



**MINUTES OF THE SPECIAL MEETING OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS
OF THE EVERGREEN FIRE PROTECTION DISTRICT
MAY 27, 2009**

A special meeting of the Board of Directors of the Evergreen Fire Protection District was held on May 27, 2009 at the Administration/Training Building, 1802 Bergen Parkway, Evergreen, Colorado.

ATTENDANCE

DIRECTORS IN ATTENDANCE: Charles Dykeman, George Kling, George Goldbach, Jeff deDisse, Charles Simons (arrived at 6:27pm)

ALSO IN ATTENDANCE: Chief Garry DeJong, Brent Worthington, Ben Celius, Bryce Lipson, Nick Boukas, Vicky Gits, DeAnna McMahan, Frank Dearborn, Brent Worthington, Wayne Shephard, Jeff Ashford, Diana Dolan, Lisa Sorrentino, Quintin Galt, Vicki Pickett, Sylvia Ross.

MEETING CALLED TO ORDER

Vice President Kling called the meeting to order at 5:34 pm. President Dykeman asked Vice President Kling to run the meeting this evening.

TIME OF REMEMBRANCE AND REFLECTION: The pledge of allegiance was recited and a moment of silence was observed.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA Vice President Kling approved the agenda as presented.

PUBLIC COMMENT

None

Vice President Kling acknowledged that someone in the audience has set up a video recorder. He asked who intends to video tape the meeting. Ben Celius the Training Coordinator acknowledged that he is going to video tape the meeting as this is a public meeting. When asked by Director Goldbach his intentions on video taping the meeting, Mr. Celius replied because it is a public meeting. The four board members present at that time had no objection to the video taping of the meeting.

OLD BUSINESS: Organizational Structure.

Vice President Kling opened the discussion reminding all present that this meeting is a follow-up to the presentation he made at the April District Board Meeting requesting a review of the three positions (Training Coordinator, Communications Manager, and Deputy Chief of Support Services) and Chief DeJong's presentation to the board at the May District Board Meeting on additional duties of those positions. The intent of the meeting tonight is to work in a work session format. There will be a review and discussion on each of those positions.

Training Coordinator Position: Vice President Kling asked if any other board member had any comments/discussion items. None appeared so Vice President Kling continued with his discussion. The Training Coordinators position was established approximately three years ago. This position was created due to a request by the volunteer firefighters to help them to formalize the training process and remove some of this responsibility and time commitment from the Fire Officer Corps. In Vice President's Kling's opinion, in the last three years this

position has not worked in that capacity for a host of reasons some of which are political, expectations no set, accountability, etc. In meeting with the Fire Officer Corps they desperately want that position and reviewed the job description and they liked the way it is written. The feelings expressed by the officers is that this position has not fulfilled its duties/responsibilities as written in the job description so Director Kling would like to discuss the bullets on the additional responsibilities as Chief DeJong presented at the last meeting and discuss and get a better understanding of where the board would like to take that position.

Director DeDisse commented that there are many reasons why the position has not been exactly what it was outlined to be. We hired an IT person to take away those additional responsibilities from the Training Coordinator and that also needs to be discussed.

Vice President Kling asked two Officers, Fire Operations Chief Wayne Shepard and Deputy Chief Jeff Ashford, who both confirmed the necessity of retaining this position. Vice President Kling then reviewed the additional duties of this position as presented by Chief DeJong and wanted the Chief to further explain the second bullet under the Training Coordinators duties that he presented – Data Entry, etc.

Chief DeJong commented that much of the data entry encompasses several things; number one is that this position is our NFRS point person making sure we are in compliance, entering the IQS (Incident Qualification System for wildland firefighting certification) records, keeping track of training records which at times means data is entered into several different systems. This position keeps track and runs lot of CE Training reports for both paid and volunteer staff and keep good data into the system.

