

**Regular Meeting of the North Blaine County Fire District in the Council  
Chambers – 81 Elkhorn Road, Sun Valley, ID  
February 12<sup>th</sup>, 2025, at 10:00 AM.**

1. Call to Order.

Commissioner Gray called the meeting to order at 10:02 a.m.

2. Public Comment.

None.

3. Approval of the February 2025 Claims\*.

Chairman Gray asked if the work in refurbishing the Greenhorn office is complete, and Chief Bauer answers that yes those expenses are pretty wrapped up.

Commissioner Michael says that she noticed that the Idaho Power costs are pretty high in the Greenhorn 200A&B and 300A&B units, at \$412 and \$490 apiece this month. She would like to look into energy efficiency upgrades. And do we split these costs with the tenants? The Commissioners say they don't mind looking into increasing efficiency levels of the units. Jocelin adds that annual power costs per tenant were assessed the last time we increased rents, and those costs are included in the rent. This time of year is typically our most expensive time of year for power. Chairman Gray does not wish to increase costs to tenants at this time; he would prefer looking into increased insulation or new windows to increase energy efficiency.

Commissioner Michael asks where Rope's End Repair Services is located, and what work they do? Chief Bauer says they are an auto repair shop south of Bellevue.

**MOTION:**

Commissioner Sarah Michael moved to approve the February 12<sup>th</sup>, 2025 Regular Meeting Claims; seconded by Commissioner Earl Engelmann. A roll call vote was taken.

AYES: Chairman Gray, Commissioner Michael, Commissioner Engelmann

NAYS: None

4. Approval of the January 15th, Regular Meeting Minutes\*.

**MOTION:**

Commissioner Earl Engelmann moved to approve the January 15<sup>th</sup>, 2024 Regular Meeting Minutes; seconded by Commissioner Sarah Michael. A roll call vote was taken.

AYES: Chairman Gray, Commissioner Engelmann, Commissioner Michael

NAYS: None

ABSTAIN: Chairman Gray

5. Report: Monthly Update – North Blaine County Fire District Chief, Rich Bauer.

Chief Bauer says that there has been notable interest in wildfire mitigation since the Palisades Fire in California. He is going to be meeting with the Golden Eagle, Gimlet, and Heatherlands HOAS about this topic. He's also been in contact with Hulen Meadows through Commissioner Michael. Hulen Meadows and Golden Eagle both have central water systems and Gimlet does not. Gimlet was developed over a long period of time in small pieces and not in a way to put a central water system in place, but there are cisterns throughout, and many of the homes in Gimlet are sprinklered. Chief Bauer will recommend a back up generator for the Heatherlands, as they currently do not have one.

On February 1st, Flying Squirrel Property Management took over property management services at Greenhorn. They are currently working to get us quotes on updating the lighting in the South and North apparatus bays at Greenhorn, as well as getting quotes on updating the boiler system in the South Bay.

On-call firefighter Max Russell will be moving into the Greenhorn living quarters on March 1st. He's one of the firefighters that went to the Palisades fires, and is a very active on-call member with us already.

Chief Bauer met with the new medical coordinator, Patrick McIntyre, and toured him around the Greenhorn and Griffin Butte fire stations, and explained to him the important strategic location of these stations. Chairman Gray says that he would like to meet with Patrick next time he is in town, and Chief Bauer and Jim said they will help facilitate this.

Commissioner Michael comments that there is now a new Ketchum Fire District with three commissioners. What else do we know about this, do they have a Chief? Jim Keating, City Administrator, says that the Ketchum Fire District does have Commissioners, but does not formally have a Chief. There is still a lot more that we do not know. Seth Martin remains the acting Fire Chief for the City of Ketchum, and may become interim Chief. The City of Ketchum is working with the new Ketchum Fire District to create a timeline of moving forward to change who provides services. Wood River Fire & Rescue is advertising to hire a new Chief, who would start sometime in May, and Jim's understanding is that the City of Ketchum is assisting in funding the position. The new Chief will then work to combine the two fire districts (Ketchum and Wood River). Chairman Gray asks Jim if he knows how and when the Ketchum Fire District will receive funding. Jim answers that the new Ketchum Fire District will submit an L-2 over the summer for Fiscal Year 2026, and they would not start receiving funds until January 2026. Jim's understanding is that at this time the City of Ketchum will continue to run the Ketchum Fire Department, and assist the Ketchum Fire District in getting set up. Jim has been keeping a close communicative relationship with City Administrator Jade Riley, to ensure that we continue working smoothly with the other entities through this process.

