

**NORTH BENCH VOLUNTEER FIRE DEPARTMENT MEETING**  
**NBVFD FIREHOUSE #1**

1. DATE: Monday, September 08, 2025

2. THOSE IN ATTENDANCE:

- 🍏 Vice President Casy West
- 🍏 Director Greg Mead
- 🍏 Chief Ken Baker
- 🍏 Director Jim Hill
- 🍏 Treasurer Edna Runyan
- 🍏 Secretary Aaron Rutherford

Note: Casey West arrived appx 7 PM

3. TIME MEETING COMMENCED: 6:30

CALLED TO ORDER BY: Jim

4. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

5. INVOCATION: Aaron

6. PUBLIC COMMENT(S): Jim will be absent for next mtg. no public comments

7. PREVIOUS MINUTES:

Pg. 5, 4<sup>th</sup> line Jim reiterated the difficulty in contacting. Page 7 See Corrected

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- a. Approved as Corrected
- b. Motion to approve: Aaron

1. Seconded: Edna

2. All in favor, None Opposed, unanimously with one absent.

## 8. CHIEF REPORT

- a. Discussion

Ken presented his call history chart. Estimate for the office assistant. Procedure change with no attorney. Based on the numbers 2700 parcels. 11-12K paid to date in 2025 (Member's Dues). Half of potential paying members. Hired individual could help with un current data for 2024. Board is suppose to be overseer. 2026 mailing list could be completed by Jan 26, 2026 as a quality goal. Ken talked to Jim about a Moyie resident that wants to be member so they could contribute. Last call Moyie dept. didn't show. Edna recommended that person make a donation since they aren't in the district. Ken said they wanted to make sure they had coverage. Jim stated that they are out of the dept district and they can't be members. Ken stated a donation of \$5k was received. 8 bottles out of date, face pieces (3) failed. Est to replace pack frame 10K per pack frame. Fit test with most passing firefighters. Radio system that is functioning now. Emergency frequency is functioning. Onielle is stepping down. Next years contracts

discussion RE viper. Ken can give the explanation for what has been offered; equip, etc. Mailing to be distributed to public. Ken is the person people are approaching RE the data for taxing district. He thinks the issue is going to be the number of members who have paid. Jim said each parcel has received a notice. And that second notices have been sent. Need people to respond to the annual mtg request. Discussion regarding parcels and members crossover, new subdivisions. Ken has talked to some who are not on the list. Casey asked if Ken has been approached about the design of those subdivisions. States Idaho fire code gives fire chief say on the design of subdivision. Firefighter (FF) comment regarding trying to give input and it was not well received, based on experience. Jim stated issue; number new subdivisions, that means more properties, structures coming. No addresses, further details regarding subdivision plans. Ken said admin could help enter that data. Asked if it could be a 26 budget item. Should bookkeeping be a separate person or just be audited. Jim stated that the funding is not available. Budget shortfall. He doesn't think the memberships make a dif. Budget estimated high on income and low on expenses. Ken asked what he should finish prepping for the mtg so when public asks question he is prepared. Edna asked for clarification regarding what help Ken is asking for. Is it beyond admin assistant? Asked if they are having meeting regarding budget for next year. Discussion regarding how much budget needs adjusted. Ken stated that questions will be asked why it's not all volunteer. Ken requested list of what he should address. Edna asked for budget to be looked at, YTD, P&L look closely at the budget items so that items through August can be added. Edna things admin is needed. Discussion about estimate spent on

