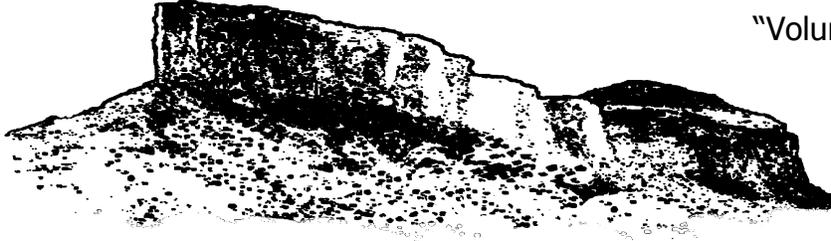


# GATEWAY - UNAWEEP FIRE PROTECTION DISTRICT



"Volunteers Serving Our Neighbors"

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## Board Meeting Minutes August 18, 2015

Meeting called to order at 6:32pm.

Members Present: Fred Bolton, Lisa Eakle, Jeannie Lewis, Madonna Dormaier

Public Present: Randy Bremmer, Carol Bremmer

Minutes were approved as submitted.

No bills and/or appropriations.

No hearings.

Public input moved until later in the meeting per request of public in attendance.

### Reports

Fire Chief, James "Bear" Barnett:

(See written report)

#### Goals

a) Priorities: Items 1-19

Note-expired EZ-IO Needles approx. \$800 cost

b) Short-term: Items 1-12

Note- Item 12-changes for CPR will be changed in October.

Bear will pursue training for community/school/resort early spring.

#### Incident, Station, Equipment, District, and Finance

a) Incidents – 13 calls in July

b) Station – 220V outlet for dryer installed by the county

There are other repairs to be made, facilitating those repairs with new supervisors through county office.

Bear asked board about where to deposit donation from Wayside Chapel Vacation Bible School – in coins and small bills; the department does not keep petty cash, the funds are to be deposited into Volunteer Account.

Madonna spoke to the board about the fundraising project from the children at Wayside Chapel and the intentions for the money to be given to aid volunteers with supplies to replenish them while fighting fire such as Gatorade and energy bars. This was the idea behind their local mission project 2 summers ago, not intended to add a water cooler/dispenser for the station. The funds were raised when it was strictly a volunteer

department prior to having full-time paid staff at the station. Madonna had not given the change to treasure at the time because the board was going through transition of treasurers.

c) Equipment

Note-Item 4: B121, design flaw determined as to the reason for overheating

Item 8: T121-Volunteers, Paul and Kevin often supports with this apparatus

d) District

Note-item 2: Verified ISO rating is 9 (>5 mile) and 10(>miles);

Bear mentioned the future needs for the department will include Tenders.

Cost savings for homeowners have yet to be researched.

e) Finance

Note- Item 1: Cloud-based software compatible with accountant, treasurer, chief.

Item 2: working on budget for 2016

Events and Training

a) Events – 5<sup>th</sup> Wednesdays FFA meeting – next is Sept 30<sup>th</sup> for family/friends for BBQ and shooting, we will be meeting at the shooting range.

b) Training – Several fire trainings have had attendance, so far no volunteers have been in attendance for EMS training, Bear will be training for CPR certification August 19, 2015 from 13:30-15:30

Question about cost of providing CPR courses for public, school, or resort training, Bear commented the cost depends on the certification needs, usually just the course materials and cards. The county is providing sidewalk CPR courses using mannequins. EMS Council possibly may incur cost, so the possible costs are unknown at this time.

Personnel

a) Paid

- 1) Chief- protocol meeting with Dr. Hall next week, close to being at unsupervised status for ASL coverage
- 2) Lt. Dormaier-moving toward Captain (in-charge of station operations)
- 3) Lt Wood –
- 4) Rincon has protocol meeting with Dr. Hall next week
- 5) Stone, Harmon, Whittle predominately providing ASL coverage for GUFED, attempting to integrate others

Bear addressed the issue of having difficulty finding ASL staffing as a comparison to the typical pay for overtime shifts in the county~\$900/shift and normal shifts ~\$600/shift. We currently pay \$300/shift. This is a 3:1 difference.

b) Volunteer Roster

- 1) Ashcraft, Duckett- most active on calls
- 2) C. Gallup – responds to medical calls when at resort
- 3) T. Gallup attended vehicle fire
- 4) R. Gooch has been busy with recent moving out of Clifton home, will attend meeting on September 30<sup>th</sup>
- 5) C. Wheeler – has been out-of-town, comes on Thursdays for a shift at station, will attend scheduled days again soon.

