

**Minutes of a Regular Meeting of the Board of Directors of the Verde Valley Fire District Held
March 26, 2024**

A Regular Meeting of the Verde Valley Fire District Board of Directors was held on March 26, 2024, at 5:00 p.m. in person at Station 31, 2700 E. Godard Road, Cottonwood, Arizona and electronically (via Zoom).

Board of Directors:

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

Staff Present:

Danny Johnson, Fire Chief
Lisa Elliott, Administrative Manager
Linda Peterson, Finance Assistant
Ashley Hammond, Administrative Specialist (via Zoom)
Richard Lopez, Fire Inspector
Dustin Chambliss, Battalion Chief
Bill Boler, EMS Coordinator
Justin Sandoval, Engineer (via Zoom)

Others Present:

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

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

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

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 14 U.S. firefighter who lost their life in the line of duty in 2024 to date.

MINUTES – Discussion and consideration of the minutes of the Regular Session held on February 27, 2024. Board Member K Bishop made a motion to approve the minutes of the Regular Session held on February 27, 2024. Board Member Brummett seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

CALL THE PUBLIC – None.

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 67% through the fiscal year.
- Total cash in the General Fund is \$3,191,450.35 (does not include the PSPRS COP Contingency Reserve Fund.)
- Decrease in cash of \$328,956 for the month of February.
- Positive cash flow of \$341,776 for the fiscal year.

- Cash flows show that they are adequate to fund the fiscal year's operations.
 - FY2023-2024 Property Tax Revenues received: \$54,951.40.
 - Fire District Assistance Tax (FDAT) Revenues received: \$6,430.92.
 - The following account explanations are for items occurring within the month of February 2024:
 - Page 5 Account 01-6400-642100 Ambulance Billing – Refund of billing fees for refunded overpayments.
 - Page 7 Account 01-6500-653001 Training Program Subscription – Partial year fees for Copper Canyon Fire & Medical District. This amount is being reimbursed by CCFMD.
 - Page 10 Account 01-7000-750000 Arizona State Grants – Recoding of expenses to account 01-7000-751000 Fire Incident Management Grant.
 - Total operating-only expenditures are 10.61% lower than the year-to-date allocation.
 - Total General Fund expenditures are 10.14% lower than the year-to-date allocation.
 - The District has collected \$4,300,135.41 (65.47%) of the FY2023-2024 budgeted Property Tax Revenues.
 - Ambulance Billing Report
 - There was a data breach in the clearing house used to process insurance claims. Because of this, our ambulance billing company is not able to obtain the explanation of benefits needed to complete the reconciliation of our transactions. The clearinghouse is hoping for a fix by March 22, 2024. As the financial statements need to be distributed to the Board prior to this time for the March 26, 2024 Board meeting, the ambulance billing information will not be included in the February 2024 financial report. The ambulance billing report for the month of February 2024 will be presented with the March 2024 report at the April 2024 Board meeting.
- Board Clerk Gilboy asked if the data breach had been corrected. Chief Johnson stated that we have not received confirmation of it being corrected. He stated that this data breach does not only affect Verde Valley Fire District, but all medical billing companies that use this clearinghouse to process insurance claims.
- 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 Member K Bishop made a motion to approve the Financial Report. Board Member Brummett 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.

None

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: 4
 Complaints: 0
 General and Final Inspections: 8
 General correspondence including site visits, emails, phone calls and letters: 25+
 Plan Reviews: 1
 Preliminary Code Reviews: 1
 Variances for Hot Work and Burns Outside Regulations: 0
 Knox Box Installs: 1
 Car Seats: 10

Fire Inspector Lopez stated that the Taawaki Inn in Clarkdale is almost complete. He stated that he assisted Sedona Fire District with a fire investigation. He stated that Station 31, C Shift had a PE class with students at Mountain View Preparatory School.

Chief Johnson stated that he attended a Small Business Community Meeting where he received many compliments on Fire Inspector Lopez. He stated that the small business owners appreciate his hard work.