necessities line items. See if there is any money left, how is the admin going to generate income. Edna stated ken expenses. Go thru line by line to track the expensing. Then #s can be brought. Ken talked about donations. Ken talks about budget prepared similar to what would be if going ahead . Jim stated budget is what it is. Ken stated people are asking about the need to go tax based, wanting income and expense verification. Casey wants a good feel for what members want and budget accordingly. Ken discussions regarding the rating and explanation to public regarding how it affects the insurance. Casey talking about the rating being used as a scare tactic regarding insurance and how to answer that question with an example. Jim said most coming are from transportation dept already. Discussion regarding transportation dept based on statute and the Idaho state constitution. Public Comment (PC); Teresa, call run volumn? Answer: 27 Stated that each call is about an hour per call and its not possible to do all the different jobs required of him (Ken). Edna stated it should be in his report. Ken saved \$600 mowing the lawns. Got used lawn mower. Casy donated plow service for next year. \$150 per station for plow. Edna says the data needs to be revealed on all those expenses. . Rick needs REC ACC to Ken. He volunteers significantly. FF comment regarding IFG report. Precedent regarding game preserve, it is South Boundary Fire Dept. Why can't they contract with NBVFD. Discussion regarding request to be member but the possibility of them contracting the Dept. instead. South Boundary is contracted for refuge even though in the NBVFD dist. PC: Teresa, asked who could look into that to see if NBVFD could approach about contracting for the Kootenai wildlife refuge. Aaron asked if it could just be by chance, confirmed it is on

contract via FF comment. Discussion regarding dept response history. Ken stated that the City of Moyie could contract with NBVFD. Edna stated it should be looked into. PC: Teresa, wanted to know who is going to look into. Jim mentioned it might be approached best at chiefs mtg. ken stated there is transition within the chiefs and county police dept.

## 9. TREASURER'S REPORT

### a. Profit and Loss: August 2025

#### i. Income: 7883.18

a. Donation \$236.82 (auxiliary too)

b. services \$ 1462.50

c. Interest \$3.86

d. Membership Dues \$4380

e. Rent \$0

#### ii. Expenses: \$34,885.92

b. Discussion: does not include interest portion of the mortgage

c. Assets \$118, 417.34, cd's \$25000, transferred funds from paypal for dues received. \$5K donation showing up in Sept. Edna has the signed cards in the mail for person. Jim asked that rent for 1<sup>st</sup> portion was received. Edna confirmed it was received.

- i. Motion to approve treasurers report: Casey
- ii. Seconded: Aaron
- iii. All in Favor, None opposed. 5/0 unanimously

## 10. 501c3 UPDATE

### A. Discussion

Edna wants to know what's going to be done about by laws the attorney suggested. Jim stated it is a waste of time and suggested to get as much of a refund as possible. Reserves are just enough to get to tax election. 501c3 will not help with donation. Grants may be available for 501cd versus 501c4 grant dried up, requires matching funds and doesn't see that happening. Not viable or necessary. Taxing District causes to go by wayside. Edna disagrees regarding 501c3 for ambulance remained after tax district. Jim stated the separate corporation is the dif. Fire District would be government entity. Edna suggested it needed looked into regarding grant funding, before decision not to do the 501c3. Ken asked if 501c3 can have a contract with NBVFD? Casey stated it's a

structuring issue. Discussion regarding structuring resources with taxing dist. Casey stated taxing district ineligible under viper contracts and that another name be formed for taxing dist. Discussion regarding the things that need looked into. Private corporation maintained for Viper, mentioned by Jim. Casey stated big changes likely, people not happy with agency engines on fires. Might be good source for income and it could be used for doing things for community. Ken stated south boundary volunteer ambulance 501c3 on fire. PC & discussion regarding the requirements for the fire dept response. Jim suggested more pressing things to pursue than the 501c3. Casey asked for confirmation whether the taxing district dept would be able to use the 501c3 status. Jim stated the structuring would need to be set up separate to benefit for both. Edna asked who would look into it and let the atty know. Discussion regarding money in trust fund that needs decided regarding if reimbursed. Edna asked if Jim wanted to determine or look into the 501c3 situation. Ken suggested separating into two different entities and the transition. Discussion regarding benefits of structure, grants available to government entity not to department. Edna said it has to have something done. Jim said the the meeting and member mailing is priority. Teresa asked about the appointment of responsibility.

## 11. Auxilary Update

Working on getting 2nd mailing. Bal \$394. Financial goals, \$500 fire fighter appreciation dinner. Set goal for \$20k for next year. Next mtg 10.01.25. Casey stated they wanted to

donate services for raffle or something. Multiple events for fund raising. 2 pieces of equipment bought with efforts.

