

Minutes of a Regular Meeting of the Board of Directors of the Verde Valley Fire District Meeting Held February 22, 2022

A Regular Meeting of the Verde Valley Fire District Board of Directors was held on February 22, 2022 at 5:00p.m. in person at Station 31, 2700 E. Godard Road, Cottonwood, Arizona and electronically (via Zoom).

Board of Directors:

Ken Bishop, Chairman
Robert Brummett, Board Clerk (via Zoom)
Donald Peck
Coleen Gilboy
Matthew Kaempfe

Staff Present:

Danny Johnson, Fire Chief
Lisa Elliott, Administrative Manager
Danny Hinds, Fire Inspector
Dustin Chambliss, Battalion Chief
Tucker Ihrman, Engineer
Ivan Anderson, Firefighter / Union VP
Spencer Young, Engineer

Others Present:

Daniel Elliott
Gary Svider
Unknown phone number (818)

CALL TO ORDER - The meeting was called to order at 5:00 p.m. by Board Chairman Bishop.

ROLL CALL – All Board Members were present; a quorum was present.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE TO THE FLAG – Those present stood and said the pledge of allegiance to the American flag.

MOMENT OF SILENCE - **A moment of silence for firefighters who have lost their lives.** A moment of silence was observed for the 21 U.S. firefighters who lost their lives in the line of duty in 2022 to date.

ORDER OF THE AGENDA - Discussion and consideration of changing the order of the agenda.

MINUTES – Discussion and consideration of the minutes of the Special Session held January 24, 2022, the Regular Meeting held January 25, 2022, and the Executive Sessions held January 25, 2022.

Board Member Gilboy made a motion to approve the minutes of the Special Session held January 24, 2022, the Regular Meeting held January 25, 2022, and the Executive Sessions held January 25, 2022. Board Member Kaempfe seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

CALL TO THE PUBLIC – None.

FINANCIAL REPORTS – Discussion and consideration of the financial report for the previous month (including ambulance billing). Administrative Manager Elliott reviewed the written financial reports noting the following:

- The District is 58% through the fiscal year.
- Total cash in the General Fund at the end of January: \$2,481,434.90.

- Decrease in cash of \$114,717 for the month of January.
- Property Tax Revenues received in January: \$230,339.86.
- Fire District Assistance Tax (FDAT) received in January: \$17,752.91.
- Total General Fund operating-only expenditures were 5.87% lower than year-to-date allocation.
- Total General Fund expenditures were 15.77% lower than the year-to-date allocation.
- Ambulance collections and call volume.
- Wildland deployment billing and revenue.

Chief Johnson reported that the District is at full staffing and that there was a small decrease in overtime in the last payroll. He stated that he met with Administrative Manager Lisa Elliott to review the budget line by line; line items were identified that will be under budget to cover the overage; these include approximately \$126,000 in the Reserve wages, \$25,000 in Administrative wages, \$10,000 in ASRS, and \$10,000 in Social Security. He stated that he firmly believes that the overage in overtime can be covered without having to do a budget revision. Staff will continue to monitor overtime bi-weekly and explained that it is projected to reach \$400,000 by year end.

Board Member Peck made a motion to approve the Financial Report. Board Member Kaempfe seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

REPORTS AND CORRESPONDENCE

CHAIRPERSON'S REPORT – A report from the Chairperson on their recent activities for the District.
None

BOARD MEMBER REPORTS – Reports from members of the Board on their recent activities for the District.
None

UNION REPORT – A report from the District representative of the Sedona-Verde Valley Firefighters Association on current events and activities for the past month.

Vice President Ivan Anderson thanked Board Member Matthew Kaempfe for serving on the Board.

He reported that the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) is still being worked on and that the Policy Committee meeting with the Board is still being scheduled.

He stated that the Arizona Fire District Safety Act and signature drive has been introduced by the Local President, David Rodriguez. The goal is to obtain 300,000 signatures to get the item on the ballot; Union members will be helping to gather signatures for the ballot in November.

FIRE INSPECTOR REPORT – A report from the Fire Inspector, discussion and possible action regarding current events and activities, including: Public education, fire prevention, meetings and events attended, training, permits issued and closed, and inspections.

Fire Inspector Hinds stated that the Plateau project is moving forward:

FIRE CHIEF REPORT – A report from the Fire Chief, discussion and possible action regarding current events and his recent activities, including: National Line of Duty Firefighter deaths; meetings and events attended; incident calls; grants update; human resource policy updates; hiring processes; facility repairs; information technology and communication network issues and concerns; de-annexation issues; out-of-District billing process; cell tower; Clarkdale property; COVID funding; AFDA updates; and other potential updates.

