



ELSIE-VINEMAPLE Rural Fire Protection District

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**Elsie Vinemaple Fire Protection District (EVRFPD)
Board of Directors Meeting
March 19, 2024 6:00 p.m.
Jewell School Library
MINUTES**

REMOTE ACCESS:

<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/89053538884?pwd=zm5EgzNU2KsXeMFOZUF52Jp9rNpqoc.1>

1. **Call to Order and Welcome.** The meeting was called to order at 6 p.m.
2. **Pledge of Allegiance.**
3. **Roll Call. Present-**Chief Rob Davis; Board members Vivian McCann, TJ Hecox, Stacy Morrison, Wayne Carmichael and Kerry Walsh. Approximately 30 community members and 4-6 participants on the zoom line.
4. **Motion to accept updated agenda.** Kerry moved to accept; Wayne seconded.
Vote 5 yes, 0 no.
5. **Motion to approve minutes of February 28 Meeting.** Two changes were noted to the draft minutes:
 - a. ISO should be 5 not 6,
 - b. web site for district is elsiefire.streamline.org.

TJ moved to accept edited minutes, Kerry seconded, vote 5 yes, 0 no.
6. **Reports**
 - a. **Chair's Report (McCann).** Vivian noted she will defer the Chair's report so we can cover the other items on the busy agenda.
 - b. **Vice-Chair's Report (Hecox).** TJ reported that he and Deidra Pitkin visited Station 2 and took pictures of roof leaks so they can be documented, and the process can begin to get them fixed.

- c. **Secretary's Report (Carmichael).** Wayne reported he was checking Station 1 and 2 file boxes in search of a record of minutes since the Department was organized.
 - i. At Station 2, he found minutes from 1984-86 when David and Wade Morgan were involved with the Department.
 - ii. At Station 1, he found minutes (intermittent and not complete) from 1988 to 2013. The last year for minutes was 2013- 2014.
 - iii. No minutes were found for 2015 and 2016, the years in which the levy for station 2 was discussed and organized.
 - iv. Starting with July 2017, minutes are complete (except for meetings where no quorum was had and some during Covid-19) to the present. These 2017 and onward minutes are stored as electronic files.

- d. **Treasurer's Report (Morrison).** Stacy reported that she obtained Quickbook account copies from William Cote, our accountant. These were files that could not be accessed from the office computers as we did not have passwords. It is now possible to complete the budget process and move on to the 2024-2025 budget process.

- e. **Director-at-Large's Report (Walsh).** Kerry reports that he, Ed Van Dyke and Ron Weber are replacing locks on Station 1 and 2 with electronic locks, that are designed with personnel codes so that we will have a record of entry.

- f. **Chief's Report (Davis).** Chief Davis reported on four items:
 - i. How many responders do we have? We have 10, three who are new and will be receiving training.
 - ii. A summary of the vehicles in service for use including those at Station 1, 2 and 3. Currently in service we have 2 engines, 2 water tenders, 2 squads, one rescue and one command vehicle that are in service outfitted, ready to go. These vehicles are currently divided up between Stations 1, 2, and 3.
 - iii. Cleanup of Station 1 and reorganization of equipment.
 - iv. A recent phone call just prior to the meeting from a Mr. Eric Olson who reported he was the one who purchased the pumper/tanker located behind Station 2. Mr. Olsen claimed he purchased the vehicle and paid \$1000 cash in July of 2022. He has not received a bill of sale or title since that time. Chief Davis and Stacy said they are trying to find a record of the deposit for the \$1000 in our accounts from that time. More on this topic as we investigate.

7. Old Business

a. Update on Billing for non-resident calls (Walsh)

Actions required:

- i. **Review and Adoption of Resolution 2024-002.** A two-page resolution drafted by Kerry was presented and discussed. One edit was noted by Chief Davis, specifying that the next-to-last paragraph should begin, “Be it resolved...” TJ moved to adopt the resolution with this edit, seconded by Stacy with a vote of 5 yes, 0 no.

Resolution entitled: “RESOLUTION #2024-002 A RESOLUTION OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS OF THE ELSIE-VINEMAPLE RURAL FIRE PROTECTION DISTRICT, IMPLEMENTING A COST RECOVERY PROGRAM FOR FIRE PROTECTION, MOTOR VEHICLE ACCIDENT SCENE RESPONSE AND TRAFFIC SAFETY FOR EMERGENCY RESPONSE INCIDENTS AND RELATED SERVICES.” Resolution entered as Attachment A to these minutes.

- ii. **Review and Adoption of Contract with EF Recovery.** Kerry presented an outline of a draft contract that would be used by our District. Details of that contract were discussed. Discussion centered on what charges will be made regarding community residents and non-residents. It was concluded that no charges should be made for resident callouts, and that only nonresidents be charged.

Discussion from the community members present centered on details of who would be charged, and under what conditions. Final statement is that no resident of the district will get a bill or a claim for fire, vehicle or medical. Nonresidents would have their insurance charged for our part of the services with motor vehicle accidents (MVA) only. We would also charge for our services when we go to a mutual aid callout.

Motion was made by TJ, and seconded by Stacy to authorize Kerry to write the contract with EF Recovery specifying the type of charges that we would bill for, to be clear that residents would not be charged. Vote 5 yes, 0 no.

