

**Minutes of a Regular Meeting of the Board of Directors of the Verde Valley Fire District Held
January 28, 2025**

A Regular Meeting of the Verde Valley Fire District Board of Directors was held on January 28, 2025, 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
Robert Brummett, Board Clerk
Kenneth Bishop
Coleen Gilboy
Vacant

Staff Present:

Danny Johnson, Fire Chief	Justin Gherman, Firefighter
Lisa Elliott, Administrative Manager	Tristen Huddleston, Firefighter
Ashley Hammond, Administrative Specialist	Seth Murphy, Captain
Linda Peterson, Finance Assistant	David McIlvoy, Firefighter
William Boler, EMS Coordinator	Jacob Pfeifer, Engineer
Cody Harkey, Battalion Chief	Dillon Sherman, Engineer
Dustin Chambliss, Battalion Chief	Justin Sandoval, Captain
Jacob Marx, Firefighter / Union VP Local 3690	Joseph Cody, Firefighter
Matthew Chavez, Firefighter	Matthew Robertson, Captain
Louis Newell, Captain	Jake McDaniel, Engineer
Genaro Garcia, Engineer	Joseph Odell, Firefighter
Daniel Skaggs, Firefighter	AJ Purinton, Firefighter
Robert Weigle, Firefighter	Tucker Ihrman, Captain
Philip Graham, Captain	Steve Smith, Engineer
Spencer Young, Engineer	Bryan Heisinger, Engineer
Ethan Church, Firefighter	Zachary Morgan, Firefighter
Ethan Wright, Engineer	Scott Ashford, Firefighter
Carson Zale, Firefighter	

Others Present:

Joel Rosenburg
Friends and Family of Joel Rosenburg
Friends and Family of Justin Sandoval
Friends and Family of Dillon Sherman
Friends and Family of Justing Gherman
Friends and Family of Tristen Huddleston
Friends and Family of Daniel Skaggs
Friends and Family of Robert Weigele
Friends and Family of Carson Zale
Daniel Elliott
Sedona Verde Valley Honor Guard

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

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

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

Board Member Gilboy made a motion to move agenda item 11. A, Employee Recognition, next on the agenda, and held in the bay. Board Clerk Brummett seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Employee Recognition – Recognition and walk-out ceremony for Captain Rosenberg as well as recognition and badge pinning for recently promoted employees and recently hired firefighters.

Chief Johnson thanked retired Captain Joel Rosenberg for his thirty (30) years of service and dedication to the Verde Valley Fire District and wished him the best of luck and a happy retirement.

Verde Valley Fire District Chapter Union Vice President Jacob Marx presented Joel Rosenberg with a retirement axe on behalf of the Sedona Verde Valley Fire Fighter's Local 3690.

Chief Johnson presented the Verde Valley Fire District's values and explained the importance and expectations of each value as an employee of the District. Chief Johnson administered the Oath of Office.

Justin was promoted to Captain and was pinned by his wife.

Dillon Sherman was promoted to Engineer and was pinned by his wife.

Carson Zale was hired as a Firefighter and was pinned by his wife.

Tristen Huddleston was hired as a Firefighter and was pinned by his father.

Justin Gherman was hired as a Firefighter and was pinned by his mother.

Daniel Skaggs was hired as a Firefighter and was pinned by Engineer Young.

Robert Weigele was hired as a Firefighter and was pinned by Firefighter Church.

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 1 U.S. firefighter who lost their life in the line of duty in 2025 to date.

CALL THE PUBLIC – None.

Consent Agenda – DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE ACTION

- A. Minutes** – Discussion and consideration of the minutes of the Regular Meeting held on December 17, 2024.
- B. Declaration of Interest Statements** – Discussion and possible acknowledgment of Declaration of Interest Statements provided by the Board Members and employees of the District.
- C. Resolution 2025-01** – Discussion and possible adoption of Resolution 2025-01 adopting a Pension Funding Policy.

D. Resolution 2025-02 Policy Updates – Discussion and possible approval of Resolution 2025-02 adopting a revised Allowance for Doubtful Accounts and Write Off of Bad Debt policy.

Board Member Bishop made a motion to approve the Consent Agenda. Board Clerk Brummett seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

