



Ken Baker, Chief of Department

*Dedication to service and community!*

# North Bench Volunteer Fire District

## NBVFD Board of Directors Special Meeting Minutes 2-17-2025

Call to order at 6:30 PM by President Jim Hill. Also in attendance were Vice President Casey West, Treasurer Edna Runyan, Directors Greg Mead, Aaron Rutherford and Don Blockhan, and Chief Ken Baker. Attorney Jack Douglas attended by telephone.

The Pledge of Allegiance was led by President Hill

The invocation was led by Director Blockhan.

There was no public comment. Chief Baker announced the new (used) engine had been purchased from Colorado and transportation is being arranged by our staff who will leave Monday to pick up the engine and equipment.

This meeting was called to consider participation in a five-year contract to USDA/USFS through West Wood LLC, a company owned by the family of Vice President Casey West, for wildland fire response, including provision of personnel and equipment.

- a) Vice President West stated his conflict of interest, which is that he is the Operations Manager of West Wood, LLC, his family's business, which would receive a 10% fee for contract administration in the event District resources were dispatched under the contract.
- b) Director Rutherford moved and Director Blockhan seconded to waive the conflict of interest for Vice President West so Vice President West can explain how the proposed contract would work and answer technical questions.
- c) Vice President West explained that West Wood, LLC has had a contract with USDA/USFS under the Virtual Incident Procurement System (VIPR) to support wildland fire suppression and this 3-year contract period was ending. The new contract period would be for 5 years and applications had to be submitted within three weeks. West Wood, LLC is currently preparing their application submittal and can include District resources (including wildland engines and personnel) as potentially available to participate. If the District participated, there is no upfront cost. The District could accept or refuse any call out. For personnel, 3 meals per day would be provided. The most likely dispatch would be Type 6 (brush) units and two personnel (typically an engine boss and firefighter). West Wood, LLC uses their experience and the prior contract period data to price their contract for a high probability of dispatch. Two Type 6 apparatus can command \$2,500.00 to \$3,875.00 per day. A Type 6 + two



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personnel could bring \$3,750.00 including wages of \$25.00 to \$30.00 per hour and a typical dispatch could be for 21 days. The District could net  
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- around \$2,200.00 per day, plus personnel wages. There are mechanics available on larger incidents in the event of apparatus breakdown. Insurance of \$1 million is paid through withholding.
- d) At this point, Vice President West recused himself and left the room. Treasurer Runyan also declared a conflict of interest since she does accounting work for West Wood, LLC. Treasurer Runyan also recused herself and left the room.
  - e) Discussion centered on the potential benefit to personnel including training and income. It was noted the District does not currently have a certified engine boss, however we do have personnel who could participate. We have two Type 6 engines that see very little use and are essentially spares. These could be profitably employed on wildland contracts. It was also noted the District would be under no obligation to respond if dispatched and there is no upfront cost. Each of the Directors opined that the potential benefit appeared significant while the ability to refuse dispatch limited any risk. Director Mead stated that someone likely would complain since Vice President West introduced the proposal to the District and his family business may potentially benefit. That was answered by the fact that there is administrative work involved that West Wood, LLC would be entitled to compensation for and that 10% seemed a reasonable charge for that. It was also stated the contract would be provided to Attorney Douglas for review.

Director Blockhan moved and Director Rutherford seconded that the District agree to participate in the USDA/USFS contract through West Wood, LLC. Vote was Director Blockhan aye, Director Rutherford aye, Director Mead aye and President Hill aye. Motion passed 4-0 with Vice President West and Treasurer Runyan recused and absent from the room.

At this point Vice President West and Treasurer Runyan were notified and rejoined the meeting. President Hill informed them of the decision to proceed with participation in the contract.

Meeting adjourned at 7:30 PM