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
 - CCFMD Kairos Renewal Meeting
 - VVFD Budget Kickoff Meeting
 - VVFD Kairos Renewal Meeting
 - Fire District Focus Group Mental Health/Cancer
 - Verde Valley Fire and EMS Chiefs Meeting
 - AFDA Monthly Board Meeting
 - Verde Valley Mayors and Managers Meeting
 - CCFMD Admin Budget Meeting
 - AFSI
 - VVFD Budget Meeting with Administrative Manager Lisa Elliott
 - CCFMD Board Meeting
 - CCFMD Staff Meeting
 - CCFMD Policy Meeting
 - Securis Board Meeting
 - VVFD Board Meeting
 - CCFMD Renewal Meeting
 - VVFD Staff Meeting
 - Budget Discussions JVG
- Human Resources
 - Accepting applications for ALS/BLS firefighters to establish an eligibility list.
- Finance / Grants
 - DFFM grant was submitted for a tactical tender. Application reviews will begin the first week of March.
 - VVFD was the lead agency in the submission of a regional AFG grant for cardiac monitors.

- Sedona Fire District and Copper Canyon Fire and Medical District are regional partners.
- Verde Valley Fire District is writing a Congressional Directed Spending Grant for an ambulance.
- Submitting a grant to Gila River for a UTV to replace the Kabota.
- Submitting a grant to the AgWest Stewardship group for an Off-Road emergency vehicle.
- Special Projects / Other
 - We have a draft MOU for CRR services with the other Fire Districts in the Verde Valley. We are waiting for comments from Sedona Fire and Copper Canyon Fire and Medical District legal.
 - Three of the staff vehicles we ordered are in, we are sending them for emergency equipment upfitting.
- Wildland Assignments / Mutual Aid
 - No wildland assignments / Mutual Aid for February.
- Out of District Calls
 - Total OOD responses for February: 1
 - The resident was billed, but no payment has been received.
- County and State Updates
 - HB2274 – Firefighters; peace officers; PTSD; coverage
- AFDA Updates – Legislative updates.
 - AFDA Board Meeting scheduled for April 4, 2024.
 - AFDA Board Meeting scheduled for May 2, 2024.

Board Clerk Gilboy asked if the District is receiving any funds for OOD Responses. Chief Johnson stated that we do have one resident that makes a monthly payment for their OOD responses. He stated that we billed a company in Clarkdale on Cement Plant Road, and have not received any correspondence.

OLD BUSINESS - None

NEW BUSINESS

Resolution 2024-02 – Discussion and possible adoption of Resolution 2024-02, a resolution of the Verde Valley Fire District Board of Directors adopting a fee schedule.

Chief Johnson stated Staff is requesting to update the District's Fee Schedule with regards to Fire Prevention Fees, CPR / First Aid Fees, Wildland Refresher Fees, and Other Fees.

EMS Coordinator Boler stated that he would like to offer CPR / First Aid Classes to AED Program Participant Agencies and minors, under eighteen (18) years old, that are not obtaining the certification for employment / income at no cost.

Board Clerk Gilboy asked the cost to issue a CPR / First Aid card. EMS Coordinator Boler stated that the fee is twenty dollars (\$20.00) to issue a card.

EMS Coordinator Boler stated that last year 2023, Verde Valley Fire District taught three hundred and ninety-seven (397) CPR / First Aid Students. He stated sixty-two (62) of those students were part of the AED Program Participant Agencies or minors.

Board Clerk Gilboy asked if there were any additional costs for the AED Program Participant Agencies or minors. EMS Coordinator Boler stated that the only cost to the District is the twenty-dollar (\$20.00) fee to issue the CPR / First Aid card.

Fire Inspector Lopez stated while comparing Fire Prevention fees to neighboring agencies, our fees are substantially lower. He stated that he would like to increase the fees to be comparable to neighboring agencies.

Board Member K Bishop made a motion to adopt Resolution 2024-02, a resolution of the Verde Valley Fire District Board of Directors adopting a fee schedule. Board Member Brummett seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Resolution 2024-08 – Discussion and possible adoption of Resolution 2024-08 amending the boundaries of Verde Valley Fire District.

Chief Johnson stated that the District has received an annexation request from Anthony and Laurie Lozano. He stated that their property is located at 1601 North Old Homestead Way, Clarkdale, and is eligible for annexation.

Board Member Brummett made a motion to adopt Resolution 2024-08 amending the boundaries of Verde Valley Fire District. Board K Bishop seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Proposed Amendments to the VVFD By-Laws – Discussion and possible direction to Staff regarding amendments to the Verde Valley Fire District By-Laws.

Chief Johnson stated that this agenda item is to discuss proposed changes so an amended set of By-Laws can be considered for adoption at the April 23, 2024 Board Meeting.