Chief Johnson reported on items from his report including:

- Was a guest on the No Grey Areas podcast for leading through loss.
- Met with Senator Payne at the AZ State Capital to discuss the house bill HC2004.

- New hire on-boarding for three (3) new Firefighters that started on February 1, 2022.
- Attended the Arizona Fire Chief Executive Officer Program.
- Subcommittee meeting at the Arizona State Capital for HC2004 for District funding; the bill was held in committee.
- Insurance Services Office (ISO) site visit.
- Engineer's testing process.
- Shared services discussions with Copper Canyon Fire & Medical District Fire Chief, Terry Keller.
- Administrative Specialist testing process.
- LPV 5.52% increase for FY2022/2023.
- New ambulance has been received; waiting for equipment outfitting and Arizona Department of Health Services inspection.
- Website update.
- De-annexation issue with Sawmill Gardens - received another letter from resident requesting back taxes; has been turned over to legal for review and process interpretation.
- Out-of-District Billing – The Cement Plant has reviewed the list of out-of-District response, Staff is validating and providing additional information as needed. Some fires were started at the railroad; Chief Johnson is working to get a meeting with the railroad to discuss billing.
- Vision and Values – has been working with Staff to develop District values. Will be used to evaluate decisions as well as how we bring individuals into the organization and evaluate them. The vision statement was developed by leadership. He asked crews to look at the current mission statement to evaluate whether or not it matches the vision and values.
- AFDA Updates
 - HCR2004 was held in subcommittee. Pursuing a signature initiative to get it on the ballot for the November 2022 general election.
 - H2609 passed out of committee.
 - Fire District Workers Compensation Risk Pool – seeking ARPA funding distribution from the Governor's Office in the FY23 budget reconciliation bill process.
 - COVID reimbursement through Yavapai County – information has been received from most agencies. Will compile the information to present to the County Supervisors for funding request.

OLD BUSINESS - None

NEW BUSINESS

RESOLUTION 2022-02 – Discussion and possible adoption of Resolution 2022-02 amending the boundaries of Verde Valley Fire District by adding parcel number 406-17-009 located at 3170 S Quail Run, Cottonwood, Arizona.

Board Member Gilboy made a motion to adopt Resolution 2022-02 amending the boundaries of Verde Valley Fire District by adding parcel number 406-17-009 located at 3170 S Quail Run, Cottonwood, Arizona. Board Member Kaempfe seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

RESOLUTION 2022-03 – Discussion and possible adoption of Resolution 2022-03 amending the boundaries of Verde Valley Fire District by removing parcel number 406-15-466F located at 840 E House Mountain Drive, Cottonwood, Arizona.

Chief Johnson gave the background on the de-annexation request stating that the residents had been working with the prior Fire Chief to get legal information on how to de-annex. This information was paid for by the District and provided to the resident by the prior Fire Chief.

He stated that the de-annexation will cause a decrease in the property tax revenues and could create the potential for others to seek de-annexation as well.

He stated that he tried to contact the resident to inform them about the item being on the Board agenda however, the number was no longer active.

Chief Johnson stated that he recommends that the Board not approve the de-annexation as it is in an area where the District is trying to pursue annexation and bill for out-of-District responses.

Board Member Kaempfe asked if there were any implications that, if this parcel was de-annexed, if it would create an island. Chief Johnson stated that it would create an island which is prohibited.

Board Member Gilboy does not feel that the legal information is current and would like to table the item until we are able to get a better idea of what we are doing. Board Chairman Bishop stated that he doesn't want to set a precedent. Chief Johnson stated that the Board can give direction to obtain another legal opinion and do more research on what other Districts do before a decision is made. Board Member Gilboy stated that she would like a legal standing to make sure the District is in the right position and would like Staff to follow up with the resident to inform them that the District needs to get additional information.

No action taken.

RESOLUTION 2022-04 – Discussion and possible adoption of Resolution 2022-04 approving the Intergovernmental Agreement with Yavapai County for election services.

Chief Johnson stated that this Intergovernmental Agreement (IGA) is to update the Election Services IGA with Yavapai County; the IGA has to be approved to use the County's election services. He stated that it has been reviewed by legal.

Board Member Gilboy made a motion to adopt Resolution 2022-04 approving the Intergovernmental Agreement with Yavapai County for election services. Board Member Peck seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

FIRE CHIEF EVALUATION PROCESS – Discussion and possible direction to Staff regarding an evaluation process for the Fire Chief.

Chief Johnson stated that Staff has requested 360 evaluation information from other agencies as well as human resource professionals; there are none being used. He reviewed the list of Fire Chief Evaluation Criteria included in the packet and stated that, if the Board likes the criteria, it can be formatted into the District's current form and obtain Staff input on the Chief's evaluation.

