Gretchen Diefenderfer, Recording Secretary