

**Minutes to the regular meeting of the Board of Directors of the Sonoita-Elgin Fire District  
December 17, 2012  
6:00 p.m.**

**Call to order:** the meeting was recorded

**Pledge of Allegiance**

**Roll Call of Board Members:** Present; Izzo, Bianchi & Pfitzenmaier, Rinaldi & Berry

**Election of Officers** – Pfitzenmaier nominates Jerry Bianchi for Treasurer, seconded by Rinaldi, elected by acclimation; Jerry Bianchi motioned Pfitzenmaier to be Clerk, seconded by Rinaldi, elected by Acclimation; Jerry Bianchi motioned Izzo to be Chairman, seconded by Pfitzenmaier, elected by Acclimation.

**Approval of the minutes;**

November 18 & 29<sup>th</sup>, 2012 – Motion by Bianchi to accept minutes from both meetings, seconded by Pfitzenmaier, motion carried; Rinaldi & Berry abstained as they were not present for the meeting.

**Old Business -  
Chief's Report**

**Out & About** – on the 6<sup>th</sup> I was at the SCC Fire & EMS meeting, we're updating our forms and contact lists; we were also notified of a drug shortage of D50, charcoal and Epi-Pens – we're fine with it (our stock) but it is statewide. We're also working on updating our infection control report. On the 8<sup>th</sup> I was at the Arizona Fire District Association meeting, one of the big topics there is financial – oversight of fire districts. What they're looking to change is have a new auditor every three years. They are trying to break the districts that have an auditor for 10-15 years – so every 3<sup>rd</sup> year we'll have to get a new auditor. As the final comes out I'll let you know. ACCHS was uncoupled from DHS last year and can set their own rates. Right now it is set at 10%. AFDA and the Ambulance Association are trying to change it back to being attached to DHS to go back to DHS rates. Arizona state wildland – for billing - if we go out of state the state fronts the money for the FEDS, they don't want to do that anymore, they want us to carry the note ourselves and wait until the Feds pay the state before the state pays us. By law we would be responsible for paying our fire fighters up front, so we would be spending money up front long before we were reimbursed.

Arizona Fire District Conference is in January, if you are interested please contact Katie. Bianchi – Chief what is the fraud they are going to be presenting there? DeWolf – everything from theft, billing, firefighters falsely representing themselves – everything. Santa Cruz County Dispatch – we have put together a timeline on items we (districts) need corrected. We meet again in January. I think it is a good spot for us. January and February we'll meet on the fourth Monday of each month due to federal holidays. The Open Meeting Law Class is next month (January), right now we have Jennifer, Larry, Tony, Myself and Katie are going. If anyone else is interested in going get with Katie and we'll get you on the roster. It will be posted as we will have a quorum at the meeting. Our septic system is done, complete, in the ground, and we are flushing toilets. We had a budget of \$20,000, last month the Board approved \$24,887; we did have a problem. The water line had been leaking for years, they rerouted it and fixed it for us. I did get a donation of \$3000 to put towards the septic system. Right now we're over budget by \$1,587.62. We still have split rail fence to put in to block it

off so no one can drive over it. This end is done and barriers have been laid to keep vehicles off of the field. We can walk on it but we cannot drive apparatus on it. Pleased to say it's up and running. Website – we had 617 hits; our highest day was the 5<sup>th</sup> followed by the 19<sup>th</sup>.

We had 36 runs last month, 23 day, 3 night, 3 simultaneous runs. Year to date is 434; 34 helicopter, 151 ambulance in district and 75 out of district.

We've been covering this the last few months, it is a leadership program for Captains, an interactive course with James Rowan is going well; we're in our 5<sup>th</sup> month. It's going really well, we're getting a lot of feedback from it. The Battalion and I, we get together once a month and work with Chief Officers around the nation. We've worked with this gentleman, Grow your Captains, has been going on for three years now. We feel it has been very successful so far.

The Ready, Set, Go! Program is going well; we continue to get the word out. This is the time of year to trim their trees up and mow their lawns. We try to get a different message out every few months. We do it with our breakfasts and other public events.

Our Finances are right on track; we got \$190,304 (for taxes) from Santa Cruz County. Our ambulances, as we've seen over the last few months, we are low this month in ambulance income. We only brought in about \$12,000. On the expense side, as we talked about we are a little high on vehicle expenses, but otherwise there are no surprises, everything is right on track.

Fuels Mitigation – we're hitting a slump at the moment, but thanks to an article by Betty Barr in the paper, we got another participant. We have put out a new style of newsletter and we have gotten one call already because of it. Low and behold we did get a call today. I'm sure that when we get our first fire on the ground, people will call readily.

