

# Yellowstone County Fire Council

P.O. Box 53, Billings, Montana, 59103, 406-256-2775



## MEETING MINUTES - MARCH 12, 2024

1. Introductions: A complimentary dinner was provided by Austin Schnizler of Dickey's Barbecue Pit. ( A thank you card signed by the officers was sent to him.)
2. Minutes: Approved from Jan. 9, 2024 meeting.
3. Treasurer's Report: We have \$594.42 in our checking account. All 2024 dues have been collected except Molt's.
4. Fire Warden/DES Report: There is a Wildland Fire Academy being held in Dillon on May 28. There is a Co-op Capacity grant with \$100,000 available which can provide a stipend to firefighters. This year's Rural Fire Capacity grant applications are due April 1 and to be turned in to the DES office. The newest county grass fire contract has been written up. There will be one contract for the 10 rural fire departments instead of 10 separate contracts.

### OLD BUSINESS:

5. Grass Fire Contract Financial Review: Phil Ehlers provided an update on his research about actual costs of grass firefighting. He handed out several documents to everyone with the financial information. Firefighters are struggling trying to make up for the shortfalls in firefighting expenses. Commissioner Ostlund explained that there is probably not enough money in the county budget to meet the suggested needs of the rural fire departments. He said the next step for the fire chiefs is to meet with the commissioners for a discussion on the documents prepared by Phil. After that fire departments would need to attend the county budget hearings.

### NEW BUSINESS:

7. Non Profit Status and Tax Forms: Larry Carpenter asked if the Fire Council would like to maintain its non profit status. The consensus was that we should keep it. Larry said he would file the necessary tax forms with the state and feds.
8. Donation Request: Larry said he received a letter asking for a \$250 donation to help maintain the grounds of the Montana State Firefighters Memorial in Laurel. The members agreed to donate \$250.
9. Agency Reports: Billings - Having a new brush truck built. Body work by Lesman Iron Works. Will have two diesel powered fire pumps available to rural fire depts. The fire consortium test is in April at METRA. Will only cover the physical fitness part of the testing. Hope to hire around 12 new firefighters in Aug. Station 8 (on Lake Elmo Dr.) will come on line soon. Initially will have a medical response vehicle and eventually an engine. Starting to test dry hydrants in their area twice a year (spring and fall). Their engines will now start to carry drafting hose instead of keeping it in storage boxes at each dry hydrant. Laurel - Nothing to report. Fuego - Nothing to report. Broadview - Building up a new Type 6. Lockwood - Training with DNRC. Hosting a tabletop exercise May 11. Some spots still open. Haley Bench - Received a 6X6 from Custer VFD and a radio from Lockwood RFD. Shepherd - Jared Clark is their new assistant fire

chief. Have 7 day a week coverage with at least one person on duty. Hosting a wildland fire safety refresher course April 15 at station #1 at 6 pm. Given a mobile radio by Lockwood RFD. AMR - Will have some surplus radios available. BLM - Staffed up by May 28. Two engines and hand crew. FSTS - April 10-12 mobile prop training at Lockwood. Have forcible entry prop and roof prop. Applying for a grant to acquire roll out container for rescue training. Also trying to buy additional burn trailers. Collapse training March 22-24. County Fire Chief - John Ostlund.

NEXT FIRE COUNCIL MEETING ON MAY 14 AT LOCKWOOD AT 6:00 PM.

Larry Carpenter, Sec/Treas.

YCFC

