

## Minutes

### Board meeting of Park County Rural Fire District #1

February 26<sup>th</sup>, 2024

**The Board of Trustees of Park County Rural Fire District #1 met on February 26th, 2024, for their special meeting at 501 East Park Street, Livingston MT.**

**Trustees Present:** Chairperson Lawellin, Trustee Fee, Trustee Lowy, Trustee Donovan, Secretary Nelson absent due to weather conditions

**Also Present:** Vickie Jo Stuber, Dave Haug, Assistant Chief Anderson

**Call to Order:** Meeting called to order at 6:12 PM

**Public Comment:** None

**Sign Claims and Warrants**

**Old Business:** Discussion on the pond for the Haug Subdivision. Mr. Haug was given a moment to read the correspondence between the Board and Department with Juliette. The board was asked if they had any questions or comments regarding the Subdivision, variance or communications. Trustee Donovan stated that she was not pleased with the tone from Juliette in the emails with the bullying threats made for future reference if any communication continues. Trustee Donovan stated that he has spent the last week at the Clerk and Recorder looking for documentation on the pond in Park County and was unable to find any information on past history and that there are no current subdivision regulations as well as agreeing with what Trustee Lowy said. Trustee Lowy voiced that dealing with the Haug subdivision has brought to light that as Park County there is a gap with no regulations or enforcement the board or department as regarding for buildings etc. Trustee Fee also asked do we have a set person with the authority to enforce the pond like stated in the covenants. Chairperson Lawellin answered that Chief Anderson is the person with the authority and that currently, the board can't adopt fire codes as there is no one to enforce them. Trustee Lowy asked if it would just be better to place a pond on site instead. Chairperson Lawellin answered that she did not know if it would be better as the pond that exists is a better option with its location, especially once it is cleaned up as it has not been usable for a while. Trustee Lowy stated that a variance was made to support the variance for the Haug Subdivision by Trustee Lowy. Discussion: Chairperson Lawellin thanked

Mr. Haug for making the requested changes to the covenant. Mr. Haug asked if checking the pump and cleaning involved draining the pond or pumping. Asst. Chief Anderson responded that at the minimum a flow test will be performed once a year to ensure proper function and if any issues arise, they will be passed on to Mr. Haug. Trustee Lowy voiced that this variance is not a precedence setting for other variances that may come up in the future. Motion passed unanimously.

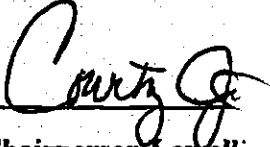
**Discussion/Decision on meeting with DOT.** The board had a meeting with the County commissioners on Thursday. The issues with DOT. Trustee Fee voiced that he received a call from Commissioner Wells on Friday that the Commissioner had lunch with the Sheriff and the Sheriff reported that Commissioner Wells has tried to set up a meeting with the Sheriff. Trustee Fee voiced that Chief Babcox is the head of the DOT was fired. Chairperson Lawellin voiced that Chief Babcox is a valuable asset at the meeting as he has a wealth of knowledge that is valuable, as well as can make decisions, and has the authority with the Sheriff to close the roads. Chairperson Lawellin also voiced that she believes it is important a representative from the board be present as well as Asst. Chief Anderson. Asst. Chief Anderson voiced that over the last four years, the majority of incidents involving the roads have been due to his lack of patience and "running his mouth" on the part of the Commissioner. Chairperson Lawellin posed the question if anyone had heard the Commissioner's voice at the meeting that was held. Chairperson Lawellin voiced that the board has spent the last two months and has not heard their support. Chairperson Lawellin made a motion that Trustee Lowy be the representative of the board for the meeting with DOT. Second by Trustee Fee. Motion passed unanimously.

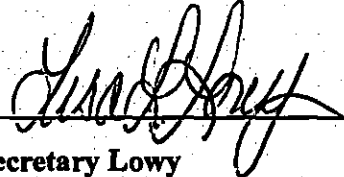
**New Business: Discussion/Decision on Board Secretary for the remainder of FY24.** Secretary Nelson has submitted her resignation as Board Secretary. Trustee Lowy volunteered to fill the position for the remainder of the term. A motion was made to nominate Trustee Lowy as the Board Secretary for the remainder of the term by Chairperson Lawellin. Second by Trustee Donovan. Motion passed.

**Public Comment: Asst. Chief Anderson** stated to the board that he is not trying to be offensive and that it is not personal. Chairperson Lawellin stated that in order to hold meetings like this special meeting at the board meeting, the door needs to be unlocked. Chairperson Lawellin said if you want the door unlocked, you need to be open. Asst. Chief Anderson stated that the Firefighters do not answer to the board, they answer to the Sheriff. Chairperson Lawellin stated that if you have a problem with Firefighters, you need to go to the Sheriff. Chairperson Lawellin stated that if you've had personally, there will be then stay home. Asst. Chief Anderson stated that he will be going interstate. I should not get a phone call from Firefighters when I am on interstate. Chairperson Lawellin stated that dealing with Semi's when a board member has a bad day and a bad attitude in this situation should not happen. We have bigger issues than a door being

locked. Unlock the door, do not expect us when we are busy. Our Firefighters should feel safe in a room when you [the trustee] are together, they should not fear retribution when they are being screamed and yelled at. Trustee Donovan voiced that he was not yelling. Asst. Chief Anderson replied that you [Donovan] are yelling now, I do not work for you. If hands are placed on one of my Firefighters again, I will be going the Sheriff's Office personally and pressing charges. Do not touch my Firefighters; I will work for you; I work for Dann if you have any issues take it up with him. Trustee Fee said he has the door code. Asst. Chief Anderson told Trustee Fee to speak with Chief Babcock. Trustee Fee said he is the only one able to hand out the code. Asst. Chief Anderson voiced that he is trying to be calm and respectful as I can be, but there is a time and a place. Trustee Donovan then said he saw him lay a hand on a Firefighter. Mrs. Shipley said I did not witness it, but she said she is the only one who did who have been instructed to write it up.

**Adjournment:** A motion was made by Trustee Lowy to adjourn the meeting by Trustee Lowy. Second by Trustee Fee. Motion passed unanimously.

  
Chairperson Lawell

  
Secretary Lowy