Grant Reviews – Chief DeWolf reviewed the grants – active, closed and potential – that the District is involved with or potentially will be involved with as he had done the past two months. There has been no change in the status of these grants. Grants Discussed – current - SAFER Stipend; Fuels Treatment Grant; closing – Fuels Treatment Lyle; Fuels Treatment Casas Arroyos; potential – SAFER Apparatus/Equipment; SAFER Fire Fighters; SAFER Stipend Personnel; SAFER Building. Pfitzenmaier – That was a really important grant that \$54,000. (referring to the SAFER Stipend Grant) I was understanding that there was nothing coming after this grant. DeWolf – this grant goes on every year; we cannot take one grant and just supplement it with another to keep the program going. It can't be to continue a grant. Rinaldi – so once the grant runs out it is our responsibility to continue the payroll. DeWolf – that is the plan of the grant, yes.

Appreciation Evening – January 26, 2013, from 5:30 – 8 pm....at the station. It will be out in the bay again. This is an evening we show our appreciation for all volunteers and staff and includes our fundraising girls and guys, our dispatchers, everyone. Dinner is included. That's all I have unless you have any questions.

### **Old Business -**

**Grant Policy Change** –submitted by Bianchi. **DeWolf** - Jerry wanted to put it under financials, these are the board policies – this is what the board policies would say. **Bianchi** - The idea behind this is I have proposed the policy change, so that the board members would know before a grant was applied for what all the information concerning that grant is. We would have an obligation for if we were awarded that grant for whatever the terms of the grant were. Until, last month is when you

started the grant information, **DeWolf** - I've been doing it for three months, Bianchi - anyway the Board would not the Chief has sent the grant off and the Board would not know and now the Chief is giving us some good information on this. If you notice the one grant they're working on, came in on the 17<sup>th</sup> our meeting day - let's say it came in on the 18<sup>th</sup> so we would not know about it before it was sent off. The idea would be that the Chief would provide the information requested in the form of an email to all board members so we would be aware of what the grant would involve. Rinaldi - to review it... **Bianchi** - well to review what the Chief sends us. So we would be aware of it and if it was necessary the Board could hold a special meeting before the grant was sent in.

**Izzo** - Are you finished there? What I mean here is we need a motion and a second on the table.

**Bianchi** - I move that we put this issue on the table.

**Rinaldi** - I second.

**Izzo** - When I looked at this first I was hoping the intent was that the Board actually approved the grant application. The reason I say that is because the grant application is essentially a contract, so I would like to suggest that we add insert here - email to the Board to be discussed and considered at a regular or special Board meeting. Chief I would ask you for your comment on that because I know it could be a real problem.

**Chief** - There could be a problem with timing, but one thing I've discussed before and in our Board Policies the fact that even if we write this grant and send it off, there is no obligation to the district until the grant is accepted. That's when the obligation comes up. So if I send off a grant today, and it was a 90/10 match, the Board/District is obligated to nothing until they contact us and say will you accept this grant. The other thing is that it has to go through our budget process. We can't accept the grant that the match isn't in the budget. So there's a catch system that we have already which is the budget process and the fact that we can refuse the grant right up to the day that they award it. We can say we don't want it.

**Izzo** - So what are you saying?

**DeWolf** - so I think we're pressuring the board in to a short amount of time to try to make a decision that isn't necessary. I think the decision can come in the process of what I'm doing on the PowerPoint to keep you up on the grants that are coming in - stating that this grant we're going to apply for it. However we won't know anything on this grant, it will be September of next year (2013), so in that length of time we have to present the budget, present the budget to the community, get input on it, adopt it, now we're funded. And even when we're funded for it we still can say no.

**Izzo** - Why would we want you to do an application that the Board had considered would be a good idea? Why would we even want you to do that?

**DeWolf** - I'm saying that, it would be presented and it always has been - all grants have been presented to the Board up front even before they've been submitted. What would be said is that. He's the grant up here, this is the grant that's open, I could have said tonight, this is what I'd like to apply for and the Board can say yeah or nay.

**Izzo** - But this is asking for more information than this is what you'd like to apply for. It's asking for a little bit more detailed information than here's what we'd like to apply for we could either say we would support it or this is not a good idea. And tonight you've mentioned the one grant, there was another one up there, let's say the remodel. Isn't it a good idea that the Board would be behind you from the get go rather than wait 'till the grants awarded?

**DeWolf** - But it would be though Ron, because if I was going to apply for that grant tonight we'd be discussing what we're going to apply for.

