

YELLOWSTONE COUNTY FIRE COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES – JAN. 9, 2024

1. Meeting held Shepherd VFD Station #2.

Introductions made. Chief Stevens was introduced as the new fire Chief in Lockwood. Chief Stevens has spent the last 23 years with Mile City Fire with the last 5 years in the chief position. He was grateful to work with Chief Staley for the past month and looks forward to working with the surrounding departments.

2. Minutes of the Nov. 14, 2023, meeting approved.

3. Treasurers Report: Larry wasn't in attendance; he gave the report on the agenda. Balance is \$319.42. The 2024 memberships dues invoices have been sent out to the departments.

4. Fire Warden/DES report: Had meetings with the county lawyers working on the updated grass contracts, the new grass contract will be renewed every year with it being rewritten every 5-7 years. DES got a donation from P66 for \$4000, they can purchase Incident Action Plan (IAP) software from The Response Group to make IAPs for incidents and planned events easier to complete.

OLD BUSINESS:

5. Fire Chiefs meeting: Never got put together. Phil Ehlers has been working a spreadsheet with wildland figures only, still waiting on a couple departments to get their numbers to him. The spreadsheet has the breakdown over the last few years on rise of cost to operate, PPE cost with the current fees only for 6 months out of the year. There are departments struggling with the rising cost of everything. Jan. 31, 2024, is the scheduled chiefs meeting, it will be in Lockwood at 7 P.M. This meeting will discuss the updated spreadsheet, current fees, suggested fees.

6. Update on grass contracts: Was given in the Fire Warden/DES report.

New Business:

7. Andy Beach with Shepherd Fire attended a FEMA training in Alabama, He has brought back two trainings for the group for people to attend. The first training is Counter IED scheduled JAN. 30-31, 2024, at Shepherd VFD Station #2. The second training is Vehicle IED scheduled FEB. 27-28, 2024, also at Shepherd VFD Station #2. These trainings will be 2-4 hours long. Details on them will be sent out.

8. KC Williams added to the new business, that they have got all the pieces for the new Custer repeater is being installed on the Treasure County repeater site outside of Hysham. This should have a good footprint to cover the east and north end of the county. Phil Ehlers spoke to the group about RF communications, which is now closed due to losing Kyle Shearer in an accident. Redtail communications now also has locations in Billings and Missoula.

Agency Reports: Fuego - nothing new. Broadview – nothing new. Blue Creek – New QRU into service, working on some wildland burning trainings. Lockwood – New Chief is learning the system and area. New ambulance coming this fall. Switched over to Motorola radios, departments that need an extra radio they will have some available after new ones are installed. Haley Bench – nothing new. Shepherd – Thanks to Lockwood on the joint training they held in Dec. Looking at a water shuttle training in May. Shepherd hired Jared Clark as new paid position, will have 7 day a week coverage. Worden – New people going through wildland trainings. QRU is broke down, only one of the 2 ambulance is running. Custer – nothing new. AMR – updating radios to Motorola. Staffing numbers are slowly coming up. DNRC – Training nominations need to be emailed to the training coordinator, nominations need to be typed out and not hand written. Get the nominations in early for trainings do not wait till the last minute. DNRC folks are busy with their own trainings and putting on trainings. Fell to ask for any trainings. There is a big wildland training being out on in Dillon May 28 – June 5, this training will have multiple classes. Fire reporting 365 days of the year need to be done; this is for any fire that burns any grass lands. CAT camp is still being planned on location and dates. BLM – Investigator class to be put on in Missoula. Willing to help with training needs if you have one you want to let them know and they will see what they can put together. Starting to fill their summer position jobs. FSTS – New Move Over law went into effect on Oct. 1. MHP gave out 45 tickets in Dec. Forceable training prop can be brought to your department there is a \$95 fee for this class. Montana Mutual Aid has been covering the cost on the burn trailer trainings. New car doors and dash do not open and lift the same as old ones, trainings on new vehicles are a good idea for departments. Electric car fires the smoke is very hazardous, always stay up wind from the smoke. It is a good idea to use a thermal camera on these to see the hot spots. Do not use piercing nozzles on electric cars. Only one burn trailer in the state with 6 trainers. Lots of trainings available. UL Firefighter Safety Institute is good place to find trainings. Lithium battery trainings. FSTS has 2 new trainers. Ordering new training props 2 story roof training prop that will be a tow behind unit. ICS class in Mile City on April 6 & 7 only 30-person class. Fire departments hazmat trainings. Need help with trainings let them know, Training officers should be getting departments trainings. Drunk driver classes to the Billings schools, this is a 90 min class, will get it sent to your school if you get in touch with him. 2024 Move Over law will be on the new driver test. If you want trainings, ask for them slots fill up fast. County Fire Chief - KC mentioned the community wildland protection plan meeting is March 6. Email was sent out for this meeting.

NEXT FIRE COUNCIL MEETING IS AT BILLINGS FIRE ON MARCH 12 AT 7:00 PM.

Reminder: Phil Ehlers noted that the Chiefs meeting can be moved if anyone wanted to go to the FEMA training on JAN. 31. As if now the Chief meeting is scheduled for Jan. 31 at Lockwood at 7 PM.

Travis Jones, V Pres
YCFC