Board Chairman Peck stated it has been a long time since the VVFD By-Laws have been updated.

Chief Johnson stated that the District uses the US Government Services Administration (GSA) rates for Staff for reimbursement.

Board Chairman Peck asked if we had any reimbursement practices other districts were practicing. Chief Johnson stated that the District went away with using a dollar amount and suggested stating the GSA rates of the location of the conference.

Board Clerk Gilboy stated that she would like all reimbursements to be looked at.

Board Chairman Peck asked if we changed the reimbursement would it affect lodging. Chief Johnson stated no, the District typically receives conference lodging discounts that are less than the GSA Rates.

The Board directed Staff to update the Verde Valley Fire District By-Laws, Section 5, to reflect the current GSA rates and present at the April 23, 2024 Board Meeting.

Fire Chief's Performance Evaluation – Discussion and possible direction to Staff regarding the Fire Chief Evaluation Process.

Chief Johnson stated that this agenda item is for the Board to give direction to Staff regarding the Fire Chief Evaluation Process.

Board Clerk Gilboy asked Chief Johnson if he reviews his evaluation. Chief Johnson stated absolutely.

Board Clerk Gilboy asked Chief Johnson if he wanted to continue to use this evaluation form. Chief Johnson stated that he is comfortable with this form.

Board Member Brummett asked if this was the same evaluation form used for Staff. Chief Johnson stated yes.

The Board directed Staff to send the Fire Chief Evaluation Form electronically for review at the May 28, 2024 Board meeting.

CRR Waiver of Conflict of Interest and Consent – Discussion and possible approval of the Waiver of Conflict of Interest regarding representation by the William R Whittington of the law firm of Boyle, Pecharich, Cline, Whittington & Stallings, PLLC in connection with the proposed Intergovernmental Agreement for Shared Community Risk Reduction Services.

Chief Johnson stated that Mr. Whittington is requesting that the District waive any conflict to allow him to represent Sedona Fire District regarding the proposed Intergovernmental Agreement for Shared Community Risk Reduction Services.

Board Clerk Gilboy made a motion to approve the Waiver of Conflict of Interest regarding representation by William R Whittington of the law firm of Boyle, Pecharich, Cline, Whittington & Stallings, PLLC in connection with the proposed Intergovernmental Agreement for Shared Community Risk Reduction Services. Board Member K Bishop seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Waiver of Conflict of Interest and Consent – Discussion and possible approval of the Waiver of Conflict of Interest regarding representation by the Yavapai County Attorney's Office in connection with the proposed Facility Use Agreement.

Chief Johnson stated that this is a new Waiver of Conflict of Interest and Consent that is being requested by Yavapai County Attorney's Office. He stated that Yavapai County Attorney's Office is requesting a Waiver of Conflict of Interest from the District regarding a proposed Facility Use Agreement with Yavapai County.

Board Clerk Gilboy asked if we have had a Waiver of Conflict of Interest and Consent with Yavapai County before. Chief Johnson stated no.

Board Clerk Gilboy asked if the District had to use Yavapai County Attorney's Office for legal representation. Chief Johnson stated no.

Board Member K Bishop made a motion to approve the Waiver of Conflict of Interest and Consent regarding representation by the Yavapai County Attorney's Office in connection with the proposed Facility Use Agreement. Board Member Brummett seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Consent Agenda – Discussion and possible direction to staff regarding adding a consent agenda item to the monthly Board meeting agenda.

Chief Johnson stated that Staff is requesting to add a consent agenda item on the monthly Board meeting agenda. He stated that the consent agenda could include approval of Board minutes, annexations, and other topics that do not need to be discussed to save time. Chief Johnson stated that the Board would receive the consent agenda in the Board packet prior to the Board meeting and it would be the Board's responsibility to look over the consent agenda. He stated that any item on the consent agenda can be removed and considered as a separate item on the agenda. He stated it is a practice many Boards and districts use.

The Board directed Staff to add a consent agenda item to the monthly Board meeting agenda.

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

VVFD By-Laws

Cell Tower

Ambulance Billing RFP

ADJOURNMENT. With no further business before the Board, the meeting adjourned at 5:39 p.m.

Submitted By:

Approved:

Ashley Hammond, Administrative Specialist

Donald Peck, Board Chairman

Attest:

Coleen Gilboy, Board Clerk

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