

**Minutes to the regular meeting of the Board of Directors of the Sonoita-Elgin Fire District
November 19, 2012
6:00 p.m.**

Call to order: the meeting was recorded

Pledge of Allegiance

Roll Call of Board Members: Present; Izzo, Bianchi & Pfitzenmaier, Ruppel; Tomlinson absent

Approval of the minutes;

September 17, 2012- motion by Pfitzenmaier, seconded by Bianchi, Aye: Izzo, Bianchi and Pfitzenmaier; Ruppel Abstained

October 15, 2012 – motion by Bianchi, seconded by Ruppel, Aye: Izzo, Pfitzenmaier, Bianchi; Ruppel Abstained.

Old Business -

Chief's Report – The Chief began his report with a letter received in today's mail.

Dear Fire District Personnel. It's the time of year for giving thanks and Sam and I thought of all of you immediately. We are so grateful for your presence in our community.

You have a big job in fighting fires and all your emergency work but you also are kind members of our community and so helpful to us all. You've helped the members of Casas Arroyo prevent fire with your fire suppression methods we've employed. You helped one of our members who was coming home from hospital and needed to be walked into his house this year. You made yourself available to help another household bring in a washer/dryer if needed. You provide our Crossroads Quilters with a place to meet twice a month and often help us set up chairs and tables. Sam and I had a snake crawl into the house while we were away five months in Alaska. You helped us get it out the door and while here fixed our buzzing smoke alarm and plugged in our refrigerator. Sam is ninety-three years and as we age these kindnesses that seem simple to all of you, mean so much to all of us.

We should tell you more often how very much you mean to us. As we lift our glass of wine this Thanksgiving it will be to those who give of themselves in service. Thanks you. Sincerely,
Donna Lee and Sam Wright.

The Chief presented his monthly report to the Board touching on the following topics: Out and About (a listing of the meetings attended by the Chief or his representative): Corona de Tucson, continue to talk about the Wildland Fire Draw-down system; Arizona Fire District Association focused on the upcoming January Conference; October Breakfast update; Rincon Valley CWPP update; SCCSO Dispatch meeting on creating a taskforce to work with SCCSO to develop a better relationship for dispatching. Board meetings for January and February – these meetings will be pushed back a week due to federal holidays. January's meeting will be held January 28th and February's meeting will be held February 25th. Those two Board meetings will be moved to the forth Monday. Open Meeting Law Training, the only meeting will be held at Northwest Fire on January 26th beginning at 10 am. They are looking to schedule one in the Flagstaff area. They told us depending on how this one goes if there's a need after the Flagstaff one they may be willing to schedule one for southern Arizona. Board members that are interested in going talk to Katie and she'll make your reservations. If we do have more than two Board members going we will need to post it 24 hours in advance. On Nov. 30th we're going to have a Christmas Bazaar from 9am to 3pm. A community member donated all this stuff to us. We're going to put on this event and see if we can liquidate a large portion of it. Pfitzenmaier – Chief we will be publicizing this out front and in the

newsletter? Chief – We have sent it out to several email addresses throughout the community, it's been marketed through Rotary and flyers that have been put around and it will be in a newsletter that we're looking to get published right quickly here. Izzo – where is it going to be? Here? In this room? DeWolf – In this room. Sonoita by Starlight, it hasn't been marketed well, they are going to have it, it is scheduled from 5pm to 8 pm. We will be open here at the firehouse, we will have some hot chocolate and maybe some cookies. It is supposedly going on and we do want to be part of it. Izzo – I just want to mention that the Chamber Christmas Party is tentatively scheduled for the 14th – the Community Christmas Party- at the fairgrounds.

