

Minutes approved at the Board Meeting of August 15, 2011.

**Minutes to the Public Budget Hearing, a Special Meeting of the  
Sonoita-Elgin Fire District Board of Directors**

**20 June 2011**

**6 pm**

**Call to order**

**Pledge of Allegiance**

**Roll call** – For the record three members are present and we are recording the meeting (lots of background noise) the record will reflect that there Board members are present. Board members Bianchi and Tomlinson are absent. Tomlinson may show up a little later. For your information the Board meetings are always recorded as are all of our public meetings. I want to let you know so that we can keep the background kind of minimal so that we can get everything on the tape. We're moving on to item 4 which is Discussion and Possible Action calendar. Opening remarks from Board members. Well start with brief remarks.

**Izzo** – My name is Ron Izzo, for those of you who don't know me I just happen to be elected by the Board to Chair the Board. I've been in Sonoita six years, retired from Pima County employment, not any different than any one of you. My property has been developed, no matter what the Board does with the budget, my taxes are going to go up. My wife lives on Social Security income and on Medicare. We have a small business which is struggling; I've laid off our two permanent employees. Most of you have livestock so you know what it costs for a bale of hay today. I just want to let everybody know my personal perspective; it's no different than the rest of you here. I am impacted by this. I do care very much about our Emergency Medical Services, and the fire in Sierra Vista couldn't bring it any more home. I don't know how many of you know how serious that is, but it went up to Ramsey Canyon Road as of a half an hour ago and taken out homes as it moves. This is kind of a sideline. Many of you have dealt with relief efforts, being we've taken here at the fairgrounds we've taken horses, cattle, goats, pigs and even rabbits, to help people and I do appreciate all the donations and all the assistance with help that that you've given us. Now a brief note, I think many of you know from the emails that are going out, you're aware of protocols and procedures. This is a budget hearing. The purpose of this meeting is to hear comments from citizens – that's what this is. We will not vote on the budget today. We set this up as a special meeting so that we could hear concerns from you. We have another meeting currently scheduled for July 18<sup>th</sup>, that meeting may be rescheduled to accommodate various schedules. That next meeting will be the time that the budget is actually voted on. Now, the process is set up by state statute and that is what we'll follow. The Fire Chief, our Chief Executive Officer of the Fire District, presents a budget to the Board. The Board does not vote on that, the Board accepts the Budget presented by the Chief for publication and then waits to hear from you before we make a decision on what the budget level will be. Secondly, I think most of you have already figured out, we do not set the tax levy. The county Board of Supervisors sets the tax levy. What we set is a budget. That with all its figures is given to the county. The county backs that in to our assessed valuation to return a tax levy. So, we can't sit here and say your tax levy will be this or will be that - we adopt a budget. Now, we charge the Chief with the daunting task to figure out what the tax levy might be based on a dollar figure – those are just educated guesses, but the tax levy is actually set by the Board of Supervisors based on the budget we submit to them. Arizona State Statutes require us to follow this process and to submit a Budget to the Board of Supervisors by a specified date in August. With that said I will turn the mic over to Mr. Ruppel for any comments he may wish to have.

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**Ruppel** – I'm going to save my comments to the end.

