

Meeting Minutes for  
Rico Fire Protection District  
Regular Meeting: April 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2024

The regular Rico Fire Protection District Meeting was called to order at 7:02 p.m. by Board Chair Tyler Lapp.

**Roll Call:** RFPD Board members Gregg Anderson, Sarah Eckles, Raegan Ellease, Tyler Lapp, and Paul Ruud.

**Guests Present:** RVFD Fire Chief Todd Jones, RFPD Administrator David Kunz.

**Approval of Agenda:** Gregg Anderson moved to approve the agenda; Sarah Eckles seconded the motion. Approval was unanimous.

**Approval of Minutes:** Paul Ruud moved to approve the minutes for the March 18<sup>th</sup> meeting; Gregg Anderson seconded the motion. Approval was unanimous.

**Public Comment:** No public comment.

**Approval of Financial Report and Accounts Payable and Pension Checks:**

Kunz added (3) additional bills for payment: Fire Hose Direct (\$2988.64 for fire hose and fittings, Rico Center Operations 2024 grant); Mike Contillo/Rico Plumbing (584.00 for plumbing repair and installation of pressure reducer and backflow valve); GoDaddy (\$46.34 for ricofire domain).

Tyler Lapp motioned to approve payment for the bills as presented (plus additional 3) and to accept the financial report; Paul Ruud seconded the motion. Approval was unanimous.

**Administrative Report:**

El Pomar and Rico Center grants are being fulfilled. RFPD has received approval to purchase (4) more sets of structural bunkers through the CFSDPG program.

Kunz will get Lapp a check to sign to transfer \$20,000 in funds from the DSB General Account to the CSAFE Capital Improvement.

**Grants (awarded):**

**Rico Center 2024:** (4) requests: \$2,980.00 for food and other expenses for the 2024 Fourth of July (awarded \$1490); \$21,785.75 for Operations (full award): kitchen remodel funds, equipment, fire hose and fittings, EMS training dummies, training funds; \$19,982.75 for TSFA expenses (awarded \$12,356.25); \$50,000 for Light Rescue (full award). Grant agreement has been received. Fulfillment has started. Reimbursement will occur upon request. Closeout October 31, 2024/ (December 31, with extension).

**CDPHE EMTS grant:** Request of \$60,000 towards the light rescue truck. Awarded \$44,618.75. The purchase order has been received and RFPD can spend funds from this grant. The first and second quarterly reports have been filed. Kunz informed the grant manager that the funding would be de-obligated due to the increased cost and lead time for the vehicle. Closeout: June 30, 2024.

**El Pomar:** \$11,973.00 requested from the El Pomar Fire fund to pay for hand tools for the new tanker and wildland fire boots for RVFD personnel. Funding for \$12,000 has been received. Kunz has set up a commercial account with Boot Barn in Durango, red-carded RVFD members have been going to pick up boots and verify fit. Closeout: January 31, 2025.

**SMPA Community Focus Grant:** Request for \$20,000 for the light rescue truck; awarded \$2,000; an additional \$2,000 was received from Basin Electric. Kunz has notified SMPA contact MartyJo Davis that the Light Rescue may not be fulfilled until 2025.

**Colorado Fire Safety and Disease Prevention Grant (CFSDPG) 2024:** Request for \$13,088 for (4) new sets of structural fire bunkers. Kunz has been in touch with LN Curtis with the names of the firefighters who will need to be fitted. Closeout: October 31, 2024

**Grants (potential):**

**USDA RD Community Facilities** grant: Kunz may apply for funds for the Light Rescue. USDA would like to see a letter from a bank stating that they will not loan to the District, which seems unlikely. USDA also will require an attorney's opinion the the District is a valid entity and able to legally spend the requested funds. Due date: rolling.

**Fire Chief Report** (Fire Chief Todd Jones):

**Runs:** RVFD responded to (6) calls for service: (1) slide-off on Highway 145; (2) welfare checks (no transport); (1) non-transport trauma; (1) mutual aid wildland fire call at MM 23; (1) fire call (house fire on Commercial Street).

**Training:** Six RVFD personnel attended a 4-day 212 Sawyer class; Training officer Eckles is trying to set up a WFR class. Eckles has also organized younger auxiliary members who train on Wednesdays – the Rico Rescue Rats.

**Equipment:** the El Pomar grant will equip the new brush truck (928) with hand tools; Firefighters Pat Fallon and Justin Juarez are rewiring the switch banks on the truck. Tanker 927 still needs complete refurbishment of water tank and possibly adding compartments. San Miguel County SAR plans to donate several older snowmobiles to RVFD as well as a trailer.

**Building:** Jones will contact Cruzan contracting in regards to the new building. They have reportedly constructed buildings similar to what RFPD is planning for under \$200/sq.ft. The fixtures for the kitchen remodel have been ordered. There was agreement that at least part of the \$4,000 budgeted for building maintenance could be used to pay for kitchen remodel labor.

**Old Business:**

**RFPD Host planning for 2024 Tri State Firemans' Association (TSFA):** The event will be held August 1-3 of 2024. Issues to be addressed include: proposed menu (to be worked out with Will Nolan); training sessions (currently pump trailer/ flashover trailer and electric car fire simulator from DFPC); accommodations for instructors and attendees, trophies (Pat Fallon and Dylan Robertson are fabricating) and merch, need for sponsors/ raffle prizes/ schwag and general donations.

