

**Minutes of a Regular Meeting of the Board of Directors of the Verde Valley Fire District Held
February 27, 2024**

A Regular Meeting of the Verde Valley Fire District Board of Directors was held on February 27, 2024, at 5:00 p.m. in person at Station 32, 1120 S Page Springs Road, Cornville, Arizona and electronically (via Zoom).

Board of Directors:

Donald Peck, Chairman
Coleen Gilboy, Board Clerk
Kenneth Bishop
Robert Brummett
Timothy Bishop (absent)

Staff Present:

Danny Johnson, Fire Chief
Lisa Elliott, Administrative Manager
Ashley Hammond, Administrative Specialist
Richard Lopez, Fire Inspector
Cody Harkey, Battalion Chief
Philip Graham, Captain (via Zoom)
Jacob Marx, Firefighter / Union VP Local 3690 (via Zoom)

Spencer Young, Engineer (via Zoom)
Matthew Chavez, Firefighter (via Zoom)
Jonathan Pizzi, Engineer (via Zoom)
Scott Mattix, Firefighter (via Zoom)
Justin Sandoval, Engineer (via Zoom)
Seth Murphy, Captain (via Zoom)

Others Present:

Andy Cockell, Maverick Towers LLC (via Zoom)
Shelly Mathisen, Maverick Towers LLC (via Zoom)
Nicolas Cornelius, District Attorney (via Zoom)
Karen (via Zoom)
Tom Looper
Rosanne Looper
Ashley McClure
Emma Olson
Joan Robertson
Brian Anthony
Dean Kaliakmanis
Craig Clark
Gillian Goslinga
Jamie Burrus
Kevin Wheeler
Johnny Lacy
Lori Starropowkes
Tanya Hughes
Lori Murray
Naomi Martnick

Brett Forrest Shenkman
Kathryn Henes
Mark Henes
Leila Kamunen
Judy Collins
Summer Eglund
Jim Collins
Jacquie Robinson
Vito Stariuskan, Verde Independent
Tony Utz
Jenny Croft
Brooke Miller
Maverick Towers LLC Representative
Cathy Seginski
Greg Howell
Steve Thursby
Catherine Seginski
Judy Collins
Janet Miller
Others who did not sign in

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

ROLL CALL – Board Member T Bishop was absent; a quorum was present.

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

Board Member K Bishop made a motion to move item 10. A, Cell Tower, to next on the Agenda. Board Member Peck seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE TO THE FLAG – Those present stood and recited 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 8 U.S. firefighters who lost their lives in the line of duty in 2024 to date.

MINUTES – Discussion and consideration of the minutes of the Regular Session held on January 23, 2024.
Board Clerk Gilboy made a motion to approve the minutes of the Regular Session held on January 23, 2024. Board Member Brummett seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

CALL THE PUBLIC

Board Chairman Peck stated those wishing to address the Verde Valley Fire District Board will be limited to a three (3) minute oral presentation. The Board is not permitted to take action on any comment raised in the call to the public, due to the Open Meeting Law restrictions, the Board may direct the Staff to review the matter or possibly place the item on a future agenda. Board Chairman Peck noted that comments from the public will not be permitted during any agenda item discussion during the Regular Board meeting, stating that the Call to the Public will be the only time for oral presentations.

A public resident asked if there would be a presentation regarding the proposed cell tower before the public comments.

Board Member K Bishop suggested a presentation of the proposed cell tower before public comments.

Board Chairman Peck directed Chief Johnson to give a presentation of the proposed cell tower.

Chief Johnson stated that Verde Valley Fire District has been in dialogue and looking at options for public safety communications. He stated that communications in Cornville, Arizona are very poor and weak. He stated that poor communications cause the District's radios to not perform how they should, residents are unable to call 911 and many 911 calls are dropped. Chief Johnson explained over the past couple of years there have been several significant calls that included a wildland fire, swift water call that involved five (5) residents, and an active shooter. He stated that on all those calls communications were a struggle not only for Verde Valley Fire District but also Yavapai County Sheriff's Office.

