

**Minutes of a Regular Meeting of the Board of Directors of the Verde Valley Fire District Held
April 23, 2024**

A Regular Meeting of the Verde Valley Fire District Board of Directors was held on April 23, 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
Linda Peterson, Finance Assistant
Dean Koropatnicki, Battalion Chief
Joe Odell, Firefighter
Seth Murphy, Captain
Ivan Anderson, Engineer
Jacob Marx, Firefighter / Union VP Local 3690 (via Zoom)

Others Present:

Gillian Goslinga
Ashley McClure

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.

Chief Johnson stated that he has received requests to speak during Call To The Public but does not see them present. Board Chairman Peck stated the Board will continue with the order of the agenda and make changes if necessary.

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

CALL TO THE PUBLIC

Board Clerk Gilboy suggested moving the Call To The Public after the Consent Agenda.

CONSENT AGENDA – DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE ACTION.

- A. **Minutes** – Discussion and consideration of the minutes of the Regular Meeting held on March 26, 2024, the Special Session held on April 2, 2024, and the Executive Session held on April 2, 2024.
- B. **Legal Services Addendum** – Discussion and possible approval of the Legal Services Addendum to the current Fee Agreement and Engagement Letter between Verde Valley Fire District and the Law Office of Nicolas J Cornelius, PLLC.

- C. Resolution 2024-09 Fee Schedule** – Discussion and possible adoption of Resolution 2024-09, a resolution of the Verde Valley Fire District Board of Directors adopting a fee schedule.

Board Clerk Gilboy made a motion to approve the Consent Agenda.

Board Chairman Peck stated that he would like a correction to be made to the April 2, 2024 Special Meeting minutes. He stated Stephen Kennedy represents Biwabkos Consultants and the minutes state that he represents Maverick Towers.

Chief Johnson stated the minutes from the April 2, 2024 Special Meeting will be corrected.

Board Member K Bishop seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

FINANCIAL REPORTS – Discussion and consideration of the financial report for the previous month (including ambulance billing). Finance Assistant Linda Peterson reviewed the written financial reports noting the following:

- The District is 75% through the fiscal year.
 - Finance Assistant Linda Peterson stated that the Bank Reconciliation Summary Report is a summary of all transactions throughout the month. She stated that the Ambulance Account balance is \$68.03 more than the amount shown on the Balance Sheet due to the Colonial payment made on March 31, 2024, and the bank statement date is March 29, 2024.
- Total cash in the General Fund is \$2,843,962.89 (does not include the PSPRS COP Contingency Reserve Fund.)
- Decrease in cash of \$296,334 for the month of March.
- Positive cash flow of \$45,442 for the fiscal year.
- Cash flows show that they are adequate to fund the fiscal year's operations.
- FY2023-2024 Property Tax Revenues received: \$115,292.99.
- Fire District Assistance Tax (FDAT) Revenues received: \$8,635.05.
- The following account explanations are for items occurring within the month of March 2024:
 - Page 1 Account 01-451000 Interest Income – Yavapai County didn't calculate interest correctly and correction has been made in April.
 - Page 1 Account 01-475000 Arizona State Grant Revenues – Received first reimbursement for the Fire Incident Management Grant.
 - Page 1 Account 01-5000-501000 Fire Chief – Moved JMA Stipend to separate account.
 - Page 5 Account 01-6300-637131 Misc Repair & Maintenance – Station 31 – Includes 2 Conex Boxes.
- Total operating-only expenditures are 11% lower than the year-to-date allocation.
- Total General Fund expenditures are 12.31% lower than the year-to-date allocation.
- The District has collected \$4,415,428 (67%) of the FY2023-2024 budgeted Property Tax Revenues.
- Ambulance Billing Report
 - February Ambulance Billing Report is included.
 - For the month of March there were 108 billable calls in the month. This is an increase of 25 calls from the prior month and a year-to-date decrease of 81 calls compared to the same timeframe in FY2022-2023. Cash collections have increased \$7,219 compared to the same timeframe in FY2022-2023.
 - Ambulance cash collections of \$54,975.90 were received.
 - Total Ambulance Billing Receivables were \$655,045.37, an increase of \$55,724.54 from the prior month. This increase is due to a breach in the billing system and calls not being able to be submitted for payment.

- 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.

CALL TO THE PUBLIC

Gillian Goslinga stated that she wanted to give a project update, she stated there have been some issues that have arisen and wants the Board to be informed. Ms. Goslinga thanked the Board for the opportunity to partner with Chief Johnson to explore options for a communications infrastructure for the Cornville area that all parties agree upon. She thanked Chief Johnson for his time over the past three (3) weeks. Ms. Goslinga stated that they need to have a platform and an identity to fundraise and ask community members to invest in this large expensive project. She stated that the group will be called the Community Communications Infrastructure Partnership (CCIP). She stated the goal of CCIP is to keep control locally and not give control to large corporations.