## 12. Town Hall Meeting Preparation

### A. Discussion

Discussion regarding levy and talking points. Westside fire district is over double NBVFD budget. Operating on a shoe string. Casey: Discussion regarding Sagle and Westside seeking a levy. Discussion regarding what members want and expect. Member dues are not tax deductible. Donations are tax deductible under 501c4. Discussion regarding budget shortfalls: almost \$130K short of dues income, less than ½ of other districts. Do people want a full timed staffed station and how many people on staff is wanted. 1 person 24/7 discussion what that one person could do. 1 person is typically not sufficient for response. Financially, reserves are good to survive for 2 years. Jim stated that baseline is \$150K for operation. Can't count grants, donations, complex fire type as baseline income. Edna suggested this needs to be explained. Jim suggested it be verbal and in writing. Jim suggested stating that expenses are \$278 and income is \$150K and currently pulling from reserves. Edna says have list as to what had to be purchased and explain. Need to compare apples to apples in reference to other district members, and properties, etc. Hard questions to be asked by people and ability to answer. Edna wants to be on the prepared side for the opposition questions. Jims stated that parcel comparison is 80% the size of



NBVFD size and budget is twice the size. Casey stated that Selkirk Fire offered to help any way needed and would be good resource. Edna suggested knowing square miles. Westside is comparable in regards to taxed properties, stated Casey. Jim said they have fewer properties and twice the budget. Edna asked if that information was what was taken to public voters and it would be good to find out why other districts failed the tax district levy. Casey said Kootenai County ran levy for \$1M dollar engine that public questioned about. Suggested that taking care of equipment is on hand. Jeff stated its not about brand new equip, but the maintenance could get done with out figuring out where the \$ comes from. Discussion regarding issues with department maintenance and fund availability. Money was received from an unexpected event that is now carrying department in survival mode. Edna stated it was band-aid. Almost all calls are medical according to Jim. Medical Assist calls to respond with staff according to Jim with tax dist. Edna: general expenses, actual cost of stipends and other costs data to be prepared and important for public. How much does a fire engine repair cost. Jim asked if residents want 24/7 medical response capability or a volunteer response time in comparison. Number of medical conditions to consider. Edna stated that the board is part of the people and she's looking on getting the information that describes why the budget is insufficient. PC: Nadine, lady volunteered to help nurse for the medic side of the dept. Statement from Ken regarding paramedics in District that would run with dept. Jim asked if they should be full time staff. Ken stated that the paramedic during the night 911 call is a bonus. PC: Teresa asked regarding the town hall mtg: is the entire board on board for pushing for tax district? Jim said it is going to be found out immediately. Discussion re: the details that is to be approved? Firefighter,

equipment, new station. Asked about making a recommendation as to what the department is asking to become. Discussion regarding what that looks like. Staffing, night time, weekends. Ken stated the loss of the station and the effects need to be discussed. Edna stated that the staffing and budge for equip isn't enough, that a 3-5 year plan be drafted. Jim said 5 year plan ends in two years. Edna stated she would like to know when voting when department wants to go to taxing district. And that voters would like to see that 3-5 plan. Casey stated that the dept knows what it needs and the members know what they want the response to be. Jim asked if the talking point is a one sheet bullet point. Ken stated it was suggested to keep the talking points brief. Discussion on the staffing, equipment included in the budget. PC about a meeting needed to have a conversation about the town hall. FF comment: in reality two firefighters is not sufficient. End goal would be three firefighters. Jim stated full time employees 24/7 with overtime requirements. Jim asked about the recommendation details.

