

Special Sheridan Town Council Meeting December 9th, 2020

Present from the Town Council was Mayor Robert Stump, Rahn Abbott, Emilie Sayler, Mike Walter, and Clerk Ginger Galiger. From the Rural Fire Board was Del Bieroth, Neil Barnosky, Max Moltich and Jeff Gerth. From the Firefighters Association was Daniel Kenworthy, Robbie Tipton, and Ted Woirhaye. Zach Thompson and Mike Dietrich with the Sheridan Volunteer Fire Department were also present.

The Town of Sheridan, the Rural Fire Board and the Fire Fighters Association came together tonight to discuss the proposed new fire station and fire department realignment. The meeting began at 7:00 p.m. Del Bieroth opened the meeting with discussion of an Interlocal Agreement document that came from the Fire Chief in Columbus MT. Columbus had a similar situation in which they combined their Rural Fire District and Town Fire Department along with a Volunteer Ambulance service into one building. The contract talks about sharing the equipment and the costs of maintaining a new building.

Mayor Robert Stump and the President of the Rural Fire Board Del Bieroth have been discussing the need of getting everyone together to have the same understanding and goals along with the challenges of building a new Fire Station. We all know that a new station and volunteer recruitment is needed and necessary. Del also expressed his appreciation to the Fire Department and the Firefighters Association. Everyone agrees that having a plan with the community on board is important in order to move forward, we need the community's support.

Dan Kenworthy is a new member of the Firefighters Association and is now getting up to speed. Dan reached out to an acquaintance that works for Martel Construction in Bozeman to get a quote for the current plan of 4 bays. They came back with a quote of \$1.9 million to \$2 million dollars from finished dirt work up. They have constructed several other buildings similar to this size. Other factors come into play such as water/ sewer and a geotechnical study. The question is, "Is this the building we want"? It may be more building than what we need right now but the Town of Sheridan is going to continue to grow. We need to look at the future and we will have to be able to secure our fire area and recruit volunteers.

Mike Dietrich agrees with Dan, we need to plan for the future and having a fresh new station may help with recruitment along with new people moving to the area.

Emilie Sayler asked, "what does the community want"? People will ask questions and we all need to be on the same page. There has always been an issue with what department owns what piece of equipment and what is going to happen to that. The people of Sheridan will feel that the equipment was "given" to the Rural Board. An Interlocal agreement will resolve the issue.

Mike Walter and Neil Barnosky both agree that nobody is going to want to see another line on their tax bill. We must be upfront with the public and joining the 2 departments through a contract may be the best way to get the community on board.

Nondi Harrington is willing to continue grant writing for the Capital Campaign to raise the money for the new building but some decisions need to be made in order for her to move forward. It was decided to form a small committee to continue moving forward on this. With the quote received from Martel and the additional costs discussed we should shoot for \$2.5 million. With cost increases this figure may go up but it is a starting point.

Councilman Mike Walter, Rural Board Member Jeff Gerth and 3 Firefighter Association Members will continue working together to keep things moving forward.

Mayor Stump adjourned the meeting for the council at 8:30 p.m.

Approved: Mayor Robert Stump

Attested: Clerk Ginger Galiger