Chief also presented information on the following topics: Website hits 785, run report, our National Company Officer Leadership Academy participation and Ready, Set, Go! Program. The BC and I have been out in the community, realizing that we have a lot more people that are trimming their trees and mowing their grass than we had just a few years back. Defensible space is getting out in our community. We had our Fire Prevention Day at the school, it was a fun day. We had the Rio Rico Smoke Trailer there, one of the air companies, Smoky the Bear and Sparky the Safety Dog, our Fire Belle was out there with her sidekick – it was just a great day for the kids. Along with that we also did our Halloween Haunted House. We had backing from the Sonoita-Elgin Fire Fighter's Association, US Border Patrol, two 4-H teams decorated it became more of a community event. And these are the couple that generally do our Christmas Lego train, they did a haunted Lego house with a train running around it this year. Well received as well. Last year we talked about the Grass Ridge trials, every year they put a thank you in their bulletin. This is the program – this is in the front of the inside cover. Last year they did the slurry bomber coming up over Star View Estates thanking the district. Just wanted to give them a little recognition and we appreciate the thanks they give to us. The Financials and Balance Sheet, we're right on track, and actually we have received \$82,000 and \$28,000 from Santa Cruz and Pima County Treasurers for taxes this year, we got that in on Friday of last week. So, we're starting to receive tax money which is always a positive sign for us and our budget. The other income and expenses are right on track. We did receive some money from wildland fires we did a while back. Our expenses, we're right on track; as Jerry pointed out we are a little high on vehicle maintenance due to our annual upkeep and a couple sets of breaks and a turbo going out. Vera Earl Tower Lease – In 2008 we signed our lease for our tower where our communications are at out on the Vera Earl. Our agreement was 2400 a year with an annual increase of 4% each year putting us at \$2807 at August 2012. I've spoken with the Vera Earl and they are in agreement to extend/renew our contract for the same agreements, so that would take us to 2017 and the final cost at 2017 would be \$3415. I'll be working with them to sign the contract with them this month. **Pfitzenmaier** – Chief is there a maintenance agreement in that - is there an annual recurring cost associated with that other than the rental. **Chief** – there's a generator that we do work on – so if we lose power our repeaters will stay up. About 2008 we received a grant and we redid all our repeaters and everything – all our power cables, we moved our repeater, we pushed it up to the top for better coverage. Our maintenance on it is just our generator. With that note, in the budget that was passed, we budgeted a second repeater because of our simultaneous calls. That has been ordered and should be installed right after the first of the year. We also budgeted the 10 new radios for the dispatchers to make us narrow-band compliant. They came in last week and we'll be issuing them out this week. So those two projects are right on track as well. **Izzo** – Are we the only ones on the tower? **Chief** – Occasionally the ranch runs some communications off of there, but right now we're the only ones on the tower. **Izzo** - If someone wanted to use that we couldn't sublease it? **Chief** – No, the Vera Earl is the only one that could benefit from that. **Bianchi** – Do we have any say to someone who maybe wanted to put equipment on there that might interfere with our transmission? **Chief** – We do have that. We had eight applicants for our 2 firefighter positions; we went through the testing process October 22nd. Jennifer Huss and Kathryn Pena scored the highest on the testing and received the positions. We are now at 100% staffing levels. **Bianchi** – Chief, what is the makeup

of our crews now as far as male/female? Chief – We’re about 50/50. Our fuels mitigation program is moving right along; we did get a little slow in October, but with a nice article by Betty Barr in the Weekly Bulletin we picked up quite a bit of work. Right now we’re probably about 4 to 5 weeks out with work. Very pleased with that. We’ve been doing a lot of work in the Papago Springs/Tunnel Springs area; we’ve got a few more there then we’ll be going down to the area around milepost 16 on Highway 83 and working down there for a couple weeks.

Last month Grants were brought up and how we’re doing them. (here is a listing of the grants that were discussed.)

Active Grants

Staffing for Adequate Fire and Emergency Response

Agreement number EMW-2008-FF-00701

Period of Performance 27-May-09 to 26-May-13

This grant award was reduced by \$83,600. The grant administrator \$51,600 and the marketing program \$32,000 were not approved.

The reduction has already been made in the grant award at application.

The total project cost was reduced from \$302,000 to \$218,400.

Federal Share p \$218,400.00

Federal Share received \$164,010.00

Amount paid to date - \$155,010.00

Amount pending - \$9,000.00

Balance of Federal Funds - \$54,350.00

Western States Wildland Urban Interface Grant

Agreement number SFA 11-302

Period of Performance 01-Oct-12 to 31-Aug-14

This grant award shall not exceed \$125,000 of federal match.