**Pfitzenmaier** – Good evening everybody. My name is Larry Pfitzenmaier. I am new on to the Board. This is certainly the first chance to look at such a large group eyeball to eyeball, who voted in the last election. I'd like to thank you for the opportunity you've given me to serve you. Thirteen percent of my last year's property taxes went to Fire District support. As far as I'm concerned it's the most important 13% of my property tax and I think that there's probably many of you who have the same view. Ron touched on it, it's very important to understand, that your Board of Directors has not endorsed the Budget that was posted on the post office wall several weeks ago. We voted unanimously to post the Budget at that point in its deliberation. We did not vote to endorse the content of the budget – none of us would do that without having vetted this throughout the community of which tonight's meeting is one of the most important events. So that you know where my head is on this Budget at least when we get started here, I'd like to review several sentences that I wrote to from several weeks ago after the Budget was posted. I support a 2011/2012 policy of no growth in the Fire District revenue. At the formation of the District, the economy was hot, we had every reason to expect prosperity and growth. It didn't happen; the housing market tanked, the economy followed, and lots of people wound up in the financial ditch. Many of our neighbors have been forced to live with less, to reduce their expectations and in a few cases, walk away from their homes. These people are going to extraordinary energy to reduce their expenses, Taxes are an expense. At a minimum we need to craft a budget for 2011-2012, that requires no more revenue than last year's budget. We have five Board members. I'm prepared to listen to 4 other good ideas, I'm prepared to change my mind if I become convinced that there's a better way to do this. Lastly, as we speak and very close to home, we are reminded that foreclosure is not the only way to lose a house around here. And the dry lightning season has not come down the pike yet – just wait till two weeks before the monsoons. I take my obligation to represent every one of you, and a whole bunch of you who aren't in this room very, very seriously. I also take my obligation to provide fire fighting services and to provide emergency services – and to care for the responders we have, to make sure they have the tools they need to do their job very seriously. There's absolutely no reason these two obligations cannot be compatible if we strike the right balance. (During Pfitzenmaier's comments, Board member Tomlinson arrived and was seated.)

**Tomlinson** – I'll reserve my comments to the end.

**DeWolf** – Good Evening everybody. For those of you who don't know me, I'm chief DeWolf. I want to run through a couple of things. This is actually a recorder (pointing to recorder), this is a microphone (pointing to microphone), so you want to take into this one. I was asked to put up our call-load for the past five years. (DeWolf then reviewed the call load – see attached documents.) [DeWolf was cut off when technical difficulties resulted in a loss of signal.]

**Izzo** – Just a matter of protocol – while we're getting that going again. If you wish to speak to the Board, you will need to sign in. We will be limiting comments tonight to a two minute time limit. I'm sorry to do that but we've already got twenty-five people – that's one hour – and we want to allow some time for us to answer any questions that might be given to us. If you have submitted something in writing to the Board, Arizona has an open meeting law – we are not able to act as a Board unless we have a public meeting on that and announce that ahead of time so the only way we can answer that question tonight would be for you to come up and read that into the minutes then we can address that in a response. If you have submitted something in writing to the Board, Arizona has an Open Meeting Law – we are not able to act as a Board unless we have a public meeting on that and announce that ahead of time so the only way we can answer that question tonight would be for you to come up and read that into the minutes then we can address that in a response format. Now, we we'll not be able to get into a

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discussion. We won't be able to do question/answer, question/answer or any kind of debate, we just don't have that kind of time. This is a public hearing format; the purpose of this is for you to come any comments you wish to have and if there are any specific questions that we may be able to answer we'll be glad to do that. We will not be able to get into a debate here tonight.

**DeWolf** – (DeWolf continued with both a PowerPoint slide showing how the proposed budget would affect a few of the homes in the area and slides of the proposed budget, as directed by the Board.)

**Izzo** – Okay, we're going to the Public Comment portion of our meeting. We did, the Board did receive an extensive letter, and I'm going to ask somebody who represents the Tea Party to come up and read that into the record and we will respond to those. Again, if you submitted letters to the Board tonight, and you wish us to respond to that and get that into the record, you will need to sign in. We have several letters here that are actually the same, so if one of you would like to do that you'll need to sign in for the record. This is right in front on the table so you can come up at any time. (background noise) We're talking about procedural issues here. Again, the Board cannot officially take action unless we have a public meeting and take a vote. So, we have received this extensive letter. Two Board members have worked with the Chief to come up with responses to these questions. These are very important questions; they probably represent the feelings of a lot of people in our community. So we will hear those questions and then we'll respond to them. And then we'll go in the order that we have here. Now a Board member or two may wish to put this on a future agenda and come up with an official position of the Board. But I want you to understand what is given tonight by Mr. Pfitzenmaier and Mr. Ruppel are considered Draft Responses – the Board has not taken a vote on this. That doesn't mean we disagree, it just means we haven't followed the open meeting law to actually officially do that.

**Matt Parrilli, Sonoita** – I guess we're on a procedural quest – do you want me to read the entire letter or just simply submit it for the record.