**Izzo** - So this really isn't anything different?

**DeWolf** - Right, it's no difference at all.

Pfizenmaier - I don't think we should apply for a grant that we in good faith have every intention of accepting. In other words, Chief, your argument or your point that we haven't accepted it that we

haven't agreed to the grant agreement until we sign on the dotted line is true of course, but we shouldn't submit the grant unless we believe we would in fact sign if it's granted. But I'm personally comfortable with what, the way you have presented the grant, the proposed grant, the hypothetical grant, I think we'd all like to know what's on the plate and that's what you have just done. What I see in this modification to the policy are some specific easily stated metrics associated with each grant. If you provide us with these just as this requests then it would meet my needs. If I knew this prior to the discussion we had on grants this evening or the next meeting, I would feel armed and prepared to talk about it.

**Bianchi** – not only that I would like to have an email with this data so I can maintain it – uh how many of you can tell me which was a 10% matching grant that you saw tonight. I couldn't. But if we've got a hard or electronic copy on our computer then we could review it any time we want. That's why I would like to have this emailed.

**Rinaldi** – I'm inclined to agree with you there. Because a lot of times the wording of these things is so confusing it would be nice to have it in front of you and not to waste the time of going through the process if you know the budget is tight, we don't have the finances to even do a 10% match.

**DeWolf** – That's correct. I don't have a problem with it at all, the information is and has been presented to the Board.

**Izzo** – any further discussion?

**Pfitzenmaier** – I'd like to move that we accept the text of the policy as stated on the draft in front of us.

**Izzo** – We already have the motion and a second and I made a recommendation for a change.

**Bianchi** – Could you repeat your change to me Ron, did you want to strike that last sentence or just replace it or...

**Izzo** – No, insert after discussed... "and considered."

**Bianchi** - ... discussed and considered...

**Izzo** – so it would be clear that we're voting on it. If there is no further discussion I'll call for the question. All those in favor; Bianchi, Rinaldi, Berry & Izzo were Aye; Pfitzenmaier was Nay, motion carried.

**New Business** – discussion about the Fire District providing a land lease to the Chamber of Commerce for an electronic marquee.

**Bianchi** – you've got a picture of it Ron in your package. When I was on the Chamber of Commerce Board, one of my duties was to apply for grants. I applied to the Pasqual Yaqui Tribe for a grant so we could put a community marquee up and the purpose of that marquee would be to inform residents as well as tourists, what's going on in the community. It would be an electronic board so it would be easy to change it, and it would be available to basically anybody in the community. It would be a double sided electronic board so people could see it coming and going. The grant we were awarded was not enough to do the whole thing so we've got community support from contractors to supply materials and some labor to complete it. The sign would look like what you see going into the fairgrounds across the top here. It would be approximately 10 feet high; the signboard portion of it would be about 4'X9'. All this is going to need permits and things like that. The Chamber will take care of all of the costs. We're would need electricity obviously going to it and I'm told we can put a meter on there that will say how much power this sign used in a given period of time and then when the fire department go their bill for electricity the chamber would pay for the portion of the electric bill. The Chamber would insure the Fire Department on it, and all maintenance would be done by the Chamber.

**Pfitzenmaier** – Jerry, could I interrupt you here for a minute.

**Bianchi** – Yeah.

**Pfitzenmaier** – What we're talking about here is the Fire Districts teaming with site facilities... a site for this, what I want to understand is we're not here to debate the sign, color or size, that's all over. That was a Chamber issue.

**Bianchi** - Well it could be, for example... if the Board didn't like the concept as presented then that would be an issue here tonight.

**Pfitzenmaier** – I just wanted to understand the ground rules of our discussion regarding this issue re here tonight.

**Bianchi** – If the Board thinks it's a good idea, then we would vote to have a land lease and this would set it in motion, working with the Chief first of all, we need to choose a location where we could have that. Then we'd have to have an agreement, a formal lease, it would have to be a long term lease, because we're going to have involved in this thing somewhere between \$35,000 and \$40,000. So it's nothing we want to put up every two years and say okay we're going to take it down.

**Rinaldi** – So where's this going to be?

**Bianchi** – Somewhere on the Fire Department property.

**Pfitzenmaier** – As you were saying to me earlier, that's after a look at other possible alternatives – you just didn't land on the Fire District as the only alternative, others have been looked at.

**Bianchi** – The ideal spot would be at the crossroads – the problem there is that - Letarte - their parking lot is highway right-of-way; the Steak Out has no room what-so-ever because they go right up to the highway; over by the post office there are other signs over there and it would require every tenants over there to sign off on it, which would make it very cumbersome. Over by the Long Realty east side office, if you put it in there, it's too big and it would come right up into their landscaping. So it's going to be on a major highway, and that to me is Highway 83. Also looking at the Church across the street, the problem there is the long term lease – if they decide they want to build a school or something there and they want to take up that space, then they're going to say move it. And that doesn't work with a long term commitment.