- i. Motion: The board recommends to our members to become taxing district
- ii. Motion to approved: Jim
- ii. Seconded: Edna
- iii. All in Favor: 4, Opposed: 1 (Greg)

What staffing recommended? one person, two persons, three persons, all full time? Ken said there is usually 2 full time to go 48 hours on, 48 hours off. Question regarding station situation. Jim recommended to only staff station 1. Aaron suggested that in future a new station needed to accommodate the plans. Casey asked about loan for building then incorporate into tax rate. Jim said it is possible but not with current budge. FF, PC about fire fighters not full time being an issue with the full time fire fighters and the discrepancy in training. PC: recommendation about the 1<sup>st</sup> town hall meeting agenda and letting public know what it entails and what it doesn't, then ask the public what they want. Discussion regarding 1<sup>st</sup> mtg. agenda. Jim stated that the board is divided. Discussion re: the future meetings being based on what public wants and can't be discussed until known. Edna stated that the 1<sup>st</sup> mtg may change direction from intended topic. Jim asked if the board approved of the talking points for the town hall compared to northside. Take questions, answer what can, write down what can't be answered. Discussion regarding talking points for the town hall mtg. Jim stated budget will be available and that the expenses are not unreasonable. Edna stated that the expenses are high because of the events in maintenance. PC asking Greg regarding his dues not paid. Edna stated that it is not the business to put board members on the spot. Jim suggested that the vote of the board 4/1 is public but not details. PC regarding not mentioning names on paid /unpaid status. Jim stated the numbers need to be known of % of paid members. And that there are probably valid reasons for non-payment. Question regarding if Jim was reading the talking points. Jim stated yes but not verbatim, Jim and Casey will take questions. PC: Teresa asked about how it will be set up? Edna asked about the publication. Aaron said he is planning to have done by

tomorrow. Casey said Jenny and Mark are setting up microphones. Aaron to help set up chairs. Recommendation for fire fighters to help set up. Ken mentioned 911 celebration at fair grounds at 6 PM. PC: Teresa asked if Edna would print out sign in sheet for meeting. Ken asked about taking notes. Jim stated he would. PC: FF if question asked that can't be answered have them write the question down with their contact information and then it can be addressed at next mtg. Recommendation for index cards for questions to be written down and put in box. Edna stated be prepared to have a way to maintain order. Jim asked for other comments. Casey asked if someone asked question if all board members got chance to respond. Jim agreed. Edna asked if each person should have a mic and Teresa said it could be set up that way. Edna suggested using the podium . PC: suggestion for people who want to speak to line up to get a podium time. Edna suggested that rules be listed in the beginning of the meeting. And that a timer be used.

### 13. 2026 Dues Rates

Jim suggested the letter contain as much info from town hall as possible. Many won't be able to attend the town hall. Casey suggested formatting the letter . Edna wants the letter to be formatted so members can supply missing information, email, contact numbers, etc. Aaron suggested it be listed in and start with it. Jim wants \$145 residential rate. Thinks business rate is confusing with multi stages and wanted to know if there is any way the business rate can be simplified. Aaron thinks it does need simplified and it can be simplified. Ken agreed that it causes confusion. Edna suggested a better question format to simplify. PC: FF suggested distinction of business rates regarding hazardous levels of

businesses for separate rates. Discussion regarding different distinctions for the rate, based on square footage, difficulty and confusion. Jim asked about the residential rate at \$145. Edna stated the last one was \$125. And that the timing might not be ideal to ask for increased rates. Jim stated that higher the rate, the fewer people pay. Aaron said that historically when a tax district is considered the member dues paid increases. It might entice those who don't want the district to pay more reliably. Aaron stated the mailing should be up to date. Jim discussed the mailing with the quickbooks invoicing and the efficiency. Ken asked if the data could come from the county for 2025, currently working off of 2024. Casey stated there is no reason the data can't be obtained from the county. Clerk told Ken that the dept would have to sort out all the data. Edna suggested Aaron get the information from the county. PC: Teresa asked about the new mailing being different from the old mailing. Aaron described how quickbooks has simplified the process and that the department is almost ready. Aaron said about 1000 people have paid. Edna stated that the parcels verses the number of members is confusing. County data is incomplete but the new county data is getting plugged in so that those who've paid will merge. Discussion regarding the details of the mailing. Jim suggested raising the residential rate to \$150 dollars. Edna stated that the rate increase also justifies the need for asking for the taxing district. Jim asked for comments on the rate increase. Edna said it should go to \$165. Aaron stated that if the department doesn't ask it will show that it doesn't really need it. Greg said he was thinking \$175 but \$160 might make them feel better. Jim said \$175 would make a difference.

i. Motion for new residential rate of \$175: Casey

ii. Motion seconded: Greg

ii. All in favor, None opposed.

