

# MESA COUNTY FIRE AUTHORITY BOARD MEETING MINUTES

February 27, 2024

At 7:01 PM Wayne DeGesualdo called the meeting to order. Wayne DeGesualdo, Chuck Nelson, Murray Thiessen, and by phone Randy Zellner and Eric Brown were present for the board.

Also present was public members Rich Phillips, Rick and Linda Weber and Brian Lurvey, Clifton Fire Chief Brian Cherveny, Mesa County EMS Coordinator- Chris Rowland, and Emergency Services Director- Andrew Martsolf, Administrative Assistant Stacy Cox, Volunteer member Val Cary, Courtney Griffith, and Chief Charlesworth.

Wayne DeGesualdo asked everyone to raise to say the pledge of allegiance. All joined in for the pledge of allegiance.

Wayne DeGesualdo said an opening prayer.

## *Guest Speaker- Christopher Rowland*

Chris Rowland along with Andrew Martsolf and Clifton Fire Chief Chervney came to speak to the board of Mesa County Fire Authority about some concerns they have about services being provided as that they have received two formal complaints about the amount of mutual aid being required by and provided to Mesa County Fire Authority. Concerns are -Decrease in EMTs on Staff - Increase in Mutual Aid Needs - The two ASA's are under served.

Chris Rowland advised that on 01/01/2022 there were 10 EMT on Staff when MCFA was formed. On 04/20/2023, when MCFA ambulances were licensed, there were three EMTs on Staff. As of today, 02/27/2024, there is only one EMT on Staff which is a 90% reduction of EMTs on staff.

In 2023 210 EMS calls of which 107 required Mutual aid- this could be ALS, Mass casualty incidents, or lack of manpower which is 51 percent of the calls requiring help from other agencies. As of 02/26/2024 of 40 EMS calls 29 calls have required outside help for a total of 73 percent.

Chris and Andrew would like to have some short term, mid term and long term goals in place for this issue otherwise they feel like they maybe forced to act with one of two options.

First is Change the ASA boundaries and have Grand Junction serve Land End Fire Protection District and the Clifton serve Central Orchard Mesa Fire Protection District. The Second option is Grand junction serves both ASAs.

Right now, the county is over the ambulance licenses but is changing state licensing as of July 1.

Chief Charlesworth spoke about offering a fee to help with mutual aid and was told by the other agencies that he could not afford to pay them. He also talked about Silt having a private service coming and helping but they are not on Mesa County Protocol and again the cost with be

prohibitive and not a short-term solution since they are not on Mesa County protocol. Chief advised that he has three members who are working toward getting on protocol right now. One of them is Carey which should be on protocol by end of March. Ramirez just started today on his calls so he has to be on probation for two months. Smith also is running her calls right now with Grand Junction and has about three more calls to complete but will depend if she is required to wait the full two months. If all goes well, within two months of this meeting the department should have three more EMTs on protocol. Have one student in EMT class right now and several interviews for EMTs to come on board.

Wants to know what avenues we are looking at for short term and long term solutions and what is the root of the problem.

The county does not want to push MCFA into giving up their ASA but needs a solution to better serve the residents.

When Chris and Andrew were asked what short term solution, they had in mind they suggested shift work like Gateway does. When asked what Gateway pays for a shift was advised \$300 for BLS and \$400 for ALS plus milage for a 24-hour shift.

Rick Weber asked how do you fix the cancer of volunteerism?

Rich Phillips said that he believes the short-term solution is to use the money in the bank and pay providers work 2 person shift 24/7 costing the district \$400K and a midterm is to set up trailer such as a man camp at station 52 and recruit within the district so they have a vested interest.

Chuck Nelson said that he wants what is best for the districts.

Brian Lurvey is just here as a concerned citizen as his family lives in the district and it does not matter how it happens but coverage has to happen.

Chief Brian Cherveney thinks it is going to be a rough road but Clifton does not want to take over the ASA.

Rick Weber believes the Chief should sit down with the new folks and see what their goals are and how long the plan on sticking around. Some of the plans for shift work or hiring to cover until we get our volunteers up will drain the funds in the bank account.