Chief Johnson stated that Verde Valley Fire District was awarded a grant from 3AM, that allows the District to keep track of our resources and firefighters working a scene it requires cell phone and data coverage. He stated the poor and weak communication coverage is a major obstacle that affects keeping the public and Verde Valley Fire District personnel safe.

Chief Johnson stated that Verde Valley Fire District has been looking at options to improve and upgrade the District's communication infrastructure through Cottonwood Dispatch, improving the VHF antennas, and microwave lengths that help stabilize the District's communications.

Chief Johnson commented that cell towers are very expensive, and the District was looking at options to help offset the cost of a cell tower. He stated that collocating a cell tower would be most cost effective and it would allow the District to install our public safety communications on it with the option for cell carries to add to the tower as well, improving communications.

Chief Johnson stated that Verde Valley Fire District has been doing research, talking with the District's attorney to see what the District is allowed to do and what the best practices would be.

Chief Johnson stated that before the District decides on the proposed cell tower, they would like input and feedback from the residents of Cornville.

Board Chairman Peck opened Agenda Item 10. A, Cell Tower, for public comments.

Leila Kamunen stated she understands the need for telecommunications, but after looking at studies by 5G, the detriment of health far out ways any communication benefits. She encouraged everyone to view stopthecrime.net that gives a list of symptoms that are known to be caused by 5G. She stated that there at two (2) international websites the provide research and information on radio frequency, and to date neither company have research to show that 5G is healthy or safe.

Ashley McClure stated that she moved to Cornville, Arizona from Chandler, Arizona for many reasons four (4) years ago. She stated that one (1) of the main reasons she moved was because Chandler was installing 5G cell towers not only in the downtown business centers but also at the local schools and major intersections in neighborhoods resulting in one hundred and fifty (150) applications for four hundred and seventy-four (474) wireless health communication facilities within the ZIP code of 85225. She stated that after learning this information there was a neighborhood meeting and they appealed to the Chandler City Counsel, the City of Chandler did not cooperate and could not afford to lose millions of dollars from the federal government. She stated hearing that the same companies are looking to gain, but in our small unincorporated town, I ask you to consider the health of the men and women who are working in this building under management, and those businesses and homes to not subject your body to additional radiation put out by cell towers. It is not in your interest or mine to subject yourself to high amounts or even an increased amount of radiation. She stated that she will not visit these businesses any longer if a cell tower goes up. Ashley commented that the first responders in every community depend upon their strength rate and clear, quick thinking to protect lives and properties. She referenced a neurological study of six (6) firefighters that was commissioned by the International Association of Firefighters by a doctor in 2004 to determine if there was any evidence of brain dysfunction in those exposed for long periods of time. She stated the symptoms of those exposed included slow reaction time, lack of focus, lack of impulse control, severe headaches, anesthesia, sleep deprivation, depressions, immunosuppression, infertility, and tremors. She stated that these firefighters whose stations have adjacent cell towers were found to have forgotten CPR.

Joan Robertson stated that she has lived in the Verde Valley for forty-five (45) years. She stated that her husband was a highway patrolman, and she was a nurse at the hospital. She stated while working in the hospital she was around radio frequency and that it is now the cutting edge of cautery in the operating room, and that it is not unsafe. She is worried that we are handicapping the fire district by not having good communications. She referenced if a winery bus tour was to be in rollover accident near Page Springs, it could be life threatening not having service to call for emergency services. She commented that Cornville is experiencing more traffic, and more car accidents. She asked the public to think open mindedly about the proposed cell tower.

Brian Anthony stated as a lifelong resident of Cornville, like many of you here, I'm in favor of preserving the rural attribute, not having a one hundred (100) foot communications tower at the entrance of the dedicated scenic highway that was dedicated in 2009. He stated that he is part of the generation that is far too dependent on technology and that reception is always hit or miss. However, his morning commutes to Sedona, anytime that he needed to contact emergency services he has been able to do so. He stated the struggle with reception issues in the northern end of Page Springs Road would not be served by this tower. He asked Cornville residents to question the true motives behind this tower and placement.

