

**RECORD OF PROCEEDINGS
ROARING FORK FIRE RESCUE AUTHORITY
EMERGENCY BOARD MEETING VIA CONFERENCE CALL**

March 24, 2020

Authority Board President Ed Van Walraven called the meeting to order at 8:34 a.m. Board members present were Ed Van Walraven, Leroy Duroux, John Young, Bill Boineau, Brian Olson and Irene Greiser. Others present were Chief Scott Thompson, Deputy Chiefs Pete Bradshaw, Kevin Issel and John Mele, Division Chiefs Richard Cornelius and Terry Cox, Finance Director Jennifer Thompson, Human Resources Director Renee Thomas, IT Director Erik Johnson, Attorney Bob Cole and Susan Herwick all in attendance via conference call.

Minutes of February 18, 2020 Meeting:

Director John Young made a motion to accept the minutes as read, the motion was seconded by Director Irene Greiser. All were in favor and the motion carried 6 – 0.

Public Comments:

None

Attorney's Report:

Attorney Bob Cole stated that we used a similar declaration of local emergency disaster during the Lake Christine fire.

Used by the Colorado Department of Health

The CEO of the Authority, which would be Chief Scott Thompson, has the power to declare a disaster. Chief Thompson made this declaration on 03/17/2020. This declaration is only good for seven days but can be extended. It is easier to apply for reimbursement after a declaration has been made.

The State is operating under a disaster plan.

This fits us into that organization.

This declaration provides Chief Thompson with other powers that he doesn't normally have (see items 1 – 3). These have been taken from several different areas. They give the Authority more flexibility to get things done. Director Ed Van Walraven asked whether the \$10,000 a month was a place holder. Chief Thompson stated yes, it is a place holder and can be changed if needed. Attorney Bob Cole stated that \$10,000 is on the low side but if it is sufficient it is fine to approve it. Director John Young asked Finance Director Jennifer Thompson what we had set aside in the emergency reserve fund. Jennifer stated that we have \$1,200,000 in the emergency fund at Colorado Trust. We did budget \$500,000 as an expense for vehicles this year that can be used for this

disaster. Director Young asked how these funds would be used. Chief Thompson stated that the only critical item these funds would be used for is payroll should several employees contract the virus and we needed to backfill their positions. Personal Protective Equipment is already a budgeted item. Director Young asked whether we had haz-mat suits. Division Chief Richard Cornelius stated that we have 400 sets of the appropriate PPE ready to go. Director Van Walraven asked what Departments usually earmark for disasters like this. Attorney Bob Cole stated that departments of our size usually earmark between \$75,000 and \$150,000 for disasters. Discussion regarding the amount needed ensued. Director Young made a motion to increase the amount from \$10,000 to \$100,000; it was seconded by Director Bill Boineau. All were in favor and the motion was approved 6 – 0.

Director Irene Greiser made a motion to approve Resolution 4 – 2020 Declaration of Local Disaster Emergency; it was seconded by Director Leroy Duroux. All were in favor and the motion was approved 6 – 0.

Chief's Report:

Chief Thompson stated that he needed a motion to let Director Ed Van Walraven sign the easement paperwork for the well for Station 46. Director Olson made a motion to authorize Director Ed Van Walraven to sign the well easement documents for Station 46; it was seconded by Director Irene Greiser. All were in favor and the motion was approved 6 – 0.

The Executive Team and Command Staff are having video conferencing each day in order to stay in touch. Communication has been good.

We are concentrating on protecting our people physically and mentally right now. Things are changing daily. We are also helping out with housing and day care.

We are collaborating with local and national agencies for standards and best practices. We had one minor exposure early on. That person was quarantined for four days but was okay.

Dr. Livengood has been very active in protocol development and local meeting. He is a blessing to have on our Department.

We had a great turnout of personnel for the mutual aid wildfire assignment in Carbondale's District recently. Burn permits are only being approved for agricultural ditches right now. No wood piles are being allowed. We are trying to keep air quality as clean as possible right now because of the respiratory component of COVID-19.

Our average responses per days has dropped from 6.9 to 5.4 since the ski area has closed.

Division Chief Richard Cornelius COVID-19 Update:

Pitkin County and Eagle Counties have their Emergency Operations Center (EOC) virtually activated with all Emergency Support Functions (ESF) filled. Pitkin County has their Incident Management Team (IMT) activated with a Unified Command (UC). The Director of Public Health is part of the UC. Division Chief Cornelius has been assigned as the Operations Section Chief. The incidents first objective involves maintaining responder and healthcare worker safety as a top priority. Several other objectives are related to communication with local, regional, and state partners and the public at large. Division Chief Cornelius has been assigned as ESF8 in charge of Public Health & Medical.

Currently 51 people have received COVID-19 testing in Pitkin County: 16 of those are confirmed positive and 28 are confirmed negative with 7 results pending. Currently in Eagle County: 100 people are confirmed positive and multiple results are pending. Per Colorado Department Public Health & Environment County Rate per 100,000 for Pitkin County is 100.41 and Eagle County is 167.59. The State Rate per 100,000 is 12.64. There is Community transmission in both Pitkin and Eagle Counties.

Pitkin County is working on community-wide testing. 1,000 COVID-19 rapid response tests that were just FDA approved have been ordered. Testing involves a finger-prick blood sample, requires less Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) and provide results in less than 10 minutes. The first shipment of tests is expected this week. Pitkin County is listed as a priority community.

720 people are confirmed positive in Colorado with 72 people hospitalized. The major concern is a hospital surge. We expect to see a hospital surge within the next 2 weeks. Critical COVID-19 patients who are on ventilators are being transferred to Denver-area hospitals. Arrangements have been made with Critical Care Team capable agencies for transfers, if local Interfacility Transport is not available.

Currently RFFRA PPE inventory is adequate for the foreseeable future. There is a critical shortage of PPE nationwide. The Western cache is empty. There will be a SNS allocation this week. Colorado has received 49,200 N95 masks and 115,000 surgical masks. 480 N95 masks and 1,000 surgical masks went to Pitkin and Eagle County. Hospitals and skilled nursing facilities have priority for PPE.

Pitkin County's Public Health Order has been updated to Stay-at-home among other restrictions. All non-essential retail businesses are closed. Residential and commercial construction is not listed as essential business. These orders are in effect until April 17. Div. Chief Cornelius is participating daily in the Eagle County EOC coordination call, the daily Valley View Hospital COVID-19 update conference call, the daily Garfield County EMS transport agencies COVID-19 coordination call, the Mountain Area Information Sharing Conference Call, and the Alternative Care Site with State conference call.

Pitkin County's ESF4 and ESF13 are meeting today to discuss multiagency response with the county if staffing levels become critical. Currently, multiple law enforcement agencies are experiencing staffing challenges.

The Pitkin County Regional Emergency Dispatch Center (PCREDC) has updated their process to include screening questions for all calls that may get an in-person response from any agency. This change goes in effect today.

COVID-19 response guidelines, COVID-19 EMS non-transport guidelines, COVID-19 enhanced PPE protocols are all in place. Our responders complete a daily screening of on-duty personnel which includes temperature checks. The best thing we can do is wash our hands frequently, judiciously clean and sanitize surfaces, and practice good social distancing. Stay home and isolate yourself if you are sick!

Deputy Chief Report:

Deputy Chief Kevin Issel stated that we are currently staffing four at Station 45, two each at Station 41 and Station 42 in order to prevent exposure to staff. Call volume should continue to drop. We are keeping all volunteers out of the stations right now. We have a quarantine policy in place for Taylor Creek Cabins and the Aspenalt Lodge in Basalt, if needed. We are eliminating the time spent in apparatus with each other. The stations and apparatus are being sanitized daily. Sick personnel are staying home until they are well. We do not have any COVID-19 illnesses yet, just common colds.

Deputy Chief Pete Bradshaw stated that he was working with IT Director Johnson on virtual meetings. These should be available in the next week or two.