**Izzo** –each question and we'll respond to each question – number one then we'll respond to number one.

**Parrilli** – I assume then that the two minutes is not applicable?

**Izzo** – it's not going to take that long.

**Pfitzenmaier** – Point of Order – Matt, it's possible that we have reformatted the questions from your letter construct our responses. So for this to make sense to the general crowd, could I ask you to read the question as we have stated it?

**Parrilli** – No I want this to be a formal submission for the record for this Board. Mr. Izzo, last week you were mailed a signed copy of this letter. All of you received this letter electronically in an email. I can do whatever you wish me to do – I can read it verbatim from front to back or I can simply submit this copy – procedurally– for the record. My question would be – you obviously received this – do you intend to respond to the questions, the issues, stated in this letter?

**Izzo** –Yes, we will respond tonight. Read one question at a time.

**Parrilla** – Do you want to do it tonight?

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**Izzo** – Tonight, right now Matt.

**Parrilli** – All right. For those of you who have not seen this letter I will read it in its entirety.

Mr. Ron Izzo, chairman, Sonoita-Elgin Fire District Board. Mr. Izzo, this letter is intended to provide you with a \_\_\_\_\_ of many members of this community with regard to the Fire District and the proposed 2011=2012 Budget. This letter also requests amplifying information on the Budget to be provided by the Board at the 22 Budget Discussion meeting. Many in this community are not pleased with the condition of the Fire District at this point in time. The idea of the Fire District was sold to the voters as the only alternative to retaining fire and emergency medical protection. The proponents also argued the creation of the Fire District would lead to “lower homeowner’s insurance rates with an elevated public protection classification scores for the community.” We’ve moved from a SEESI Budget of a little over \$400,000 to a Fire District Proposed Budget of over a million. We are not convinced the protection levels have increased in proportion ..... we do not know..... if the ..... scores have not gone up. Our view.... .... the personnel costs have gone out of control, and those costs in concern with the ambulance burden resulted in the scuttling of several projects designed to enhance our fire protection. Given the foregoing, please provide answers to the following questions or issues at the next Fire District Board Budget Review Meeting. (Parrilli’s questions in black, answers by SEFD Board members in red.)

1. The structure of the Department appears to include twelve (12) full time, paid firefighter and EMT positions. Six (6) of those are leader/management positions – Chief, Battalion Chief, three Captains and one EMS Director. How does that management structure look when applied to the 34 volunteer FF/EMT positions? A wiring diagram would be helpful.

Staffing is structured to accommodate multiple shifts and operational chain of command concerns, including situations where the Chief may be unavailable or disabled. The six “leadership/management” positions mentioned above provide front-line, operational fire fighting and EMS leadership and skills. To date, we have responded to 34 simultaneous incidents in 2011. In situations involving simultaneous incidents, one of our three Captains has responsibility for the first incident. The Battalion Chief assumes command of the second incident, providing leadership and EMS paramedic skills. The Battalion Chief is a salaried position rather than an hourly position in order to reduce overtime costs. He remains available at all hours to fill Advanced Life Support needs. Volunteer support is always desirable but not always available. Some of our volunteers live outside Sonoita and others can only respond on weekends. Some can’t respond at night. Due to the nature of our population base, the majority of our volunteers are 60 years old or older.

An SEFD Organization Chart is available at the Fire Station during normal business hours. Again, we have that, but due to Open Meeting rules, we cannot distribute that along with these answers tonight.

2. What is the job description for the EMS Director? Is this a full time, paid position? Who is filling that position? Why is the pension for this position funded under the AZ State Retirement System (ASRS) and not the Public Safety Personnel Retirement System (PSPRS)?

The EMS Director is a part time position. The EMS Director orders and inventories EMS supplies, manages the quality assurance of First Care Forms and all correspondence and activity with AeroMed Claims (ambulance billing), works with our base hospital (UMC), manages SEFD staff infection control and blood borne pathogens monitoring programs and annual fitness tests, as

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well as recertification overviews, and updates of standing orders and protocols for various incidents. The ASRS system applies to office and staff personnel, whereas the PSPRS system is for operational personnel.

