**Notes on the GHFPD Fire Board Meeting 3-21-23** by Gretchen Diefenderfer

Next Meeting is scheduled for April 18, 2023, 7:00 p.m. at the Firebarn

The Meeting was called to order by President Rich Lopez. Nineteen people attended: Rich, Chris and Leslie Finn, Shivaun Hoyle, Virginia Schultz, Liz Wiig, Greg Buis, Gretchen Diefenderfer, Deb Yeager, Board Members Chris Dirolf, Kent Coghill, and Boyd Brown, Max Yeager, Lefthand Chief Chris O’Brien, Fourmile Chief Bret Gibson, Gold Hill Assistant Chief Whitey DeBroux, Val Crist, Kris Gibson, and Rick Sheingold. Please let me know if I’ve missed anyone.

**Minutes –** of the February meeting were approved.

**Chief’s Minutes –** Whitey, Bret, and Chris O’Brien all contributed. Whitey reported that they had an inventory meeting with Bret and lots of people showed up. They’re starting to get a better feel of the status of the trucks, structure, and equipment – a good overview.

Training – There is a pumping training with Fourmile on Thursday and there will be Wildland training on April 8.

Calls – there were 3 calls since last meeting: 1) car alarm alerted 9-1-1, but no incident was found, 2) cyclist accident down on Lefthand and 6 people showed up including Gold Hill plus AMR, and 3) there was a MVA call from the emergency phone in Lefthand, but the caller said there was no emergency. GH staged up here because of black ice and was not needed.

New Software – They have downloaded the software and it’s awesome. They are beta testing it – can see incidents on smart phones in progress.

Maps of all cisterns – Bret suggested they have a conversation, possibly share a layer of maps NIWF – fire maps. EZRI mapping service allows sharing a single layer.

**OTHER BUSINESS**

**Elections –** Liz Wiig, the DEO (Designated Election Official) reported that the ballots have been submitted and will be posted soon. Boyd added that they did a drawing for the ballot positions, typed it up and checked it with John Chiml, the FD attorney. They will coordinate with the County and be looking for judges/ canvassers, etc. On the ballot for 4 year terms, Leslie Finn, Jessica Brookhart, Max Yeager, and Kent Coghill. For 2 year terms, Chris Dirolf and Boyd Brown.

**Re: Joint Meeting of the GHTM and the GHFPD on 3/20 –** Rich thanked Bret and Chris and felt there was a good turnout. Marcus asked about follow up meetings? Ellie from Fourmile will be compiling and organizing the sticky notes from the exercise last night on what kinds of abilities everyone would like to see in our fire department, what we expect from the fire board, and what we, as community members, can contribute to the fire department. She will get these to Bret, who will release them to the fire board.

Bret asked how many people attended. Gretchen took notes, see <https://goldhilltown.com/special-gold-hill-town-meeting-and-fire-board-meeting-minutes/> and our count was 33 people attended either in person or by Zoom.

Rich reported that they are looking at a job description for a new GH Fire Chief. Bret added that we have an opportunity for truly operational assessment and development over the next 6 months, then 3 months to cement the changes needed and bring them into reality and then hope the members of the community will step up. They want to establish a reasonable platform to base decisions on in this next 9 months. Chris Dirolf expressed thanks to both Chiefs Gibson and O’Brien for being willing to help us.

**Grants –** Kris Gibson reported that the grant to the State has been submitted for the 5 sets of bunker gear – nothing new. We are also part of the Wildfire Incentives grant with the CWPP group. Paul Dennison is great and will be making decisions regarding the County CWPP/IA Funding and availability. The final review is this week, they’ll get signatures next week. It’s been a fantastic effort. More grants will be coming up and will be looked at as they come up.

Bret added that for the CWPP and IA money they want input from the community beyond the fire departments -for them to make their opinions known. There is a tremendous amount of money involved. Boulder County is loud, but not the loudest. As far as the number of residents per square mile, we’re behind, so we need to get people behind us – we all, the community, the fire board, and members of the fire department need to send messages to Joe Neguse, our Representative and it will make a difference.

