

**Minutes of the Geary County Rural Fire Board Trustees Meeting
For December 3, 2014**

The meeting was called to order at 7:30 p.m. by Fire Board Chairman Larry Hicks.

Roll call was taken. Districts present: John Poole (Jackson – arrived at 7:35 p.m.), Oliver Schmutz (Lyon), Bob Forman (Milford), Chris Ross (Smoky Hill), Clayton Schumtz (Wingfield), Chairman Larry Hicks and Fire Chief Garry Berges. District absent: Blakely and Jefferson. Also present were assistant fire chief Curt Janke and County Extension Agent Chuck Otte.

Minutes: Minutes of the October meeting were reviewed. **Chris moved to approve the minutes as presented. The motion was seconded and passed 6 – 0.**

Fire Chief Report: Garry reported that year to date there have been 165 fires in 2014 compared to 128 in 2013. In the past two months there had been five vehicle fires. On November 5th they assisted with a burn at the new Helland Park. Due to wet conditions they were not able to complete the burn. The planned October 11th burn at Tomah Shinga camp had to be cancelled due to weather. It will be attempted in the spring. Truck 104 is at Wyse Fire Supply. It will need a new pump installed and the cost for that will be around \$25,000. Station #7 (McDowell Creek) is awaiting installation of the furnace. Once the furnace is installed the trucks will be moved. Eight to ten people showed up at the two open houses held at Stations #7 and #8. Volunteer payments for 2014 will be presented to qualifying volunteer fireman in the near future. Approximately \$5,100 will be distributed. Surplus equipment that was assembled when Fire Station #1 was cleaned up was auctioned at Purple Wave netting nearly \$1,200. Because the Fire District is a government entity, there is no auction fee. The 7% fee is paid by the buyer.

Assistant Fire Chief Report: Curt reported that the firefighter appreciation dinner was held November 8th and was attended by about 65 people. Donnie Whitebread received the first annual Rural Firefighter of the Year award. Randy Nabus, John Moyer and Travis Berges were all promoted to Captains in the Rural Fire Department. Garry and Curt reported that they had excellent support from many local businesses to put on this event.

County Extension Agent: No report.

Unfinished Business: No unfinished business.

New Business: John moved to reappoint Chuck Otte as secretary for 2015. The motion was seconded and passed 7 – 0. John moved to nominate Bob Forman to serve as Vice Chairman for 2015, that nominations cease and a unanimous ballot be cast. The motion was seconded and passed 7 – 0.

Garry reported that he and Curt had been working on a Federal Assistance to Firefighters grant application which is due on December 5th. They are requesting 38 new airpacks, 38 additional bottles and 35 facemasks. The total for these items is \$330,485 and there is a 5% local match. They are also requesting \$1,725 for a complete set of training manuals. One of the emphases with volunteer fire departments is ongoing education. Training will continue on a year round basis. It will likely be spring before we know if we received the grant.

Oliver thanked the department for holding the firefighters appreciation night. He was sorry that he wasn't able to attend due to the health of his wife.

It was asked if the open houses netted any new firefighters. Curt responded that several application forms had been picked up but none returned yet. Since April there have been twelve new firefighters across the county.

A question was asked about the promotions to captain. Was there a promotion policy? Was this a competitive application process or how was/is it handled. Curt explained that there is not a promotion policy in place but in an effort to create more organization the chief and assistant chief sat down and determined who the best options were for promotion. Curt explained that he would like to work on and develop a more organized process for future promotions.

Larry thanked everyone for not only serving on the Fire Board but also serving as volunteer firefighters.

Next meeting will be February 4, 2015.

John moved to adjourn the meeting. The motion was seconded and passed 7 – 0.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:55 p.m.

Chuck Otte, Secretary