**Izzo** – Let me add a couple more things. The Chamber, Jerry in particular, has been working on this a little over two years. The Grant is from the Pasqual Yaqui Tribe for \$25,000. The Chamber of Commerce is a non-profit organization. The Chamber, i.e. Jerry, has actually been in formal negotiations with two other locations and for various reasons those people have put terms and conditions on or had not wanted the sign there and so it kinda leaves us to this. It is a community sign and is for the community. As Jerry mentioned, the idea is that non-profits would be able to list without a fee; for-profits would be paying a fee, the money would go to the Chamber, which is a non-profit itself and that fee would go to pay the support, electricity, etcetera. So what the Chamber is asking for is a lease for this to be placed in a suitable location to be worked out with the Chief, that's visible on Highway 83. There aren't a lot of locations people.

**Pfitzenmaier** – So we're talking, Ron, a lease of the land that the footprint that this would cover.

**Izzo** – the lease doesn't spell out the dimensions of the sign, Jerry?

**Bianchi** – That's right, the sign is 2 feet, the overall length is, I would guess, would be 12 feet. So we're looking for 2'X12'.

**Pfitzenmaier** – My question here is regardless of our view of the propriety of the sign or what the sign says, I consider the Fire District to be community property, public property, ownership, I realize it was donated a number of years ago, but we all have a vested ownership in the Fire District, why in fact would we lease property for this endeavor rather than donating it. If we agree the concept has value, is it our position to charge for putting a sign up on District property?

**Izzo** – the Chamber is asking for no fee.

**Bianchi** - it would be one of those things like... for \$10 and other valuable consideration... it would not be a large amount of money. But it would have to be a lease because I don't think the Fire District or this Board wants to give that piece of property to the Chamber of Commerce. We either have to lease it from the owner or we have to own it.

**Pfitzenmaier** – but we could allow the Chamber of Commerce to place their sign on our property. Without giving up any ownership. That's what a lease does, it gives you the right to use something.

**Pfitzenmaier** – Okay, I was assuming the lease had a cash flow associated with it.

**Bianchi** – No, an initial payment that would be a nominal amount of money and no cost at all to the District.

**Izzo** – A local attorney has written up the lease - there is an actual lease document. So, do you want to make that a motion.

**Bianchi** – I'd like to make a motion that we move forward with this, we being the Chamber, and that would be me, with the Chief, to continue with this, I believe it's a feasible thing, I believe it's a beneficial to the Fire Department as a community effort and people will be looking over at it all the time.

**Izzo** – is there a second?

**Pfitzenmaier** – Point of order, this is approaching discussion, right?

**Izzo** – Right.

**Pfitzenmaier** – I second. Discussion?

**Izzo** – So now were open for discussion. I would ask the Chief, any comments on this?

**DeWolf** – Actually, I have a couple. One is, I don't think as a District we can do this. I think we are a taxing district and we are not – we can't obligate our taxpayers into something like this. I would recommend that we talk to our District Attorney and ask them about it. My second question on it is – I think the sign is a good idea – the District property is my concern and obligating the District to pay for it which we are – because if the Chamber, which has not been very active, does not pay the electricity then we have to use tax-payer money to pay the electricity. Which we're...

**Izzo** – we don't have a separate meter?

**Bianchi** – Well we could determined, can he be sure he's going to get a check for it.

**Izzo** – can we have a separate meter so if the Chamber doesn't pay then it could be turned off?

**DeWolf** – and then we're stuck with this huge sign that we can't do anything with – and again obligating District property to something that we have no control over. What happens when, and I'm playing a little devil's advocate here, what happens when the Rotary comes forward and says they want to put a sign up? We're now obligated to do it because we've already done it for one non-profit. My first question would be I'd like to contact the District's Attorney, here's what's been presented, can we even do it.

**Izzo** – Can we lease the land?

**DeWolf** – Correct.

**Izzo** – so what are other options, if the Board decides this is a good idea, what are the other options; allow the Chamber to install it and this be part of the Fire District, the Chamber manages it for the District, enters into some kind of agreement with the District other than a formal lease.

**DeWolf** – That could be, my other question would be, we're going to let profits and not-for-profits use it, what's going to be said across that sign? And it's representing us ... come to Mikes and get smashed... its far-fetched, but truly we have no control over it. Like I say, I think we need to find out if the District can even enter into something like this.

**Izzo** – Well, we may not be able to lease the land, I agree with that, we may or may not be able to do that, but we certainly could enter into some sort of arrangement with the Chamber where we could permit the sign to be there, even if we have to give you oversight on what's going to be on the sign. You know, because it's going to be in our best interests – because it's on our property we want to have approval on what's on the sign.