Commissioner Michael says that we she became a Commissioner with NBCFD, the District joined the Idaho Rural Fire Commissioner Association, and everyone got a Commissioner handbook. One

of the new Ketchum Commissioners is asking about getting a copy of the Fire District Handbook; who should she ask? Jim suggests asking Jade Riley with the City of Ketchum, and Chairman Gray suggests she join the association.

Commissioner Michael asks if we know of people who might be applying for the position of Fire Chief for Wood River? Jim says that we do not; we know there are a number of people interested, but that's about it.

#### 6. Report: Monthly Update – Sun Valley Fire Department Chief, Taan Robrahn.

Chief Robrahn says that the City of Sun Valley has been very focused on wildfire mitigation outreach in response to the CA wildfires. They have been focused on outreach and education, and they think this is the best way to inspire forward progress. This includes working with landscaping companies, property managers, and HOAs. Chairman Gray comments that many people have been losing their homeowners insurance due to wildfire risk; can we reach out to the insurance companies to tell them about the steps homeowners are taking? Chief Robrahn says that a lot of the insurance companies now will use Google earth to see how close homes are to the wildland interface, and communicate with homeowners if they need to reduce fuels or risk losing their coverage. Homeowners can then communicate with the insurance about steps they've taken for wildfire mitigation.

Chief Robrahn says that a lot of what the City is looking to do is fuel reductions. There are a lot of mature trees now that pose substantial hazards. The City will be considering changing code to make it easier for property owners to remove hazardous trees. Jim Keating adds that the City is doing GIS mapping to locate where potential fire hot spots are in the City. With this information the City will address these areas with the best tools for each situation. The City is hiring a GIS professional for this mapping, and partnering with the Sun Valley Water and Sewer in hiring this person. He would like the Commissioners to consider extending the GIS professional's purview into the North Blaine County Fire District and covering that cost. Chairman Gray says that is certainly worth considering. He would want to know if they'd be available to expand that scope to include flood plains as well, and what the cost estimate may be?

Commissioner Michael comments that we are currently focused on wildfire mitigation; have we considered other natural disasters such as flooding? Places like Vermont and Asheville, North Carolina have had major flood events no one ever expected. Jim says that this is a great point, and we know that this is a real concern here, and he has had some conversations with the City's flood manager Brittany Skelton about this. He agrees it should be part of the calculus of emergency planning.

Chief Robrahn says that the City is taking a proactive stance on the wildfire mitigation efforts, and the Mayor is very engaged as well. The mapping will be very beneficial in seeing where our strengths and weaknesses lie. We are doing full assessments of our water lines and back up generators for water access.

Next, Chief Robrahn says we have been very busy with planning for World Cup, and we expect to have a substantial amount of additional people in the community for it. There will be a few events hosted in the City of Sun Valley, and we generally expect an increase in call numbers during the event.

We are excited to be hiring for a Firefighter/EMT vacancy in the department. We have had 8 applicants so far; 6 are from within the valley and 2 outside. One of our long term firefighters, Julie Youngblood has just started paramedic school, and we are very excited for her.

#### 7. Updates, discussion, and possible action regarding Greenhorn Housing Project\*.

Chief Robrahn says that we have one vacant unit in the older Greenhorn Units. We have identified about \$15K of work we would like to complete in there, including painting, carpeting, lighting, and appliance upgrades. Like we discussed at the last District meeting, we would use our leftover Greenhorn Project funds for this. Jim confirms there is about \$120,000 left in that fund.

Commissioner Michael would like to have that attic looked at and see the possibility of adding insulation. She would also like to look into updating the type of heating we have in there. Chief Robrahn says we can definitely have a professional go in a take a look both of those and provide options and suggestions. Commissioner Engelmann comments that updating windows is also something that could be looked at.

Chief Robrahn says that one of our Greenhorn residents, an on-call firefighter, has recently been diagnosed with cancer. He has a long road of treatment ahead of him, and Chief Robrahn would like the Commissioners to consider waiving his rent for a period of time alleviate some of his stressors.

#### **MOTION**

Commissioner Engelmann moved to cancel this member's rent for the next six months; seconded by Commissioner Michael.