Director Goldbach asked if the Training Coordinator actually teaches some classes. Chief DeJong said sometimes he does. How many, Director Goldbach asked? Chief DeJong replied that he is not sure of the actual number but its more the exception than the rule.

Director Kling continued the discussion presenting that according to the Chief's presentation material, this position spends half the month on administrative tasks even though according to the job description this position's role is to develop and coordinate training, lesson plans, etc. Chief DeJong agreed but the importance of dealing with administrative tasks is valuable to the organization (e.g. entering training records, CE, etc). Chief DeJong admitted that the way this position was implemented from the beginning was not set up to succeed.

Director Kling continued the discussion that based on the request of the volunteers and the citizens that approved that position, that the Training Coordinator position should be refocused back on the job description as written and get that level of responsiveness to the volunteers that the job description specifies. Chief DeJong agrees and is currently evaluating that position and refocusing that position to primary deal with training issues. Director Kling asked if any of the tasks this position is currently doing can be removed to further help in the refocusing effort. Chief DeJong is working with Operations Chief Shephard to remove the Stores responsibilities from this position, and getting the IT position up and running is helping to remove those responsibilities as well.

Director DeDisse asked Wayne Shepard if he wants to see the Training Coordinator attending trainings and work directly with the officer corps. He responded definitely.

Director Kling added that he would like these changes to be made immediately. Chief DeJong agreed and the board can review it again in 6 months if they wish. Director Kling added that

this Board has the authority to amend that job from enhancing it to removing it and by going directly to the Officer Corps they agreed that this position as written in the current job description is exactly what they want and need. Also they confirmed that they are not getting that level of help now and would like to see the position come more in line with the job description. Chief DeJong accepted the responsibility of making these changes.

Reporter Vicki Gits asked how the district came up with the job description. Chief DeJong commented that it was a collaboration of job descriptions from different departments and Mountain States Employers Council.

Communication Manger Position: Vice President Kling opened the discussion on the Communications Director position by acknowledging the unfamiliar attendees in the audience and reminded all that this is an open discussion/work session type meeting so please feel free to ask questions. Then board was allowed a few minutes to review the current job description before the discussion started. The only change that was made to this job description in 2008 was that this position now reports to the Deputy Chief of Support Services not the Chief as in the previous version.

Director Kling discussed the levels in the organizational chart in regards to this position; dispatchers report to two supervisors, they report to the Communications Manager, the Communications manager reports to the Deputy Chief of Support Services who then reports to the Chief – is this efficient? Director Dedisse was asked to give a brief description on the history of the position. Director Kling asked the Chief what are the responsibilities of the supervisor's position. He replied they are tasked with additional duties as far as special projects, tracking equipment, going to meetings; they are there also to help with information flow and trainings as well. Director Kling is struggling with the efficiency of 5.5 calls per day with two dispatchers – one of those being a supervisor working in the line - and the communications manager working there as well – his question is: does this job warrant a director level position?

Fire Chief DeJong replied that this is a manager level position with this position reporting to the Deputy Chief of Support Services which was a change he made to try to improve communications instead of having twelve direct reports. Director Goldbach asked about the NFPA Standards on communications – doesn't the number of alarms determine the amount of dispatchers? The Chief replied that if we follow NFPA and ISO standards the district needs to have two dispatchers at all times. We also EMD calls for Clear Creek County which is another reason we need to have two dispatchers.

Director Goldbach asked Director Kling if he has a problem with the title of the position? He replied he has a problem with the bureaucracy and how much it has grown in the last few years. He feels that we are going into a time when the district needs to be doing more with less. He has a hard time understanding that with 5.5 calls per day on average that scheduling time accounting as well as other administrative duties can't be accomplished while on duty. Chief Garry agrees, but with what has been going in the communications department lately that would be difficult especially if there are meetings to attend.

