

**Rural Urban Fire Control Board  
November 7, 2019**

The special meeting of the Alma District Rural-Urban Fire Board was called to order at 7:30 a.m. by Chairman Schooley at the Alma Municipal Building.

Present: K. Beeson, Ron Hunt, T. Mallory, G. Mapes, D. Merchant, & M. Schooley.

Absent: L. Mott.

Also Present: M. Williams, H. House, K. Phillips and Terresa Frisbie, Seville Township Clerk.

Motion by Beeson, seconded by Merchant to amend the Agenda to consider a resolution to become a member of Michigan Mutual Aid Box Alarm System (MABAS) and to authorize the Alma District Rural-Urban Fire Board Chairman, Matthew Schooley to execute the agreement of behalf of the Alma District Rural-Urban Fire Board.

**Motion carried with a unanimous voice vote.**

Mark Williams, Public Safety Director reported that the Alma District Fire Department is in a desperate position regarding the current VHF radio communication system. The Wolverine tower housing the antenna used by the Department will be dismantled at the end of 2019. Many options have been considered. Due to Alma being in a topographical bowl, all the options to move the antenna still will not solve the problem of poor radio service for the District. The only way to resolve this problem is to change over to the 800 MHZ System. This system is a state-run system used by Law Enforcement, Mobile Medical Response, and Flight Care for several years. The Alma Fire District tested the new system. Six areas were tested and the APX 900 system worked in all six areas where the VHF system only worked in two areas. Due to this impending communication emergency and to enhance County-Wide communication, the Department is requesting to purchase twenty-three APX 900/800 MHZ radios in the amount of \$44,812.51.

Motion by Mapes, seconded by Merchant to approve the Budget Amendment to decrease the fund balance in the amount of \$44,812.51 to purchase 23 APX 900/800 MHZ Radios.

**Motion carried with a unanimous voice vote.**

Mark Williams, Public Safety Director presented an additional request. The Alma District Fire Department has started its own Dive/Rescue program that is in the final stages of implementation. The Department was fortunate to receive \$7,266 from the Gratiot Community Foundation for the purchase of our new dive trailer. We were also the recipients of over \$16,000 from the ABATE 10 Motorcycle Club and nearly \$2,000.00 from the Alma Elks Lodge #1400 to put toward a new three bay garage to house our new trailer and other items that will no longer fit in our fire station. We estimate that the new garage will cost us approximately \$38,000.

The Alma District Fire Department would also ask that you consider allowing the remaining expense out of the fund balance, not to exceed \$25,000. This would allow us to complete our garage building project early next spring (pending approval from the city) and allow us to have plenty of room for growth well into the future.

A discussion on the size of the garage and whether or not to have heated floors began. Williams felt the garage was the correct size for their needs and heated floors would be reviewed. Member Beeson would like the Board to approve support of the project and once the project is set for construction review the funds needed from the Fund Balance and bring that amount back to the Board for approval.

Member Beeson asked for a motion for a second amendment to the Agenda to send thank you letters to those who donated funds for the construction of the garage.

Motion by Beeson, seconded by Merchant to approve the second amendment to the Agenda to send thank you letters to those who generously donated funds for the construction of the garage.

**Motion carried with a unanimous voice vote.**

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Motion by Mapes, seconded by Beeson to support the construction of a three bay garage for the Dive Trailer and Miscellaneous equipment and to proceed with the engineering of the project.

**Motion carried with a unanimous voice vote.**

Mark Williams, Public Safety Director brought before the Board for discussion and approval on the Michigan MABAS (Mutual Aid Box Alarm System). This mutual aid system is something that we can join at no cost and something that will benefit us greatly. Breckenridge Fire, Perrinton Fire, Ithaca Fire, and the St. Louis Area Fire Department's have already passed resolutions to be a part of MABAS. Joining MABAS with our neighbors will allow us to be a part of our own Gratiot County MABAS district. The MABAS allows us to bring in resources and send resources to and from other District members. There is no cost to join MABAS and we can exit the program at anytime with no penalty. It truly is a win, win for all involved. He had information on MABAS, along with a Resolution document and the MABAS agreement for review by the Board.

Motion by Beeson, seconded by Mallory to adopt the resolution to become a member of Michigan Mutual Aid Box Alarm System (MABAS) and to authorize the Alma District Rural-Urban Fire Board Chairman, Matthew Schooley to execute the agreement of behalf of the Alma District Rural-Urban Fire Board.

**Motion carried with a unanimous voice vote.**

Chairman Schooley felt it was time for the Board to review the Bylaws. We would need regular meetings to accomplish this review. We have tried to do this in the past.

Member Mapes would like to see monthly meetings to discuss the Bylaws and then set quarterly meetings.

Member Beeson feels we need to seriously push for a County wide millage for standard operating of communications.

Member Mapes asked about exploring collaboration with Isabella County on a joint communication system.

Chairman Schooley advised that the 911 Board and Gratiot County are in talks about a millage for communications.

Member Beeson and Member Mallory excused themselves from the meeting at 8:15 a.m.

Chairman Schooley asked for a motion to set the next meeting for January 16, 2020 to discuss the 911 system.

Motion by Mapes, seconded by Merchant to set the next meeting for January 16, 2020 at 7:30 a.m.

**Motion carried with a unanimous voice vote.**

Motion by Mapes, seconded by Merchant to adjourn the meeting at 8:25 a.m.

**Motion carried with a unanimous voice vote.**

Sheila Letourneau, Recording Secretary

Approved February 26, 2020