## Meetings

### 1) Board

Note Item 1: will be absent for September and October meeting

### 2) Communications Technical Committee

Note Item 1: pager system older communication system, Active 911 is cell tower dependent, 800Hz radio is due to have device changes from Motorola in 2018, demo 800Hz/VHS radios, seeking grants to help offset costs. Fred mentioned that grants helped pay for current radios that were recently updated just a couple years ago.

### 3) Chief's Meeting

Note Item 1: concern over communications center and infrastructure

### 4) EMS QA/QI

Note Item 1: likely to be tasked with additional assignment of improving EMT training and probationary procedure within county.

## Chairman's Report, Fred Bolton:

Fred commented about the fuel acquisition structure for 2016 is still unknown at this time.

Bear asked if the little red truck is owned by GUFED. He has an idea for a possibility for future ported tank on Ford. Fred will look into the red truck.

## Treasurer Report, Jeannie Lewis:

### Current balances:

Department: \$5,957.18

District: \$8,602.90

Payroll: \$41,025.18

Visa Bill - \$962.00, previous treasure was paying minimum balance. Jeannie asked board to approve paying off the entire balance. All agreed to pay balance due. Funds are already being transferred from one account to the other to pay bills. Fast & Easy is okay with delayed payment.

Jeannie asks Fred what the disbursement schedule is, Fred will meet with Jeannie to clarify disbursement schedule.

Jeannie commented on the EZ-IO Needles cost ~\$800 for 7 needles. Fred commented that we would be paying for core costs only, maintenance expenses would have to wait.

Madonna asked Bear if it were possible to stock only one ambulance at a time since there is only enough crew to operate one ambulance at a time. That could potentially cut the costs of medical supplies in half. Bear commented that it could be a possibility.

## Unfinished Business:

### SOG Mission Statement:

Madonna commented on the mission statement to be Board driven with community and leadership input beginning with developing the list of core values. Fred asked Madonna to take the lead of developing the mission statement. Madonna agreed. Bear asked for a timeline. No timeline is defined for the process.

#### Student Board Member:

Fred asked Madonna to seek a student who might be willing to sit on the board as a student member. Madonna agreed to follow-up with Mr. Allen, the new principal at Gateway School.

#### SOG 2001 Approval – Apparatus & Equipment Roster

Reference the handout submitted by Bear. Chief commented on the commitment to plan and seek means to acquire necessary apparatus for our diverse fire district. Bear asked if there were any questions about the drafted guideline 2001. Bear answered board questions regarding individual apparatus types.

Fred comments this drafted guideline is like a benchmark, if money was not a problem. This guideline will assist in clarifying goals of the district for future apparatus purchases as well as assist in funding needs with stakeholders and future grants. Jeannie comments that the board would desire to add language to include that it is budget dependent. She commended Bear for being forward thinking to provide advance planning of district needs.

#### Borrowing Second Ambulance Feasibility Discussion:

Fred continued earlier discussion about second ambulance – there is a possibility to borrow a spare ASL equipped ambulance from other local departments if we were to have our ambulance in the shop or other reasons it may be out-of-service. Bear confirmed that is a possibility for our district. Fred asked if there is a cost for using their ambulance. At this time, Bear does not feel that there would be a cost involved. Fred asked how many there are available. There is one at Orchard Mesa, one not stocked at Clifton, a couple at Lower Valley and others. Board is interested in this possibility. Bear will continue to investigate the feasibility of this option at the Fire Chief’s meeting. Bear is to report back next month to the board.

All board members wish to include “budget dependent and board approved” language to the drafted proposal. Add sentence, “This plan is budget dependent and requires board approval.” To be added at the end of the draft overview statement. Bear clarified that this is SOG guideline not SOP procedures. Fred will discuss language with the lawyer tomorrow. Board can approve 2001 guideline pending legal consult.

Jeannie moved to approve SOG 2001 guideline with added statement, “This is budget dependent and requires board approval.” at the end of the overview statement.