3. The FD roster indicates 46 personnel. If 34 are FF/EMTs, what are the other 12?

SEFD's roster includes 21 EMT-B (that's Basic), 5 EMT-P (that's Paramedic), 27 FF I & II, 31 wildland, 19 tender drivers, 10 dispatchers, 3 EMS first responders and 3 support personnel. Those of you doing quick math on that realize I just read 88 positions, that doesn't quite add up. The reason is that the "double-counting" reflects the fact that most of SEFD personnel are cross-trained.

4. The Chief's total salary and benefits add up to over \$85,000.00. Included in his contract is a 3% annual raise. That appears to us to be well above where it ought to be, especially given today's economic conditions. Are there any performance metrics stipulated in the Chief's contract or is it unequivocal? Has the Chief been asked to renegotiate his employment contract? (Note here that School District teachers have not been accorded a pay raise in the last three years - and will not likely see one this year.) When will the current contract expire?

In 2009/2010 the SEFD Board did a wage comparison study and found that considering the Chief's years of service, qualifications and accomplishments, his salary is comparable to others in a similar position. At the time of this comparison, one of the community's stated concerns was the lack of a formal fire education for the Chief. Subsequently, the Chief has spent more than \$20,000 of his own money to obtain a Fire Science Degree. In addition the Chief was recognized last year by the National Association of Fire Chiefs for his professional and leadership skills. This award was judged by fire and EMS professionals nationwide. The Chief's five-year contract became effective on May 24, 2010.

(A copy of Chief DeWolf's SEFD Employment Agreement is available at the Fire Station during normal business hours.)

(A copy of Chief DeWolf's Qualifications and Accomplishments is available at the Fire Station during normal business hours.)

5. It is our understanding that the rest of the full time personnel receive an unequivocal 3.25% percent raise annually. Is this a true statement?

No. SEFD initiated full 24/7 service in August, 2010 in order to cover an increasing number of night calls. When doing so, full time EMT/Firefighters agreed to an hourly wage reduction from \$10.45 to \$10.17. The proposed 3.25% pay raise for 2011/2012 will bring their hourly wage to \$10.50.

6. Is any funding being provided for any form of pension for personnel in the "volunteer" category? If so, what is that cost?

No.

7. Which of the 46 personnel are covered by severance pay agreements and what are the terms of each category?

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Only the Chief is covered by a severance pay agreement, per contract.

(A copy of Chief DeWolf's SEFD Employment Agreement is available at the Fire Station during normal business hours.)

8. National Fire Protection Association 1720 Standard cited as requiring 6 persons on scene of incidents/fire. The fact that we understand that this NFPA Standard is being hotly contested by many substantially volunteer departments – and hopefully this one. NFPA Standards are not law, individual departments especially volunteer departments have the flexibility to modify their response to standards based on local conditions. The imbedded question in that is are we subscribing to NFPA Standards 1720 on a routine basis.

SEFD can't pick and choose which NFPA standards to adhere to. We try to weigh NFPA, ISO, OSHA and training requirements to meet the best fiscally responsible balance for the needs of the district. Additionally, we must consider that compliance, or lack of compliance with standards can become a factor in litigation involving Director liability.

The letter goes on to state... We do not support rigid adherence to NFPA standards at the expense of the judicious use of our tax dollars to improve service. Further we view this as a fiduciary responsibility issue. What is the Board's position on this issue?

You have our stated response from Larry and myself. I would also point out my personal response to this that there are five individuals in this room who bear a financial liability in the event the Fire District is sued over the outcome of a call. Those five individuals are the five Board of Directors, and I think that is important to note.

So, the answer is you're going to stick with 1720?

You have our response.

9. Ambulance service was touted early on as a capability that would pay for itself through transport fees. Please provide the budgeted and actual revenue/loss for ambulance operations for FY 10-11. Please include in your calculations the cost of crews, capital equipment, supplies, fuel and maintenance. In other words the roll out the door cost of an ambulance run.

The ambulance service has not yet completed its first full year of operation. Current projections, based on 11 months of activity and assuming 226 transports, show an income of \$159,731.07 against a cost of \$59, 675.75 resulting in a net gain of \$100,055.12.

