

A regular meeting of the Rural Urban Fire Board was held at the Alma Municipal Building. The meeting was called to order at 3:00 p.m. by Alma City Manager Aeric Ripley. A quorum of the Board was present.

*Roll Call*

Board members present: Kevin Beeson, Ron Hunt, Tish Mallory, Greg Mapes, Doug Merchant, and Aeric Ripley.  
Board members absent: Daniel Wernick.  
Others present: Curtis Dancer, Harold House, Mark Williams, and Jack Snyder.

**Motion by Beeson, seconded by Hunt, to approve minutes of the October 17, 2022, meeting, as presented. Motion carried.**

**Voting yes: Beeson, Hunt, Mallory, Mapes, Merchant, and Ripley.  
Voting no: none.  
Absent: Wernick.**

*Monthly Reports*

**Motion by Beeson, seconded by Merchant, to receive the following reports: Fire Budget Actual Ending October 2022, Rescue Budget Actual Ending October 2022, Fire Board Check Disbursement Report October 2022, Rescue Check Disbursement Report October 2022, and Fire and Rescue wage scale. Motion carried.**

**Voting yes: Beeson, Hunt, Mallory, Mapes, Merchant, and Ripley.  
Voting no: none.  
Absent: Wernick.**

Beeson asked for an explanation of the Fire and Rescue Wage Scale. Ripley explained that Step 1 equates to someone with no experience. To move up on the pay scale they must pass trainings, which takes about 10 years to get to the maximum pay scale. Discussion followed.

*New Business*

Public Safety Director Williams provided an update on replacing Engine 3. The new truck would have an enclosed pump panel, extended cab with a 360-degree view, and it will hold up to six firefighters. The truck would hold up to 2000 gallons of water, which is ideal for rural fires, and it will eliminate using other trucks because of the bigger tank. This will allow them to leave the other trucks for potential calls which may come in. The new truck would also have a better turn radius, meaning the driver wouldn't need assistance. The cost of a new truck is around \$800,000, but with costs rising it could go up to \$1 million. Chief House said the cab can easily be cleaned since the pump panel will be outside of the cab, and it has filters in it for any smoke and chemical smell. All fire gear is kept outside of the cab to prevent the firefighters from inhaling any chemicals and smoke from the fire. Director Williams and Chief House both mentioned this is the desired truck and everyone will be going to this style in the future.

Director Williams said they will keep Ladder 5. Engine 4 is not used often because no one likes to drive it. Beeson asked why they are keeping Engine 4 if everyone hates it. He thinks it should be sold and put the money toward the new truck. Director Williams said no one wants the truck because it does not have a deck gun. Mapes asked if they could lock in the price. Director Williams said they will try to do that no matter who wins the bid. Mallory asked how long it will take to build. Williams told her 2-3 years.

Beeson brought up the possibility of building a second fire hall in Sumner. Hunt is concerned it wouldn't have the manpower to operate. Beeson asked where the firefighters live. Williams said there are a few who live in town and there are some who live outside of town, but none who live by Sumner. Mallory said maybe a second location would inspire others to apply for the position. Beeson said Shepherd has three locations for fire halls. Maybe they should talk to them to see how they do it. Ripley wondered how the fire hall would be built in Sumner. Mallory said they had \$300,000 from the township and \$200,000 from the county in ARPA funds. Merchant asked if there were any highschoolers who would be interested in joining the fire department. Williams mentioned Alma does have a program to get highschoolers interested.

Director Williams said they need to send the bids out soon. Beeson was wondering how much the board had to spend on a new truck because he is not ready to vote. Finance Director Curtis Dancer said they have about \$930,000 to spend on the truck. Beeson thinks it will cost \$1 million and worries about the price but understands the necessity of a new fire truck.

**Motion by Mallory, seconded by Hunt, to authorize Director Williams to send out bids to replace Engine 3. Motion carried.**

**Voting yes: Beeson, Hunt, Mallory, Mapes, Merchant, and Ripley.**  
**Voting no: none.**  
**Absent: Wernick.**

*Old Business*

Ripley stated the interlocal agreement was approved during the last meeting. Merchant still has some issues to work through before he signs it. He will discuss it at the next Arcada Township meeting. Merchant wanted to thank Ripley for attending a township meeting as he was the first city manager from Alma to attend. He would like to see an independent board. Mapes asked what the advantage would be in having an authority. Merchant said the city would hold a portion of the authority. Mapes has a problem with footing half of the bill when there would be four other communities involved. Discussion followed.

*Public Comment*

No other members of the public were present.

**Motion by Merchant, seconded by Beeson, to adjourn the meeting at 4:49 p.m. Motion carried.**

**Voting yes: Beeson, Hunt, Mallory, Mapes, Merchant, and Ripley.**  
**Voting no: none.**  
**Absent: Wernick.**

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Kim Fellows, Recording Secretary

Date of Approval: December 19, 2022