Vivian then asked for a motion to have Chief Davis draft a standard operating procedure (SOP) that authorizes billing of nonresidents for MVA accidents only. Wayne moved and Stacy seconded. Motion passed 5 yes, 0 no.

- b. **Review of 2022/23 Financial Report with accountant - Update (Morrison).** Stacy had nothing more to add to what she reported under item 6d.
- c. **Status of surplus.** Chief Davis agreed to table a complete update for later. He did report setting up a Gov Deals account so we can begin the surplus sales process. We expect to start listing those items we have approved at

the last meeting in a week or so. Vivian asked how long the sales process might take. Chief Davis reports the bid process usually lasts about 2 weeks.

- d. **State Pool Bank account.** Stacy reported that the process for getting a state pool account was in process. We will maintain a checking account with Lewis and Clark Bank and use the state pool account for all other funds.
- e. **Engine Repair - update (Davis).** Chief reports that the repair on vehicle #3425 was completed at True North and it is ready to be picked up. Cost is \$20,000 plus an extra \$700 for parts. We have already paid the \$20,000 so we will need another check cut for \$700.

8. New Business

- a. **Forensic Audit/Investigation for FD, including Station 2.** Stacy reports that until we set up QuickBooks and see what is in the accounts, we won't know what needs a deeper look, possibly by an accountant with forensics experience. Stacy also reported that the expense records for Station 2 are not all in one place and are haphazard. This will take time to sort out. TJ asked about the report from the former Chief and restated by Susan Robinson at this meeting that some boxes of notes on Station 2 were missing from that location. That will need to be part of the investigation, although as Stacy notes, it does not make sense that someone would enter station 2 just to remove paperwork and files.
- b. **2024-25 Budget Process (Davis).** Chief Davis reported that the budget process begins soon. Chief wants to have 5 community members and the 5 Board members on the committee, with him as Chair. A process for applications from the community will be set up and a committee will be announced at the next meeting. That meeting will most likely be a Special Meeting before the next regular meeting (which is scheduled on April 17).

Chief Davis would like to have our first budget meeting on April 17, 1 hour prior to the regularly scheduled board meeting for that month. The goal of that first budget committee meeting will be to deliver the budget message for the 2024-25 fiscal year and go through the initial reading of what that budget is going to look like and then make contact with the county so that we have a pretty good idea of what our funds will look like as far as tax revenue for the 2024-25 fiscal. The main problem right now is lack of access to some 2023-24 numbers which are needed to calculate the carry over for 24-25.

The second budget committee meeting will likely be in May prior to the regular scheduled meeting. At that meeting, the budget will be presented to the Board and community. If approved, it will be adopted at the regular meeting in June.

Chief Davis asked for volunteers and said the time commitment would be about 1 hr each in April, May and June-with possibly a bit more as needed.

An audience member asked what the revenue might be. Chief Davis said an estimate would be about \$149,000 that we will receive from tax funds. A portion of that will be set aside for payment for the Station 2 projects. So, we'll be operating with new tax revenue just over \$100,000. Reserve funds will carry us from July 1 to Nov 30, when tax revenues start to arrive. The reserve also includes that portion we need to pay for the new pumper tanker due for delivery in August.

There's a potential that we will see some additional funds coming from the county that we weren't expecting in the amount of about \$10,500, which will help some.

Vivian then encouraged volunteers for the budget committee. You can leave a voicemail at Station One, or you can email the chief directly at elsiefirechief@gmail.com, or you can just, if all else fails, send us an email on our website, and we'll make sure that he gets it. Chief Davis said that if more than 5 volunteers are received, he will hold a public meeting, i.e. a Special Meeting and work it out and then have the Board approve that budget committee.

- c. **Answering Your Questions.** Eleven questions submitted by members of the community were read and answered by the Board. A copy of those questions/answers is posted on our website at:
<https://elsiefire.specialdistrict.org/files/b9c08f2b4/Questions+from+the+public+with+March+19+2024+answers.pdf>

There were two questions from that recording not on the website list, for Chief Davis.

1. He was asked if equipment was missing following the dismissal of the former chief. Chief Davis reported that there are turnouts and other equipment that we believe the district has purchased that are so far unaccounted for, and we continue to work through that during our inventory at each of the district properties.
2. Chief Davis was asked what his priorities were for the District. He replied that there were 3:
 - a. **Number one** is making sure that the district can continue to respond to callouts. When you call 911, you live here, you expect that somebody's going to show up. So, making sure that our response capabilities remain intact and active is absolutely step number one for us moving into the future.
 - b. **Number 2** is maintaining financial stability and making sure that we understand where we're at financially, and that we're being transparent to the community members and that all of you understand and are comfortable with what we're doing with your money. Those folks that live within the district and pay their taxes deserve to know that we're spending your money appropriately, and you can understand that at any point you should ask the

question: Okay, where are you spending our money, and what are you doing with it?

- c. **Number 3** is continuing to increase our recruitment retention. This means making sure that we continue to recruit folks that have time and the drive and the desire to volunteer with the fire district, and then making sure that we're doing the right thing for those folks that want to give up their time so that they want to continue to serve their community when the calls come in.
1. **Good of the Order.** None reported
 2. **Motion to Adjourn.** Kerry moved to adjourn; Wayne seconded. Vote 5 yes, 0 no. Adjourned at 7:21 p.m.

After the meeting adjourns, please stay for an informal meet-and-greet with Interim Chief Davis!