Dean Kaliakmanis stated that he experienced a situation last year where his friend was stung by a wasp and went into anaphylaxis shock. He stated that he could not keep a signal while calling 911 and had to load his friend into his

vehicle and drive until he had service to get medical emergency services. He asked those opposed to the proposed cell tower, if one (1) of their family members experienced cardiac arrest, was unable to call 911 due to poor communications and passed away, would you still feel opposed. He asked that everyone be open-minded and give consideration for our well-being.

Craig Clark stated that the public is uninformed about the proposed cell tower with a lot of unanswered questions. He asked how much coverage the proposed cell tower will provide, and which areas it will cover. He asked if this proposed cell tower is optional, what other options are available to improve communications, before deciding on the proposed cell tower.

Gillian Goslinga stated that she appreciates the service Verde Valley Fire District provides. She asked if the District has considered satellite phones, she stated there are satellite phones that service everywhere, and is a healthier communication option. She asked if the District has seen a RF propagation map that shows the coverage the proposed cell tower will provide. She submitted the federal level criteria of an RF propagation map. She stated that the current SCC regulatory guidelines for exposure to radiation dates to 1996, implies thermal effects on skin of six (6) foot tall human beings. She stated a cell tower outside the station will cause the firefighters to thermal skin exposures. She stated every tower is a federal action under the Telecommunications Act of 1996 which means you must abide by federal rules. She stated that this proposed cell tower will threaten endangered species in Cornville, Arizona.

Brett Forrest Shenkman stated that he has had the privilege to live in Cornville and provide health services to many Cornville residents for the past three (3) years. He stated that he stands before the Board as a concerned community member, a community he loves and cherishes, a community he believes has a bright future. He stated as a licensed naturopath medical doctor he is uniquely qualified and responsible for safeguarding the well-being of the Cornville Community. He stated that he has extensive training in both conventional and holistic medicine. He is uniquely qualified to validate claims made for and against products and technologies that impact the well-being of people and nature in this community. He stated that the American public has been dangerously misinformed by industrial, political, news media and public health narratives that lead those to think these technologies are safe and important. 5G microwave technology towers dramatically increase a relative new category of environmental toxicity called electric smoke. This environmental toxicity disrupts natural cellular communication systems. He stated that the risk of a new 5G tower outweighs the potential benefits and would be unethical to allow it.

Summer Eglund stated that she is in the process of building a home in Cornville. She said she moved to Cornville in 2018 to get away from radiation. She stated that there is a rise in disability amongst people who have been exposed to radiation. She stated that she wanted to find a place where she could just be without radiation. She stated that she knows it is inconvenient when a call will not get through, or must wear silver lined clothing to protect yourself with cell phone just to go out in public. She stated there are a lot of electromagnetic sensitive and disabled people in the community. She stated that her meter showed that the room reading was low for radiation. She stated that she had more questions, how tall is the tower going to be, is this new construction, what is going to be provided, is internet going to be provided through the tower, and who is Maverick Towers LLC.

Judy Collins stated that before she came to Arizona she lived in Idaho. She stated at her home in Idaho they had a fire tower and cell tower near her home and were fine. She stated that she is a nurse and appreciates all that the fire service does and provides. She expressed how important it is to reach medical emergency services when needed and how badly Cornville needs better communication services.

Tanya Hughes stated that she lives off Loy Road in Cornville and has no communication coverage at all. She stated that she has a booster in her home that provided WIFI. She stated that she has come across accidents and has no service to call 911. She stated that she has experienced someone suffer from cardiac arrest and have emergency service show up in three (3) minutes, and that is not going to happen in Cornville. She stated that communication services are so important in saving lives. She stated communication outweighs the radiation risk.