**AIM Grant –** Marcus and others have been working on the AIM grant. Marcus reports that they submitted a concept paper, which was approved and they’ve been invited to submit a formal grant. Marcus and Julian (Watershed Collective) stressed community support and involvement and last mile stuff – smaller parcels and managing grasslands, too, some home hardening and financial support for lower income people, and clean ups. The deadline is mid-April and they need a letter of support from the Fire Board. There is a limit of $5,000 for equipment. Virginia added that if we get it, the Fire Board needs to think about who on the board would like to be on the committee. They are definitely aiming for May 6 for educational events, etc. – Wildfire Mitigation Awareness Day.

**Cash Mine –** Rich reports that lots of letters have been sent from Rowena, Gold Hill, GHFPD, and Fourmile and a wide range of concerns were expressed. Whether the mining/milling effort moves forward we don’t know, but our concerns have been expressed. Max asked if anyone knows who’s involved this time, but no one knew who Mining, Inc actually is.

**Trucks for Sale –** Notices have been posted about selling some trucks and interest has been expressed. Calwood is interested in the brush trucks (one truck plus one for parts) and Chris Finn has expressed interest in the Ford as well. Max proposed that we wait for an offer from Calwood to make decisions. Bret asked what do we need and do any of these vehicles fill those needs. Max replied that the brush truck has 18,000 on the odometer and might be worth keeping, but we have no room to store it and it becomes a liability and deteriorates. Possibly we could find a place for it near the west side of the district and install a cistern for it. Bret suggested that we should get that all in place and then get an appropriate vehicle for it. Boyd added that we should consider what importance the vehicles have to someone who needs them, like Calwood, not the money involved. Chris Finn has said that he could use one to protect their property. Legally we have to disable the siren, etc., and Bret recommended that we remove fire department labels. Decisions to be made at the next board meeting.

**Review of Trucks, Station, and General Training –** Bret reports some conclusions have been reached and the three vehicles we have do not properly meet the required mission capabilities. The medical truck equipment exceeds our capabilities – extrication today is incredibly complex. BES trains for hundreds of hours as does the City of Boulder. We need to dial back to pry bars and breaking windows – no cutting or spreading. It’s beyond our capabilities and dangerous. We need to wait for BES. We should keep the medical truck and the red truck and dispose of the Lefthand vehicle. The medical vehicle use should be suspended for now – the secondary braking systems don’t work and must be fixed . Policies and procedures have been a problem and we’re working on them. One other truck doesn’t hold pump pressure. Can’t pull vacuum on two of the trucks.The entire fleet needs to be sent for preventative maintenance and mechanical evaluations, pump tests. Overall, they don’t fulfill our mission and we need to reach out for help. Neighbor departments can probably fulfill most of our immediate needs. We need a good list of our needs and have begun to list our inventory of equipment. Need to list our standards and protocols for structure fires and wildland fires. For the Board, the Medical Truck has to be fixed and the other two thoroughly looked over and evaluated and the equipment reorganized. In the interim, Fourmile will lend a truck 4603 primarily for rescue and medical. We can’t drive the medical truck until we get it to the Front Range Fire Department or more probably the Mountain View FD in Erie asap. We can set up an agreement with them to service our trucks as needed.

We need to come up with what do we really need – we need a tender. Chris Finn added that we have money in the budget to buy a replacement. Rick Sheingold wonders about a quick response vehicle to get to a scene and size it up, given that our neighboring departments have state of the art equipment for mutual aid. Bret again stressed that we need to evaluate our trucks and decide what we need, which might include a quick response vehicle that can utilize the power of the radio, size up and call for mutual aid, but we do need primary equipment as a baseline. He would love a tender in Gold Hill.

Rich thanked Bret for a very detailed report. Max and Boyd will coordinate to get the medical truck down to get repaired and evaluated. Bret also suggested it would be worthwhile to discuss bringing training in house for awhile vs. the triad.

Gretchen Diefenderfer