

# MINUTES OF THE NORTHERN LAKES FIRE PROTECTION DISTRICT BOARD OF FIRE COMMISSIONERS

## REGULAR MEETING

April 28<sup>th</sup>, 2022 at 10:00 a.m.  
125 W. Hayden Ave., Hayden, ID

### I. Call To Order

COMMISSIONER HALPIN called meeting to order at 10:00 a.m.

COMMISSIONERS PRESENT: Commissioners Amende, Duncan, Halpin, Pearce, and Washko

OTHERS PRESENT: Fire Chief Riley, Division Chief Dill, Secretary Knapp, Amy Manning, Susan Lausen, Shane Anderson, Kaye Thornbrugh, and John Spencer.

### II. Pledge of Allegiance

COMMISSIONER HALPIN led the Pledge.

### III. Presentation

#### A. Idaho Independent Intergovernmental Authority (III-A) Trust Annual Report

Amy Manning, the III-A Executive Director, introduced Susan Lausen, the III-A Operations Manager, and then presented a copy of the 2020/2021 Plan Year Annual Report to the board. She reported on the following information contained in the report:

1. FIRE CHIEF RILEY serves on the board of trustees elected by the other fire agencies; Ms. Manning thanked CHIEF RILEY and stated that the III is glad to have him.
2. The report has a list of the III-A staff including the Director, the Operations Manager, the Wellness Manager, Benefits Specialist, and Marketing Specialist.
3. In this year's report, quotes from members were included gathered from emails, voicemails, and texts, so that everyone could see some of the appreciative comments received.
4. Staff attended five different conferences during the plan year, with 110 training hours, total hours just 5% over FT, and staff cost 1.6% of total budget.
5. During the plan year, 26 agencies went through the Trust's rating process with 18 declined. The Trust had 13 additional agencies join for a total of 83 agencies, 1,611 employees and a total of 4,810 members including dependents. Today, there are 87 agencies, 1,750 employees and 5,000 members.
6. Benefits added during the plan year included:
  - a. Medication infusion benefit program for acute forms of illness that necessitate infusions performed in a hospital. As a self-funded insurance, the Trust rents medical networks including Blue Cross of Idaho (BCI) and ProAct. The cost of medication purchased through ProAct is 1/3<sup>rd</sup> the cost of purchasing the same medication through BCI. The Trust was able to find 2 hospitals willing to administer medication purchased by the Trust which resulted in a savings of \$472,000 in its first year. The Trust will reimburse the patients' deductible and travel costs to encourage members to use this benefit.
  - b. Maternity benefit program that offers an incentive reimbursement of up to \$1,500 for deductible and co-insurance if member participates in the III-A St. Alphonsus Regional Medical Center maternity program (in Boise). The estimated savings of this program is \$444,296 with the III-A wanting to give back to its members.
7. The III-A Wellness Screenings caught two cancers last year. There are two Nurse Practitioners (Velma and Dustin) involved in both the on-site wellness screenings and

the 24/7 III-A tele-health program. While the NPs have their own clinics, someone will call back within 2 hours.

- a. There were 1,436 calls in the last plan year at no cost to members; this is an important benefit to members in rural areas especially. Ms. Manning also noted that the III-A staff is available 24/7.
8. The Trust's mental health program/EAP contracts with Dr. Steven Odom who specializes in first responder trauma. The Trust's internal EAP program has almost 200 providers with 35 certified as first responder specialists; Ms. Manning noted that more than 50% of its membership is employed by first responder agencies.
- a. The EAP's first responder 24/7 helpline handled 98 calls this plan year with 12 callers in crisis.
  - b. There were 17 member agencies that participated in the Peer Support training during the plan year.
  - c. There were 15 members referred to in-patient treatments, including 4 employees, 2 spouses, and 9 children with an average age of 18-20 years.

Ms. Manning stated that it is the III-A's goal to provide the best possible care through its mental health program.