Catherine Seginski stated that she lives on Loy Road and has been a weekend resident in Cornville since she was nine (9) years old. She stated she runs the Cornville Farmer's Market, and wished they had signal down at the market so they could except EBT and credit cards. She asked the areas the proposed cell tower would cover, she stated that she does not want to see a tower out of her bedroom window. She stated that there must be other technologies, walkie talkies or satellite phones that could improve communications.

Tom Looper stated that he is uncomfortable with the technology because it is not proven to be safe, and once you put up a tower and do not have a reception another tower goes up. He stated that he is against the tower and believes the public is only getting one (1) option is because it is funded by the government.

Mark Henes asked who is going to pay for the proposed cell tower, and if the government is going to are they going to tax the residents for it. He asked if the proposed cell tower could go on the white hills out of town. He stated that he has a friend who has a PHD in radiological antenna who worked for Boeing. He stated that his friend's name is Charlie Croft, and his phone number is 928-642-0355.

Board Chairman Peck closed Public Comments at 5:45 p.m.

Cell Tower – Discussion and possible approval of the Option and Ground Lease Agreement with Maverick Towers LLC for the cell tower at Station 32 in Cornville; the Board may vote to go into Executive Session for legal advice pursuant to A.R.S. § 38-631.03 A.3 for discussion or consultation for legal advice with the attorney or attorneys of the public body.

Chief Johnson stated that the District does have a tentative contract the Board can review that has had legal review. Chief Johnson answered a few questions from Public Comments which included, the tower is new construction, the tower would go on the back corner of Station 32, the District does have legal authority to enter contracts and stated that we do not know what providers would go on the tower. Chief Johnson stated that Maverick Tower LLC would pay for the tower and would rent the space from Verde Valley Fire District. He stated per the agreement Maverick Towers LLC would relocate the District's radio infrastructure to the tower at no cost.

Board Clerk Gilboy asked if we knew how tall the tower would be. Chief Johnson stated that the tower would be one hundred (100) feet tall.

Board Member K Bishop asked if the tower would affect the cost of property taxes. Chief Johnson stated no.

Gillian Goslinga stated that Chief Johnson did not state all information prior to the Public Comment period, creating the situation that the public cannot comment on new information. She stated she understands the need of a tower to amplify radio service for public safety but collocating wireless providers only amplifies power wattage and radio frequency. She asked how Verde Valley Fire District has legal authority to add to a tower intended to improve their safety communications.

Board Chairman stated that Public Comments have been closed.

Gillian Goslinga stated that she would follow up with an email.

Chief Johnson asked Nicolas Cornelius, District Attorney, the legal authority for a district to enter into a cell phone tower agreement. Nicolas Cornelius stated that the District may enter into a contract of this type under Arizona State Revised Statues Title 48, which provides the agency its authorized to enter into agreements with private providers or Intergovernmental Agreements (IGA) with other governmental entities. He stated that the proposed cell tower will be paid for by the company installing the agreement, Maverick Towers LLC.

Nicholas Cornelius stated that questions asked by the public outside of Call to the Public are not appropriate. He stated there is no other provision for that under the Arizona State Revised Statutes. Call to the Public is an opportunity for the members of the public to direct questions to the Board. He stated that the Board can instruct staff to conduct additional research if the Board deems that necessary.

Nicholas Cornelius suggested that the Board suggest specific questions.

Nicholas Cornelius stated that the proposed cell tower does provide additional revenue and an additional no fee improved radio communications for the District.

Chief Johnson thanked Nicholas Cornelius for his input and suggested to the Board that we should not take action on this Agenda item. He suggested that we do more research and have more conversations with the public.

Board Member Brummett agreed with Chief Johnson.

Board Clerk Gilboy stated that she would like to have another community meeting, more information of the coverage the proposed cell tower will provide, and the options that could provide better communications.

Andy Cockell, Maverick Towers LLC stated he is available to answer questions as well as the radio engineer in the audience. Chief Johnson stated that we are not going to open back up Public Comments but appreciates them listening to help answer future questions.

