Meeting called to order at 1153 by Chair Jeremy Walla.

Board Members in attendance: Harvey, McClure, Sortland, Walla.
Appointees in attendance: Tobin.
Fire Administration Staff: Massey

GENERAL OPENING COMMENTS

Meeting Purpose and Focus – Walla stated the FSB has, and will continue to advocate for the FSB budget which has been cut since 2013/2014. In 2016/2017 the FSB began working with County Commissioners, and in 2018 (2019 budget) we saw a small increase.

Harvey reminded attendees we are 90 days out from new budget discussions, and even with the slight increase we are still $30,000 short from the previous year’s budget allocation.

Tobin gave a brief “budget cut” history of why funding decreased; and said there was urgency in getting budget information to the Commission to begin a dialogue that would result in increases and budget stabilization.

Walla stressed the need for continuity with meeting attendance and advocacy so that we don’t lose the institutional knowledge that exists on the FSB and Commission. Also, we need to create a plan so that the Commission understands fire service needs, why we need it and how we will efficiently spend tax dollars.

BUDGET REVIEW

Walla briefly discussed the need to review financial reports that are disseminated at monthly FSB meetings to focus on current information needs.

Tobin suggested we consider adding a Fire Tax Reserve. He warned that during a busy wildland or structure fire season we could stress the current budget and building up a reserve would provide emergency funding.

Harvey is working to develop partnerships with surrounding counties to institute cost-sharing measures. As an example, a new partnership with Custer County is bringing down our Workers Compensation costs. Also, Zuercher SMS Paging (Text) is completely funded by Fire Administration but used by six (6) ambulance services, Jackson County, Search and Rescue, SRT, etc., and its past time to share those costs. Additionally, Pump and Ladder Testing dollars were initially set aside to help VFDs just getting started and were not meant to sustain testing expenses long-term. Class A foam is used by departments, they bill the State and Feds and are reimbursed for foam usage, however nothing comes back from those departments to the FSB. These are areas we could review and perhaps modify.

Walla said he has received multiple comments from VFDs regarding 5-Year Plan funds and would like to begin discussion on how it is currently meeting department’s needs or if we need to make adjustments to better support departments. Should funds only be used for PPE or could they be spent on other urgent needs such as a new engine for a truck? McClure mentioned that Wall is still without a compressor due to a lack of funds, (they had also applied for a grant but were not awarded funding).
Walla said Training is a core item and we need to increase awareness. Each department should have their own onboarding process to help with recruitment and retention, but the FSB should be covering Workers Comp for firefighters from the time they are accepted onto the fire department. Tobin mentioned grant funds were also available to support Training needs.

Sortland explained Rockerville’s onboarding process and suggested it as a basis for a County BOP to help others. Tobin said we might consider adding/funding Cancer in the Fire Service training.

Walla said Zuercher provides priority text paging and preemption, but we need to review using Zuercher to its potential, i.e. M.D.T in apparatus. This may include investing in training to help us use the system to its capacity.

Harvey stated the need to continue to fund Operational Support (Cascade, communications, towers et al).

(List of suggested Budget Categories, and Core Services attached.)

**CONCLUSION**

Tobin said we need to add numbers from past three years to the recommended Budget Categories to help FSB and Commissioner understand needs.

Harvey urged support from the FSB with Commissioners and at County meetings.

McClure said there was support on the FSB and that we can and should rely on their help.

Sortland reiterated that training was key, and said we needed to be our own advocates moving forward.

*Meeting adjourned at 1331 by Chair Jeremy Walla.*