

# Meridian Rural Fire Protection District

33 E. Broadway, Suite 210 - Meridian, Idaho 83642

## Meeting Minutes – January 13, 2025

### **Call to Order:**

The Meridian Rural Fire Protection District monthly meeting for January 13, 2025 was called to order at 4:00 p.m. by Commissioner Ward. Roll call was taken.

### **Roll Call:**

Attendees: Commissioner Marv Ward, Commissioner Derrick Shannon, Commissioner Randy Howell, MRFPD Legal Counsel John Fitzgerald, MFD Chief Kris Blume, Meridian City Finance Todd Lavoy, and Liz Strader Meridian City Council (via phone).

### **Approval of Agenda for the January 13, 2025 MRFPD Monthly Meeting:**

Motion was made by Commissioner Ward and seconded by Commissioner Shannon to approve the meeting agenda. Agenda approved.

**Approval of the Minutes for the December 9, 2024 MRFPD Annual Budget/Monthly Meeting:** Motion made by Commissioner Ward to approve meeting minutes, Commissioner Howell seconded. Meeting minutes approved.

### **Treasurer's Report- Provided by Commissioner Howell:**

- Approve and pay bills as follows:
  - Check #5552, City of Meridian, \$142,650.14 October 2024 A,B,C Budgets, Invoice #3105.
  - Check #5553, Hughes Fire Equipment Inc., \$98,115.24 Water Tender purchase, Invoice #614728
  - Check #5554, ICMRP, \$3,076.00, Liability Insurance, Invoice #08146-2025-1

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- Check \$5555, John O. Fitzgerald, \$921.26 General Legal Services, Invoice #2025-01
- Check \$5556, Kathleen Roma & Associates, Accounting and Payroll Services, Invoice #77248
  - Total of \$244,809.31 checks paid out this month
- Motion made by Commissioner Howell to accept and pay stated bills. Commissioner Ward seconded. Motion passed.
- LGIP \$7,057,826.94 balance
- US Bank \$26,248.34 balance
- Current net cash position is currently \$7,084,075.28
- US Bank Statement- November 2024 Received and Reconciled.
- LGIP Statement- December 2024 Received and Reconciled.

### **Old Business:**

- Meridian City Council member Liz Strader via the phone proposed new conversations regarding funding from rural to help with Meridian Fire budget shortfalls for staffing. Comments were based on previous discussions with the Meridian Fire Department and the Meridian Rural Fire Protection District.
- Commissioner Howell presented that the MRFPD does pay the City of Meridian the contracted amount monthly to the City of Meridian. Commissioner Howell offered he had concerns on how future funding is planned as the rural continues to shrink and the rural's long-term viability is in question. Liz Strader and Commissioner Howell exchanged in back and forth dialog. Liz Strader discussed the acceptance of the SAFER Grant and alternative sources of funding for the 4-person staffing model. She also stated that any Levy

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discussion is not been officially approved or discussed. Liz Strader also brought up that the building of fire stations 7 and 8 at the same time was based on financial input from the MRFPD to help cover staffing costs.

- John Fitzgerald, MRFPD Legal Council, provided historical backup to the relationship between the City of Meridian and the Meridian Rural Fire Protection District via the Joint Powers Agreement in place. Legal Counsel John Fitzgerald provided insight to answer Liz Stater's question about staffing. Past meeting minutes do show discussion on the topic and there was placeholder amounts added in the MRFPD annual budget, however no formal resolution was ever introduced or approved but the rural for said funding. John Fitzgerald further stated that the MRFPD commission has not said no to future funding of staffing costs of the Meridian Fire Department, rather what would be the agreed upon amount.
- Commissioner Shannon restated that as a commission we have not approved an official resolution for any funding. We have previously discussed in principle to support but no dollar amount approved.
- City of Meridian staffing financial support request. Todd Lavoy (Meridian City Finance) provided Meridian City Finance 101 presentation (available from the City of the Meridian) discussing revenue streams, budgets/budget process, and projected budget short falls pertaining to Meridian Fire. City of Meridian is still growing but a much slower rate. Growth rate is growing but much slower. City is still annexing rural parcels but also at a slower rate. 70/30 residential versus commercial, which is historically the norm for fee revenues. \$98M of \$100M of City of Meridian budget revenue is already allocated leaving \$2M discretionary spending for Meridian City to use.