**Bianchi** – well, I don't know about the approval part of that. I would like to see us proceed, first of all, to see if we can do it. So Chief, if you could arrange a teleconference I'd be glad to be there to answer questions that she may raise at the time. Then maybe we can proceed at that point. If it cannot be done, then there's no point going forward. If it can be done...

**DeWolf** – then how it can be done...

**Bianchi** – the Chamber is not going to allow anything like come on over and get smashed, there will be no political statements...

**DeWolf** – is that all stated on the contract?

**Bianchi** – It can be.

**Rinaldi** – there could even be a bond or some sort of monies put up

**Bianchi** – well I don't know about that.

**Rinaldi** – not a bond, I'm using the wrong terminology, but there could be some monies set aside bills and what might happen. Escrow.

**DeWolf** – Seventeen years in the community and I've watched our Chamber come sky high and crash down and go sky high again. The low parts are my concerns, we're obligating tax-payer's money for something that's not.. we can't go out and loan money to Michael to keep his lights on how do we do it to the Chamber.

**Izzo** – my thoughts are we do provide a certain community service. For example, this room is used by the community, we do provide some community service, this really is not any different. Maybe instead of thinking separate we ought to be thinking how we can work with community organizations. Maybe it can be something the Fire District does. Maybe the Fire District controls the sign. I'm just thinking of ways we could work together and not separately. Because we have a precedent of providing community services – such as this room and certainly we go to the fair and rodeo – we're essentially not committing tax-payer dollars when we do that, I can't see this as a commitment of tax-payer dollars. I do agree there needs to be some sort of provision...what happens if the Chamber does dissolve, can't pay the electric bill in there, maybe we say this is good for the community and this is something the District ought to do. We're going to use this thing a lot – the District's going to be a big user – of this kind of a marquee.

**DeWolf** – I think – besides talking to our attorney, I think we ought to site it and see even if we could put it – I've looked at our for a couple days since I got this and I'm thinking where the heck – and I didn't even know how big it was. Where are you going to put this so that it's visible? Unless we go out front and cut all these trees down – and I did that 10 years ago and I don't want to be the one to cut them down because the community came unglued. So, is there even going to be a place we can set this with the set-backs off the property line that the county will require us to do that will even be visible. 'Cause there are trees in the county right-of-way that you may not see it until you're dead on top of it. So, do we even have a place to put this.

**Izzo** – If there are trees in the state right-of-way – it is state right-of-way..

**DeWolf** - yes

**Izzo** – is it difficult to get them removed.

**DeWolf** –were you here when the turmoil was when they cut the trees down on the Double JK?

**Izzo** – So, that's an issue?

**DeWolf** – Oh Yeah.

**Izzo** – Jerry, can this be continued with those two things, potential locations and conference with the attorney?

**Bianchi** – Absolutely. As I stated earlier if the Board is willing to go forward, I could meet with the Chief and look for a place to put it.

**Izzo** – so we'll continue this without a vote.

**Bianchi** – that's fine, sure.

**DeWolf** - Do you have the set-backs from the county, Jerry, how far it has to be off property lines?

**Bianchi** – I think it only has to be on your property, but I'll double-check that Chief.

**DeWolf** – Okay, set-backs; we'll also look at additional costs, we have no power on the north side of the building. All our power would have to come from here, we'd have to trench – I don't know how we'd get the power out there.

**Izzo** – well that's the Chamber's department.

**DeWolf** – to get across the property line you'd have to cut our slabs. Those are things Jerry we can start to look into.

**Bianchi** – I wasn't looking for a decision yeah go do it, what I was looking for a discussion of the feasibility and if we would consider it.

**Izzo** – Let's move on to the Audit Committee Report.

**Audit Committee Report – Bianchi** – Okay, that's me too. The Audit Committee met because we finally got the audited statements on the June 30, 2012 fiscal year end. Basically speaking it's pretty much the same verbiage as last year except they put a lot more boilerplate in it. They again said that they could not give an opinion according to normal standards of the United States Accounting because this is cash-basis it's not accrual. Arizona state law does allow for fire districts to do cash-basis which is what we do. Based on that the auditors opinion was... in our opinion the financial statements referred to above present fairly in all material respects the cash balances of general fund of the District as of June 30<sup>th</sup>, 2012, and the respective revenues collected, expenses paid and change in the fund balance for the year ended on the basis of accounting described in note 1 (cash-basis). So we are given the best recommendation or opinion from the auditors for the system we use here in the Fire District. I verified the in the financial statements the auditor presented with the June financial statements that were presented to the Board and the public in July and the numbers all agree. The auditors had one small change to make, a payment was made for the ambulances and when the check was cut it had a June date on it and they backed that out into July which is one that really belongs in the fiscal year. Other than that it's a good statement. Katie do we have any copies here. If somebody wants just the financial statements and the auditor's opinion we can make that available to you. If you want the full-blown magillicuddy here, you're going to have to pay for that copy, there are a lot of pages there and we would not be able to make that available free of charge. Least that would be my recommendation that we don't do that. Now I don't believe we have to take a vote on this at all. If there are any questions.