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 50% through the fiscal year.
- Total cash in the General Fund is \$4,828,215.84 (does not include the PSPRS COP Contingency Reserve Fund.)
- Increase in cash of \$403,455 for the month of December.
- Positive cash flow of \$2,035,861 for the fiscal year.
- Cash flows show that they are adequate to fund the fiscal year's operations.
- FY2024-2025 Property Tax Revenues received: \$746,939.37.
- Fire District Assistance Tax (FDAT) Revenues received: \$48,126.50
 - Board Member Gilboy inquired about the “no cash account” amount of \$346,007.28 listed on page 8 of the Bank Transaction Report. Administrative Manager Lisa Elliott responded that she would look into the matter and get back to the Board with more information.
- The following account explanations are for items occurring within the month of October 2024:
 - Page 1 Account 01-451000 Interest Income – Interest revenues posted are for the months of November and December 2024.
 - Page 10 Account 01-7000-780000 Miscellaneous Grant Expenses – Can-Am Defender purchase and upfitting.
 - Page 10 Account 01-7000-791000 Unanticipated Grant match requirements – 2024 AFG application development services.
 - Board Member Gilboy asked if it cost to apply for the grant. Administrative Manager Lisa Elliott stated yes.
- Total operating-only expenditures are 8.84% lower than the year-to-date allocation.
- Total General Fund expenditures are 18.92% lower than the year-to-date allocation.
- The District has collected \$4,455,371 (62%) of the FY2024-2025 budgeted Property Tax Revenues.
- Ambulance cash collections of \$88,694.57 and 121 billable calls in the month. Increase of seventeen (17) calls from November 2024 and a year-to-date increase of fifty (50) calls compared to the same timeframe in FY 2023-2024. Cash Collections have decreased by \$71,367 compared to the same timeframe in FY 2023-2024.
 - Board Member Gilbow asked if the District's ambulance revenues were trending higher than the budget. Administrative Manager Lisa Elliott confirmed that they were. Chief Johnson added that the District has been in regular contact with the new ambulance company to ensure smooth transition. Board Member Gilboy then asked if the District is still receiving revenues from the previous ambulance billing company. Administrative Manager Lisa Elliott responded that no funds had been received from them in the previous month.
- Total Ambulance Billing Receivables were \$758,903.54, an increase of \$3,511.56 from the prior month.
- Crews have been deployed on twelve (12) assignments through December 31, 2024.
 - Invoices have been submitted for all twelve (12) of the assignments and payment has been received for all twelve (12) assignments.

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

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.

None

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 Monthly meeting
 - Cottonwood Christmas Parade
 - Kairos Fall Stewardship Meetings
 - Monthly AFSI
 - Verde Valley Mayors and Managers Meeting
 - Securis Board Meeting
 - AFDA Executive Strategic Planning Meeting
 - AFSI
 - Verde Valley Fire Board Meeting
 - Verde Valley Staff Meeting
- Human Resources
 - Posted another joint process with Copper Canyon Fire & Medical District to establish a Firefighter eligibility list.
 - Administrative Manager Lisa Elliott is working on an outline and plan for the next Spouses Academy that will be held in March of 2025.
 - Filled one of our vacancies with an ALS firefighter.
- Finance / Grants
 - VVFD applied for a 100-Club grant for active assailant equipment.
 - VVFD wrote a congressionally Directed Spending Grant for an ambulance.
 - We have been included in the draft appropriations bill.
 - VVFD submitted an AFG regional grant for cardiac monitors.
 - VVFD submitted a grant to DFFM for a portion of the cost of a water tender, the request was \$324,040.
- Special Projects / Other
 - The JPA study is approximately seventy percent (70 %) complete, and Verde Valley Fire

