



Teton County Fire Protection District

P.O. Box 474

911 N. Hwy 33

Wednesday January 21, 2026- Driggs Fire Station, as well as Teleconferenced via Zoom

In Attendance:

Jason Letham, Fire Commissioner, absent

Bob Foster, Fire Commissioner

Erin Borbet, Fire Commissioner

Mike Maltaverne-Fire Chief

Kevin Brown – Fire Marshal

Ed Schauster – Deputy Chief of Operations

Jared Colson – Battalion Chief of EMS via zoom

Bart Birch- Legal Council

Mariana O'Neill -CFO

Kim Keeley- Teton County Clerk

Meeting began @ 1300 hours

Commissioner Foster called the meeting to order.

Budget Discussion:

Kim Keeley provided an overview of tax districts and mill levy options, explaining the constraints and processes involved in seeking voter approval for tax increases. Kim explained the current system of 3% plus new construction increases, capped at 8%, and highlighted how tax shifts affect residents. She discussed the challenges of increasing levy rates and the options for overrides. She discussed the timing and process of putting a measure on the ballot, noting that voter turnout is higher in November elections. She explained the difference between bonds and levies, with bonds being used for large, one-time expenses like buildings. Kim also touched on the agricultural exemption and its impact on local governments.

She also shared efforts to increase the 2% lodging tax to 4% for property tax relief, which faced setbacks but gained some legislative traction. The group will continue to explore revenue options and engage with legislators on potential solutions.

Chief Maltaverne discussed the fire department's budget, explaining that out of the \$5.7 million total budget, only \$650,000 can be flexibly allocated for items like training and vehicle maintenance. He highlighted the need for a training officer and a dedicated maintenance supervisor, as well as the importance of addressing the aging fleet and developing a vehicle replacement program. Chief also mentioned that 25% of the time, the department receives multiple calls simultaneously, suggesting a potential need to increase staffing at Station 2 in the future. He highlighted the importance of funding for wildfire mitigation efforts, mentioning a private fundraising campaign and potential future funding. He also addressed the need for replacing equipment and facilities, emphasizing the high costs of new ambulances, radios, and other essential items. He expressed concerns about public perception regarding tax increases and the challenges of securing voter approval for funding requests. He emphasized the importance of strategic messaging, particularly during key electoral periods, and highlighted ongoing efforts to educate the public about the department's needs and services. Chief also mentioned recent media appearances and outreach efforts to increase visibility and gather support for the fire department's challenges. He highlighted the increasing call volume and financial challenges, emphasizing the urgency of addressing these issues now rather than later.

The group planned for upcoming meetings, including a CBA negotiation session on February 9th, where they will focus on quality of work-life issues, contract terms, and long-term strategic planning.

Commissioner Foster made a motion to adjourn at 1402 hours.

Commissioner Borbet seconded the motion.

Commissioner Foster asked for all in favor. All replied “aye”, and the Board of Fire Commissioners were adjourned

FIRE DISTRICT