Nicholas Cornelius suggested that at the next meeting Maverick Towers LLC present a presentation to the public.

Board Member K Bishop made a motion to direct staff to complete more research on the proposed cell tower, and hold public meeting with Maverick Towers LLC present for a presentation. Board Member Brummett seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

The Board took a recess at 6:09 p.m.

The Board resumed Regular session at 6:14 p.m.

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

- The District is 58% through the fiscal year.
- Bank Reconciliation Summary Report
 - Summary of all transactions throughout the month.
 - VVFD General Fun December 2023 bank statement error.
 - Administrative Manager Lisa Elliott stated that the District's January bank statement did not match the ending balance on December's bank statement. She stated that she contacted the County, and they sent the corrected December bank statement. Chief Johnson commented on the detail and excellent work Administrative Manager Lisa Elliott demonstrates with the finances.
 - National Bank service fee.
 - Administrative Manager Lisa Elliott stated that Board Clerk Gilboy had asked about the National Bank Service fee at a prior Board meeting. She stated that she contacted National Bank, and our account was not classified correctly. She stated that they have corrected our classification, and it should decrease our monthly service fee to about \$60.00 a month.

- Total cash in the General Fund is \$3,460,632.23 (does not include the PSPRS COP Contingency Reserve Fund.)
- Decrease in cash of \$807,671 for the month of January.
- Positive cash flow of \$670,732 for the fiscal year.
- Cash flows show that they are adequate to fund the fiscal year's operations.
- FY2023-2024 Property Tax Revenues received: \$238,827.08.
- Fire District Assistance Tax (FDAT) Revenues received: \$17,842.57.
- The following account explanations are for items occurring within the month of January 2024:
 - Page 1 Account 01-431000 Fire Protection Service Agreements – Second ½ of Yavapai Apache Nation Agreement.
 - Page 1 Account 01-5000-501000 Fire Chief – Includes unbudgeted JMA stipends.
 - Page 3 Account 01-6100-612004 IT Services – Recoding of Sunstate Technology Group agreement pursuant to GASB Subscription Based Information Technology Arrangements (SBITA) requirements.
 - Page 10 Account 01-8000-891000 Principal Payments and 01-8000-892000 Interest Payments – Recoding of Sunstate Technology Group agreement pursuant to GASB Subscription Based Information Technology Arrangements (SBITA) requirements.
 - Page 10 Account 01-9000-920000 Op Transfers Out – Capital Fund – FY2023-2024 budgeted transfer to the Capital Fund.
 - Page 10 Account 01-9000-940000 Op Transfers Out – Employee Benefit Fund – FY2023-2024 budgeted transfer to the Employee Benefits Liability Fund.
 - Page 11 Account 02-8000-854100 Firefighting Equipment – Battery-operated vent fans.
 - Page 11 Account 02-8000-854600 TRT Equipment – Rope rescue equipment.
 - Page 11 Account 02-8000-8840001 Radio Infrastructure – Communications infrastructure equipment.
- Total operating-only expenditures are 7.59% lower than the year-to-date allocation.
- Total General Fund expenditures are 6.61% lower than the year-to-date allocation.
- The District has collected \$4,245,184.01 (64.63%) of the FY2023-2024 budgeted Property Tax Revenues.
- Ambulance cash collections of \$78,770.79 and 130 billable calls in the month. Increase of ten (10) calls from December 2024 and a year-to-date decrease of eighty-three (83) calls compared to the same timeframe in FY2022-2023. Cash collections have increased by \$38,667 compared to the same timeframe in FY2022-2023.
- Total Ambulance Billing Receivables were \$645,118.81, an increase of \$13,252.99 from the prior month.
- Crews have been deployed on six (6) assignments in FY2023-2024 to date.
 - The invoices have been submitted and payment has been received on all six (6) assignments.

Board Clerk Gilboy made a motion to approve the Financial Report. Board Member K Bishop 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.