(A copy of Ambulance Service, 11 Month Billing Update is available at the Fire Station during normal business hours. That includes some rigor that shows the validity of those numbers.)

10. Is the original SAFER Grant paid off? Are the "SAFER Grant R&R" and the "SAFER Grant Stipend" separate grants? Do either of the latter require repayment?

The original SAFER (Staffing for Adequate Fire & Emergency Response) Grant is closed and there is no match or payments required on any of the other SAFER Grants.

11. The Vera Earl Ranch is the next question. Who is the \$224.67 tower space rent paid to?

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### The Vera Earl Ranch

12. Regarding Public Protection Classification (PPC) scores, when last we were advised on this item, SEESI scores were 8/9. Have these scores changed since the formation of the Fire District? When is the next scheduled assessment by ISO?

SEFD PPC score is 8b/9. SEFD installed a 40,000 gallon water tank as a first step. A water tender and water tank in Elgin was to be the next step, but those items were removed due to budget constraints. Both would need to be in place to change our ISO score. There is no need to schedule a near-term ISO assessment because there has been no change in the factors that influence that assessment.

13. We often see reference to a “Strategic Planning Calendar”. Is it priced out? Please provide a few copies at the June meeting.

(We have a Strategic Planning Calendar, there is some update required, we have a current Strategic Planning Calendar available at the front desk.)

Thanks in advance for supporting our information needs. Please be assured that none of us oppose the Fire & Emergency Medical support. Our concerns are centered on judicious financial efficiency with which those services are provided.

(End of formal letter)

**Pfitzenmaier** – I would also like to add, Matt, his crew provided us with a draft copy of these questions several days before we received this it really made it a lot easier for us to get together and work together, we really appreciate that.

**Parrilli** – I also have available for you or anybody else, it’s kind of a profile of personnel costs since 2007 through the 2012 Budget. I’ll be happy to provide that to anybody who wishes to have a copy of one. Thank you.

**Izzo** – We’ll begin going down the list.

**Pete Daniels, Elgin** – Board members, members of the audience, I’m a resident and taxpayer. I’ve lived in Elgin for eleven years. As most of you know I have 34 years of experience in Fire Service and EMS. We’re in some challenging and economic times. Governments in general have been overtaxing and underperforming in my opinion. I strongly support the primary principle of the Tea Party which comes from its acronym which is Taxed Enough Already. I’m very sensitive to those issues. Since I purchased property in this area my assessed value has increased 906% in nine years. As a result of that increase the amount of property tax I’ve paid has increased 461% in that same period of time – a very sensitive issue with me. My sincere appreciation to the members of this elected Fire Board, because I know, I’ve been there, it’s a thankless job. You generally only hear from community members when they’ve got a complaint to air. However, by Arizona State Statutes you have several very important responsibilities. It is your responsibly as Board members to ensure that our Fire District provides our Community with appropriate and adequate fire service, rescue and emergency medical services in the most fiscally responsible manner possible. Board member Pfitzenmaier hit on one of my points, there should be a reasonable balance between those two objectives. Providing the best service imaginable may not be fiscally responsible, yet pressing for the least costly option may deprive our community of adequate appropriate emergency services. As elected officials you should strive to represent all members of our community, not just those who voice their complaints or concerns. I am sure in my personal experience

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that the majority of the community is vastly in support of the fire district (it's already been mentioned here). The past two years – is that it (beeper went off) Gosh I should have timed it.) Take your responsibility seriously. What I needed to say real quickly was that huge increase in my tax (17%) is represented since we formed the Fire District. You would have to make a huge cut in the fire district budget to give me any relief. The School Districts and county operations take a lot more of my taxes I really want to see them come down, I'm working on it, but don't take away my services in order to give me a small bit of relief in my Fire District taxes. Thank you.

**Ruppel** – If they have written comments can we take them. What I want to do – is accurately reflect your comments so far this evening. I would ask that if you have written comments that you provide a copy of them to us.