Ashley McClure stated that she believes the Cornville community can fundraise the money for the proposed tower. She stated that the CCIP is working through some obstacles right now, including tax deductibles, starting a non-profit, and having a CCIP Board. She stated they have collected approximately seven thousand dollars (\$7,000.00) but have slowed the fundraising down while trying to navigate these obstacles. She stated local businesses in Cornville have agreed to help with fundraising, jars at their businesses to collect money, she stated this technique will not get them to their goal but a little adds up. Ms. McClure stated that the biggest issue with this is how CCIP advertises this opportunity to donate. She stated that the CCIP has been working on the wording for an information flyer that relates to all members of the community including the need for this communication infrastructure for the fire district.

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.

Union Vice President Marx stated that the Labor group is currently working with management on the MOU.

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
 - QuickBooks Review with CCFMD Staff and JVG
 - CCFMD B-Shift Captains Meeting
 - Verde Valley Chiefs Meeting
 - AFDA Board of Directors Meeting
 - Meet and Greet for Camp Verde Town Manager Candidates
 - Pre-Season Yavapai County Cooperators Meeting
 - Cornville Community Association Meeting

- Peer Support Meeting with SMO
- Meet the Chief Event at YCC
- CCFMD Budget Review FY24/25 (JVG)
- AFSI
- VVFD Captain Assessment Center Prep
- Active Assailant Regional Meeting
- Yavapai County Fire Chief Meeting
- CCFMD Board Meeting
- CCFMD C-Shift Captains Meeting
- VVFD Budget Committee Meeting
- VVFD Board Meeting
- Yavapai County Communications Study Kickoff
- Human Resources
 - We received 9 applications for firefighter, 7 meet the minimum qualifications.
 - Captain's testing is being finalized. The assessment center will be May 7 & 8.
- Finance / Grants
 - DFFM grant was submitted for a tactical tender. Application reviews began the first week of March.
 - VVFD was the lead agency in the submission of a regional AFG grant for cardiac monitors, (1.38 million). Regional partners are VVFD, SFD, and CCFMD.
 - 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
 - Three of the staff vehicles were picked up. We have the staff car, the other 2 are at the facility for emergency equipment upfitting.
 - Station 31 paint and stucco repairs are complete.
 - Station 31 carpet removal and new flooring will begin in May.
 - Station 32 communications tower conversations are still ongoing with the community. Dialog with residents and communications industry experts has been happening to work towards a solution.
- Wildland Assignments / Mutual Aid
 - VVFD, Cottonwood, Sedona, and Copper Canyon all sent resources to CAFMA through the state-wide mutual aid agreement to assist with the large commercial fire.
- Out of District Calls
 - Total OOD responses for March: 0
- County and State Updates
 - SB1071 – Peer support teams; information; disclosure
 - Make changes to CISM requirements and protections to include peer support teams.
 - SB2751 – Interstate compact; fire management; aid
 - Authorizes Arizona through DGGM to join the “Great Plains Fire Compact” to allow the state to more efficiently share wildland fire fighting resources between the other compact states and share with other states that are part of other compacts, as authorized by the Federal Weeks Act of 1911.
 - HB2767 – Emergency management assistance; reimbursement
 - Authorizes AZDEMA to reimburse municipal and fire districts for statewide mutual aid deployments.
- AFDA Updates – Legislative updates.
 - AFDA Board Meeting scheduled for May 2, 2024.
 - AFDA Annual Membership and Board Meeting scheduled for July 16, 2024.

OLD BUSINESS - None**NEW BUSINESS****FY2024-2025 Budget Presentation – Information and discussion regarding the development of the FY2024-2025 Budget.**

Chief Johnson presented the preliminary FY2024-2025 Budget Information PowerPoint. He stated Verde Valley Fire District has four (4) funds that are used to track revenues and expenditures. He stated the four (4) funds are the General Fund, Capital Fund, Wildland Fund, and Employee Benefits Liability Fund. He stated that the General Fund is broken out into the following divisions: Fire Board, Administration, Fire Prevention, Building Maintenance, EMS Services, Operations, Fleet Maintenance, Wildland (in-District), Communications, Debt Service, and Other Financing Uses. Chief Johnson stated that the General Fund revenue categories are Property Tax Revenues, Intergovernmental Revenues, Fees for Services, Ambulance Revenues, Other Revenues, Grant Revenues, and Other Financing Sources. He stated there has been a 6.69% increase in Limited Property Values for 2024. He stated that totals a \$439,396 increase in Property Tax Revenues at the \$3.21 mil rate. A one (1) cent change in the mil equals \$21,832, the proposed increase in the mil rate to \$3.31 would equal \$657,712, an additional \$218,316. Chief Johnson stated the Fire District Assistance Tax (FDAT) will not increase.

