



Fire Protection District

Protecting Lives and Property Since 1962

November 18, 2009

FFPD-186-09

Brian Maass
KCNC-TV
1044 Lincoln Street
Denver, Colorado 80203

To Mr. Maass,

We appreciate the information brought to our attention as a Board and representatives of the District. We have asked our attorney and auditors to review our policies and practices to confirm that we are in compliance with Special District legal and financial requirements. We, as a Board, stand by our Chief and the positive steps that the District has taken in these hard economic and political times. You have brought to light some areas in which we certainly can improve and will strive to make improvements now and in the future.

In order to provide a follow up to the questions you asked with regard to the receipts provided to you, and other questions that were raised in your November 13, 2009 email to me, the District responds as follows:

- 1). Mr. Corbin was not over paid by \$800.00 for the use of his trailer. The actual number of days of usage on the invoice was incorrect. The correct number was five days of usage. The dates of assignment were from June 27th through July 1st, 2008. Based on a 2008 calendar, this equates to five days. This information, as is all information related to any assignment, is public information and you may request that through the appropriate agency.
- 2). I have attached a copy of a memo that was issued to all chief officers and district employees who have credit cards that, effective 11/12/09 indicating that better documentation of all receipts is required. This is also being incorporated into our Policy Manual. Thank you for bringing this lack of detail to our attention.
- 3). The tobacco products purchased in Cody Wyoming were personally reimbursed to the District by Mr. Simmons when his reimbursement request was reconciled. The District did not nor does pay for any tobacco products.
- 4). Firefighter Matt Gold purchased some personal items; however, he personally paid for those items once the reimbursement request for the trip was fully reconciled.

- 5). The receipts for Whole Foods and Carl's Junior were for legitimate business meetings.
- 6). The receipt for Hobby Lobby were for materials used in a training class presented by Firefighter Sam Parsons that month.
- 7). The Bureau of Land Management (BLM) did pay for all materials and labor to wire their truck with response lights, sirens and radios.
- 8). Matt Gold was reprimanded for the purchase of two energy drinks (receipt dated 7/10/08 at 10:13).
- 9). The "briefcases" that you questioned were actually Engine Boss soft sided carrying cases that carry the information, forms and materials required for the proper reimbursement to the District when the Engine Bosses are deployed.

Here are answers to your previous questions.

10. Who is Megan Milan and why does she have a Fairmount Fire Protection District (FFPD) cell phone?

Megan is Chief Angell's stepdaughter and she does not have a FFPD cell phone, however she does reimburse the FFPD for her usage based upon the FFPD plan. She bought and paid for the phone herself. Receipts have been provided to you to show that she has reimbursed the District since she received her phone. As of December 31st, 2009 Megan Milan will be off the plan and the District will be fully reimbursed. The benefit to the District was a larger pool of minutes and she has paid for all of that airtime. The District is conducting a detailed review of the current cell phone policy (see paragraph 21).

11. Why has it taken so long to get provide credit card receipts?

There are thousands of receipts and it took a long time to copy them. We had just moved all boxes of past files down to Station #3 so it took additional time to go get all the receipts out of the boxes and get them copied.

12. How many credit cards does the District have and with what banks? Who has cards and why?

This information was provided to you pursuant to your first request. DeAnn provided a detailed list to Mr. Maass.

13. Clarify the relationship between FFPD and American Equities and Peak 2 Plains?

American Equities and Peak 2 Plains are consulting and training companies, as was fully disclosed to you in previous meetings along with the ownership of many businesses related to department members. Chief Angell's wife, Christy, owns American Equities. Chief Angell and Chief Olme own Peak 2 Plains. This business relationship is no different than any other relationship that FFPD has with other service vendors which all have been fully disclosed to the Board. FFPD subcontracts with many vendors that have specialized training skills, equipment and talents that we may or may not have in house. When FFPD doesn't have the people, we subcontract it. When we do have the personnel or the relationship with a company owned by our personnel and we receive a cost advantage, we use them.

14. Is Joel Hager working on fire department vehicles in exchange for his wife's cell phone? Is this being done on FFPD time or after hours?

Chief Hager's wife's cell phone was part of a benefit package offered to all top-level Chiefs in the department. As noted in paragraph 21, the District is conducting a detailed review of the current cell phone policy.

15. Were the purchases for Chief Angell's Bobcat (tires and other equipment) paid by you or the FFPD? The FFPD did not pay for Chief Angell's Bobcat, the tires or the new bucket. Lieutenant Rick Goodman had the District mount two of the new tires after one of the old tires went flat when he used the Bobcat at the training facility.