Second - Lisa

No further discussion

All approved - motion passed

#### New Business

##### Fall Dynamite Shoot Preparations

Fred pulled a tendon, will not be able to climb mountain, will need more volunteers to help place stakes and dynamite. Fred requested a couple checks to purchase a few set-up items.

#### Public Input

Carol Bremmer requested to speak to just the board and not have the chief present because it may be uncomfortable for him otherwise. Fred stated that it was not possible due to legal requirements of a public meeting; comments had to be made in a public format with Chief present.

Randy Bremmer commented that he has been watching restructure changes of the department, mainly due to the fact that his daughter Katelyn Bremmer was serving as a volunteer and then a paid EMT, he stated he began to get more involved in recent months. He has concerns based on the Fire Department and the services being provided. Randy commented that once he saw things going on with the personnel, he began to dig further. He researched issues and his concerns heightened, what he found disturbed him greatly. Asks board a rhetorical question; "For me as a fire department patron, was I better off with Mike Johnson sitting in front of a TV ready to respond to a call being fully qualified to take the call and doesn't have to reach out to Grand Junction or someone who qualified?" Randy answered for himself, he was better off with Mike Johnson. His skill set is exactly what we need. He also has a question about the reason why volunteers who are less likely to respond to calls when the Chief is on duty. Asks board if you all aware that this is happening?

Fred stated that he has heard that claim, but no one has been able to validate that claim. He has heard it, but received no way to validate that claim.

Randy stated that he doesn't want to downplay organization, he understands organization, but the organization is not good if parties are not willing to respond under this Chief. There are a couple of incidents where the Fire Chief sent people away. On another point, Randy commented that the goal was to have ASL and BLS coverage to be better than 30% coverage. Randy asked Fred if that is the case.

Fred stated he doesn't know the percentage at this moment. Fred states that the coverage is part of the agreement from our funding. Randy asked about partnership satisfaction. Fred stated that he recently spoke with the partnership representatives for the six month review of the contract and they are pleased with our arrangement and coverage. If there were concerns, they would have mentioned it at this time.

Randy states that he wanted to speak with the board two months ago about this, but he wanted to know why on May 2<sup>nd</sup>, Chief had a class to teach in the afternoon and told Alex who was staying at the resort housing he would be back later that evening. Two witnesses saw Chief at a restaurant with a beverage that evening with his girlfriend. Randy's understanding is that he was supposed to be here. So if someone were to have a heart attack or something, Alex is by himself. Chief was not where he was supposed to be and he had a staff member left alone.

Fred stated that he has heard that allegation and has discussed that issue with Chief and there is no validation of that issue. There is no evidence that anything inappropriate occurred that day.

Randy asked if that is okay. Fred commented that it sometimes happens when the Fire Chief has to be out of district for meeting or trainings. This was the case when Dave Anderson was Chief. We had the same types of conflicts then.

Randy understands when the Chief may have a meeting or a class in the afternoon, but he was still not back in the evening and seen some place other with an unknown kind of drink.

Fred stated that he looked into that issue. That issue was communicated to Fred in writing and nothing inappropriate had occurred.

Randy stated that he is having a little trouble understanding that. Fred stated that someone will have to bring evidence to him or the board that there was any inappropriate conduct, and not just an I saw somebody and I think this was occurring. When it comes to issues of personnel it has to be factual, it cannot be somebody's opinion.

Carol questions whether Chief can be at a restaurant in Grand Junction while he is supposed to be on duty leaving the EMT by himself. Fred states that Chief was where he was supposed to be that night doing what he was supposed to be doing. So the allegation that was in writing of the night where he was where he was

supposed to be was in regard to inappropriate conduct. When Fred looked into it, there was no evidence of inappropriate conduct. If somebody has evidence to the contrary of inappropriate conduct, then he is open and willing to listen to it. Fred has not seen any evidence to prove there was inappropriate conduct.

Randy clarifies statement that Chief Barnett was where he was supposed to be at a restaurant with his girlfriend when there was a group at the resort. Fred states that yes our agreement with the partners understand that we will at times have conflicts. We hold to the agreement being budget dependent and board approved provided we do not have other conflicts. As an example, we had a similar conflict earlier in the year when Chief Anderson was at a meeting in town and that was before Chief Barnett was even here. There was an infant death and Alex happened to be the EMT on duty that night. Randy wanted to know where he was at. Fred stated that he was at a meeting he was supposed to be at, so the resort did not have the ASL coverage at that time. We would have liked to have had, but it would not have changed the outcome in that case. Those types of conflicts happen.

