Fire & Rescue Authority Board Meeting Minutes
Wednesday, April 29, 2015

Members Present:

Board Chair Jeff Swanty
Fire Chief Mark Miller
City Manager Bill Cahill
Assistant City Attorney Tree Ablao
Public Safety Admin. Dir. Renee Wheeler

Councilor John Fogle
Mayor Cecil Gutierrez
Rural Board President Dave Legits
BSC Roylene Sterkel

Members Absent:

Rural Board Secretary Greg White
Chief Ned Sparks

Visitors:

HR Director Julia Holland
Attorney Dino Ross
Attorney Emily Powell
Mike McKenna
FRAC Vice-Chairman Bob Boggio
BC Tim Smith
BC Jason Starck
Engineer Dan Engelhardt

Call to Order:

Chairman Swanty called the Fire & Rescue Authority Board meeting to order on the above date at 1:08 p.m.

Public Comment:

None

Consent Agenda:

1. Consider the minutes from the Loveland Fire Rescue Authority Board for the March 25, 2015 Regular Board Meeting.

2. Consider a Resolution Approving the Establishment of an Addition to the Rules and Regulations of the Loveland Fire Rescue Authority Regarding the Establishment of, and
Appointments to, the Loveland Fire Rescue Authority Advisory Commission.

3. Consider a Resolution to Appropriate a Supplemental Budget Approved February 25, 2015.

4. 2015 First Quarter Budget Report – Budget Biz

Councilor Fogle moved to approve the Consent Agenda. Rural Board President Legits seconded the motion and it carried.

Regular Agenda:

5. Discuss the progress on the LFRA Employee Conversion Strategy:

   Attorney Ross introduced Emily Powell to the Board members. Attorney’s Ross and Powell passed out a schedule of activities and deadlines for completing each action. Attorney Powell explained what each color on the schedule is related to and said the schedule is meant to identify activities that need to happen in the appropriate time frame. All actions need to be complete by September for presentations to City Council and the LFRA Board. The schedule will be updated as needed.

   Attorney Ross asked the Board if they want to see monthly updates. The Board indicated they would like to have the updates monthly via emails.

   City Manager Cahill said he appreciates the schedule of actions and it shows the complexity of the project. HR Director Holland talked about the pension plan options as it relates to administrative employees and uniform personnel. The administrative personnel contributions would change. She has looked into setting up a trust that would allow all benefits to remain the same for uniform personnel. She needs the Boards approval if they want her to move forward with this option to do an engagement letter to the attorney. The cost would be $4,100 to have the attorney draw up the drafts for trusts. She said the attorney indicated he could complete this task within 8 weeks.

   Rural Board President Legits moved to approve an engagement letter to the attorney to move forward with a trust. Councilor Fogle seconded the motion and it carried.

   Chairman Swanty asked Engineer Engelhardt if he has heard any concerns regarding this aspect of the conversion. Engineer Engelhardt said he has not and that communication has been good between personnel.

6. Presentation of the 2014 Annual Report and the Three-E’s Tour:

   Chief Miller shared a Power Point presentation overview of his Three-E’s Tour that he has done for fire personnel.

   PSA Director Wheeler reviewed the 2014 annual report with the Board. She referred to graphs and spreadsheets depicting the significant measures we use, comparative information with other surrounding departments, increases in call volume and mutual/auto aid numbers.

   City Manager Cahill asked why there are 119 mutual/aid responses given to Poudre and only 57 received? BC Starck explained that part of it is the fact the Poudre responds to Alpha/Bravo incidents in their districts and we don’t so if it’s a mutual/aid area for those types of calls, we respond. This is being looked at and may change in the future.

   Chairman Swanty referred to the 94% customer satisfaction and asked City Manager Cahill how that compared to other departments within the city. City Manager Cahill said it’s a very
good percentage, but there are a couple other departments that have a higher percentage such as Water & Power at 98%. Chairman Swanty said he hopes City Council will consider those comparisons when they are looking at possible budget cuts.

7. Discuss Status of the Rural District Mill Levy Strategy:

PSA Director Wheeler said that Rural District Mill Levy strategy is being worked on. The Loveland Rural Fire Protection District Board decided to move forward with a mill levy election in November, 2016. They will be asking voters to approve 2.761 mills. The election will be coordinated with county elections to hopefully gain more voters. Two decisions that still need to be made are if the mill levy increase should be two separate ballot measures (one for operations and one for the debt on capital) or a single mill levy increase for the total, and if the mill levy should have a sunset. She asked Engineer Engelhardt if he would talk about the strategy for the campaign.