**Pfitzenmaier** – Jerry's patience was tried more than Terry's and mine on more than one occasion when the auditor was non-responsive, we have what we paid for and we have what we wanted but it wasn't easy getting it. Chief was involved in that also. Uh, which isn't the way business should be done. It's interesting to recall the Chief's comments earlier that fire districts will be looking at changing auditors every three years – we may be changing – we have a draft RFP we're looking at looking toward another audit firm for some pretty good reasons. That was part of the audit this year that we had to deal with.

**Bianchi** – there was a lot of difficulty in communicating with these auditors, and I don't understand why, but it was very difficult in getting them to return phone calls and things of that nature. We're going to be looking at maybe doing a change on that, we being the Audit Committee. And if we do, we'll make a recommendation to the Board at that point. Chief, anything you want to add on this?

**DeWolf** – Just another great year on an audit. We came out good.

**Izzo** – no discussion or questions on that item? We'll move on to audience comments; Mr. Pete Daniels.

### **Audience Comments:**

Pete Daniels – To start with I'd like to congratulate our new Board members and also like to express my sincere appreciation to Mr. Izzo for running again, congratulations on his re-election. You folks have a daunting challenge in front of you. As Board members of our Fire District you are the in-between point, the middle person, between the benefit to our community and the needs to the Fire District. It's not an easy position to fill and I recognize that. It's my understanding that the Chief has

said he would be ordering the latest version of the Fire District Association Handbook for each of you in January, I believe. I highly recommend that you study that well when you get your copy, that's kind of the bible for running fire districts in this state. But in addition to that I'm here to plead with you, we got, we formed our fire district in 2006, we made some pretty incredible progress, in my opinion, but we've also had some weak spots. I think one of the weak spots that I recognize, and this is only my opinion and mine alone, is that there has been some weakness between the function of the Board and that of the Fire Chief. That's been evidenced from comments from community members at the Board meetings, and to address those things I highly recommend that each of you take the personal responsibility, rather than just to sit for an hour or two a month at a Board meeting, to spend some time developing a personal relationship with the Chief getting to understand the issues; to review the materials sent to you prior to the meeting; be prepared to make an intelligent choice at the meetings for the benefit of the community. To assist in that effort, I would highly recommend that this Board consider the possibility of study sessions prior to Board meetings for critical items. Earlier this year there was a study session for the budget that was very, very productive. A study session, and I'm sure your Chair Mr. Izzo is very familiar with study sessions, give the opportunity for Board members to ask questions, request information that they may feel they need or not have initially before considering an important issue. I'm not saying you need a study session for every meeting but when important issues that can impact the District as far as budgetary concerns, potential liability to the District, I would highly recommend you consider scheduling a study session. Since we became a District and especially during this last election, there's been a lot of discussion about community involvement in the activities of the Fire District. Study sessions also give community members an additional opportunity to provide their input. I understand this is a challenge in our community, that a lot of community members don't get involved in local issues, they could care less but there are many that do care and I think if we expanded their opportunities to participate in this process, it would benefit the community and the Fire District ultimately.

The other challenge I would place before you I would really, really recommend that this Board in the very near future work with the Chief to establish a formal long-range plan for the District. The Fire Chief is your employee; he's your direct employee. You are required by statute to provide an evaluation of his performance on an annual basis. How do you do that and how has it been done in the past? It's been very arbitrary. I would recommend, I would suggest that a long-range plan be the basis for a clearly stated set of standards for our Fire Chief on what his performance evaluation will be based on. Short of that, it's nothing more than a popularity contest. Do you like the Chief, do you like what he's doing, we haven't been sued, there's no claims against the District, I guess he's doing a good job. We're meeting our calls, but a long range plan, and I know we're a public entity and we're not a business, but if we were to run more as a business and have a long range plan – we've been kind of stymied the last several years, the last four or five years because of the collapse of the housing in our economy. When we formed the Fire District we were looking at a very significant growth in this area and a lot of our budget projections were based on that growth, that didn't happen. Now we're in a holding pattern, the Fire Chief, his staff and you folks as a Board, and the previous Boards, have tried very hard to do everything we can to maintain services to our community without an excessive budget increase. We need to be prepared to add services when the community grows if and when that happens – as I'm sure it will. I certainly can't say when, but we need to be positioned... if we get caught behind the eight ball and caught short, it's going to be very difficult for us, the Department and the community.

