

TURNER FIRE DISTRICT
BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING MINUTES FOR SPECIAL SESSION

Meeting Minutes
November 19, 2011
7605 3rd St SE, Turner
10:00 am

Meeting called to order by President Dave Gulledge at 10:00 am. Other board members in attendance were Ed Humber and Gene Schaefer. Directors Claude Kennedy and Craig Anderson were absent. Staff present were: Chief Henson, AC Remy, Rebecca Shivers Singleterry. There were community members, TFD volunteers, and Local 2557 President Boyer in attendance as well.

Agenda: Special work session with an open forum discussion, the board will not be taking public comment unless called upon.

Flag salute: Yes

Open Forum Discussion:

1. President Gulledge: Met with Finance Office Staff and feels from discussion that TFD is in good shape financially. Stated there are Capital Outlay projects that may be wants but as far as needs the district is in good shape.
2. Director Humber stated the financial picture for the TFD is good today. Sees that the gap between resources and expenses will continue to grow over time, the same with all governmental agencies and the board will continue to need to revisit this during fiscal year budgeting.
3. President Gulledge asked the board, "What makes sense for TFD?" He sees that this board must set the direction on how TFD staff spends district resources, that the board is to set the strategies for the future. He also asked what are we, TFD, getting financially from membership in WVFRA? What has worked, not worked?
4. Director Humber asked the board, "Are we actually getting any cost benefit from membership in WVFRA? Have we actually received any value from the membership?" He stated that the people of this district elected him and are the people getting what was promised from WVFRA? Director Humber's conclusion was that membership in WVFRA for TFD has not saved the district anything because the costs actually outweigh any gain.
5. Director Schaefer stated that the folks in Turner who elected the board members and the new board members put their trust in the board to do the right thing by the community. He asked, "is the partnership working, is it best for Turner?" His conclusion is that TFD can stand alone from WVFRA and survive on its own.
6. President Gulledge stated, "what works best for the community, what is the value, the worth?" He asked if a 401(a) retirement account opting out of Social Security for employees benefit outweighs the costs to TFD to stay in WVFRA. He does not believe that it is worth it for only two or three things that might work against the many things that don't work to stay. He feels there are more cons than pros. He also noted that the list of considered changes presented in the Chief's letter at the last meeting are mainly cosmetic, while many are good ideas, still mainly cosmetic, and doesn't speak to the heart of the issue. President Gulledge stated that he was voted to the board to represent the community, his best effort for all the people.
7. Director Humber questioned why after three years there are no other member agencies? When is it going to happen that other agencies would want to join? Are we part of something that is

never going to be more than it is? Feedback he has heard to date is that no other agencies are willing to join, all negative reasons at this time.

8. President Gullledge also agreed and asked why no one else will join WVFRA? He stated it prompts the question, “Do we like what we are getting or do we not like what we are getting as members of WVFRA?”
9. Director Schaefer asked if others are watching, why has no other agency stepped forward to join? He believes it is because others see it is not working.
10. President Gullledge took a question from the public: Andi Batchelor, “What is it that is keeping other fire agencies and TFD from joining WVFRA or staying in WVFRA?”
11. President Gullledge stated that the new board members were elected to effect change and in all honesty the new board members have not addressed this issue and now they need to and move forward.
12. Director Humber stated that other agencies are not going to join because of WVFRA leadership, this is what feedback he has heard not just from internal comments but external as well.
13. President Gullledge asked other board members their opinion – Perception cannot be the driving force, the driving force is that they were elected to bring change.
14. Director Humber stated there has been so much damage done, he says it cannot be fixed.
15. President Gullledge stated the facts – no changes to leadership, no new membership to WVFRA, the same issues still without solutions, and again reiterated, do we like what we are getting? As a community it doesn’t feel we like what we are getting.
16. Director Humber stated that TFD was a family atmosphere, now there are hurt feelings, broken hearts and spirits, people are not happy. Is that what we want for our volunteer fire district? He wants to see the excitement back, the people proud of TFD.
17. Director Schaefer stated it is vital for TFD that it be something good, that people are proud to be a part of it. He doesn’t think that feeling is here anymore with current situation. He stated that people, community and volunteers, are standing on the sidelines and waiting for the board to take action. He clearly feels we will lose our volunteers if nothing is done.
18. President Gullledge stated he spoke to the TFD volunteers and Turner community members – they experienced a loss of identity. The volunteers and community had a strong positive response when the board removed the WVFRA stickers from the apparatus. They told him don’t stop there, TFD needs to be TFD. The community wants a community based fire district that provides events about Turner not WVFRA or MCFD1.
19. President Gullledge asked the board, “Where do you want to end up today at the end of this work session?”
20. Director Humber stated that he appreciated Marion County Fire District No. 1, all its staff, firefighters, and volunteers. His sentiments were echoed by other board members as well. He wanted to make sure that was clear. He feels that while WVFRA was a great experiment, maybe it was not meant to be, looking to the future for TFD, other partnerships or opportunities may come up but right now TFD needs to be TFD.
21. President Gullledge asks the board again, “Where do you want to end up today at the end of this work session?”
22. Director Humber stated that he thinks everyone, the community and volunteers, staff, are all waiting on the board for a decision.
23. Director Schaefer stated that he agreed with Director Humber. Everyone is waiting for a board decision. While it is human nature to avoid hard decision, one must be made. Even with the magnitude of this decision, the TFD board must move forward and do what is best for Turner.
24. Director Schaefer again stated, let’s do what is best for Turner. We, the board, were elected to look at what is best for Turner. There are things that can be done as partnerships with other districts but not as a member of WVFRA.