Engineer Engelhardt said that Union 3566 will be setting up a political action campaign like they did with the first mill levy election. They will be organizing people to go out and knock on doors with accurate information. This will be conducted much the same as the first election because that proved to be very successful. One of the areas they will target is the I-25/34 corridor which is in Johnstown, but is in our Rural Fire Protection District. That area is growing rapidly. They will also target the Big Thompson Canyon area. Rural Board President Legits asked him if he feels the enthusiasm from fire folks is still there. Engelhardt said he feels like it definitely is. Board President Legits said he thought it helped voters to see off-duty firefighters taking their personal time to meet with them to discuss the issue.

PSA Director Wheeler said she feels the sunset issue will be a big one. Chairman Swanty suggested maybe setting it up to increase slowly until the current sunset is reached. This is an issue that will need to be decided. PSA Director Wheeler thanked Bob Boggio for his help in developing a document to help with the election process.

8. Discuss Budget Reduction Strategy if Sales Tax on Food for Home Consumption is Eliminated:

Chief Miller said we are in the preliminary stages of what could be cut should this tax be eliminated. He has been directed to reduce our 2016 budget by $245,000. This will mean some services being cut.

City Manager Cahill said that Council will address this issue at their May 19th meeting. They will be looking at several different possibilities:

- A three year phase out of the tax
- To eliminate the entire tax at once
- Leave the tax in place
- Refer the issue to voters in an upcoming election
- Some new options not yet discussed

He said asking departments to bring back their possible budget cuts in a matter of a three week period before the meeting is something that normally would take a full year to consider. Council has also asked for feedback from all of the commissions and boards throughout the city. He explained the background of the food tax. Every department (except the airport and the building department) within the city was asked to cut 1% from their respective budget. He
said that all department reductions that are proposed may not be accepted for what they are and others may be asked for instead. Since other cities around us are not in this position of cutting budgets, we may lose some employees to better opportunities elsewhere.

Councilor Fogle talked about how City Council came to look at this tax as a possibility to cut. He feels that cutting the tax all at once has no merit and that if it goes before the voters that’s what will happen.

Chairman Swanty said this is a difficult task and that this Board voted on a 2016 budget and now the City is cutting that budget. He wants Council reminded that 18% of the fire budget comes from the Rural so this will affect them as well. Rural Board President Legits said we won’t have a choice and will have to “buy into” whatever is decided by City Council.

City Manager Cahill said that Council will get miscellaneous proposals and that 25% of the city wide cut will come from the Council Reserve budget. That budget line item is being renamed to Special Projects because it is used mostly for human services activities.

Chief Miller said he feels this process creates morale issues for employees because they are concerned about job security.

Councilor Fogle said if it is decided to cut the tax, he would like to see us do 1% first and then look at it again on the second and third years to see if that’s still the direction that Council wants to take.

Chairman Swanty said we need to make sure that compensation stays in place with appropriate cost of living increases so the City can be the “employer of choice” in the region.

9. Review Briefing Papers and Correspondence:
   a. Chief’s Report – none
   b. March Statistics – in packet
   c. Letters – in packet

10. Executive Session Concerning the 6-month Evaluation of the Fire Chief:
    Chairman Swanty read a motion to convene into executive session for the purpose of:

    1) discussing personnel matters to include review, evaluation, deliberation, and discussion and provide the city Manager with direction regarding the six month evaluation of the Fire Chief, as authorized by CRS § 24-6-402(4)(f) and Charter Section 4-4(c)(5); and

    2) considering and discussing documents and materials related to these personnel matters that are not subject to public inspection under the Colorado Open Records Act, as authorized by CRS § 24-6-402(4)(g) and Charter Section 4-4(c)(6).

    City Manager Cahill seconded the motion and it carried.
    The Board went into Executive Session at 3:20 p.m.

    The Board ended the Executive Session at 4:02 p.m.
    No further items were discussed and Chairman Swanty adjourned the regular meeting at 4:05 p.m.

*Minutes submitted by Secretary Sterkel*