

**NEHALEM BAY FIRE AND RESCUE DISTRICT  
BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING  
February 10, 2022**

**Public May Attend via Zoom:  
Meeting ID: 841 5402 3080 Passcode: 350949**

**I. CALL TO ORDER**

*As noted in the 08/16/2022 board meeting minutes, the NBF RD Treasurer for FY 2021-22 was John Steele, not Robert Forster.*

President John Handler called the meeting to order at 3:00 p.m. Persons in attendance were Director John Steele, Treasurer Bob Forster, Secretary Charles Bridge, Vice-President Mike Sims, Fire Chief Chris Beswick, and Executive Assistant Kristen Coyle. Eric Swanson, President Adventist Health Tillamook and Jackie Fox, Director Adventist Health Tillamook Ambulance, were also in attendance.

**II. WELCOME TO VISITORS**

**A. PUBLIC COMMENT**

There were no members of the public present via the Zoom platform.

**B. READING AND APPROVAL OF BOARD MEETING MINUTES**

Handler asked the Board members if they had any corrections or comments after reviewing the minutes from the January 14, 2022 Board Meeting.

*Bridge made a motion to accept the minutes as presented. Forster seconded the motion. Handler called for the question; motion passed unanimously.*

**III. FINANCIAL REPORTS**

The Board reviewed the Bills Paid, Visa Charges, and the Profit & Loss vs. Budget reports for the month of January. Beswick answered board questions regarding PPE expenses and disposal practices. Bridge requested that employee health insurance expenses be discussed prior to the next budgeting cycle.

*Forster made a motion to approve the January 2022 financial reports as presented. Bridge seconded. Handler called for the question; motion passed unanimously.*

**IV. STAFF REPORTS**

**A. FIRE CHIEF'S REPORT**

Chief Beswick presented his chief's report; Handler noted that the SAFER grant portion of the report will be presented under the New Business portion of the meeting. Beswick provided the January incident statistics; there were 83 incidents for the month which includes 58 EMS calls. Beswick note this is a 30% increase from the same month in 2021 which in turn was a 15% increase from 2020. Although the District was busy for the month, there were no noteworthy calls. February to-date incident activity is more in line with historical volume.

Beswick provided a volunteer and technical team update. The resident volunteer at Station 11 will be moving out soon; at that time the Station 13 resident will move to Station 11. The two

recruits are just waiting for their certificates to arrive by mail. There are three volunteers currently on limited duty. There are five volunteer applications in various stages of the on-boarding process. The next FF academy will start in early March with the goal of having the recruits certified by the end of May.

Beswick reports that the Rosenbauer, the new engine manufacturer, offered a reduced cost opportunity if the leasing company could release funds now to pay for the chassis versus at the time of completion. Beswick authorized the lease/purchase company to release \$114,300 in funds for this purpose.

Beswick reports that he has established a Weekly Update newsletter to provide members with the latest District news and happenings. Beswick offered to add the board members to the distribution; all directors expressed interest.

Beswick reported that a volunteer with nearly 20 years in service will be retiring soon, as he is moving out of state.

Beswick noted that there was a recent line of duty death for a volunteer firefighter from St. Paul, Oregon. The incident involved an explosion within a barn; the unfortunate incident is a reminder of how unsafe barns can be. Findings from the preliminary and final investigation will be incorporated in trainings. The district will be sending an engine with three volunteers to the memorial services to be held Saturday, February 12<sup>th</sup>.

Beswick reported that in early March he will be participating in a Build and Improve a Collaborating Team class geared towards combination staff / volunteer fire departments. The class will be held in Arizona, and it is presented by the International Association of Fire Chief; IAFC will pay for all class and travel costs utilizing federal grant monies.

Beswick concluded his report by reminding the board that there is a budget committee vacancy now that Mike Sims is on the board of directors. Directors were reminded to provide Beswick with the contact information for any candidate who may be willing to serve. The possibility of advertising the position on the reader sign was discussed.

## **B. TRAINING REPORT**

The January 2022 training report prepared by Division Chief/Training Officer Jesse Walsh was provided. Beswick highlighted the annual Candidate Physical Agility Test (CPAT) certification for interior firefighters; he was impressed with each firefighter's performance. A make-up test will be scheduled for those who were unable to participate, including recruits. Steele asked for more information regarding the quarterly medical reviews. Beswick indicated this is done on a drill night via Zoom meeting with District's two medical directors and all Tillamook County fire departments. The doctors do a good job presenting the subject matter in a non-intimidating way, thus appealing to all levels of EMS providers. Upcoming fire fighter training will be fire extinguisher maintenance and a live fire extinguishment.