When the day in question was written to Fred, he could not find any evidence of inappropriate conduct that night. Randy stated that the class with in the afternoon, yet he was still not back in the evening.

Fred states that he cannot discuss issues of personnel with public any deeper. Randy continued to address the fact that he understood Chief to be on shift that evening after his afternoon class, but was not back to be on shift with Alex. Randy does not feel that is okay nor is it where he was supposed to be in a meeting with his girlfriend at a restaurant. Randy states that he does not understand that to be okay. How is that supposed to be where he was supposed to be?

Fred states he cannot discuss issues of personnel. Fred advises Randy to put concerns in writing for the board to discuss. He cannot discuss personnel issues with public.

Randy would really like him to answer his questions or he will find someone who will answer his question. Fred states that he can take a written, even detailed statement, and the board can go into executive session to discuss the issues because it is an issue of personnel. Fred cannot talk to Randy or any other person outside the board in public or private about personnel issues. Fred advises Randy to put his concerns in writing by counsel of our attorney. Randy comments that is sounding like this is being buried. Fred reiterates to Randy to put his concerns in writing and submit them to the board.

Lisa commented that she felt Randy has some very valid concerns regarding volunteers and Chief Barnett. She discussed the chain of command in order for Randy and others to continue to address the issues following this chain of command. If it is a volunteer, then the first step is Chief, second step is any member of the Board, and to Fred as the chair of the Board. If they are still not happy with that, then they could go to Grand Junction to the EMS Director. We all in Mesa County work under him. So if they are unhappy working with Chief Barnett, then they could follow this chain of command. Randy states that some have tried. Lisa commented that she has not heard of anybody, and if there has been any complaint it has gone through Fred and the correct channels. If they are still upset, there are further steps that they can take. Lisa is happy to help find numbers. And then the second issue of the restaurant, Lisa states she has no idea about this incident. She states that she appreciates the community let us know about issues, because the main thing is trust with our services. It is the citizens who have to dial 911. Lisa has been on this team since 1993, and has heard many complaints even that community members would rather drive themselves than call 911. We are what we are, community has to trust us or we are not doing our jobs. We need to build trust. First step is to go to Chief Barnett, then the Board, and Fred. Fred looks into it and gets back to the board. He finds there is no problem, and you are not satisfied with that answer, then she recommends you follow Fred's advice and write this incident down and we will take it to the next level. You are our customers, you are the people we are trying to get the trust of and we want to serve you. Lisa stated that she is glad they are taking the time to address issues so we can look into it.

Carol comments she felt they were following the chain of command by coming to this meeting. Lisa and Fred both affirmed that they both are following the chain of command. Carol states that she knows of two people who have specifically written to the board and nothing has been done. Nothing that was said had any effect on anybody. She states that they are number three.

Fred states that he only received one written communication which was from their daughter. Carol asked about Mike Johnson's. Lisa commented that we did not get his. Lisa commented that the letter from her daughter did not address anything that she wanted us to do or keep an eye out about how things were going which we already try to do. Lisa stated she is glad that they are here at the meeting and bringing issues to us and encourages the Bremmer's to put the issues in writing.

Randy also commented that he is concerned about the competencies of the Fire Chief. He questions whether Bear is competent in fire training or in his medical training. He feels that other staff and volunteers have left without pushing the chain of command. The reason why many are gone and have not contacted the board is because they don't want to suffer the repercussions throughout the county system and those who have followed the chain of command have found themselves out of favor. Randy knows that content of the letters and upset that the board did not look into it. Lisa commented that Fred did look into it. He still does not see how being at the bar in a restaurant while on shift is where he was supposed to be that night. Randy stated that a story like that could end up in the Daily Sentinel; he feels that just the appearance of it is not right.

Fred reiterated that he is happy they came to the meeting; he commented that this is the path to follow to bring issues to the board. He is required to follow the rules he is required to follow and urged Randy to put it in writing to empower the board to take it to the next step. Without it in writing, the board cannot take it to the next level.