Director Goldbach asked how many dispatchers does the district employ? Nine. So there are nine employees in this unit and someone needs to supervise them. Director Kling asked why can't they be in charge and also work the job? Director Goldbach responded that there is so much involved in communication and that someone needs to be in charge who has knowledge of all the new innovations in communication that are coming out. Director Kling then asked

how much technology do we need to do our job? Director Goldbach replied that reason is why we need this position; this person should be instructing the chief on what is needed in that department. Chief DeJong replied that having this person work on a shift is difficult with all the other responsibilities this position is required to perform. The chief did confirm that the manager does cover open shifts which does help lower the overtime costs of the district; he feels there is value of having someone separate of trying to maintain a level of focus. The Communications Manager replied that lately she has been covering many open shifts but could not answer exactly how many hours she has dispatched for the district.

Director Kling then continued the discussion saying that five years ago the District was substantially smaller and he does not think that the district can justify the growth that we had for the enhanced value that we added – that is what is driving a lot of this. Deputy Chief of Support Services, Nick Boukas replied that there are many times when managers have to be at committee meetings where you need a manager to make decisions for the District; an example is NCR where we are asking them for a substantial amount of money and we never participated until the beginning of last year and our regular presence at those meetings is important. To have someone who is on OT as a supervisor not being able to make those decisions and not participating in those meetings and not being able to tell us what the new standards and regulations are is very important as these change on a frequent basis. We shouldn't be behind the eight-ball. Director Kling replied that the answer is something in between; is there another way to amend that schedule so that the Communications Manager is one of the dispatchers three days a week and office work the other two; and in terms of the NCR grant is another example of how we have increased this infrastructure and we got in on the back end of somebody else's grant. Chief DeJong interrupted in order to explain that we did not piggyback onto someone else's grant but that we are stand-alone grant that is in line with Clear Creek and Grand County. Director Kling continued that we did not use any in-house resources. The Communications Manager, DeAnna commented that she disagrees with that statement and that the District would not even be taking about switching to VHF if she had not come on board and made some liaisons with people and attended the meetings.

Chief DeJong continued saying that one of the reasons he was hired was to get EFR interacting with other agencies because we had withdrawn from participating in those meetings; he continued that there is something to be said about building those relationships. He personally does not see that position being able to continue that level of focus if they are working on the console dispatching calls. Director Kling asked if there was any harm in trying to build a different schedule? Chief DeJong then asked Director Kling if he is saying that he should fire a current dispatcher so the Communication Manager can take on dispatching. Director Kling replied since we have open positions couldn't the manager take on that open shift schedule. Chief DeJong replied that the division is currently full – we just hired two more dispatchers.

Director DeDisse asked how much overtime is paid in this division in the last six months? If there are vacancies the manager should be filling that position first. Chief DeJong explained that because of all the vacancies in that division in the last six months there has been a bit more overtime. He also explained that an employee working in two divisions does not get overtime they are paid at their regular rate in the division they are working in as it states this clearly in our Staff Manual per FSLA rules.

Director Kling replied that he doesn't feel that 5.5 calls per day requires that level of oversight in that division. DeAnna replied that her day is not just about the calls but personnel issues that arise, trainings, technical issues, etc. Director Kling does not disagree but feels that we

could be more efficient. There are too many levels of bureaucracy. Director DeDisse agreed giving an example of the company he works and the levels in their organization; EFR is top heavy. Director Goldbach agreed saying EFR has too many layers in management positions; he feels the Communication Manager should report directly to the Chief. He also stated that the Board should not interfere in the day to day business of the District. Director Simons replied he would not call it interfering – the board is as responsible for the running of this business as is the Chief. The Chief replied that it could be more common practice to make the manager work a shift during the week (Monday – Friday) unless there is a meeting or other issue that requires her to be at a meeting, etc. Director Goldbach reiterated that the NFPA requires two dispatchers and that is the nature of the beast if we dispatch our own calls. Director Kling stated that we are one of very few districts that dispatch our own calls. Nick Boukas clarified that EFR as well as Arvada, West Metro and Golden are the only agencies in Jefferson County that dispatch their own calls.