25. President Gulledge stated that this board can make a decision, this is a public meeting, there is a quorum and they can take action if necessary. He asked the other board members what they would like to do, wait or move forward and come to a consensus at this meeting on what to do next. Then take that decision to the next scheduled TFD board meeting on December 15th so that all five board members can take action together.
26. Director Humber stated that it is time for TFD to walk away from WVFRA. He feels there is nothing to be gained by staying in. He does believe that partnerships in sharing some services such as finance, training, and fire marshal can be productive but not under the 190 agreement as WVRFA.
27. President Gulledge took a question from the public at this time: Kris Boyer, President Local 2557 asks if the issues brought up in an earlier TFD board meeting this year that were put on the whiteboard would be addressed before a vote was taken?
28. President Gulledge stated that while those issues are important, the real decision that needs to come first is by the TFD board, whether to continue as is, a member of WVFRA or to pull out of WVFRA. This was what the community tasked the new board with dealing with first and foremost. Also stated that cannot get to the smaller issues until this larger item is dealt with first.
29. President Gulledge took another question from the public at this time: Andi Batchelor asks what issues are a reflection of partnership as opposed to leadership being the problem?
30. Director Schaefer stated that the board will not be able to answer all of your questions in this work session today. That the list is long but the main reason for the work session today is to address whether TFD should stay in WVFRA or not. He asks can TFD stand alone, yes. Is it in good financial shape, yes. Are there any real benefits to staying in WVFRA that outweigh the costs, not really.
31. Director Schaefer stated that TFD resources are better focused on Turner.
32. Director Humber agreed with this statement and restated it as well.
33. President Gulledge stated that the fire authority model is hard for the community to accept. There is no communication with the community and there is confusion for the community members on which board has authority. The community understands the authority lies with its taxing districts but WVFRA continues to make the decisions and they are not in agreement with this. He went on to state that the board cannot address all the questions in one meeting/one day.
34. Director Schaefer stated that at this time he recommends pulling completely out of WVFRA for TFD. After that decision is made by the board, then the board can look at components of partnering with other districts that work or benefit TFD or the other district together. Then the board can consider keeping the things that work and letting the things that don't work go. This will take time, to dismantle and pull out. Some components will need to continue to keep districts running. It is important to do what is best for Turner now.
35. President Gulledge stated that there are a few things that do work, such as finance, where staff at TFD handle payroll and human resources, they are equipped to do this and do it well. We can look at keeping components of what works such as this if both district boards are interested in contracting for services, do not need membership in WVFRA to have partnerships or contracted services work.
36. Director Schaefer stated that community support is vital to TFD, and we need to make sure that the community understands what we are doing.
37. President Gulledge stated that he has been communicating with the community, volunteers, and staff through various venues. He does feel that the board will need to provide letters to the community from the TFD board about steps that will be taken but to wait until there is actually something to report after the December 15th board meeting. He feels that it is useful and viable to provide community awareness through letters from the board and he may use the Turner

City Newsletter as a vehicle for that. He asked the other board members, “what is the next steps, the voice of intent is there, now what is the next step?”