**Daniels** – I've no problem with that it that's the pleasure of the Board.

**Ruppel** – Okay, thank you.

**Sandra Ruppel** – At the county meeting with John Maynard there was one slide I found very interesting. It showed that the last year's primary and secondary taxes for the Sonoita-Elgin area were \$12.06 – the Fire District's tax rate was \$1.41. So, the other \$10.65 went to the elementary and high school. I've seen it posted that this is not personal, it's about taxes. If that's true then why don't I see the graphs and charts that although the students numbers have been basically stagnant in the last thirteen years that I've been a part of this community, the budget of the school has increased to two million dollars and millions have been spent on the facilities. You say it's not personal, it's about taxes; for me it's personal. A comment was made after the last meeting that because I am the wife of a board member it was pathetic that I exercise my right as a citizen to speak at the public meetings. I'm here because it's personal to me. Who here has a son or daughter that is part of this department? My son has been a volunteer for three years. He was out at 3 am Saturday morning, helping to stop a fire on 82 that I suspect many of you were never even aware of. You talk of cutting funding for training, staff and safety equipment as I watch my son practice deploying under a thin, silver blanket that in the event of a sudden shift of the wind, might keep him from getting burned to death. We've had a very vivid example right here, of the speed and intensity of how far a fire can travel in this area. The talk a few weeks ago about how difficult it was to see and breathe because of the smoke from the Tumacacori Fire covered the town. I see my son coming off the line from protecting this community covered in black soot with red eyes, I've smelled smoke in my house and I listen to him as he tries to clear it from his nose and lungs. I'm here because it's personal to me. I'm here as a mother defending the safety and well-being of my son and the other staff and volunteers who put their lives on the line for his community. They don't sit behind desks; they rush into fiery fields, into burning buildings and onto accidents scenes with dead bodies strewn across the highway. You can criticize me and make fun of me all you want,, but if it was your son or daughter being put in harm's way, I would hope it would be personal for you too. Please just try to make it personal. Think about the issues as if you had a loved one whose very life depended on quality leadership, training and equipment of this department. Board members please consider the comments of the community; they are a valid and important part of this process, but please also consider the lives and safety of my son and the other staff and volunteers as you make a final decision on this budget. Thank you.

**Greg Hardin** – I've lived in Sonoita about 15 years or so, I want to commend you guys o the job that you're doing. I appreciate your efforts and all that. But I want you to know that I disagree with the Fire District to begin with; we were misled initially about how the Fire District was going to be formed. We were told that wouldn't be any more than what our membership dues were going to be which way I think, \$150 for the year. Our contribution now our takes for the Fire District run into the thousands, so I want to know when it is going to decrease like we were promised. That's my question to you.

**Gary Soliere** – Sonoita Resident – When this Fire District was becoming a District, I used to submit questions just so you know what's going on I'm about to slander or assault. You all have my question in front of you but I'd like to read it. I'm looking for clarification on a situation and I'm using the worst case scenario. As a Sonoita homeowner and county taxpayer, I have a heart attack. I'm driven to the fire station seeking assessment and treatment. The Fire Department staff monitors my vital signs and set up and IV. I'm at the station about one half hour waiting for the helicopter to transport me to Tucson. Now,

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here's where I need clarification; 1. Since I've driven to the fire station and was treated by the staff am I charged for this service? 2. Do charges apply if you were called to my residence for the same service? And 3. I realize the ambulance or helicopter transport to Tucson is charged to the individual or their insurance. I thank you very much and I think the Board is doing a terrific job.

**DeWolf** – The only time a District resident is charged is if we transport you in the ambulance. However, that transport could be from your residence to the station for the LZ – we would charge for that, or from your location to the hospital we would bill for that. If we show up at your home and have the area where we can land a helicopter, you will not receive a bill from the Fire Department.

**Izzo** – Just a clarification, we talk about being charged. Most of us have insurance or Medicare that actually covers that. That's who pays the bill for ambulance service.

**Wes Chambers** – Good evening. I've lived here since 1988. I was a member of the fire department when we built this building. I was the Fire Chief for 9 years. I can tell you that operating volunteer fire department doesn't work – it just doesn't work. I'd like to ask the audience a question. How many of you live within 5 miles of the station? How many of you know your ISO Rating? Very few, right? From my understanding if you live within 5 miles of the station you're got an 8b rating which drops your fire insurance by 40% (lots of audience interference) If you haven't checked with your insurance company and gotten that rating that's your problem. If you live outside 5 miles you don't get that rating. But you've got to remember there're a lot of people that have paid a lot more to keep this department going and keep everybody else in service than, you all. Thank you.