## **IV. UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

### **A. DECOMMISSIONING OF 1996 E-ONE PUMPER**

Beswick recapped the last board meeting's discussion concerning an attempted sale of the engine before a donation be considered. Avenues for selling include engaging a broker to sell it or placing an ad on Daily Dispatch and selling directly. The selling price can be via a sealed-

bid process or asking price. Beswick confirmed that a broker would be compensated by a percentage of the selling price. Bridge expressed his desire to attempt a direct sale. Steele indicated in the past the District has placed ads on Daily Dispatch; he would support this option. Beswick indicated that the second department that expressed an interest in a donation never followed up with Beswick's request for an official written appeal for donation. Beswick answered the board's question regarding Cannon Beach's engine situation; he indicated that the E-One pumper could be made available to them on a short-term basis if necessary. Beswick expressed a monetary range the apparatus could command in the marketplace. The board discussed the timing of the sale. The board expressed a desire to have an asking price listed rather than utilize a sealed bid process. Beswick indicated he would get an appraisal on the equipment.

## **VI. NEW BUSINESS**

### **A. PRESENTATION BY ERIC SWANSON – PRESIDENT, TILLAMOOK ADVENTIST HEALTH**

Swanson introduced Jackie Fox; Ms. Fox distributed Eric's business cards for all those attending. Swanson indicated the best way to get in touch with him is via email. He thanked the board for allowing him to present. His stated goal for the presentation was to discuss opportunities for collaboration.

Swanson began his PowerPoint presentation by elaborating on his background, which includes stints in EMS (as a paramedic and Director of Tillamook Adventist EMS), law enforcement, the Oregon Health Authority, and the Tillamook 9-1-1 District. Awards, accolades, and education were also listed on his PowerPoint.

Swanson indicated two incidents during the September / October timeframe have strained the relationship with the Ambulance Service: a press release from the Tillamook Co. Fire Defense Board citing poor ambulance response time and a similar post on NBFRD's Facebook page. Swanson reminded the attendees that there was a pandemic surge at the time of these publications; the pandemic caused disruption not only within the ambulance service but also Tillamook Hospital entire hospital's operations.

Swanson presented summarized data indicating ambulance rates per 100,000 population; the Tillamook County rate is 14.79 per 100,000 compared to 7 for Clatsop County. He also cited ambulance service cutbacks in Lincoln County due to staffing. Swanson solicited questions from the audience. Handler thanked Swanson for presenting and apologized for the District's lack of understanding for call times. Handler shared that his acquaintances with fire and EMS service in the Portland Metro area are also citing personnel shortages. Handler expressed his desire for the District and Adventist EMS to make things better for each other. Bridge clarified his understanding of what the metric of 14.79/100,000 measures; Swanson offered to send the calculation for the metric. Forster stated that there were issues before the Covid-19 pandemic. While he is hopeful the pandemic will go away soon, he feels that the ambulance service may go back to that pre-pandemic status. Swanson replied that he is not aware of what the issues were at that time, as no one has stated them to him. Steele disagreed; he stated former Fire Chief Perry Sherbaugh reported to the board his multiple contacts with Swanson and his office concerning ambulance services. Steele stated Sherbaugh also wrote letters to both Swanson and the Tillamook County Board of Commissioners. Swanson stated that those letters were not addressed to him but rather to the Hospital Administration; at the time he did not hold a position within the health organization to address the issues. Swanson said that since his most recent appointment, issues have not been presented to him.

Swanson continued his presentation; he reported the ambulance received 4,303 9-1-1 calls county-wide during 2021. The average response time was 11 minutes, 40 seconds. The Manzanita response area, from the Clatsop County Line to the Jetty Creek, represents 16% of the ambulance call volume and had a 2021 response time of 11 minutes, 49 seconds. Response time is dispatch to arrival. Calls that were cancelled in route are part of the response time calculation. Beswick wanted to ensure that the response time is just ambulance arrival time and does not include fire first response; Swanson confirmed. Beswick also asked if this includes QRT ambulance response; Swanson indicated that it does not, it would be including only transporting ambulances. Swanson stated that the county ASA (Ambulance Service Agreement) requires a 90% within 20-minute response time and factors in fire first response.