Contribution by home owners for an additional Cost Share Match of 50%

Bring the total cost of this project to \$250,000 this project is estimated

To complete 360 acres.

Grants Closing Out

Western States Wildland Urban Interface Grant

Agreement number WCG 08-302

Period of Performance 15-Oct-10 to 30-Sept-12

This grant award shall not exceed \$20,000 of federal match.

Contribution by home owners for an additional Cost Share Match of 50%

Bring the total cost of this project to \$40,000 this project is estimated

To complete 140 acres 108 acres completed 20 -25 homes.

Federal Share - \$20,000.00

Federal Share received - \$7,976.00

Amount paid to date - \$2180.00

Homeowner match - \$14, 905.00

Balance of Federal Funds - \$9,844.00

Western States Wildland Urban Interface Grant

Agreement number WCG 08-302

Period of Performance 15-Oct-10 to 30-Sept-12

This grant award shall not exceed \$20,000 of federal match.
Contribution by home owners for an additional Cost Share Match of 50%
Bring the total cost of this project to \$40,000 this project is estimated
To complete 140 acres 108 acres completed 20 -25 homes.
Federal Share awarded - \$55,075.00
Federal share received - \$55075.00
Amount paid to date - \$43,930.00
Homeowner match - \$9,583.23
Balance of federal funds - \$0.00

Upcoming Grants

The primary goal of the Assistance to Firefighters Grants (AFG) is to meet the firefighting and emergency response needs of fire departments and nonaffiliated emergency medical service organizations. Since 2001, AFG has helped firefighters and other first responders to obtain critically needed equipment, protective gear, emergency vehicles, training and other resources needed to protect the public and emergency personnel from fire and related hazards.

The Staffing for Adequate Fire and Emergency Response (SAFER) Grants was created to provide funding directly to fire departments and volunteer firefighter interest organizations to help them increase the number of trained, "front line" firefighters available in their communities. The goal of SAFER is to enhance the local fire departments' abilities to comply with staffing, response and operational standards established by the NFPA and OSHA (NFPA 1710 and/or NFPA 1720 and OSHA 1910.134).

The Fire Prevention & Safety Grants (FP&S) are part of the Assistance to Firefighters Grants (AFG). FP&S Grants support projects that enhance the safety of the public and firefighters from fire and related hazards. The primary goal is to target high-risk populations and reduce injury and prevent death. In 2005, Congress reauthorized funding for FP&S and expanded the eligible uses of funds to include Firefighter Safety Research and Development.

The American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) of 2009 (Public Law 111-5) provided the Department of Homeland Security with \$210,000,000 to fund the 2009 Assistance to Firefighters Fire Station Construction Grants (SCG).

This one-time grant opportunity provided 120 fire departments with financial assistance to build new fire stations or modify existing stations, in order to enhance response capabilities and protect the community from fire and fire-related hazards.

2013 Volunteer Fire Assistance Grant Program

The Volunteer Fire Assistance (VFA) Program focuses on fire management and prevention activities such as training, equipping, and organizing rural fire departments. Rural communities with a population of 10,000 or less qualify.

2014 Western Wildland Urban Interface Grant Program

The Western Wildland Urban Interface Grant Program focuses on hazard fuels reduction, information and education, and community and homeowner action. Fire departments, local governments, educational institutions, and non-profit organizations qualify.

So, this is my Grant 101 for November.