Chief Johnson stated that Health Insurance had increased 13%, Dental Insurance has increased 3%, Vision Insurance had no change and Life Insurance had no change. He stated Worker's Compensation has increased by 6.8%, PSPRS Tiers 1 and 2 have decreased by 2.52%, and Tier 3 decreased by 0.67%. He stated that ASRS has decreased by 0.02%. He stated that the Social Security COLA increased by 3.20% for 2024, and the Arizona Minimum Wage increased by 3.61%.

Chief Johnson stated that Staff is requesting to implement a new pay scale that has been restructured to eliminate compression between ranks as well as reduce the number of steps in each rank. He stated that the proposed scale increases the amount between steps to 3.0% (from 2.5%) and restates step 1 of all suppression ranks as well as the Fire Inspector and EMS Coordinator ranks to bring these ranks more in line with industry comparisons.

November 2024 Board Meeting Date – Discussion and possible change of the date for the November 2024 regular Board meeting date.

Chief Johnson stated that 2024 is an election year and the Board is required to canvass the election results between November 11-25, 2024. He stated that the November regular Board meeting is scheduled for November 26, 2024. He stated Staff is requesting the Board to reschedule the regular Board meeting date within this required timeframe or request a special meeting in this timeframe.

Board Clerk Gilboy stated that she will be out of town the week of November 18-22, 2024.

Board Member K Bishop made a motion to reschedule the November 2024 Regular Board meeting to November 19, 2024. Board Clerk Gilboy seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Resolution 2024-10 Bylaws – Discussion and possible adoption of Resolution 2024-11 adopting revised By-laws for the Verde Valley Fire District Board of Directors.

Chief Johnson presented the red-lined version of the Proposed Revised By-Laws that the Board requested at the March 26, 2024 Board meeting. He stated that the updates were to include meal reimbursement and mileage

reimbursement for the use of personal vehicles at the rates established by the U.S. General Services Administration.

Board Chairman Peck asked if it was still an option to choose to be reimbursed for actual fuel cost related to the travel. He stated the red-lined version of the Proposed Revised By-Laws has that option red-lined.

Board Clerk Gilboy asked Board Chairman Peck if he wanted Travel Reimbursement to state at the mileage rate established by the U.S. General Services Administration or the actual fuel costs related to the travel necessary. Board Chairman Peck stated yes.

Chief Johnson stated that the Board can suggest that verbiage be added to the Travel Reimbursement, and this Agenda item will be added to the May Board meeting agenda for approval and adoption.

Board Chairman Peck asked if the Board could approve and adopt Resolution 2024-10 with the suggested changes. Chief Johnson stated no, the changes need to be added before approval and adoption.

Board Member K Bishop made a motion to add the suggested verbiage as discussed to Resolution 2024-10 By-Laws for the Verde Valley Fire District Board of Directors. Board Clerk Gilboy seconded the motion.

Chief Johnson stated that all Board members must be present to approve and adopt Resolution 2024-10.

Board Chairman Peck stated under Overnight Lodging it states that overnight lodging should be made far enough in advance that the District can issue a check. He stated the District does not issue a check and pays with a credit card. Chief Johnson stated the District can issue a check.

The motion passed unanimously.

Resolution 2024-11 CRR IGA – Discussion and possible adoption of Resolution 2024-11 approving an Intergovernmental Agreement with Copper Canyon Fire and Medical District and Sedona Fire District for Shared Community Risk Reduction Services.

Chief Johnson stated that this Intergovernmental Agreement (IGA) with Copper Canyon Fire and Medical District and Sedona Fire District for shared Community Risk Reduction Services (CRR) will allow each agency to receive and provide CRR services to help each other in times of need. He stated that this IGA is a great resource for personnel and will provide training opportunities.

Board Member K Bishop made a motion to adopt Resolution 2024-11 approving an Intergovernmental Agreement with Copper Canyon Fire and Medical District and Sedona Fire District for Shared Community Risk Reduction Services. Board Member Brummett seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Resolution 2024-12 Call of Election – Discussion and possible adoption of Resolution 2024-12 calling for an election on November 5, 2024.

Chief Johnson stated Arizona Revised Statute requires the District to adopt a resolution calling for an election. He stated the terms of three (3) Board members end in November, those Board members are Robert Brummett, Kenneth Bishop, and Timothy Bishop. Chief Johnson stated the District has budgeted for an election if the District needs to hold an election.

Board Clerk Gilboy made a motion to adopt Resolution 2024-12 calling for an election on November 5, 2024 to fill three (3) Board vacancies. Board Member Brummett seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS – A listing of items to be placed on a future agenda.
Resolution 2024-10 Bylaws

ADJOURNMENT. With no further business before the Board, the meeting adjourned at 5:57 p.m.

Submitted By:

Approved:

Ashley Hammond, Administrative Specialist

Donald Peck, Board Chairman

Attest:

Coleen Gilboy, Board Clerk

DRAFT