As far as the study sessions, this goes directly to a comment made last month by Mr. Soliere about the Board being in a position to make decisions without adequate information, sometimes putting the Chief on the Spot, I think study sessions would go a long way to alleviate that potential conflict. But, consider doing study sessions on important issues and get with the program and make

a long-range plan that the Board can adopt. You can be flexible, you can change it at a later meeting, but at least get a road map – where are we going and how are we going to get there? Thank you very much.

**Izzo** – Thank you Mr. Daniels.

**Jerry Linderman** – Sonoita for the past 16-17 years. There is some concern among members of the community as to the placing of the contract of the septic going out of the community when the feeling is that there were or are some contractors in this area that could have performed this service. That's what I wanted to say. Was it all on a level playing ground.

**Izzo** – we normally don't conduct business by that kind of a format, but in this particular case we're asking a specific question. Would any Board member like to address it if not I'll refer it to the Chief. Chief, the specific question is what was done to solicit bids and were local businesses considered? It was presented at last months' meeting – the people that were asked to submit bids and those that submitted bids. Kinda go over that real quick.

**DeWolf** – we opened it up for the bidding process, We did have four local contractors apply, submit bids and we had one out of town. The lowest bidder was local, and he withdrew his bid last month just before the contract was awarded. The next lowest bid was somebody that was out of town and there was a huge ... Izzo – what was the difference? DeWolf - \$10,000 difference between vendor that we had do it and the next-lowest bidder.

**Izzo** – was there not one of two local contractors that did not want to consider doing this?

**DeWolf** – Yes, there were two that gave us bids originally and two that declined bidding. So we wound up with one out of town and two local bids. One local guy was the low bidder and was going to be awarded the contract, and withdrew his bid. The next local guy was \$10,000 higher than the one we accepted.

**Izzo** – do we feel like we contacted all local bidders – all local businesses were given an opportunity?

**DeWolf** – Yes.

**Linderman** – were all local options explored without putting in the new septic system?

**DeWolf** – Kevin go ahead and answer that.

Venos – Jerry, at first our primary goal was to just repair and extend the system, and we were working with a local person in doing the exploration that, doing the digging, percolation holes, we spent quite a bit of money doing percolation holes to the north end of the property, maybe having to pipe it around, getting it into a new area of percolation that maybe this area was getting too saturated. We did an incredible amount of work with that local person, then on top of that we brought in a local volunteer, who is in this room tonight, who also did exploration with regards to percolation. Several phone calls were made down to the county with regards to the repair of a failed system and with regards to the responsibilities of today's septic systems and then it moved on to the state level because the county at one point said this is beyond our abilities you're going to need to work with ADEQ. ADEQ were the ones to do the final plan review and the final plan check based on the requirements, today, of the septic system. Our thoughts in the beginning were that we would be able to extend the leach fields into a new virgin area, and those fields would not percolate, nor would the fields on the north side, the additional three acres that was granted to us this last two years ago by the Vera Earl. We were going to try to put the fields over there and just pipe it around. So a lot work and effort went in using a local person to do that exploration. Then after we made the determination that it was going to need to be an alternative system, I did week's worth of research into what types of alternative systems would work best with this soil, and did enough research to find a company that provided the materials for several systems that went into our area and that worked in our type of soil. Based on that, that particular vendor worked with two of the companies

that bid on the final system that was chosen. There was a lot of, we've got almost two years of work into this system right now, since we first knew that it was failed.

**Linderman** – Are you saying that the supplies that were necessary to do the job came from one source and the bidders were limited to using that source for supplies?

**Izzo** – An engineer was retained when the system failed, investigations into extending the leach field indicated that that could not be done, an engineer was retained to design this system that had to be approved by the state, and that's what was bid. Am I correct?

**Venos** – Yes.

**Lindeman** – So you had...the plans went into the bid.

**Izzo** – Yeah. We're not taking it lightly, we've been at it for two years. We've been pumping the tank...

**Venos** – Monthly for over a year and a half.

**Linderman** – May I add another thought that was going on while the meeting was going on? That has nothing to do with the septic system.

**Izzo** – Certainly.

**Linderman** – Why would we as a community want an electronic sign on the corner of 82 & 83. And if you're going to have public service messages up there, how do you limit them to exclude.. beware of safe sex, or you know, don't drink and drive and that sort of thing? This Sonoita is not what we came here for fifteen seventeen years ago.