Election Results – 2012-2016 Board members will be Anthony Berry, Ron Izzo and Jennifer Rinaldi. They will take office on December 1, 2012. On our canvassing, we're working with both counties on a daily basis, they claim they will have our canvasses to us by the 26th which puts us in a little pickle because I've got to get this Board to have a special meeting either the 27th or 28th so that they can accept the canvas and we can get the three new Board members in to Santa Cruz County by December 1st. So, keep your eyes on your emails – as quickly as we can get these canvasses back from the two counties, I'll get an email out to you so we can get a Board meeting set up. **Izzo** - I know we went through this a couple years ago. Are we going to be able to swear them in? **Chief** – No. they have to go to the county. Actually, the three of you have to go to the county. With this election too, I don't know how many of you were following Prop. 17, Prop 17 did pass, 117, I think it's a good thing. It will take effect in 2015 and that's a 5% annual limit on assessed valuations. It may or may not have a big effect on us. I think it will make it easier to do our budgeting knowing that it can't go up more than 5%. We won't have the booms that a number of the districts had a few years back. That's all I have for my Chief's report.

Bianchi – As the Chief mentioned, last month I brought up the question of grants and wanting information about grants, the Board discussed it, it was determined that, Chairman Izzo asked me to take a stab at writing a policy on this and I did that. Chief were you able to get that on a slide? **Chief** - No, Well I'll read it. I'm proposing that this would be inserted after Financial and it be titled, Grants.

(Proposed policy amendment relating to grants.)

Delegations of Authority From the Board to the Chief

II Policy

C. Operations (p 29)

Grants (inserted after "Financial")

The Chief will search for grants which may be financially or operationally beneficial to the District and to prepare applications for any grant request. Prior to the formal submission of the application, the Chief will inform the Board of all major aspects of the grant including:

- Title of the grant;
- Time period of the grant;
- Due date for submission;
- Perceived benefits to the district;
- Total amount of any funds to be received;
- Total amount of any matching funds from the district;
- Additional personnel required and/or assets needed to be obtained;
- Any other obligations imposed on the district;
- Any penalties for failure of the district to perform its obligations.

The information about the proposed grant will be emailed to the Board and be discussed at a regular Board meeting or, if necessary, at special meeting.

There are a couple ways for this to be handled – if time is of the essence, the Board Chairman will appoint up to two members to review the grant and advise the Chairman if a special meeting is needed. Another way to handle that is that the information is emailed to every Board member. If Any Board member feels that important enough to discuss at a Board meeting he

would notify the Chief and it would be discussed at a board meeting before the application could be submitted.

Izzo – our procedure requires that any change in policy be presented and it will be discussed and voted on at the next meeting. That's the presentation and we'll make copies if anyone wants to see that. The next meeting it will be officially discussed and voted on.

Bianchi – do we need to vote on that?

Izzo – I don't think so.

Bianchi – Okay I'll get this off to Katie and she can get it off to the Board members and anyone else that wants it.

Correspondence or other items of importance – None

New Business –

Septic System – First of all, we have our permit to put our septic system in. So we had three bidders, Gronlund homes of Sonoita, ASA of Tucson and Empire Homes of Sonoita. BC Venos – Gronlund Homes went up a small amount from the original proposal, ASA stayed the same, Empire Homes stayed the same. At that time it was requested by the Chief to get a breakdown of materials vs. labor and start and completion dates from the three low bidders. At the time I did that the owner of Gronlund Homes declined to go any further with his bid stating that he was too busy and wasn't going to be able to get to us in a timely manner. I extended our thanks for the process that he did with us and appreciated his honesty of not having us sitting here with an open septic system for 8 weeks. Our second bidder ASA gave us an immediate start date and a 4-5 day completion time, provided that ADEQ scheduling conflicts are out of his control. Empire Homes also gave us an immediate start date with an undesignated completion due to unforeseen scheduling with Arizona PreCast and Sonamix LLC – they said they could not estimate their time. So at this point we have the two low bidders with the low bidder being able to start, at our last conversation, was going to be within, two weeks of approval he'll be on-site and he anticipates being on-site for 5 days.

Izzo – were there other requests?

Chief – We talked to Marsh Development and they were upwards of \$80,000. And we requested a bid from SBBI and they declined.

Izzo – Do we feel that we've contact the local people that may have been able to do this work?

Chief – Yes.

BC – We made a real hard effort on the first go-round with the pricing and with the second go-round we went to the three low bidders. There were no changes in the plans from the state, so it was easy to update the bids.