Discussion regarding the details of the member property type: Contiguous up to so many acres per Ken. Discussion regarding the acreage and residences included in rate. Casey suggested raising all by 20%. Jim asked how many times acreage fires are responded. PC: FF question regarding if it's still under construction, is it still technically acreage. Are they living in it or not? Does it effect the dues? Inspection on property of home under construction and how the board will handle it. Aaron suggested that there will probably be some grace in there. Discussion regarding acreage amounts. Recommended \$85 for vacant acreages regardless of number of acreage. Jim asked if it was reasonable.

i. Motion for \$85 for acreage without residences: Casey

ii. Motion Seconded: Aaron

iii. All in favor, None opposed

Commercial parcels discussion regarding the designations and the possible assessments and the confusion. Ken said coverage is the question. Edna asked Greg about past policy on members paying concerning the parcel with one RP and multiple businesses. Are the business owner or the property owner being billed? Edna said the board does not have the information for each individual business. PC: Teresa asked if the discrepancy is addressed

on the residential bill and if it is clear on the bill. Jim said the current bill is based on property sized and # of residential buildings. Commercial bill could be set up per business on the property like the residential. PC regarding the different risk of each business. Casey mentioned the difference in rate per the square footage cost. Edna stated that the bill is currently for only what the county supplies and properties are not paying accurately based on the county info. Jim suggested residence with single residential structure \$175 with discussion regarding billing for addition structures. Jim suggested that the additional residential structures be \$175 also.

Casey asked ken about sq footage billing. Ken stated that the sq ftg is helpful because of different business sizes. Jim suggested having sq ftg amounts billed at a different cost. PC: Teresa stated the letter should be very clear regarding the charges. Discussion regarding the square footage designation for charge amount. Casey stated 2K square feet or less to be the minimum charge. Edna asked about the description to make it clear that the member understands the billing for each business on the property. Jim sgst 1<sup>st</sup> tier up to 2000 sq ft \$300, 2<sup>nd</sup> tier up to 5000 sq ft \$500, 3<sup>rd</sup> tier up to 10,000 sq ft, \$1000, over 10K \$2000

PC regarding the bill categories used for billing. Jim stated that the hazmat surcharge is difficult to access. PC: FF says that the hazmat is a fine that will be fined if not known based on the member bill. Casey stated that the business should notify the dept if hazmat on property and fee should be paid if not. Ken stated the dangers of the hazmat. Casey asked about the requirement of the certain categories of hazmat. Hazmat materials to be notified to the department, suggested by Casey. Discussion regarding fuel on properties.

i. Edna Motioned to adopt the billing tiers for commercial: 1<sup>st</sup> tier up to 2000 sq ft: \$300, 2<sup>nd</sup> tier up to 5000: \$500, 3<sup>rd</sup> tier up to 10,000: \$1000, over 10K sq ft: \$2000.

ii. Motion seconded: Casey

iii. In favor: 4. Opposed: 1 (Greg) Motion passed.

Jim asked if a letter sent by mid November is reasonable? Looking to set due date as of January 1, 2026. Edna said if the information isn't available by middle of November that the end of November might be more reasonable. Jim stated ideally members would have one month to respond. Edna stated that was reasonable. Jim stated it is not a formal adoption but it would be mailed as early in November as possible. Edna wanted to know how the details in the letter is going to be decided. Jim suggested anyone could make a suggested letter to send to Jim to compare. Discussion regarding what is going in the letter and the info needed to be collected. Agreement about needing to edit the letter and recreating the document.

MEETING ADJOURNED TIME: 9:30

10. PREPARED MEETING MINUTES PROVIDED TO BOARD MEMBERS:

a. Date: 10/13/25

11. SUGGESTED CORRECTIONS TO MINUTES: YES/NO



## 12. CORRECTED MINUTES PROVIDED TO BOARD MEMBERS

a. Date: