

**RECORD OF PROCEEDINGS**

**MINUTES OF A SPECIAL MEETING  
OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS OF**

**CIMARRON HILLS FIRE PROTECTION DISTRICT**

Held: Thursday, May 2, 2019, at 5:30 p.m., at the Cimarron Hills Fire Protection District Administrative Offices, 1835 Tuskegee Place, Colorado Springs, Colorado.

A Special Meeting of the Board of Directors of Cimarron Hills Fire Protection District, Colorado Springs, Colorado, was called to order at 5:32 p.m. and held as shown above and in accordance with the applicable statutes of the State of Colorado with the following directors present and acting:

1. Call to Order Director Graham opened the meeting at 5:32 p.m. with 5 directors in attendance.

2. Roll Call

Board Attendance	Present	Absent
Paul Graham, President	X	
Larry Keleher, Vice President	X	
Rene' Sintas Secretary	X	
Janet Cederberg, Treasurer	X	
Paul Miller, Director	X	

Also present were:  
Acting Fire Chief Matt Gortner and Executive Assistant Virpi Mattson taking minutes.

3. Pledge of Allegiance The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

4. Approval of the Agenda The Board discussed the May 2, 2019 Agenda.  
**Upon motion by Director Cederberg, seconded by Director Keleher, the Board voted unanimously to approve the agenda.**

5. Conflict of Interest Disclosures Director Sintas disclosed that she and Director Keleher also serve on the Board of Directors of the Cherokee Metropolitan District.

6. Public Comment for Items on the Agenda **Tracy Stuehm:** Inquired if there is a “Plan B” to keep the District afloat if the contract (with the City) does not go through.

Director Graham responded that there has not been a lot of concrete ideas without having to cut staffing and reduce (services) from what we are already doing. “We do the best we can with what we know. We are open to suggestions. For over a year, we have been asking for ideas about how to creatively raise money without raising taxes. This was the most viable option at the time.”

Director Sintas responded that if we can’t do this, she only sees one other option which is going to a vote of the people, letting them know we either have to raise the mill levy or cut services. “I don’t see any waste here. I’m shocked that they run on what they do.”

**Assunta Manning:** advised that she looked at the old forecast data from 2018, and stated she would like to see the numbers presented in a very detailed financial structure.

Director Graham invited the attending CHFD members to express how the process is impacting their lives.

**Chief Gortner:** Commented that the process has been going on for about a year and a half with a lot of time and effort put into it, however we don’t know what our future is right now and our lives have been put on hold. Each member has an individual story to express how this impacts them.

**Paramedic Velasquez:** Commented that due to an unknown transition or training academy date, he hasn’t been able to plan vacations with his family or his annual fall hunting trip which is creating stress for them.

**Driver/Engineer Anthony:** Echoed the planning frustrations and expressed his belief that many members will be leaving the Department if the City contract does not go through and the (sustainable) future of the District is unknown.

**Paramedic Chaffee:** Commented about the current tightening of funds and holding back on purchases as we wait out a decision about the direction of the Department. He also commented on leadership in critical positions that are being filled by members “acting” in those assignments. “We are not going to innovate... We just bought an apparatus that matches city. If we decide we are not going to move forward with the contract, we have not made any progress in our Department... I’ve put wedding plans on hold because I don’t what is going to happen in my future.”

**Firefighter Lancaster:** Mentioned costs involved in having to make changes in his personal life. He expressed his concern that the financial constraints on the District seemed to surface suddenly and inquired about a Plan B if the contract does not go through. He expressed that even as the most senior member of the Department, his position would be one of the first to get cut as he chose not to promote during his career.

**Driver/Engineer Olson:** commented that he appreciates the work the Board is doing and still thinks a contract with the City could be a positive thing. He expressed frustration in making plans with his wife and family based on an anticipated transition date that has changed, and how this could ultimately cost him thousands of dollars. He also commented on his frustration with everything being kept hush hush and the rumor mill.

**Firefighter Farr:** Commented that that line firefighters at the City seem to know more than we do.

**Lieutenant Smith:** commented on the lack of information or misinformation, and the rumor mill. He referred to momentary shortfalls in supplies as we are not wanting to backstock or buy items in bulk at better pricing like we normally would.

**Firefighter Gladin:** identified himself as a part-time firefighter, stating that although he will be losing his job... “there are 12 amazing firefighters that deserve longevity. I am for this contract, but I share the same frustrations... I have several friends across the street at CSFD that seem to know more than we do. Some days it’s tough to come to work, not knowing what is going to happen.”

Director Graham and Executive Assistant Mattson briefed on a recent change that could impact future projections; following the recent assessment process, residential market values of the District have gone up 31% as reflected today on the Assessor’s website. Market values of commercial properties (per the website) have gone up approximately 28%. Executive Assistant Mattson stated that she is cautiously optimistic about these numbers. Official preliminary assessed values will come out the end of August, with final assessed values coming out in November.

The Board responded to the member concerns, acknowledging and validating their frustrations and the impact on their lives. The Board explained that some details cannot be shared as they are still under negotiation, and the information/rumors coming from the City side cannot be controlled (by us).

7. Executive Session

A. **Executive Session: Determining positions relative to matters that may be subject to negotiations, developing strategy for negotiations, and instructing negotiators regarding contract for services IGA between the Cimarron Hills Fire Protection District and the City of Colorado Springs (24-6-402(4)(e), C.R.S.)**

**Upon motion by Director Cederberg, seconded by Director Miller, the Board voted unanimously to go into Executive Session for Determining positions relative to matters that may be subject to negotiations, developing strategy for negotiations, and instructing negotiators regarding contract for services IGA between the Cimarron Hills Fire Protection District and the City of Colorado Springs (24-6-402(4)(e), C.R.S.)**

The Board went into Executive Session at 7:32 p.m.

**Upon motion by Director Cederberg, seconded by Director Keleher, the Board voted unanimously to come out of Executive Session.**

The Board returned to regular session at 9:38 p.m.

8. IGA with  
City of  
Colorado  
Springs Fire  
Department

A. **IGA with the City of Colorado Springs Fire Department for Fire & Medical Services:**

Director Graham addressed the CHFD members, advising that the July 28<sup>th</sup> transition date has been taken off the table. “We will be talking to legal about how much of the existing draft contract can be released (redacted)... Our primary focus is still the IGA (contract) to ensure we take care of our people, while giving the District an extended time to look for other options if needed down the road.”

Director Miller stated, “A contract should have several things: 1) it should be beneficial to both parties; 2) have an identified price; 3) have addendums identifying individual mandates. The contract as it stood a few months ago was missing a few things, including a price... We have to have the information to make a sound decision.

9. Public  
Comment

**Firefighter Grissom:** Expressed her appreciation for the Board and the work they are trying to do. She read a statement expressing the sacrifices that are being made by all of the firefighters for a contract such as loss of seniority, rank, and vacation time, but expressed her willingness to support it in the interest of a future and security for her family.

**Chief Gortner** recapped that everyone is in a different phase of life with a different situation. “We want to know we have a secure future for our families. Dealing with the “what if” (in future budget projections), that’s just scary and creates depression and turmoil in the fire service.”

**Paramedic Chaffee** stated that “bad news wouldn’t be half as bad as not knowing.”

10. Board  
Comment

**Director Miller:** no further comment

**Director Cederberg:** I want to thank all the firefighters and V (Executive Assistant Mattson) for everything that you do. I appreciate that you came tonight and told us how you felt.

**Director Sintas:** no further comment

**Director Keleher:** “We have the best firefighters in the Country and I want to do the best thing for your future.” I can’t say enough positive about you guys.”

**Director Graham**: I am hopefully optimistic about these new numbers that are coming out. If these new assessed numbers come through, it is going to make the whole thing even better.

11. Adjourn

**Upon motion duly made by Director Miller, seconded by Director Cederberg, the meeting was adjourned at 9:56 p.m.**

The foregoing constitutes a true and correct copy of the minutes of the above-referenced meeting and was approved by the Board of Directors of the District on the 16<sup>th</sup> day of May, 2019.

Respectfully submitted,



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Rene' Sintas, Secretary