Randy suggests that Fire Chief follows the will of the board and Fred is the person as the head of the board to keep Chief accountable. Somebody does not have to come to the board with a complaint in order for the board to keep him accountable. Fred states that Randy is coming to the board with a complaint and we need the complaints in writing. Lisa agreed. Fred asked that he make it as detailed as need be so that the board, not just him, can address the issues. Randy states that is not a problem, he will be writing the board.

Carol commented that there are several issues brought up by several different people that have all been of concern to her. She feels each of them should be looked into. At this point it would be hearsay because she doesn't remember who said what when, but even if two are true, then the department has a problem and the community has a problem.

Fred says that her concerns are not hearsay. Fred encourages Carol to write her concerns and submit them to the board so the board is bound to address them, names don't have to be named. Lisa commented that if people are coming to her then that is something to be trusted by so many people and it is important to have the concerns addressed.

Jeannie clarified that we are all able to put our concerns in writing. She asked if it was okay for individuals to submit their concerns in writing anonymously if they are uncomfortable with being public. Fred clarified that it could not be anonymous. Lisa commented the board is happy to listen and want to know. The board and the chairman will look into the issues. Randy commented that there is a lot the board is unaware of and it is shocking.

Lisa stated that perhaps he is not aware of working of the fire department and the workings of the board. During board meetings, the board members deal with money and budget. We hired the Chief to handle to district day-to-day workings. Randy asked who would get sued if there was a serious incident. Fred commented that this scenario did not happen, and board members have amenity so cannot answer that question of who would get sued? Lisa states nobody is getting sued. We are rural EMS and Lisa

commented that if he wants 24/7ASL coverage, then he will have to move to Grand Junction, we are a rural EMS district.

Randy asked earlier question as to why Chief was not back in the evening when his class was in the afternoon. Fred asked him to put it in writing.

Lisa commented that sometimes as community members we are unhappy with our services from our doctors, and that sometimes happens, but Dr. Hall is the EMS Director and we operate under his license. Lisa commented that Bear is working with Dr. Hall's approval and if he were unhappy with Bear's performance he would say so. As far as she knew Mike Johnson quit, it was his choice to quit. Whatever happened before that, it was his choice. She stated she did not know exactly what happened, but he chose to quit. Dr. Hall is the one who certifies our providers for Mesa County. Lisa stated we feel comfortable with him being here as a board.

Randy stated that he knows we do. The board could go ahead and write him off. Fred stated that we are not writing him off.

Randy commented about Mike Johnson and Bear. He asked if any of the board members saw his letter. No one saw the letter from Mike. Fred stated that he talked to him in person in his driveway. Fred asked again, put all this in writing.

Randy had a question about yesterday's (8/17/15) responders and why Land's End was called for mutual aid. Fred stated who responded. Paul was first on scene with Volvo. Chief and Rincon responded. Chief commented that he called mutual aid. Fred stated that this not the first time they have started a fire. This time was caused by welding sparks that started the fire.

Lisa stated that this is similar to complaints at the workplace where people complain to each other, but rarely take it to the right people to make a difference. Randy commented that complaints of that nature from staff could have a negative impact on their career. Lisa commented that those who have already quit, it would not be an issue of impact on their career, they are still members of the community. Randy and Carol will write a letter to the board.

Add Discussion about Telluride/Norwood Article (2020 changes):

Bear gave a synopsis of the article. Bear outlined the structure of training certification as it now stands. EMS services for ASL and BLS. The National Certification Board, which operates under the Federal Department of Transportation will be dissolving EMT-Intermediate title and will institute an Advanced EMT to replace the previous title. For small rural districts which relies heavily on volunteers , this change greatly impacts the services that can be provided in areas where the affordability of higher trained EMS personnel is cost prohibitive. For us, we would lose David Stone who is an EMT-Intermediate. Otherwise, it does not have a he impact on our district at this time.

The town of Norwood is looking to try for a mill levy increase to be included on the fall ballot. Fred commented that we can watch their results of attempting to increase mill levy and how they communicate the needs to be able to meet service requirements. Fred will follow up with the lady in Norwood who is heading up the mill levy.

Next board meeting will include executive session if Randy and/or Carol write a letter to the board.

Motion to Adjourn by Lisa

Madonna Second

Adjournment at 8:23