Bianchi – So we have submitted to these bidders the engineering requirements from the state I presume.

BC – like I said, there were no changes, so the draft documents became the construction documents. The only thing the state will give us is the letter that the Chief had on the PowerPoint.

Bianchi – now what's the likely of any change orders on the installation.

BC - The only thing that could possibly be a change order is a hard dig.

Bianchi - What's a hard dig?

BC – If we get out there and start digging into the ground and have to get a hammer-jack on an extended hoe, then that would be change order work. Other than that everything is covered in the documents... all the way down to the parking bumpers that would delineate the leach field.

Bianchi – based on when you were trying to get a conventional system to work here you dug a lot of holes. What's the likelihood of a hard dig?

BC – Nil.

Ruppel – If there were a hard dig, it would be on a cost-plus basis?

BC – Yes.

Izzo – Any other questions? (None.) Is there a motion to make that award.

Pfitzenmaier – so I assume we've just talked about awarding this to ASA?

Izzo – Would that be your motion?

Pfitzenmaier – That is my motion.

Bianchi – I'd second that motion.

Izzo – Any further discussion? Call for the question. All those in favor, Aye – unanimous. Motion carried.

Audience Comments –

Pete Daniels – Elgin; my first comment would be that we've got a little bit of an administrative glitch here, it worked well this week because you didn't take action on that item, but if an audience member has a comment about an agenda item that you're going to take action on, you probably ought to receive those comments before you take the action. I'm not opposed to anything that's been done on that item to this point, but by state statute the Board of this organization is ultimately responsible for any contracts that we do so you may be adding regulation and policy that has already been provided for by statute.

The second issue just on a general comment I wanted to take this opportunity to publicly thank Mr. Doug Ruppel for his many, many years of service to this organization. I don't expect that to stop, however I want to speak for myself and I'm sure many members of this organization and this community, for the years of incredible commitment and work you've done on behalf of the fire district. Thank you.

Board member comments –

Pfitzenmaier – Back to the septic system – we as a board made every effort to give this contract to a local business. We also had the charge to do this work in the most reasonable and cost-effective manner for the taxpayer, and we made the choice with that in mind. My other comment is, I would like to suggest, and we don't have to put this date on the calendar, very shortly after the first of the year, after the new Board is constituted, I believe the Board should hold a special meeting at which time we go over the existing 2012-2013 Budget line by line for the benefit of the new Board members as well as the existing Board members to understand what the fire district does and how it does it and how we prioritize things...so that's just kind of a ... we'll talk about that again. Do I have any comments from the Board on the wisdom of that? I guess I don't.

Bianchi – I don't where it would harm to do that, but I think if the new Board members feel it would be beneficial to them I think we should do it. I would like to congratulate those who were successful in their campaigning. Running for a campaign is a tough thing, it's time consuming, it puts a lot of stress on the people out there who are doing it, for those who follow the democratic process I want to thank you all for having done so whether you were successful or not. I too would like to thank Doug, I'm sure we'll be doing something in the future which will be a little more appropriate than this, for his service to SEESI and SEFD. We didn't always see eye to eye on things, but we managed to struggle through it. I appreciate the efforts you've done over the years.

Izzo - following up on the elections, I want to welcome the new members, I look forward to working together. Over the years there's been a real change and we've been able to see the democratic process at work – a lot of people were interested in this election. A lot of people were involved, we had a lot more opportunity to get out there and talk to people. A lot of people were asking intelligent questions. So there's just so much more interest over the years. And I think everyone's going to benefit from that. We've gone from trying to wonder who's going to run for the board - asking people to run for the Board, to having good candidates – you know a number of candidates. Having five well –qualified candidates has impressed me a great deal. Again I look forward to working together as we tackle this somewhat difficult task ahead of us.

Ruppel – I'd like to extend my congratulations to the new Board members and best wishes the future Board and thank the Chief and his staff for their patience in enduring my unending questions over the last eleven years. It's been my great honor to be a part of the organization and I'm sure I'll be around in the future.

Motion to adjourn – Motion to adjourn by Bianchi, seconded by Ruppel, motion carried.