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- Todd Lavoy discussed \$3.3M annual Meridian Fire Department staffing shortfall after funding from SAFER Grant runs out. City is looking for new revenue streams to cover the cost.
- Liz Strader commented that PERSI increases annually have also impacted city of Meridian budget.
- Todd Lavoy offered clarification regarding the how the property tax relief from the state of Idaho works based on annual review. The tax relief is annual and may or may not be in place year to year.
- Commissioner Shannon asked clarifying question regarding the construction of station 7 and 8. Station 8 was built 5-1/2 years early. Those stations built with or without the rural. This was a city council decision. It made more economic sense to build now instead of waiting. Second question regarding the SAFER Grant acceptance and the 4-person staffing model. Commissioner Shannon also made a point that the if the MRFPD liquidated its assets, the funds would only cover two years of operating capital for the 4-person staffing. Chief Blume and Todd Lavoy indicated that the shortfall is city of Meridian issue to resolve. The potential levy discussion is part of the solution discussion to come. Commissioner Shannon also discussed the budget placeholder amounts in the MRFPD budget. The SAFER Grant does not actually cover the expense for the 4-person staffing so the city is tapping into the fund balance to gap the next two year. This is why the city is asking for additional assistance with funding. Commissioner Ward offered that the MRFPD did discuss funding with no resolution and that the MRFPD will discuss supporting the City of Meridian Fire Department. Todd Lavoy explained the SAFER Grant expires fiscal year 2028, thus the reason to find and replace revenue to fund the Meridian Fire Department current 4-person staffing model. Todd Lavoy explained that any funds allocated from the MRFPD would be used to help fund the shortfall over the next two years. No timeline in place for MRFPD to offer funds.

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Commissioner Howell asked we discuss further before making a determination. Liz Strader closed with appreciation of the relationship with the MRFPD.

- Chief Blume provided handout regarding response times for MRFPD. 12 minute response time in 2024. Primary calls out were EMS calls. MRFPD will review the content and discuss at February monthly meeting.
- Watertower lots weed abatement pushed to Spring to source new solution.
- Old MRFPD Water Tender sale to city of Boise. Still require UEI# and W9 so send to City of Boise. [SAM.Gov](https://sam.gov) account created. MRFPD will not received agreed upon funds (\$100K) until UEI# in place. Init is currently at Hughes Fire Equipment for updated.
- No old business

### **New Business:**

- Hughes Fire Equipment invoice paid for new Water Tender.
- MFD Department Updates from MFD Chief Blume:
  - Meridian Fire did NOT send any personnel to the California fires. Focus is on supporting our own constituents. Projected Meridian Fire overtime is already above 114% of ongoing local coverage.
  - State of the fleet is solid and much newer. Budget amendment on file with City of Meridian to purchase a new ladder truck. ISRB rating showed ladder service needed to meet standard. Impact fee eligible and accrued.
  - Annual Awards Ceremony at West Ada School District February 27, 2025.
  - All ten current firefighters on pace to graduate.
  - Current vacation, retirement, and staffing shortages are contributing to overtime expense. Funded overtime budget is 15% less than the previous year event though adding 18 staff. 4-person staffing is in

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play at five stations most all days and all eight stations on occasion based on vacation callouts, and short staffing.

- No New Business.

Motion was made by Commissioner Ward and seconded by Commissioner Shannon to adjourn the January 13, 2025 meeting of the Meridian Rural Fire Protection District. Motion approved. The meeting was adjourned at 5:21PM MT.