9. Budget growth over the last three plan years increased by nearly \$11 million, with revenue 10.6% higher than budgeted due to new agency contributions.
- a. The Trust did not use any surplus during the plan year (as of 9/30/2021);
  - b. Renegotiated their contract with ProAct and saw a 142% increase in rebates;
  - c. Saw a reimbursement of \$782,500 for COVID-19 costs from the State of Idaho.
10. The Trust's IBNP (Incurred But Not Paid) Reserves set aside are \$1.6 million and monitored by the Idaho Dept. of Insurance. The Trust has 30 Certificates of Deposit (CDs) and saw 0.4%-3% interest rates.
11. Idaho's inflation trend is 8%, which is 10%-12% nationwide. Idaho's medical renewal trend for the plan year was 6.6%, with the III-A renewal rate at 1%. Ms. Manning stated that the Trust always recommends that member agencies budget a 10% renewal rate each year.
12. There were 13 high claimants (\$100,000 or more) during the plan year included in the report, with the average being 8-10 per year. Ms. Manning noted that claims for Sept. that weren't seen until Nov/Dec were not included in the report, and that the high claimants actually totaled 23 during the plan year. She stated that although the average is good overall, she is still recommending agencies' budget 10% renewal, noting that the final renewal rates will be out in June.
13. The COVID-19 costs in the report have been updated and as of 2/28/22, the Trust has spent \$2.5 million, with claims for a member who passed away the end of March following treatment for COVID will end up increasing this total to almost \$3 million.
14. The Trust will be requesting federal COVID reimbursement funds through the state's JFAC and has many advocates in the legislature that agree its first responder members have seen higher rates of exposure and illness during the pandemic.
15. The Trust has used surplus this plan year which has not affected the stability of the Trust with more than \$4 million in reserves, but will affect renewal rates. Ms. Manning stated that because self-funded plans can share more information with their member agencies, the agencies are then able to budget the anticipated costs better.

Ms. Manning asked the board if they had any questions or concerns. The board thanked Ms. Manning for the information. **COMMISSIONER PEARCE** stated that the District is lucky to be a member of the III-A and appreciates all the hard work its staff does.

#### **IV. Amend Agenda**

There were no amendments to the agenda.

#### **V. Consent Calendar**

The consent calendar was presented for review as follows:

- A. Approval of April 28<sup>th</sup>, 2022 Meeting Agenda as presented;
- B. Approval of April 14<sup>th</sup>, 2022 Regular Meeting Minutes;
- C. Approval of Unpaid and Paid Bills Lists;
- D. Review of Monthly Financial Report for March

**COMMISSIONER PEARCE** made a motion, seconded by **COMMISSIONER AMENDE** to approve the April 28<sup>th</sup>, 2022 Consent Calendar as presented.

**COMMISSIONER HALPIN** called for discussion. There was no discussion.

**COMMISSIONER HALPIN** called for the vote and all were in favor. Motion carried

#### **VI. Reports**

- A. Chiefs Report – Was presented for review. FIRE CHIEF RILEY reported on the following:
  1. Employee Injury – While on-scene investigating the cause of a structure fire on 4/26, DEPUTY FIRE MARSHAL LARSON was injured and will be off-duty until cleared by his physician.
  2. New Employees – The four recruits are in the final days of the academy and have been assigned to battalions starting on shift 5/9.
  3. Impact Fees – Will be attending meetings in Hayden and Rathdrum with both cities on track to implement collection of fees for the District. FIRE CHIEF RILEY reported that progress has been slow and hopes that the cities will have final votes sometime in June.
  4. Hayden Emergency Services Committee – Attended the first Citizens Task Force meeting for the city of Hayden along with JOHN SPENCER.
  5. Training Division – DIVISION CHIEF MATHER is working on acquiring a residential structure for a training burn in the next few weeks for the new recruits to participate. FIRE CHIEF RILEY noted that the structure was initially acquired, then plans fell through after complaints from a neighbor, but that now the plan is back on again.
  6. Prevention Bureau – Due to the increased workload the Bureau is experiencing, FIRE CHIEF RILEY reported he has taken steps to cut back some services for the time being, including no public fire extinguisher trainings and the Bureau not attending public events, other than already scheduled ones (Hayden Days and Rathdrum Days in July). FIRE CHIEF RILEY stated that he has also directed the Bureau to do plan reviews one week per month.
  7. Meeting at Kootenai County – FIRE CHIEF RILEY and FIRE MARSHAL DRECHSEL attended a board of county commissioners (BOCC) meeting on 4/19 to hear concerns from a member of the public regarding smoke around Hayden Lake. The BOCC asked the fire district, as well as representatives from the IDL and DEQ, to meet with the citizen to see what can be done. **COMMISSIONER WASHKO** clarified with FIRE CHIEF RILEY that the smoke issues are from a combination of prescribed burns, small yard waste burns, and fireplace smoke. There was

