

**HYALITE FIRE DISTRICT BOARD OF TRUSTEES  
PUBLIC MEETING  
MINUTES**

DATE: May 23, 2016 TIME: 7:00 p.m.  
PLACE: Sourdough Fire Station, 4541 S. 3rd.  
BY: Hyalite Fire District Board of Trustees

Call to Order of Hyalite Rural Fire District by Trustee Kraft at 7:00pm  
Members Present: Wyman, Kraft, Tate, Zidack, Geddes,  
Members Absent: none

**Consent Agenda**

- Approval of Minutes

**Regular Agenda**

- 1) Discussion and Decision of 2017 Hyalite Preliminary Budget
  - a) Preliminary budget due this Thursday, May 26th.
  - b) Mill Levy for the bond is down
  - c) Trustee Kraft made a motion to approve the budget, Trustee Geddes Seconded the motion and it was passed with all Trustees in favor
    - i) All trustees must sign before they leave
- 2) Discussion on Hyalite By-Laws
  - a) Nick Shrauger went over the draft of the by-laws compiled by the public committee, highlighting some of the big changes from the by-laws that were in place for Rae/Sourdough.
    - i) There are now only 5 articles instead of 9
    - ii) Each article is also being identified with a title to go make it easier to understand.
    - iii) Conflict of Interest clause (3.3 old) 2.3 new
      - (1) Felt that there needed to be a strong arm's length of people requesting funds and those using funds
    - iv) 3.2-Meeting notices (old-Montana law) (New-elevate public notice from policy to by-law status)
      - (1) Meeting minutes being published 5 days after the meeting
      - (2) As of now, its 30 days or more, and the public are unable to know what is going on in a timely manor
      - (3) Chuck mentioned we could post a public summary so if someone missed the meeting, they could be informed about what happened
    - v) Annual Meeting Agenda ( 3.7) Intent was to make sure that the annual meeting is when the board can go ahead and meet in front of the public and discuss a state of the state message as it pertains to the discussion of current and possible future district finances, issues and concerns.
    - vi) 5.1 (new) Changes to by-laws
      - (1) By laws should not be changed every year.
      - (2) If there needs to be a change it needs to be added to the next month's agenda, then public needs to be notified and no less than the 3<sup>rd</sup> meeting or 60 days can change be made in by-laws. Changes can only be approved by vote by super committee (4 board members)
  - b) Public Comment on By-Laws presentation by Mr. Shrauger

- i) Steve White
    - (1) 2.3 (Conflict of interest) Mr. White was unsure if there was a county statute that it can't be done
    - (2) 3.3-(Quorum and proxy). Voting could be made based on information heard at meetings and a proxy may not have all the details needed to vote appropriately. Having a proxy at meetings with an ability to vote, may not satisfy Montana law.
    - (3) 3.9-(Emergency meetings) Emergency meetings are important, it is good that they can be called, however, the meeting can be called by too many people. It should be limited to the chair or trustee; not the Chief. Chief could call chair and have chair call the meeting.
  - ii) Kay Cafey
    - (1) 2.1 Authority (elected or appointed) Ms. Cafey wanted better understanding on if the board was elected or appointed.
      - (a) Trustee Wyman-Hyalite was appointed. If someone resigns, someone will be appointed until the regular election so that someone can be elected into the role.
      - (b) She felt that this was unclear and needed to be made clearer in the finalized by-laws.
        - (i) It is clarified in the Montana Code-Law
    - (2) 2.4 –In regards to audits, are they performed annually?
      - (a) Yes they are. It is done in accordance to Montana Code. The specifics are not spelled out because if Montana code changes, we would have to change the by-laws. By stating “in accordance to Montana Code, By-laws are not needed to be changed when Montana Code changes.”
        - (i) Mr. Shrauger asked if we could add the Montana code link to the by-laws
        - (ii) Mr. White added that we can add the Montana code to the minutes as well
    - (3) 3.6 At least (8) meetings, or monthly; Ms. Cafey wanted to be clearer on the meeting schedule.
      - (a) Trustee Wyman- Monthly meetings will be made, however, if there are issues that arise, or no items to discuss, meetings can be canceled. We created a rule for 8 meetings so that there are a minimum amount of meeting being held annually.
  - iii) John Hanton wanted to know where the agenda is posted before the meetings
    - (1) Trustee Kraft-Website, Facebook and posted on buildings.
    - (2) Mr. Shrauger wanted to make sure that agendas were getting to the public in a timely manner. He inquired about posting the Agenda, with the meeting notices, in the Bozeman Chronical.
      - (a) Chronicle charged Big Sky \$33 to post the full agenda. Chronicle charged Hyalite \$11 without an agenda, only the notice.
  - iv) Jess Armitage added that he felt the need to make the by-laws effective without effecting operation.
  - v) Chief Revisky-Thanked Chief Schroger for the efforts as Sourdough Chief and for the creation of the committee to create new by-laws. He asked Mr. Scroger if he would be interested in creating a publication of the history of Sourdough and that Mr. Armitage could do the same for Rae. Trustee Geddes would like to add that the board could back up the effort financially.
- c) Trustee Kraft reminded everyone that a decision on by-laws could not be made at this time, that today's meeting was about making sure that everyone understood the suggested by-laws.
    - i) Mr. White asked if a decision on the by-laws needed to wait until July 1<sup>st</sup>.
      - (1) Trustee Wyman pointed out that the Hyalite Board cannot spend money; however, can elect officers once by-laws have been voted on.
  - d) Opened it to Board for questions