16. Relationship of Craig Corbin's Incident Command trailer?

This is no different than any of the other trailers that the District leases out and the relationship of Mr. Corbin has been fully disclosed in accordance with the applicable laws. The Board approved the lease/agreement for use of the Corbin trailer after full disclosure of Mr. Corbin's ownership. Mr. Corbin abstained from participation in the deliberations and the vote. The trailer is a specialized piece of equipment not readily available except at a substantial cost beyond what the District pays under the agreement with Mr. Corbin.

17. Explanation for Birthday and Christmas gifts?

The FFPD has provided gifts to the volunteers, retirees, Board members, FIRE Team members, District employees and even some past volunteers as a way of showing appreciation for the job they have done. These "gifts" recognize people who are and have been willing to put their lives on the line for the rest of us. All charges, invoices, or receipts are provided to the Board each meeting for review and approval.

18. Explanation for using Terrey Harrod in the process of Station #3?

Terrey Harrod is the sister of Chief Angell and a licensed Colorado Commercial Real Estate sales person. The District made no payments of any kind to Ms. Harrod. She provided services to the district as the buyer's agent, however all compensation/commissions to her were agreed to, and paid by the seller at closing per standard Colorado real estate practice. All information was fully disclosed at the Board meeting and the Board unanimously approved the motion to use the Realtor of record.

19. How are Bonuses determined?

Bonuses are included in the annual budget as part of employee compensation. The annual budget and appropriation resolution including funds for bonuses are both approved by the Board after public hearing. Each year, the Board delegates to the chief the discretion to allocate a designated amount of bonus funding among employees (not including the chief), based upon some of the following criteria: (a) initiative demonstrated by the employee in working extra hours above what they are paid for or in providing services which reduce District operating costs, (b) exceptional performance beyond the requirements of their jobs to which they are assigned.

The actual percentage paid to each employee varies from year to year. Chief Angell's bonus was not the highest percentage (of salary) paid to a district employee in 2008.

From the amount budgeted, the chief sets bonuses for personnel reporting to him. The Board sets the bonus of the chief- who reports to them. He has not been delegated authority to "set his own bonus". The Board of directors, at a meeting in January 2009, approved his most recent bonus. The chief did not participate in the deliberations relating to his bonus and, in fact, asked to be excused from that discussion. In setting his bonus, the Board took into consideration the excellent financial condition of the District, which was largely a result of the Chief's ability to generate revenue. This revenue is a result of the deployment of highly trained District firefighters and specialized equipment to wildfires across in Colorado and throughout the western U.S. These revenues from other agencies directly benefit the taxpayers of the District. The Board further considered the salaries and bonuses paid to the chiefs of comparable departments in the Denver Metro area. The Chief's salary and bonus given in 2009 (for 2008) was not at the high end.

20. The use of Town & Mountain Limousine by Chief Angell for District business.

Town & Mountain Limousine did provide travel services to FFPD on at least two different occasions. Based upon the criteria by some Federal, State and other entities that we contract with, reimbursement of personal travel expenses cannot be made to any individual. However, travel expenses incurred by the District are fully reimbursable. It proved to be financially beneficial for the District to use Town & Mountain Limousine, as it was less expensive than paying mileage and parking for two or more individuals for four or more days. If a reimbursable service is used, FFPD must pay those costs directly from our profit margin. It actually saved the taxpayers of the District money. David Padilla, a District Firefighter, owns Town & Mountain Limousine.

21. Cell Phone Use.

Based on the information generated by your questions the Board is re-evaluating the use of District cell phones and or District cell phone service plans, by District personnel and spouses or other family members. The Board does not believe any misuse of public funds resulted from the past practice of reimbursement to the District for personal use of district cell phones or the provision of services of value to the District in return for the cell time. However, in order to avoid even the appearance of any impropriety, the District is reviewing policies governing cell phone use, which have been implemented by other fire protection agencies and municipalities. As a matter of public safety it is absolutely imperative that all fire personnel be in constant contact with the District. Cell phone use for District related activities will continue on some basis, with appropriate controls to prevent private use of District subsidized cell phones or air time. Future cell phone policy will be the subject of a written policy to be considered by the Board at an upcoming meeting.

22. Alcohol purchases on District credit cards.

I believe you indicated that there were approximately 4 receipts that had alcohol purchases not to exceed two Corona's and two margarita's maximum on one. According to your own words, these purchases were sparse , and we immediately told you the purchases were for course instructors that

were not members of the District or department but did provide the FFPD a unique set of skills and talents. Please see the attached memo about credit card purchases.

Should you have any additional questions or if I missed any of your previous questions, please contact me directly.

Sincerely,

FAIRMOUNT FIRE PROTECTION DISTRICT



Craig Corbin, Board Chairman

11/18/09

CC: File

Chief Don Angell

Attachments (1)