Board Clerk Gilboy thanked the crew that transported her mother in December. She stated that they provided excellent service, and she appreciated them.

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

Union Vice President Marx stated there was no significant information to report for the month.

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, significant projects, and inspections.

Fire Inspector Lopez presented the monthly statistics:

New Permits: 6
 Complaints: 1 – Referred to the County
 General and Final Inspections: 13
 General correspondence including site visits, emails, phone calls and letters: 25+
 Plan Reviews: 2
 Preliminary Code Reviews: 2
 Car Seats: 12

Fire Inspector Lopez stated he attended the Fire Inspector International Code Counsel (ICC) class in Bullhead City and obtained his ICC Fire Inspector 1. He stated that he will take the test for ICC Fire Inspector 2 tomorrow. He stated that he assisted Copper Canyon Fire and Medical District with a fire investigation. Fire Inspector Lopez stated that Station 31 crews had a PE class with Mountain View Elementary School and delivered flowers to residents at Gracious Granny's for Valentine's Day.

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; human resource updates; finance and grant updates; special projects/other updates; wildland assignments and mutual aid; out-of-District calls; County and State updates; AFDA updates; and other potential updates.

Chief Johnson reported on items from his report including:

- Meetings Attended
 - AFDA Board of Directors Meeting
 - Wildfire Mitigation & Management Commission Briefing
 - Chief Johnson stated that he got to sit in a wildfire mitigation management commission briefing. He stated that the National Fire Service completed a burning study a few years ago and studying how fires spread. He stated that wildfires are a problem, and the National Fire Service is going to conduct another study on wild fires and forest management.
 - Joint Statement Final Review AFCA / AFDA / PFFA
 - Verde Valley Fire EMS Chiefs Meeting
 - AFSI
 - AFG Grant Meeting
 - PFFA Health Trust Meeting
 - ISO Retrogression Call
 - CEOP Executive Panel
 - VVFD A-Shift Station Visits
 - CCFMD Benefits Discussion
 - DFFM Conference Call
 - Meeting with Start Moving On (Mental Health)
 - Securis Board Meeting
 - CCFMD Board Meeting

- CCFMD Labor/Management Retreat
- VVFD/CCFMD Wildland Meeting for the upcoming season
- CCFMA Captain Academy Executive Panel
- VVFD Board Meeting
- VVFD B-Shift Station Visits
- Human Resources
 - Engineer's testing process took place February 20-21, 2024. The list has been posted and will be good for two (2) years. Chief Johnson stated that all participants passed, and it was a extremely competitive testing process.
- Finance / Grants
 - The DFFM grant was submitted for a tactical tender. Application reviews will begin the first week of March.
 - The District's NAV was provided by the Yavapai County Assessor's office and the District increased 6.69%.
 - Chief Johnson stated that new home construction was the drive for the NAV to exceed the 5% cap.
 - Verde Valley Fire District received the Distinguished Budget Presentation Award.
 - Chief Johnson stated that the District has received the Distinguished Budget Presentation Award for the second year in a row. He stated that Administrative Manager Lisa Elliott is a huge asset to the District and thanked her for all her dedication.
 - The budget process and MOU negotiation have begun. We are having an internal budget kickoff meeting on March 4, 2024, with the program managers and Labor.
 - The District will be releasing an RFP for ambulance billing services in March.
- Special Projects / Other
 - The engine that the Board approved was ordered and we were given a delivery date of 45-50 months.
 - The ambulance that was approved by the Board was ordered and we were given a delivery date of 18-20 months.
 - We have a draft MOU for Community Risk Reduction services with the other Fire Districts in the Verde Valley. We are waiting for comments from Sedona Fire, and we will bring it before the Board for discussion.
 - The staff vehicles that were ordered now have production dates in February-March 2024. Delivery will be late March-April 2024.
- Wildland Assignments / Mutual Aid
 - No wildland assignments / Mutual Aid for January.
- Out of District Calls
 - Total OOD responses for January: 1
 - Chief Johnson stated that the resident was billed, but no payment has been received.
- County and State Updates
 - HB2290 – Certificates of operation; interfacility transfer. Exempts hospital-based ambulance services from the current CON requirements for interfacility ambulance transport and establishes alternate regulatory requirements for these services.
- AFDA Updates – Legislative updates.
 - AFDA Board Meeting scheduled for March 7, 2024.
 - AFDA Board Meeting scheduled for April 4, 2024.