The school property will transfer from Dolores County Schools to Telluride School District on July 1<sup>st</sup>; Kunz will confirm with McCarthy about school usage for the 4<sup>th</sup> of July and for the TSFA event. Kunz will also request money from the Town to help subsidize fixed costs for the TSFA event. Chief Jones estimates that a per-head meal cost of \$80 will generate \$17,000 in revenue. More kitchen fixtures/equipment may be needed for the event. The next TSFA planning meeting will be May 6.

**Review and Approval of RFPD By-Laws (2024 revision):**

Review, revision and approval of the RFPD by-laws occurs at the beginning of even-numbered years. Raegan Ellease suggested several revisions to the most recent (2018) revision of the by laws: Section R should refer specifically to the 2006 International Fire Code; that the Article VII (Fiscal Committee) language should be clarified (by resolution) that the RFPD Board shall function as the Fiscal Committee; that Article VIII, Section 1 be revised to state that the Fire Chief is elected by the Rico Volunteer Fire Department, but can be vetoed by a majority of the RFPD Board. Kunz has drafted some of the changes and will look for precedent in the record for how the pension committee was addressed. Voting and quorum language in Article V was agreed to be sufficiently clear in intent and no revision was made.

The proposed amendments to the RFPD by-laws shall be duly noticed and presented for adoption at the next RFPD regular meeting as per Article X, Section 1 of said bylaws.

**New Business:**

**Resolution 2024-5: Opening a Dolores State Bank account for Tri-State:** Kunz stated that DSB now wanted a resolution to open the new account. Gregg Anderson moved to approve Resolution 2024-5; Paul Ruud seconded the motion. Approval was unanimous.

**Review of RFPD Pension plan and structure:** Kunz presented a summary of how the RFPD pension plan works, how DOLA match payments are calculated, and which RVFD members would next qualify for pension. He also stated that after years of asking the Fire Police Pension Association, that the statutes had finally been clarified so that they can manage funds from volunteer fire departments. Kunz will follow up with FPPA for a proposal. The Board agreed to follow the State Statute by scheduling a quarterly pension plan review during the regular RFPD meeting that (2)

RVFD volunteers could attend. Paul Ruud motioned to direct Kunz to draft a resolution to raise the monthly pension benefit to \$100 for existing and future pensioners; Sarah Eckles seconded the motion. Approval was unanimous.

**Review of Alley Standards for Emergency Access**

In anticipation of additional requests for access review to undeveloped residential properties from platted alleys within the Town of Rico, the Board had requested this item be on the agenda for discussion. The 2006 International Fire Code Appendix D does not contemplate roadways narrower than 20' in width; however, platted ROW's for alleys in the Town of Rico are 16'. and the improved surface (due to terrain and drainage restrictions, among others) is often significantly smaller (often 12'). The Board wishes to proactively clarify acceptable access parameters for accessing residential properties that can only be accessed via an alley ROW. IFC 2009 Table D103.4 calls out standard turnarounds for dead-end fire access roads. Access roads exceeding 150' in length are supposed to have hammerhead or cul-de-sac turnarounds; however, due to Rico's topography, these may not be practical to construct or maintain. Board members discussed allowing a k-turn turnaround if the driveway could be 20' deep off of the alley. Board members also discussed whether properties exclusively accessed by alleys should be encouraged to incorporate self-contained fire suppression (e.g. cistern or foam system) if fire suppression access would be too problematic.

**Carter Way Alley improvement plan review**

Board member Gregg Anderson recused himself, stating that he could provide his opinion, but would not vote as his company (Alpine Land Consulting) provided the engineering study for the proposed access.

The nearest hydrants to the property are within 500': in Block 16 on the NE corner of Mantz Avenue and Silver Street, a pull of 484'; and in the Block 7 alley between Commercial and Silver, a considerable uphill pull of 264'. The proposed alley improvements exceed 150', and no hammerhead or cul-de-sac is proposed. The existing water service in the alley is a 2" service line that would not support a hydrant. The proposed width of the improved alleyway (12') is narrower than the standard width of Town alley right-of-ways (16'). The proposed ROW alley slope exceeds 15%; Town road standard maximum is 10%. The proposed access would be sloped downhill to the north, which would compound any drainage issues during freezing conditions.

The Board discussed the difficulties of access to and egress from the site with fire and EMS apparatus, with particular attention to the challenges of extending a water supply, which would also be compounded by winter weather conditions.

Paul Ruud moved to approve the proposed access plan, with the recognition that: given the narrow width, topography, slope and aspect of the proposed alley access, RFPD strongly recommends that any new residences accessed by this extension of Carter Alley integrate an independent fire suppression system. Sarah Eckles seconded the motion.

The motion passed: voting in favor were members Eckles, Ellease, and Lapp, and Ruud. Anderson abstained from voting due to his conflict of interest.

**Other Business:**

**Raegan Ellease resignation:** Ellease submitted a letter of resignation prior to the meeting, to take effect at the meeting's end. Paul Ruud moved to accept the resignation; seconded by Gregg Anderson. The vote was unanimous with Ellease abstaining. There was general agreement to have Kunz draft a letter thanking Ellease for her service.

The next regular RFPD meeting will be held on May 20<sup>th</sup>.

A motion to adjourn was made by Tyler Lapp at 8:38; seconded by Sarah Eckles. Approval was unanimous.

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Chairman

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Secretary