A roll call vote was taken.

AYES: Chairman Gray, Commissioner Engelmann, Commissioner Michael

NAYS: None.

Mayor Peter Hendricks of the City of Sun Valley has a couple of comments about Greenhorn. First though he says that the City has had many conversations with many entities about fire mitigation. The Sun Valley Elkhorn Homeowners Association has established a committee to talk about it. The heightened interest of fire mitigation is top of mind right now. The aim of Jim and the Mayor is to talk with knowledgeable people about relevant topics in mitigation. They have been having discussions in coordination with Sun Valley Water and Sewer District. He has recently been elected Chairman for the Board of Sun Valley Water and Sewer. He says that with the GIS mapping they are looking at, the map will show where all wells, reservoirs, and booster pumps are in the City. This will be overlaid with the Chief's assessment of higher fire risks are. The main task of City government is to provide for the health and welfare of it's citizens, and we are truly making that our priority.

Mayor Hendricks thinks that this is a perfect time to update the original Greenhorn Units. He would encourage the District to consider spending more than the currently considered \$14K budget, including looking into updating insulation, windows, toilets, sinks, etc. He wants the District to encourage residents to not try and fix problems in their units themselves; they should reach out to Flying Squirrel Property Management immediately. Chairman Gray would like to get recommendations on the units in upgrading their habitability and efficiency. He would like to move on this right away. All Commissioners agree that we should be working on units as they become vacant. Find out quotes for increasing energy efficiency. Commissioner Michael notes that this sounds like a lot of staff time, do we need a project manager? Chief Bauer says that we can certainly use Flying Squirrel property management for much of this, getting all of these quotes and contacting contractors. The contract we have with them covers 10-12 hours of work per month. The Commissioners approve Chief Bauer reaching out to Flying Squirrel to get these quotes.

#### 8. Discussion regarding possible land acquisition adjacent to Griffin Butte Fire Station.

Chairman Gray thanks Commissioner Michael for her research on this. He states that he would like to continue talking with BLM and ITD about eventually building additional units at Griffin Butte. He's not trying to build immediately, but he would like to secure the land, to maybe add two to four more units there in a couple of years. Chief Robrahn says he thinks this is a great train of thought to follow. We have many contacts with the BLM and ITD and can get these conversations started. He says expanding Griffin Butte is one of the strategic priorities City leadership has been considering. Chairman Gray says he thinks we should move forward on this as quickly as possible, since we are at a time the ownership or management of that land could change.

Jim Keating says that he agrees everyone is excited about the strategic possibility of continuing to develop the land at Griffin Butte. He is concerned though that the City and the District have a lot going on, and does not want our resources stretched too thin. He is happy to talk about this with Commissioner Michael though. Commissioner Michael says that there is a lot in flux with the federal government right now, and there are a lot of steps involved in developing Griffin Butte. Commissioner Engelmann agrees that there are too many balls in the air with everything going on at the moment, but it is worth inquiring into. Commissioner Michael would like to put on the record that there are no restrictions on the Griffin Butte housing in regards to having families in there.

Chief Bauer adds that with all of the strategic planning we have been doing with the County and Greenhorn Station, and expanding our EMS services, we should keep our eyes on the ball. Continuing to work on what we have already been working on will really benefit the entire County. Chairman Gray would like us to continue looking into Griffin Butte as time allows.

#### 9. Discussion: New Business.

Commissioner Michael has feedback from the Hulen Meadows HOA. She is working to get a letter from Chief Bauer stating that if they restore the Hulen Meadows pond as a water collection site for helicopters, it would be beneficial from a firefighting standpoint.

10. Discussion: Old Business.

None.

11. Public Comment.

None.

12. Adjournment\*.

**MOTION**

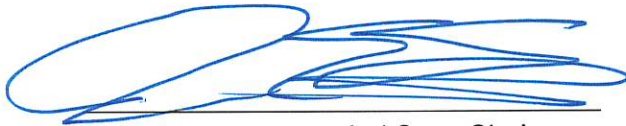
Commissioner Engelmann moved to adjourn the meeting; seconded by Commissioner Michael.

A roll call vote was taken.

AYES: Chairman Gray, Commissioner Engelmann, Commissioner Michael

NAYS: None.

Chairman adjourned the meeting at 11:20 a.m.



Jed Gray, Chairman



Sarah Michael, Treasurer