OLD BUSINESS**NEW BUSINESS**

Ambulance Billing Services Proposal Review Committee – Discussion and possible appointment of two (2) Board Members to the FY2024-2025 Budget Committee.

Chief Johnson stated that staff will be issuing the Request for Proposals (RFP) for Ambulance Billing Services. He stated that we need two (2) Board Members to be on the Proposal Review Committee with himself and Administrative Manager Lisa Elliott.

Board Clerk Gilboy and Board Member Brummett volunteered to be on the Ambulance Billing Services Proposal Review Committee.

Board Chairman Peck made a motion to appoint Board Clerk Gilboy and Board Member Brummett to the Ambulance Billing Services Proposal Review Committee. Board Member K Bishop seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Budget Committee Appointments – Discussion and possible appointment of two (2) Board Members to the FY2024-2025 Budget Committee.

Chief Johnson stated historically, two (2) Board Members have been appointed to the Budget Committee to meet with himself and Administrative Lisa Elliott to discuss the budget and make recommended changes to be presented to the Board. He stated the Budget Committee typically meets in April / May.

Board Chairman Peck nominated Board Member T Bishop and Board Clerk Gilboy volunteered to be on the Budget Committee.

Board Chairman Peck made the motion to appoint Board Clerk Gilboy and Board Member T Bishop to the FY2024-2025 Budget Committee. Board Member Brummett seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Debt Collection Services – Discussion and possible award of a contract for Debt Collection Services.

Chief Johnson stated that the District issued a Request for Proposals (RFP) for Debt Collection Services in January 2024. He stated the review committee consisted of Board Chairman Peck, Board Clerk Gilboy, Administrative Manager Lisa Elliott, and himself. Chief Johnson stated the proposals were reviewed and Professional Finance Company, Inc. ranked number one (1), and Bull City Financial Solutions ranked number two (2). He stated that the term of the contract will begin March 1, 2024 and terminate on June 30, 2025. After the initial term, unless modified or terminated by either party, the contract will renew for additional one (1) year terms.

Board Member K Bishop made a motion to award the contract for Debt Collection Services to Professional Finance Company, Inc. DBA PFC USA. Board Member Brummett seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Professional Auditing Services – Discussion and possible award of a contract for Professional Auditing Services.

Chief Johnson stated that the District issued a Request for Proposals (RFP) for Professional Auditing Services in January 2024. He stated that the District's Financial Operating Guide requires a RFP every five (5) years for Professional Auditing Services. Chief Johnson stated that the District has used Baker Tilly for Professional Auditing Services for the past five (5) years, and they were a great company to work with. He stated that Baker Tilly did not submit a proposal.

Chief Johnson stated that the District had a total of three (3) proposals. The three (3) companies that submitted proposals were Walker & Armstrong, Fester & Chapman, and Beasley, Mitchell & Co. He stated that the proposals were reviewed and ranked based on the criteria established in the RFP. Chief Johnson stated that Walker & Armstrong ranked the highest.

Board Member K Bishop made a motion to award the contract for Professional Auditing Services to Walker & Armstrong in the amount of \$19,000 for the FY2023-2024 fiscal year with the option of auditing the District's financial statements for the subsequent four (4) fiscal years.

Board Clerk Gilboy stated that there was a spelling error that needed to be corrected on the Contract For Services. Administrative Manager Lisa Elliott stated that it would be corrected.

Board Gilboy seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Resolution 2024-03 Annexation Request – Discussion and possible adoption of Resolution 2024-03 amending the boundaries of Verde Valley Fire District.