Chairman Bishop stated that he would like Staff input on the Fire Chief; he would like the Battalion Chiefs to get feedback from their crews to complete the form and have the Administrative Manager complete a review as well.

Board Member Kaempfe would like to give the form to everyone and use those that are submitted. Board Clerk Brummett feels that it is a lot of extra stuff that will be very time consuming and have a lot of filters before it gets to the Board.

Battalion Chief Chambliss stated that the past procedure involved Captains created the evaluation with their crews and submitting these forms to their Battalion Chief. The Battalion Chief created their own evaluation and submitted all copies to the Administrative Manager to forward to the Board.

Board Member Gilboy stated that this year, the Board should do the evaluation and then develop the process for next year as this is too rushed. Board Member Peck stated that the Board needs to get Staff's opinions and feels that the Battalion Chiefs could gather that. Board Member Kaempfe stated that he likes the process that

Battalion Chief Chambliss reviewed. Board Member Gilboy recommended a Google document or Survey Monkey that would require Staff to own their comments.

Board Member Kaempfe stated that he would like to have Staff to use the form in the format described by Battalion Chief Chambliss and have all compiled and ready to discuss at the March Board Meeting and could schedule a Special Executive Session for the Chief's annual review and contract. He stated that all comments would need to be submitted by March 15th for the Board packets. He suggested looking at Survey Monkey to see if we can require Staff to enter their names.

Chief Johnson explained that use of the benchmarks listed under each category would be used to validate and justify the responses to the categories; they would have to justify their responses. He stated that the form that is currently used by Staff is a fillable PDF form. The leadership criteria listed for the Chief is not in the current form for Staff.

Board Clerk Brummett feels that it is a lot of information that is being rushed. Board Member Gilboy stated that she feels that the Board could do the evaluation for this year, without Staff input due to timing, and then get Staff input for future years. Board Member Peck stated that the problem is that the Board only sees one side. Board Chairman Bishop would like feedback from BCs and crews and would like the Chief to do a self-evaluation.

Chief Johnson stated that Staff will work on it having the evaluation form out by the end of next week.

Board Member Kaempfe made a motion to direct Staff to create the evaluation in Survey Monkey, give Staff one (1) week for completion, require names attached, use a scale of one (1) to five (5), and allow Survey Monkey to make the compilation; Board Members are required to complete the evaluation as well. The Board will discuss the Fire Chief's evaluation at the March 22, 2022 Board Meeting in Executive Session. Board Member Gilboy seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

UTV PURCHASE – Discussion and possible approval of the purchase of the grant funded UTV and related expenditures and approval of additional unbudgeted funds from the Wildland Fund.

Engineer Tucker Ihrman discussed the UTV purchase with the Board. He passed out additional bids that were received after the Board packets were created. He explained that the Committee was requesting that the Board approve purchasing either a Can Am or a Polaris based on what they can find in stock as supply is difficult. He explained the use of the additional funds from the Wildland Fund to outfit the UTV to be ready to use on wildland assignments as well as in-District responses. The Committee also discussed getting a fully enclosed unit to use in monsoons, various weather, etc. He explained the various UTV models that the Committee has looked at.

Board Member Gilboy asked if the bids were from State contract. Engineer Ihrman stated that the Committee was not able to obtain quotes from State Contract; the Committee has not been able to get other quotes as supplies are short. Discussion on Purchasing Policy requirements and the Board's ability to waive the formal bid process due to purchasing issues being encountered and the grant deadline.

Board Member Gilboy made a motion to approve the purchase of the UTV and related expenditures using the Gila River Indian Community grant and additional funds from the Wildland Fund with the understanding that it is outside the Purchasing Policy requirements. Board Member Peck seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

BOARD MEMBER RESIGNATION – Discussion and possible acceptance of the resignation of Matthew Kaempfe from the Board of Directors effective February 23, 2022 and direction to staff.

Chief Johnson stated that Board Member Kaempfe submitted his letter of resignation from the Board of Directors effective February 23, 2022. He explained that the Board has ninety (90) days to fill the vacancy. Staff will bring the information to the next Board meeting regarding the process to fill the vacancy.

Board Member Gilboy made a motion to accept the resignation of Matthew Kaempfe from the Board of Directors effective February 23, 2022 and direct Staff as discussed. Board Member Peck seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS – A listing of items to be placed on a future agenda.

- Fire Chief Evaluation
- De-Annexation
- Board Vacancy

ADJOURNMENT. With no further business before the Board, the meeting adjourned at 6:28 p.m.

Submitted By:

Approved:

Lisa Elliott, Administrative Manager

Ken Bishop, Board Chairman

Attest:

Robert Brummett, Board Clerk

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