- District will submit the annual audit after the January Board meeting.
 - Chief Johnson stated that the first citizens advisory committee is scheduled for Wednesday, January 29, 2025.
- Wildland Assignments / Mutual Aid
 - Verde Valley Fire District deployed an ambulance to the Horten Wildland fire in Payson for fourteen (14) days.
- Out of District Calls
 - Total OOD responses to date in January: 1
 - The resident was billed and currently has an outstanding balance of \$3,000.00
- County and State Updates
 - HS 2124: Hospital; interfacility transport (AFDA Position: OPPOSED) Sponsor: Rep. Julie Willoughby (R-13, Chandler) Authorizes hospitals to provide interfacility ambulance transport services. Disadvantages and economically harms current providers of interfacility ambulance services.
 - HB 2197: Certificate of necessity; repeal (AFDA Position: OPPOSED) Sponsor: Rep. Julie Willoughby (R-13, Chandler) Deregulate portions of Arizona's ambulance services.
 - HB 2219: Appropriation; Taylor-Snowflake fire; medial (AFDA Position: TSD) Sponsor: Rep. David Marshal (R-7, Snowflake) Appropriates \$2,090,000 from the state general fund in FY25-26 to the DOA to district to the Taylor-Snowflake Fire and Medical Dept. for various fire apparatus and equipment (specified).
 - HB 2268: Fire districts; homeowner's policies; DIFI (AFDA Position: SUPPORT) Sponsor: Rep. David Livingston (R-28, Peoria) Establishes a grant program for rural fire districts located in wildfire prone areas as identified by DFFM. Grant funding is for apparatus, equipment, readiness and response items (specified). Funded by fee on homeowners' fire insurance policies in Arizona.
 - HB 2341: Fire protection systems; inspections (AFDA Position: TBA) Sponsor: Rep. Theresa Martinez (R-16, Casa Grande) Establishes inspection requirements for smoke and fire dampers.
 - HB 2384: Fire insurance; wildfire risk modeling (AFDA Position: TBA) Sponsor: Rep. David Marshal (R-7, Snowflake) Establishes fire insurance risk model requirements for fire insurance policies in cities or towns of less than 150K population. Risk model required to adjust for hazard mitigation for designated Firewise communities.
 - HB 2398: Appropriations; White Mountain Fire Contingency (AFDA Position: TBD) Sponsor: Rep. Wal Blackman (R-7, Snowflake) Appropriates \$9,000,000 from the state general fund in FY25-26 to the DFFM to distribute to the following entities: \$3,000,000 to Taylor-Snowflake Fire and Medical Dept.; \$3,000,000 to City of Show Low; \$3,000,000 City of Pinetop-Lakeside for a fire contingency program.
 - HB 2400: Appropriation; fire contingency program; Payson (AFDA Position: TBA) Sponsor: Rep. Wal Blackman (R-7, Snowflake) Appropriates \$5,000,000 from the state general fund in FY25-26 to the DFFM to distribute to the city of Payson for a fire contingency program.
 - HB 2457: Fire districts; formation; county supervisors (AFDA Position: TBA) Sponsor: Rep. David Marshall (R-7, Snowflake) Provides an alternate method of formation (by election) in rural counties under specified conditions. Authorization expires December 31, 2027.
 - SB 1149: Appropriation; fire incident management grants (AFDA Position: TBD) Sponsor: Senator Gowan (R-19, Sierra Vista) Appropriate \$6,500,000 from the state general fund in FY25-26 to DOA to award grants for fire management platform. Note HB 2456 is House mirror bill.
- AFDA Updates – Legislative updates.
 - AFDA Board Meeting scheduled for February 6, 2025.

OLD BUSINESS

None

NEW BUSINESS

Board Member Vacancy and Appointment Process – Discussion and possible direction to Staff regarding the Board Vacancy and Appointment Process.

Chief Johnson stated that the Board vacancy was not filled during the last election. He mentioned that the District received one candidate's application, but it was submitted after the posted deadline. Chief Johnson stated the District's attorney recommended reopening the application process.

Board Member Gilboy asked if the candidate was aware that their application was submitted after the posted deadline. Chief Johnson confirmed that they were and informed the candidate that we would let them know the Board decision.

Board Member Bishop made a motion to reopen the application process. Board Clerk Brummett seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Chief Johnson stated there would be a Special Session on Tuesday, February 18, 2025, for candidate interviews. Board Member Gilboy stated that she would be unable to attend the Special Session.

Resolution 2025-03 – Discussion and possible adoption of Resolution 2025-03 approving an Intergovernmental Agreement with Central Arizona Fire and Medical Authority for Telecommunications Services.

Chief Johnson stated that the Verde Valley Fire District is in need of telecommunications services to support and maintain critical public safety communications equipment, systems, and infrastructure. He explained that this Intergovernmental Agreement (IGA) will allow Verde Valley Fire District to obtain these services from Central Arizona Fire and Medical District (CAFMA). Chief Johnson further noted that the IGA has already been approved by the CAFMA's Board and was drafted by the District's attorney Nicolas Cornelius.

Board Member Gilboy made a motion to adopt Resolution 2025-03 approving an Intergovernmental Agreement with Central Arizona Fire and Medical Authority for Telecommunications Services. Board Member Brummett seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Resolution 2025-04 – Discussion and possible adoption of Resolution 2025-04 approving an Intergovernmental Agreement with Copper Canyon Fire and Medical District for Fire Prevention Services.

Chief Johnson stated that Verde Valley Fire District is currently in need of Fire Prevention Services following the resignation of our Fire Inspector. He stated Fire Inspector Lopez accepted a position with Scottsdale Fire Department and that we will miss him. Chief Johnson stated to address this gap, Staff is proposing an Intergovernmental Agreement (IGA) with Copper Canyon Fire and Medical District (CCFMD) to provide these services through their Fire Marshal. Chief Johnson further explained that Staff is recommending a monthly stipend of \$2,000, which would be payable to CCFMD to cover the cost of these services and related expense. He noted that this stipend will save the District money by providing necessary assistance without the need to fill the position with a full-time employee at this time.

Board Member Bishop made a motion to adopt Resolution 2025-04 approving an Intergovernmental Agreement with Copper Canyon Fire and Medical District for Fire Prevention Services. Board Member Brummett seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

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

ADJOURNMENT. With no further business before the Board, the meeting adjourned at 6:21 p.m.

Submitted By:

Approved:

Ashley Hammond, Administrative Specialist

Donald Peck, Board Chairman

Attest:

Robert Brummett, Board Clerk

DRAFT