A 911 Technical Committee member spoke (She did not identify herself by name), saying she wanted to familiarize the board with some of the infrastructure that goes on behind the scenes; there is a lot of technology and coordination which is not something that can be done sitting behind the dispatch console. She has personally witnessed DeAnna help procure thousands of dollars for the district. There was additional discussion about how many hours DeAnna covers as a dispatcher and then the floor was closed on this discussion.

Deputy Chief of Support Services: Vice President Kling opened the discussion on this position and allowed the other board members time to look over the job description for both the Deputy Chief of Support Services and the EMS Chief position. Chief DeJong reminded the board that this was not a whole new position but a new position that was filled by a current employee of the district. It was not a new hire – it was an upgrade of a previous position to help him, the Chief manage the divisions and have an effective span of control among these divisions. It was approved by the board at that time.

Director Dykeman asked if the Deputy Chief of Support services position includes the EMS Chief position. Chief DeJong replied yes. Director Simons asked where did the genesis of this position come from. To provide a more traditional organizational chart; and that this position was the Chief DeJong's idea. A discussion ensued regarding the current organizational chart and who reports to whom. Director Kling asked about certain bullet points in the Chief's presentation (e.g. cell phones) – which makes him wonder why the number two person in the district is ordering broken phones and doing other administrative work that can be done in at the clerical/administrative level. Nick Boukas reminded the board that the current administrative staff has taken on additional tasks since the PT Admin Asst position was not filled. Director Kling would rather pay a PT or FT admin person do some of the administrative type tasks that the current Deputy Chief of Support Services/EMS Chief is doing now since there is a huge disparity in wage ranges between a clerical person and the Deputy Chief of Support Services/EMS Chief; to him it just validates his point about excessive administrative overhead costs.

Chief DeJong wanted Director Kling to confirm that he would like the PT admin asst position filled. Director Kling replied not until we know that we are going to make these changes; an 80K a year person should not be doing some of the mundane administrative tasks (database maintenance, interviews, etc). Director Kling does not feel that we need to have a four member panel interviewing potential candidates. Director DeDisse agreed.

Director Kling's reason for bringing all this up is for the district to be more efficient operationally and financially and some of these bullet points in the Chief presentation validate his point. A discussion on timecards and who approves them ensued.

Director Kling asked if any board members have any additional comments. Director Dykeman asked if there was a salary adjustment in February 2008 when this position was created, which was confirmed by the Chief. Director Dykeman then asked if this position is not doing these administrative tasks wouldn't someone else need to do them? Yes, they would be assigned to someone else and so the increase in the EMS Chief positions salary would equate to somewhat to hiring an additional clerical person. Director Kling added that if we assume that the current staff was fully utilized how did we add a couple of pages of tasks to the EMS Chief position if it was assumed to be fully utilized in the first place? This is the fear that Director Kling has: that there is such a substantial amount of inefficiencies that you could add another job to an average 40 week with additional salary and with no question of that position being full in the first place. The Chief felt that with the way Nick was managing EMS he would have extra time for these additional duties. This confirms that everyone's plates are possibly not full as Director Kling believes.

Chief DeJong replied that if this position was removed that these tasks would have to be divided up among other staff and his span of control would increase and he would have to change the level of support that managers are currently receiving. This position was created to provide internal staff better service; the chief could manage them but its going to be a different level of management. Director Goldbach responded that to him all that was added was another level of management.