discussion on the limited authority the District has and that any changes to burning laws would have to be addressed by the state legislature.

B. Commissioner Reports

There were no commissioner reports.

VII. Public Input

JOHN SPENCER reported he attended the first City of Hayden safety committee task force meeting on 4/19, along with FIRE CHIEF RILEY. He stated that the committee of 10 members will be looking at finding funding for additional law enforcement in Hayden, as well as involving the need for more fire district personnel. **COMMISSIONER WASHKO** clarified with MR. SPENCER that the next task force meeting is scheduled for 5/3 at the city's council chambers. **COMMISSIONER HALPIN** clarified with MR. SPENCER that the Kootenai County Sheriff was also in attendance at the task force meeting.

VIII. Executive Session

**COMMISSIONER PEARCE** made a motion, seconded by **COMMISSIONER WASHKO**, to enter Executive Session pursuant to Idaho Code §74-206 (1)(a) and (1)(b) to consider hiring personnel and to consider the evaluation of personnel.

**COMMISSIONER HALPIN** called for discussion. There was no discussion.

**COMMISSIONER HALPIN** called for a roll call vote:

ROLL CALL VOTE:  
Commissioner Amende Yes  
Commissioner Duncan Yes  
Commissioner Pearce Yes  
Commissioner Washko Yes  
Commissioner Halpin Yes

Motion carried

Entered Executive Session at 10:40 a.m.

**COMMISSIONER WASHKO** made a motion, seconded by **COMMISSIONER AMENDE**, to exit Executive Session and reconvene the Regular Meeting.

**COMMISSIONER HALPIN** called for discussion. There was no discussion.

**COMMISSIONER HALPIN** called for a roll call vote:

ROLL CALL VOTE:  
Commissioner Amende Yes  
Commissioner Duncan Yes  
Commissioner Pearce Yes  
Commissioner Washko Yes  
Commissioner Halpin Yes

Motion carried

Exited Executive Session at 10:45 a.m. There was discussion on the hiring and promotion of personnel as well as discussion on evaluation of personnel. No decisions were made.

**IX. Adjournment**

There being no further business to be brought before the board, the regular meeting was adjourned upon the motion of **COMMISSIONER WASHKO** and as seconded by **COMMISSIONER PEARCE** at 10:46 a.m.

**COMMISSIONER HALPIN** called for discussion. There was no discussion.

**COMMISSIONER HALPIN** called for the vote and all were in favor. Motion carried

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
**DAVID P. HALPIN, Chairman**

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
**DENNIS L. AMENDE, Commissioner**

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
**DOUGLAS D. DUNCAN, Commissioner**

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
**MICHAEL R. PEARCE, Commissioner**

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
**JAMES C. WASHKO, Commissioner**

I certify that the foregoing is a true and correct copy of the minutes of a duly called meeting of the governing body of the Northern Lakes Fire Protection District held in accordance with all applicable legal requirements, including Idaho Open Meeting Law, on the 28<sup>th</sup> day of April 2022.

ATTEST BY:

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Valerie Knapp, District Secretary