Wayne thanked everyone for coming and all the input and assured them that this is important and the department will be working toward a solution.

### ***Approval of Minutes***

Wayne DeGesualdo asked if everyone had a chance to read the minutes from last Board Meeting. Murray Thiessen made a motion to accept the minutes as presented. Chuck Nelson seconded the motion. All were in favor, no opposed. Motion carried.

### **OLD BUSINESS**

**Tank Update-** Tanks are buried. Risers are set up about 28 inches Working on finding the pipe that is needed for it and got an estimate from Sorter for the pull out. Target date is by the end of May before fire season.

**Handbook Update-** Chief said he has started working on the handbook.

**Website Update-** Website is in the works and target date for live launch is March 15<sup>th</sup>

## **NEW BUSINESS**

### **Treasurers Report**

Chuck Nelson presented the treasurers report. Advised there is not much to report on so far this year. Utilities are high but hoping to see that ease as it warms up. Ambulance maintenance has hit us hard. While income has not really started yet ambulance income is strong for only two months in, but we are only at 13% of the expense used for the year. Murray Theissen made a motion to approve both treasurers' reports as written. Eric Brown seconded the motion. All in favor, motion carried.

### **Chiefs Report**

We have 5 new people pending interviews. One of them is a medic that has been on protocol in Mesa County in the past.

3 people on supervised calls to get on protocol.

14 members total.

We have 6 people in fire one class starting soon.

Squad 51 no longer running Jeremy wants to buy it, just need a price.

Engine 51 needs a valve kit.

Tender 52 Non operational and not sure if anyone is qualified to drive it.

Brush 52 Guy from Western Slope wants to buy- or do trade labor for the engine for it. The pump on it is bad and it will cost \$3000 to repair it.

Dorie put in for the FEMA grant for new radios.

### **Grants:**

**FEMA AFG COM** - Prebuild is done-got a VIN and our Chassis has been delivered

**CDPHE 2023 EMTS** Target date is June 12<sup>th</sup>. Opted not to have Bruan Northwest to install the 800 Mega hertz radio to save money and lack of need.

**CDPHE 2024 EMTS Funding Program RFA #41271**-Awarded half the cost of the gurney and power lift. Power cot has been received; it is at station 51. Power lift should be delivered to Bruan Northwest in March.

Looking at possibility of a man camp at Station 53 and if the septic tank could handle it.

Having Black Hills Energy look at station 52 to see what the cost would be in stall gas at that location but was a no show on Friday will reach out to them again. Part of the problem at station 52 with the heating bill was the swamp cooler was never winterized.

College may have property off of Hookless that Chief wants to see if they might donate to the department for the new station. The Chief was advised by the board that is the body farm but was advised there are seven acres off of Hookless and Kauffman that belong to the county that was brought up as a possibility but the county.

Chief would like to get out of station 52 altogether as does not think that is a beneficial location as he doubts the Authority could gain access to Highway 50.

**Other Matters before the Board:**

Stacy Cox advised the board there are multiple community meetings this month at Station 53. Two meetings on 3/9, one on 3/20 and one on 3/25 plus at least one in April. Rich Phillips wants to use it on 3/9 also for the Cemetery meeting from 1-3 making it 3 meetings on March 9<sup>th</sup>.

**Public Comment:**

None

***Adjournment of meeting***

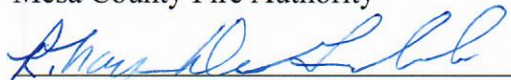
Chuck Nelson made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Murray Theissen seconded the motion. All in favor, no opposed, motion carried. Meeting adjourned at 9:02 PM.

Next Board Meeting is March 26, 2024.

Respectfully Submitted,

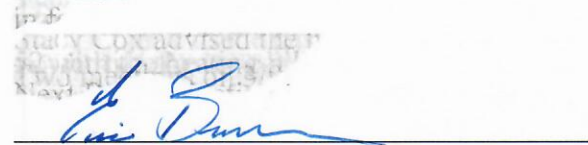
Stacy Cox, Administrative Assistant

Mesa County Fire Authority



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ATTEST



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ATTEST