**Izzo** – Thank you very much.

Gary Soliere – This is directed to the Chief – Chief, The CTI trucks that go up and down the road. I've never noticed a HAZMAT sticker on them or anything else. They're tarped, and I know they are carrying dirt, but this dirt is going to Mexico. What my question is, is do you think there's any hazardous materials in this stuff and if there are, and if there are you capable if there is a wreck.

**DeWolf** – Very capable of taking charge. In the state of Arizona anything that is hazardous material has to be placarded. That's all we can deal with it. We can't give fines, we can't have people placard trucks have to be placarded. If they are going across and you'll see DPS pulling over and scaling trucks and doing all kinds of checks on them. If they check them they pay fines.

**Izzo** – is there a hazmat trailer?

**DeWolf** – no, that's a mass-casualty trailer.

**Izzo** – how are we prepared for a HAZMAT spill on the highway?

**DeWolf** – as far as ICing the call, we have all the qualifications to do that. We are all First Responder HAZMAT, we have no HAZMAT Techs. Basically what we do is secure scenes and bring in a Tech Team from Tucson or Sierra Vista is where we get our Tech Team from. The reason for that, is to put a Tech on this department, first of all to have a Tech Team you have to have 5 or more, costs \$5,000 or more per person. We don't deal with enough HAZMAT to burden the community with that type of bill.

**Soliere** – and one other thing and I'll direct this to the Board; on the marquee sign. I thought there were valid points on both sides, I thought Wow the Board's making sense, then the Chief wow he's making sense, good valid points, nice discussion. Thank you.

**Izzo** – Thank you. Okay, Board member comments.

Board member comments –

**Bianchi** – I appreciate your taking the time, Mr. Linderman, for coming down to express your opinion to the Board and get some information. If more community members would do that sort of thing, then the community would be informed as to what's going on in the Fire District. So I appreciate your taking time and having done that.

Rinaldi – I have one comment. Just an FYI about the mailing that came out. I got mine on Friday, just having information having to do with the Fire District – I thought it was good information but I want to say I was stopped by a couple of citizens and they were upset about by the price of that particular mailing. I thought it was my job to mention that.

DeWolf – The what?

Rinaldi – The price. The mailing, it's an expensive mailing.

DeWolf – it was half of our regular mailing. We generally send out a four-page newsletter – this was half the cost.

Izzo – What was the cost? The postage?

Goodwin - \$179.00.

Rinaldi – I need to know these things to say to people this is what this particular item costs and this is part of the budget. I need that information.

DeWolf – It is in the budget, right at the bottom under communications to residents. It all comes out of there. We aggressively went after a newsletter a year ago and the Board actually wrote policy on it. We even tried advertisement to lessen the cost. We got a couple of responses but no continuing response throughout the community. We did see these and did talk about two months ago at the Board meeting that we weren't going to do our regular mailing that we were going to go to this due to cost savings.

**Rinaldi** – okay that's the kind of information I need to know to forward to people that ask about it.

**Pfitzenmaier** – Jennifer I might add that it's my experience, it's always a balance to explain to our customers that we're both trying to keep them informed - for which we're sometimes were accused of not doing enough of and holding costs to an absolute minimum. And that's going to continue, nothing is going to change that dynamic and that tension.

**Rinaldi** – Absolutely and I just need to be armed with the facts and know what the budget was and how to respond.

**Pfitzenmaier** – People like Mr. Linderman and others who are here and others who have been her in the past, they're the ones taking the time to be privileged to learn what we're doing and why we're doing it like we talked about today. That might be a suggestion to stop on by some Monday.

**Izzo** – If we look at, it's line 144 in the profit and loss, glad you brought that up, maybe we budgeted too much. So it will be something to consider in our review this next budget. We budgeted \$4,517 and we've spent \$781. Looks like we might spend \$1,500.

**DeWolf** – We'll probably get two more out so we'll probably be up. Also, for the new Board members, we have an Audit Committee that I work with and they work with me, we also have a Newsletter Committee, its Ron Izzo and Larry Pfitzenmaier, they develop and work the newsletter with me and my staff.

**Izzo** – All we do is review the stuff he sends. Add Jennifer to that committee.

**DeWolf** – it's technically not a committee...

**Izzo** – yes, include...

**DeWolf** – I will extend Jennifer the reviewing of the newsletter.

**Izzo** – Yes.

**Berry** – the only comment I have is with the sign board. I don't think the Fire Department if they pursue leasing property should have to police or should have anything to do with what's said on it. Because it's just another burden that someone in the office is going to have to take over. Above and beyond that, thank you all for your audience comments. We appreciate everyone being here.

**Adjournment** – motion by Bianchi, seconded by Pfitzenmaier. Motion carried.