- i) Trustee Kraft-
  - (1) 3.2-(Notice of meetings)
    - (a) Always adhere to meeting laws by Montana code
    - (b) To notice a meeting 5 days in advance it will be hard to set final agenda that far out due to the large amount of business that is being done.
  - (2) In regards to Minimum meeting requirements, there has never been a minimum meeting requirement in the by-laws before not sure if it is necessary now.
  - (3) 4-(Financial)
    - (a) Bank does not recognize two signer checks. We have enough checks and balances in place to make sure anything off will be caught before the signing of warrants.
    - (b) We also have annual audits to help with checks and balances.
  - (4) (Change in the by-laws)
    - (a) To Mr. Shrauger's comments, to stay in touch with the public; we have gone above and beyond to make sure that we are staying in contact with the public.
    - (b) Normally we had to change the by-laws based on the change in officers. He agrees with not making changes that frequently, but worries about taking 3 meetings to make those changes may interfere with more important business that the board needs to conduct.
- ii) Trustee Zidack asked to clarify what the current checks and balances we have in place?
  - (1) Trustee Wyman clarified the warrant signing process as it stands for Rae/Sourdough.
  - (2) Trustee Zidack had a concern with who could sign warrants.
    - (a) Having the Bookkeeper sign checks takes away from the checks and balances.
    - (b) Having a Fire Fighter sign checks would add to complexity of the checks and balances as they are not sure what they are signing.
    - (c) Does not feel there is a need for two trustee signature since we do have a good set of checks and balances in place.
- iii) Trustee Geddes-Article 4
  - (1) This is an operational mandate and we should stay away with having Operational Mandates in By-Laws.
- iv) Trustee Wyman-
  - (1) The 48 hour notice could present a challenge
    - (a) Currently Monday the agenda is put together. By Wednesday we have the agenda almost finalized. The bookkeeper will pull reports that provide a financial snapshot from Wednesday to Wednesday. By Thursday the agenda is posted on the building and on the websites.
  - (2) Strongly agrees that we should not change by-laws annually.
  - (3) Does not agree with publishing the agenda in the paper.
  - (4) In favor of 30 days to make changes to the by-laws. (brought up in one meeting, possible vote in next)
    - (a) Walt-Agrees with the approval to 2<sup>nd</sup> reading, not necessarily agree with 3 meetings to make a change.
- e) Public Comment again
  - i) Betty McCoy-in regards to finance policies, are these policies written down? If not, it should be so that when the treasurer is gone, the same policies are followed.
  - ii) Trustee Wyman explained that job descriptions are being made so that if a new board member does not agree, the policy would need to be changed with the board.

- (1) Policies are looked at annually based on the governance policy.
- iii) With the new board, is there a new entity, will Hyalite be operating the same as Sourdough? Ms. McCoy would like to see that Hyalite does better than SDF and Rae has ever done before.
  - (1) Trustee Kraft felt that the two current boards for Rae and Sourdough worked out a lot of weaknesses. Operationally Rae and Sourdough have been working together for over 15 years. Yes, we will be bringing some old with us, but we will be addressing new challenges as they come up. The entity change is not a flag for us to change, but to continue to be better as we go.
  - (2) Ms. McCoy added that the board must look at the best way to have something get done, and do it that way, Don't just continue to do the same old because it worked.
  - (3) Trustee Zidack added that if there is something you can see or suggest specifically, to please let the board know.
    - (a) Chief Revisky pointed out that as a department, we are in a constant cycle on making sure that we are always trying to refine and do better. We get better when we get the suggestions from firefighters and members of the public. We should do everything we can do to continue to be better.
- f) Steve White-Public notice of 48 hours-A meeting on a Tuesday at 7pm should be noticed by 7pm Friday
  - i) Caution on Article 4-if we have policies, then they should be adapted into bylaws so that the public has knowledge of it
  - ii) Changes-this should be a constitution. Changes to bylaws should be hard. There should be a 60 day window and changes should be made by a super board.
    - (1) Reiterated by Jon Hann, Bill Quinn and kay Cafey that the by-laws should be like a constitution and should be hard to make changes
- 3) Trustee's activities
  - a) Update on Transfer to Rae/SDF to Hyalite
    - i) Trustee Wyman sees a relatively smooth transition. We have federal tax ID, Montana State ID to follow this week.
    - ii) Budget is done, most of the transferring will be done by county treasure. Ordering of checks will be done and vendors will be called to start making changes to create Hyalite accounts. Everything will be followed by the BARS accounting system. Anything accrued in June will be paid by RAE/SDF.
- 4) Announcements
  - a) Next Joint Board Meeting is Monday June 20, 2016
- 5) Adjourn
  - a) Meeting adjourned at 8:53pm

These are draft minutes to be submitted for approval on June 20, 2016