

**NORTH GARLAND COUNTY REGIONAL WATER DISTRICT  
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Hot Springs, AR 71909  
(501) 620-4118 FAX (501) 318-0304**

**MINUTES OF BOARD OF DIRECTORS SPECIAL BOARD MEETING  
MAY 28TH, 2024  
6:00 P.M.**

**DIRECTORS PRESENT:** Jerry Vaughn, David Harper, Joe Turner, Jack Fields, Velton Lacy, Todd Graves and Eddie Livingston.

**STAFF PRESENT:** Stephen Mc Earl, Barbara Thurman

**GUESTS PRESENT:** Darrell Eckard

Meeting to Order – Director Vaughn called the Special Board meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

Adoption of the Agenda – The agenda was adopted as presented.

Approval of April 30<sup>th</sup>, 2024 Board Meeting Minutes – Director Lacy made a motion the minutes be approved as presented; seconded by Director Graves. Motion Approved

Land Agreement with the Fountain Lake Volunteer Fire Department – Director Vaughn stated it is open for discussion.

Mr. Mc Earl addressed the Board and said the reason that the special board meeting was called is because legally, Director Vaughn and Director Turner could have been allowed to be in here if they chose to during the last meeting when they were asked to step out. Director Vaughn stated since Director Turner and I were not present he would like to have a motion to resend the vote that was taken regarding land for the Fountain Lake Volunteer Fire Department.

Director Fields made a motion to resend the motion for the 99-year lease for \$1 to the Fountain Lake Volunteer Fire Department, seconded by Director Harper. Motion approved.

Director Fields stated he thinks the district should sell the land to the Fountain Lake Volunteer Fire Department and have the deed state if the Fire Department ceases to exist or if something happens the land reverts back to the district. Director Lacy asked Director Fields what's the difference between purchasing or leasing the land. Director Fields stated because you don't know what could happen in 99 years. Discussion followed. Director Vaughn stated no one knows what is going to happen to the district in 99 years and if the fire department had a deed there would be no questions. Director Lacy stated he has checked with several other fire department and their all leasing the land for their sub-stations.

Darrell Eckard was given permission to address the board. Mr. Eckard stated the entire district paid for this building and this property includes Piney, Jessieville, Mountain Pine, Walnut Valley and Buckville as well as Fountain Lake. Mr. Eckard stated it will be a board decision but he would recommend the Board lease and not sell the land to the Fountain Lake Volunteer Fire Department.

Director Harper stated his concern is the entire district purchased this land and why would the board want to sell their land. Director Haper stated this is what was brought up in the last meeting and is documented in the minutes that the land is not the Boards land to sell. Several board members spoke up and agreed that the land isn't the Boards to sell since it belongs to the entire district. Mr. Eckard stated there is already talk in the Mountain Pine area about this and is why he came to the meeting tonight.

Discussion followed. Director Turner stated he has no problem with a 99-year lease and as long as the contract is drawn up right and the fire department has the option to renew the lease at the end of 99 years. Director Fields stated the Fountain Lake Fire Department wants to have an acre and not a half-acre. Director Lacy stated he would be willing to lease an acre and but not to sell the land. Directors discussed if there was enough land there. Mr. Mc Earl stated he wants there to be a 20' buffer between the land the fire departments wants and the other land since the district might need this land at some point in the future. Director Graves asked if the Fountain Lake Volunteer Fire Department would be happy with an acre since before it went from  $\frac{1}{4}$  to  $\frac{1}{2}$  and now they are asking for 1 acre. Director Harper asked if 1 acre would be enough and Director Turner stated they would make it work.

Director Lacy asked how much this meeting has cost the district so far. Ms. Thurman stated \$750 in attorney fees plus \$1,400 in directors' fees for this meeting. Director Lacy stated he feels the fire department should reimburse the district for the attorney and directors fees for the meeting and the district shouldn't have to pay to lease land to the Fountain Lake Volunteer Fire Department. Director Vaughn disagreed because they weren't allowed to be in that meeting when it was discussed. Director Lacy disagreed and feels the fire department should reimburse the district for attorney fees as well as this board meeting tonight. That's the right thing to do. He sympathizes for the fire department but he's sitting in this chair representing the district and not the fire department. The Board has a responsibility to the water district and not the Fountain Lake Volunteer Fire Department. Directors Graves and Livingston agree. Mr. Mc Earl stated if Directors Vaughn and Turner weren't asked to leave the meeting we wouldn't be having this meeting. Director Turner stated he chose to leave the meeting. Discussion followed. The board agreed to not be paid for attending the board meeting.

The board discussed getting an attorney to draw up the agreement. Barbara stated that the district will have to have two attorney fees. One attorney to draw up the lease and another attorney that handles our 2019 bond. They will need to be involved since the land and building were paid for with funds from when we refinanced our bond and the lease will need to be reflected on our deed.

Discussion followed as to who would be responsible for all the cost to lease/sell land to the Fountain Lake Volunteer Fire Department. Discussion followed. Director Turner said he feels the Fountain Lake Volunteer Fire Department should at least pay 50%. Mr. Eckard spoke up and asked why the district should incur any cost just to lease/sell land to the Foutain Lake Fire Volunteer Department. Discussion followed. Director Vaughn stated the Fountian Lake Fire Department would pay all costs associated with North Garland County leasing or selling the land to Fountain Lake Volunteer Fire Department.

Director Lacy made a motion that the North Garland County Regional Water District lease 1 acre of land to the Fountain Lake Volunteer Fire Department for 99 years for \$1.00 and renewable at the end of the 99-year lease for \$1.00 and that all expenses incurred be the

responsibility of the Fountian Lake Volunteer Fire Department; seconded by Director Graves.  
Motion approved with Director Vaughn and Director Turner abstained from the vote.

Director Vaughn adjourned the meeting at 6:53 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



David Harper, Secretary/Treasurer

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