Chief Johnson stated that the District received a letter requesting annexation into the Fire District. He stated the property is located at 2949 West Via Novamas, Cottonwood, AZ, 86326, and is eligible for annexation.

Board Member Brummett made a motion to adopt Resolution 2024-03 amending the boundaries of Verde Valley Fire District. Board Member K Bishop seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Resolution 2024-04 GOHS Car Seat Grant – Discussion and possible adoption of Resolution 2024-04, authorizing the submittal of the grant application for the Car Seat project to be considered in Arizona's FFY2025 Highway Safety Plan.

Chief Johnson stated to submit applications for grant funding to the Governor's Office of Highway Safety, a resolution must be adopted to demonstrate the support of the governing board.

Board Member K Bishop made a motion to adopt Resolution 2024-04 authorizing the submittal of a grant application for the Car Seat project to be considered in Arizona's FFY2025 Highway Safety Plan. Board Member Brummett seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Resolution 2024-05 FY2023-2024 Budget Reallocation – Discussion and possible adoption of Resolution 2024-05 approving the reallocation of the budgeted funds in the FY2023-2024 Budget.

Administrative Manager Lisa Elliott stated that the Government Accounting Standards Board issued statement number 96 titled, Software Based Information Technology Arrangements. She stated that this statement number requires all governmental agencies to recognize these types of agreements as liabilities rather than just an expense. She stated that in our audited financial statements the Sunstate Technologies contract was recoded and reallocated to debt services as a liability. She explained that since our budget has been adopted with the funds for this contract allocated under administrative expenses, we need the Board to approve reallocating these funds over to the debt service account. Administrative Manager Lisa Elliott stated the reallocation of the budgeted funds will not increase the overall budget.

Board Clerk Gilboy made a motion to adopt Resolution 2024-05 approving the reallocation of budgeted funds in the FY2023-2024 Budget. Board Member Brummett seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Resolution 2024-06 Pension Funding Policy – Discussion and possible adoption of Resolution 2024-06 adopting a Pension Funding Policy.

Chief Johnson stated that House Bill 2097 that was approved in 2018, requires that each governing body of a PSPRS employer to annually adopt a pension funding policy. He stated this shows that the Pension is being watched and funded by the Board and Administrative staff.

Board Member K Bishop made a motion to adopt Resolution 2024-06 adopting a Pension Funding Policy. Board Member Brummett seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Resolution 2024-07 AFG MOU – Discussion and possible adoption of Resolution 2024-07 approving the Memorandum of Understanding for the Grant Award Year 2023 Assistance to Firefighters regional grant application.

Chief Johnson stated the Verde Valley Fire District, with Copper Canyon and Medical District and Sedona Fire District wants to submit a regional application to the Grant Award Year 2023 Assistance to Firefighters Grants for the replacement of heart monitors. He stated that Verde Valley Fire District will act as the host agency for the application and management of the grant. He stated if awarded this grant it would standardize this region to the same heart monitors. He stated the estimated grant is going to be 1.2 million dollars, the dollar amount is not on this MOU. He stated this MOU is required by FEMA to allow the District to submit a regional grant application. If funds are awarded, a formal addendum will be signed by all parties to specify the division of any award and match requirements prior to the distribution of any awarded funds.

Board Clerk Gilboy asked if the heart monitors would stay with each District's apparatus. Chief Johnson stated yes, it just allows information to transfer smoothly as the patient transfers to other care.

Board Clerk Gilboy made a motion to adopt Resolution 2024-07 approving the Memorandum of Understanding for the Grant Award Year 2023 Assistance to Firefighters regional grant application. Board Member Brummett seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

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

**Cell Tower
Strategic Financial Plan**

ADJOURNMENT. With no further business before the Board, the meeting adjourned at 6:57 p.m.

Submitted By:

Approved:

Ashley Hammond, Administrative Specialist

Donald Peck, Board Chairman

Attest:

Coleen Gilboy, Board Clerk