Deputy Chief John Mele stated that onsite inspections have been cancelled. Phone calls are still coming in with concerns about new buildings in both Pitkin and Eagle Counties. Plan reviews are still taking place for already planned development. We are currently compiling lots of data for a meeting with ISO regarding a new evaluation for our District which will be held soon. The plans review position has been put on hold for right now. We are doing a fire prevention patrol in order to check preplans, knox boxes and to be visible to the public.

HR Report:

Human Resources Director Renee Thomas stated that she was monitoring the information coming in from the local, State, and Federal levels regarding COVID-19.

Our worker's compensation provider will pay first responders for 14 days of a quarantine issue.

Our Short-Term Disability provider is relaxing medical documentation to cover people who become sick and need quarantine. We are waiting for information from the provider to verify if it will cover our policy as we have longer wait periods for disability claims than the standard 14-day quarantine.

Emergency Family and Medical Expansion Leave Act – Federal Law that is in effect from April until December 31, 2020. This law allows for up to 12 weeks of partially

compensated paid leave for someone working for the organization 30 or more days to care for a child whose school or daycare has been closed due to COVID-19.

Emergency Paid Sick Leave Act – Federal Law that is in effect from April until December 31, 2020. Requires employers to pay employees that meet the criteria, 80 hours of paid sick time. This law allows the exclusion of first responders and healthcare workers.

A temporary adjustment for paid time off and extended leave hours to allow staff to use these different pays to care for family members effected by the closing of daycare and schools or if family members are ill. Authorized use of ELH includes use for dependent care.

She has sent out mental health information to everyone.

Information Technology:

IT Director Erik Johnson stated that he has been an active participant in telework mobilization. He is working on the launch of video conferencing. He is scrutinizing who has physical access to the fire stations. He is maintaining the daily operational effectiveness of having a remote workforce. He is maintaining IT support for in-station staff. He is constantly monitoring our communication network capacity and performing contingency planning. He is also collaborating with Carbondale Fire. He asks everyone to keep an eye on what is coming in via email as scams are prevalent right now.

Division Chief Terry Cox:

Division Chief Terry Cox thanked the Deputy Chiefs for their support on the Target Solutions purchase. A training on COVID-19 has been posted in Target Solutions for all personnel to complete. Seventy people have completed this training so far. Onsite training has been suspended until further notice. Training later in the year is still currently scheduled.

Finance Report:

Finance Director Jennifer Thompson stated that the finance department was up and functioning from home. We have received \$1,800,000 in property taxes so far this year. Because we are so restricted on what we can invest in, there have been no impacts on our investments. The final payment was made on the two new engines. Requested payroll changes are being double checked with the employee before being entered. Changes to vendor invoices or statements are also being double checked before payment is sent out.

Board Comments:

Director John Young asked whether we could use volunteers to backfill positions and pay them for it instead of bringing in someone from outside the Authority. Chief Thompson stated that the volunteers who are drawing on retirement cannot. Attorney Bob Cole stated that you cannot volunteer and be a paid employee for the same

organization. Chief Thompson stated that we will take care of our people. We are furloughing some staff in order to limit the number of employees in the Stations.

Director Leroy Duroux thanked everyone for making our community as safe as possible.

Staff Comments:

Chief Thompson stated that Division Chief Cornelius made a very good point. We are running a marathon right now and this is going to go on for months. It will make lasting impacts on all of us. We are currently making history.

Unfinished Business:

None

New Business:

Chief Thompson stated that the Administrative Guideline 8 is for your information only. There is no need to approve it.

The next RFFRA Board meeting is scheduled for April 21, 2020 at 8:30 a.m. Its format has yet to be determined. It may be a conference call or video conference meeting.

Volunteer Meeting:

We will have a virtual Town Hall meeting instead of the next volunteer meeting. It will be held on April 7, 2020 at 6:00 p.m. Director John Young stated that he would attend this meeting.

Adjournment:

Director Greiser made a motion to adjourn the meeting, it was seconded by Director Boineau. All were in favor and the motion passed 6 – 0. The meeting was adjourned at 9:45 a.m.