The Deputy Chief of Support Services addressed the board saying what they may not fully appreciate is that all of the managers do not work a 40 hour work week; they take work home on the weekends and work evenings; he added that this position takes a lot of the minor tasks off of the Chief's plate so that he can focus on his job; it frees him up to do the more important things his job requires. He continued that we should not look at EFR in terms of a corporate structure but should be more in line with the fire service. Director Kling replied that our structure is drastically different than it was 5-6 years ago and in those five year since then he would like to know what enhancements and innovations we have purchased or have been made. Mr. Boukas replied that we are more involved in the community now, we are teaching triple the number of CPR classes, we're doing more with other community organizations, we dramatically increased the number of school visits, etc which takes time away from their management roles. Where some folks may call this bureaucracy he calls it pitching in. Director Kling reminded that this position is salaried and working more than 40 hours is expected. He continued saying that the district has hired additional staff to cover inspections, school visits and CPR classes and that most of these tasks are done by line employees not managers.

Mr. Boukas continued that he understands that the board is questioning whether the district's org chart is expanding to much upward (more layers) – but he counters that argument by saying that in a traditional fire department structure there is a deputy chief who supports the chief and that is what he is doing here at EFR. He reminded the board that at the time this change in organizational structure was made three out of the five current board members were there and he has not heard any complaints or has been given any feedback. This is the first time in the year that he has been in this position that there has been any discussion about it. Director DeDisse wanted to go on record that he did not say anything about that he wanted this position.

Director Goldbach reminded everyone that the reason all this is coming up is not about personnel's performance in these positions but for financial reasons. As a board they are responsible for the financial stability of the district especially in the event the district does not receive as much revenue as it has in past years. We have to something now not wait until the money runs out. We have to be conscious about how and where we spend the districts money. Director Simons said we have to put a harness on spending somewhere. It was confirmed that EFR provides impeccable service to this community but its how we pay for this service that is in question – our inefficiencies.

Director DeDisse confirmed that it is not our service that is in question it is how the district spends it money that is in question. For example, while some folks are taking a 5-10% pay cut because of the cost of elevated salaries, the district is spending substantially more money on salaries.

Director Kling then addressed the board and attendees that when speaking about enhancements and efficiencies that have occurred in the last few years like the one time merit awards instead of merit increases – his challenge to the district and citizens alike – its that these measures were introduced by the board and no its not fun to sit up there and talk about these three positions. He would like the employees/volunteers to bring to the board cost-cutting measures and how we can be more efficient but since that has not happened these discussions which are not comfortable for anyone need to take place. He wants the 116 people who work and volunteer here to bring these issues to the board – help them do this. Chief DeJong does not disagree but there have been smaller enhancements that the board has not been informed about – he could increase the level of the Chiefs Report if directed by the board. The board would like to see these savings highlighted in the financial report and explained in the Chief's Report.

Director Kling then asked, so in the last five years with all the changes that have been made the net result is more CPR classes and community education? A discussion regarding the budget ensued and that the board is and will continue to be very involved in the budget process and Director Dykeman continued by saying that these positions have been put on notice and that the board will follow up to make sure enhancements have been made. He does not want to see cost cutting measures involve personnel – he would rather see cost savings made in other ways especially in this economy.

Director Simons asked since last year the district came in \$400,000 under budget is that because the district was thrifty or because the board allocated too much money in the budget? Director Dykeman replied that it is probably a little bit of both. Further discussion ensued regarding the \$400K and where that money went etc.

Director Kling asked if there were any board member comments. Director Dykeman announced that the actuarial study for the volunteer pension (FPPA) has arrived and would like to schedule the pension meeting for 6pm instead of 6:30. All agreed so the pension board will meet at 6pm on June 9 to discuss the results of the study.

Director Kling closed the meeting by saying that he wants EFR to be the best of the best and that he is not bringing all this up because he is a penny pincher he wants to support this organization to make it the best; he does however disagree with Director Dykeman that just because the budget is sound we are good to go; he philosophically feels that any government agency should operate efficiently and even or more so than a private organization.

Director Dykeman wanted to let everyone know that in the community all he hears is great things about EFR.

MEETING ADJOURNED: The meeting adjourned at 8:12 pm

Respectively Submitted,

Sylvia Ross,
Recording Secretary