38. Director Humber read directly from the WVFRA IGA, the section related to dissolving the fire authority.
39. President Gulledge suggested that the next step for the board was for him to reach out to legal counsel to discuss the process. To have legal counsel weigh in on the language and input for the next deliberate steps by the TFD board so that it could be done right the first time. He also stated that he would like to know if the board would like to make this a December board meeting agenda item.
40. Director Humber stated that the community is depending on the board to move, make a decision now.
41. Director Schaefer stated after again reading the IGA language for dissolution of the fire authority that his interpretation is that the two governing bodies are TFD and MCFD1, not WVFRA board and that it states it takes 4 members votes from both governing parties.
42. President Gulledge took a question/statement from Chief Henson: Chief Henson stated that the IGA inferred the 4 members to be WVFRA board members, he had letter from legal he would send to board that inferred this.
43. The board members reviewed the IGA language together at this time and agreed by consensus that the language referred to the two parties, TFD and MCFD1, not WVFRA.
44. President Gulledge entertained a motion to put on the agenda for the December 15th TFD board meeting as an action item, TFD intent to withdrawal from WVFRA.
45. Motion: *Director Schaefer moved to place the action item that the Turner Fire District withdrawal from the Willamette Valley Fire & Rescue Authority on the agenda for the December 15, 2011 TFD board meeting. Director Humber seconded the motion.*
46. President Gulledge called for discussion. He stated that the board through him would work with legal counsel on language, intent, and review laws on IGA. He also stated that if need be, he would open discussion with the WVFRA board.
47. President Gulledge took question from the public: Kris Boyer asked what work will be done between now and the next meeting? He again asked about a list of issues that were written on the whiteboard during an earlier TFD board meeting.
48. President Gulledge stated that the decision to stay in WVFRA or not is the first step, with discussions with legal counsel. Other questions and issues will come forward after the board makes a decision and those will be addressed then.
49. Discussion ensued between the board members regarding the issues that might come forward, the questions that have been asked.
50. Director Schaefer stated that at the last TFD board meeting Director Anderson suggested the need for TFD to create a business plan. He felt a decision by the board needs to come first before any long term planning can be addressed.
51. President Gulledge took a question from the public: Kris Boyer noted that 12 months ago both districts looked at a budget reset due to budget shortfalls at the time. What is the boards observation of budget and finances with regards to today?
52. Director Schaefer stated that the observation by the board 12 months ago regarding the budget and district finances was a different board, no comparison can be made.
53. President Gulledge stated he has spoken to the community and they have spoken their desires. This board is acting on those requests.
54. President Gulledge took another question from the public: Kris Boyer asked if the board is willing to ask for input on the decision. President Gulledge stated yes.
55. Discussion ensued among the board members regarding input, what have received already, what they will be asking for from staff, community, volunteers, etc. The TFD board will make sure the intent at next board meeting will be communicated to the community.

56. Director Schaefer stated the board will be working to notify the community through various venues and events, the Turner City newsletter, the two Toy & Food Drive collection weekends and all other opportunities that manifest.
57. President Gulledge took question from public: Kris Boyer stated, no input from the North, MCFD1.
58. President Gulledge stated that it was not appropriate to have the MCFD1 board here in official capacity. This is TFD work session. The TFD board will follow up with both MCFD1 and WVFRA boards respectfully. He also stated this may prompt a December WVFRA board meeting.
59. Action taken: *President Gulledge asked if other discussion, having none, he called for a vote and it was unanimous.*
60. President Gulledge asked if there was any further business to discuss.
61. Director Schaefer stated he had nothing else at this time. He anticipates that board members will meet with staff between now and December 15th board meeting to get more detailed information on shared expenses and how TFD would look without WVFRA.
62. Director Humber stated he had nothing else to add.
63. President Gulledge stated the board is now moving forward and will look at impact on TFD and other issues as they come forward.
64. President Gulledge asked for any public comment at this time, there was none.
65. President Gulledge entertained a motion to adjourn. Director Humber moved to adjourn, Director Schaefer seconded, unanimous.
66. Meeting adjourned at 11:41 am.

Next Meeting: December 15, 2011, 6:30pm at 7605 3rd St SE, Turner.

Dave Gulledge, Board President

Board Secretary