Steele asked how these statistics tie into what District staff sees in the field. Beswick indicated that he has run his own calculations for the district for a few months and the response time is vastly different; he indicated this is an area for collaboration to ensure that both parties are calculating times in the same manner. Swanson then provided statistics for the Garibaldi, Tillamook, and Pacific City response areas. He indicated that the hospital will soon publish response time on a quarterly basis.

Swanson indicated he will include the data with the slide deck. He asks that should the district have any complaints about the ambulance services, they should be communicated to Fox. He also requested no defamatory comments be made to the public concerning the ambulance service. He hopes the district can engage in a culture of collaboration within the district, with the hospital, and with the other public safety agencies. He suggested the district hold people accountable for their actions or inactions, and it should focus on what is within its scope. He feels that the two entities have a collaborative advantage, and in the past has worked with the District with grant writing. Swanson indicated that he will have similar meetings the next week with other city managers and fire chiefs.

Handler thanked Swanson for his time. Sims pointed out that although the statistics presented appear to be well within the ASA time frames, the frustration in the field from NBFDR and other agencies must stem from somewhere. Sims suggested that during his upcoming meetings with other agencies, Swanson not focus so much on his own calculated response time but rather solicit information from the other agencies about the ambulance service issues they have experienced. Discussions ensued among the group concerning challenges with longer incidents, out of county transports, and ambulance staffing.

Swanson reiterated that should someone in the room have an issue with the ambulance service, they should contact himself or Fox. Steele expressed his dismay over what he perceives as Swanson's inability to accept criticism. Steele has heard over the past 8 years grievances from district response personnel and chief, as well as reports of similar grievances from the Fire Defense Board, concerning the ambulance service. He re-emphasized that the district wrote letters of grievances; he finds it inconceivable that Swanson does not have knowledge of those. Steele acknowledged that the pandemic has caused disruption to EMS services. However, he feels the response times presented do not correspond to the response rates district QRT (quick response team) sees in the field. He feels the citizens of the community need to know a realistic ambulance response time and as such, the board encouraged Beswick's media outreach.

Swanson suggested that both agencies calculated response times using January (2022) data and then compare the results. He also noted that the minutes of the Fire Defense Board do not mention any authorization for a press release concerning ambulance service grievances. Steele asked Swanson to outline the measures Adventist is undertaking to increase ambulance staffing as well as what are the challenges to find staff. Swanson indicated that for all (open) medical

positions, there is not much interest in moving to Tillamook (County). There is a nationwide shortage of EMTs and paramedics. He cited an October 2021 NBC news story from October 2021 in which the president of the American Ambulance Association indicated people are leaving the profession because it is too daunting and not enough people are entering the profession. Swanson reported his organization's recruitment efforts includes referral bonuses, competitive wages, and a superior benefits package. There are discussions with the community college concerning the establishment of a paramedic program. Oregon requires paramedics have an associate's degree, which is a barrier. Swanson shared stories regarding current ambulance EMTs and the prospect of them returning to school to become a paramedic. He also indicated that the organization is looking for the right candidates, as they will be confronted with going into people's homes. Steele appreciated the recap of issues, and he suggested Swanson publicize his organization's efforts. Handler expressed agreement. Sims countered that mixed messages are being sent; it doesn't add up to publicize Adventist's efforts to counter ambulance staff shortages in the era of COVID if the response times Swanson presented are to be believed. Handler indicated that he does not feel that way; the response times are an average for responses for a wide range and he feels people can understand that. Handler indicated the district does not publicize its response time.

Swanson reverted to staffing impediments. He indicated the service does not has a staff residency requirement; currently 75% of staff live outside the county. He stated that many do not want to live here due to desired separation from the population they serve, which he feels is understandable given the nature of the job. He hopes that COVID will resolve itself; the fluctuating quarantine restrictions created staffing challenges. Swanson ended his presentation by offering to speak again with the group and to make himself available to answer questions, collaboratively review data, etc. Steele inquired how the service deals with patient transfers to facilities out of the county. Swanson indicated that they respond to those patients as any other. He noted that Metro West and other agencies have cut back their transport-only service, thereby Adventist Tillamook Ambulance is picking up (routine) care transports to Kaiser and the VA. In addition, the hospital bed shortage resulted in patient transfers to far places such as Everett Washington, Klamath Falls, and Springfield. Wage and hour laws deter the utilization call back / on-call ambulance.

Handler thanked Swanson for information he shared and called for the rest of the meeting to proceed. Swanson re-thanked the group and reiterated his willingness to answer questions.

