

# Aspen Fire Protection District

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## Board of Directors Regular Meeting January 9<sup>th</sup>, 2024

The Board of Directors of the Aspen Fire Protection District met for their regular meeting. The meeting was open to the public in person and virtually via Zoom.

**Meeting called to order by John Ward at 5:04pm**

### **Roll Call:**

- Board of Directors Present: John Ward, Parker Lathrop (zoom), Dave “Wabs” Walbert, Charles Cunniffe
- Board of Directors Absent: Emily Taylor
- Staff/Volunteers Present: Rick Balentine, Jan Schubert, Ali Hammond, Nikki Lapin, Amanda Perusse, Jan Legersky, Scott Arthur.
- Online: Jake Andersen, Max Lyall
- Public/Others: Richard Peterson

**MOTION: Motion by Wabs to approve minutes from Regular Meeting on December 12th, 2023.**

**Second: John Ward**

**Discussion: Question on FPPA: did the Pension Board meet to accept the Board’s decision from the last meeting, to increase the FPPA amounts? Mike Tracey is the volunteer representative, he discussed with Rick Balentine that he is in favor of the increase and had a question on the 3% possible yearly increase, but the full Pension Board has yet to meet. The annual vote for volunteer representatives will take place at the February Operational meeting on 2/7/24, at which time, there will be 2 representatives voted in. FPPA has already accepted the increase per Jan Schubert, based on the minutes from the last board meeting, however the Pension Board should meet after the 2/7/24 vote to ratify.**

**Vote: All approved.**

**Public Comment:** None

**AVFD Inc.:** None

### **Financials**

- Monthly Financial Review included in the packet.
  - Discussion on FPPA funds are collected/distributed, they come directly from the State into the FPPA account. Currently 66 members collecting FPPA right now.
  - Discussion on Mill Levy – confirmed at the last meeting that we are not going to collect the \$1.2 million in 2024. This is being submitted to the Treasurer on 1/10/24.
  - Discussion on backfill from the state. We will receive backfill in May from the State Treasury. First it will transfer to Pitkin County Treasury and then to Aspen Fire. Believe it will be in the six figures. We will need to make a final budget amendment after the backfill has been received.
  - Great job to Jan Schubert on the budget projection, very challenging task with all of the changes that took place.

### **Board member comments/action items:**

Wabs - none

John - Had a nice lunch with several of the Administrative staff just before New Year's. There was great camaraderie in the group. We have gone through a lot of changes and will go through a few more with the new hires coming. Rick and everyone has done a great job as far as keeping the volunteers and careers on the same level. That kind of culture takes work and will continue to take work for all to feel valued and to get participation. Our model doesn't work without volunteers, and I appreciate the fact that they are.

Charles - Sad he missed the luncheon. Glad it went well, and all had a good time.

Parker - none

### **Staff Report:**

- Fire Marshal – Jan Legerksy reviewed the report provided in the board packet.
  - Very busy December through the holidays. Total plan reviews for 2023 = 424, total for 2022 = 411, so it is not slowing down.
  - Winterskol is this weekend, January 13<sup>th</sup> will have fireworks, weather permitting, otherwise on 14<sup>th</sup>.
  - XGames is at the end of the month, January 26<sup>th</sup> – 29<sup>th</sup>. Set up has started.
  - Fire Inspector I job posting should take place before the end of this week.
- Operations Report – Deputy Chief Andersen reviewed the report provided in the board packet.
  - Really proud of middle-level leadership, our volunteer leadership (formal and informal) over the last year. Change is difficult, especially really big changes. Very impressed with the team we have here now and how they've manage through all of this and grown even closer together as a family throughout it all. It is really heartwarming and impressive to witness.
  - Review of photo and incidents from packet.
- Training Report and Recruitment– Scott Arthur reviewed the report provided in the board packet.
  - Class of 2024 will start academy on 1/16/24, we have 7 recruits
  - Total number of training hours for 2023 was 7355 hours!!!
  - Thanks to the Board for another great year.

**Wildfire Community Action Fund:** Ali Hammond reviewed report in the board packet.

- Project Manager position will post after Fire Inspector I hiring has been completed.

### **CEO/Fire Chief and Good of the District:**

- Rick Balentine and Charles Cunniffe will be meeting this John McBride this week to discuss the lot options.
- Congratulations to Charles Cunniffe on the article in FireHouse Magazine about Station 65 in Starwood, well done.
- Chief Rick Lasky, wrote the book "Pride & Ownership, a Firefighter's Love of the Job". He has been here a couple times for training over the years. Recently reached out to schedule a conversation about how we transitioned from a volunteer to a combination department, along with our benefits for members, to use as a possible model for other departments. Will keep the board posted on the outcome.
- Thanks to all for the emails, cards and thoughts throughout this difficult time. It is great to have so much support and has been very helpful.

**Old Business:** none

### **New Business:**

- We were set to purchase a new Electric Vehicle, for the Deputy Fire Marshal, in 2023, however, it was not ordered. 2024 prices have increased from the original quote of \$45,000 to ~\$50,000. Still waiting on a final quote. It will be housed and charged at Station 62, Fire Place Housing.

**MOTION: Motion by Wabs to adjourn at 5:43pm**  
**Second: Charles Cunniffe**  
**Discussion: None**  
**Vote: All approved.**

**\*\*\* A full recording of this meeting can be requested by contacting the District Administrator at [nikki.lapin@aspensfire.com](mailto:nikki.lapin@aspensfire.com) or by calling 970-925-5532.**