## **B. RESOLUTION 22-02 – A SECOND RESOLUTION TO DESIGNATE 2021 WILDFIRE COST REIMBURSEMENT**

Resolution 22-02 appropriates unbudgeted reimbursement and expenditures for District personnel and apparatus during the Wildfire Season. The district received funds in the amount of \$15,967.40 as reimbursement for deployment to the Cougar Peak Fire. The Resolution designates within the General Fund \$15,967.40 to Revenue – Wildfire Reimbursement, \$7,983.70 to Expenses Personnel Services and \$7,983.70 Expenses Material Services – Rescue Operating Supplies. Beswick indicated that the District is anticipating one additional reimbursement check for the 2021 Wildfire Season for approx. \$23,000.

*Steele made a motion to approve Resolution 22-02 A Second Resolution to Designate 2021 Wildfire Cost Reimbursement; Bridge seconded. Handler called the question; motion passed unanimously.*

### **C. RESOLUTION 22-03 – RESOLUTION TO DESIGNATE 2021 VACCINE CLINIC COST REIMBURSEMENT**

Beswick explained this is a reimbursement from OHA via a FEMA grant for costs directly related to COVID-19 vaccine clinics. The costs to be reimbursed came to \$26,507.22, and it excludes the cost of the vaccine refrigerator, which was purchased through a separate grant. Beswick spoke with the FEMA representative earlier in the day; this will be our last COVID related reimbursement unless something else happens. The resolution designates within the General Fund \$26,507.22 Revenue - Vaccine Expense Reimbursement and the same amount for Materials & Services – Operating Supply Expense. Beswick explained the funds will be used to purchase 3 AED devices for apparatus as well as to purchase video laryngoscopes for district paramedic use.

*Forster made a motion to adopt Resolution 22-03 A Resolution to Designate 2021 Vaccine Clinic Cost Reimbursement; Sims seconded. Handler called the question; motion passed unanimously.*

### **D. REVIEW OF POLICY 9.12 – USE OF DISTRICT OWNED PROPERTY**

The policy, which was established in 2010, is a general policy regarding personnel use of district owned personal property. Beswick indicated he cleaned up some parts of the policy to reflect modern (technology) times in areas such as phone and computer usage; a red-lined copy with his edits was provided to the board members.

*The Board performed a First Reading of the policy; there were no suggested changes. The policy will be presented for a Second Reading at the next board meeting.*

### **E. SAFER GRANT APPLICATION (ADDED TO AGENDA)**

Beswick provided some background; NFPA Standard 1720 requires fire response time to be 6 personnel on scene within 14 minutes. Currently, the district does not meet the response with its personnel. Beswick's analysis shows that the district could meet this with the addition of three full-time personnel. He applied for a SAFER grant to reimburse the personnel costs (wage and benefit) for three full-time fire fighters for three years; the application amount was for \$867,000. Steele asked for a gage of how likely the request would be approved; Beswick replied a low-medium chance. He indicated that the grants are awarded annually, and he feels if more time is spent on next year's grant, the District's chances would be increased. Forster inquired as to what happens at the end of three years; Beswick indicated that an extension can be applied for/granted for an additional three year. Steele asked how Beswick would utilize the additional headcount. Beswick outlined steps that would have to occur such as the adoption of civil service rules and the return to 24-hour shift schedule with a full-time officer and firefighter being on duty for each shift. A twenty-four-hour shift schedule would still require use of volunteers. Two would be on duty at all times: one officer and one FT FF. The on-duty personnel would be required to stay at Station 13. Steele pointed out the uncertainty of what would happen after year three. Beswick indicated that projections would need to be done prior to accepting grants to ensure the district would be able to fiscally handle the additional payroll. Board members commented on the acceleration of call volume over the years and the amount of new construction in the area. Handler commented on preventing burn-out of existing staff; Beswick commented that the district must be sensitive to the volunteers' perception. Beswick indicated the grants are awarded in May. It was noted that it would be up to the board to accept an awarded grant.

*There was consensus to place the SAFER Grant on the next meeting's agenda.*

**VII. REVIEW / SET NEXT MEETING DATE**

The next monthly board meeting was scheduled for Thursday, March 10, 2022, at 3 p.m. Forster indicated that he will be out of town and unable to make that meeting.

**VIII. ADJOURNMENT**

President Handler adjourned the meeting at 4:29 p.m.

*MINUTES APPROVED BY BOARD  
March 10, 2022*

  
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John Handler, President

ATTEST:   
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Charles Bridge, Secretary