**Ruppel** – I'd like to make a short statement here. 1. I'd like to personally honor Wes Chambers service to this community and to this Fire Department. (lots of applause) Mr. Chambers, and men and women like him for many decades now, have been the lifeblood of this department and brought a greater degree of safety and community, to this town. Without what they have done we would not be where we are today. Second. I am a little dismayed at the outburst after Mr. Chambers's statement. We're here tonight for a civil discussion, and all of this, both sides of this are going to hear things we don't want to hear tonight. I would certainly hope that we all still live in a community where we can have that kind of a debate respectfully.

**Connie Christianson** – I thought I was just signing in.

**Izzo** – Thank you Connie, the shortest presentation.

**Marion Stoddard** – I live in Sonoita and am a member of the Sonoita-Elgin Tea Party and I'm a taxpayer. At the last Fire Board meeting, Sandy Ruppel challenged the audience with this question. How many here have children in the local school? When only a few hands were raised, she suggested we should be looking at our local school board budget. I took Sandy up on her suggestion and went to the local school board budgeting meeting. But first I'd like to ask her question in a different way. How many attended public school? I graduated from one of the highest rated public school systems in this country back in 1968. I did not pay for my education. My parents paid their share of taxes, but it definitely wasn't enough to cover the tuition for myself or my 5 siblings. We have a public school in this community that in 2004 was designated an A+ School, a national designation, and it has continued to rate among the highest scoring schools in the state since then. This school district has not raised its tax rate in the last three years and has not proposed to raise it this year. In fact they live with the mistake of being underfunded several years ago. For the next fiscal year, the school district has prepared by adjusting staff positions to fill vacancies with the nurse/counselor taking up classroom time in addition to her classroom duties, and the librarian moving into the classroom with the librarian being covered by a paraprofessional. The staff at the local school district has not had a salary increase in the past three years, and an increase has not been budgeted for this fiscal year. And the teacher's are being asked to contribute more to their benefits. May I add that being a teacher at public schools requires one to meet educational credentials defined by state and federal government before they can teach – education that has to be obtained before they can enter a classroom. (beeper went off) Let me just put my final thought out. I think the Fire District should take a lesson from the school district. I feel that they is an opportunity within the District's Budget to rearrange priorities and live within the current Budget. Thank you.

**David Bareiss** – My questions were asked and answered in Matt's presentation.

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**Thomas Rogas** - I am a 13 year property owner here in Sonoita. Due to the time constraints on this I am going to cut to one particular issue to throw out to the community and the Board. This is the second consecutive year that we are in a contentious meeting over a proposed tax increase has occurred within this particular process. Last year that situation was resolved through changes in the Budget, that brought the property tax issue to the previous existing level. This year the proposed amount is about three times that size – it looks like we have three times the amount of people here, so maybe there's a cause and effect. But, essentially the issue I think facing the community and the board is subsequent meetings that took place around the Budget – I think it is fair to say that attendance of regular Board Meetings by local citizenry throughout the years – there was no particular direct engagement or communication going on beyond that. That to me is an issue that I think addresses the whole democratic process. I think we as a community have a responsibility to be engaged and have dialog. But by the same token, outside of the Board meetings there have been no Board communications to the community to educate us about what's going on, what the issues are, what things potentially impact the Budget, what things don't, are there things coming up that as a community we should be aware of, so that we don't have – excuse the expression – fire drill meetings like this – that raise the heat of the community. If Maynard can have town hall meetings, the board can have town hall meetings (beeper going off) on some fashion on a regular basis that can deal with communication issues. In my 37 years of management experience, when we got to controversial situations, stressful situations, I think more communications and more dialog, more debate, certainly helps ease those situations, helps to educate more people on both sides what other people are thinking. When we have to sit here and actually introduce people because nobody knows who they are, I think both sides have a disservice to each other that needs to be remedied – hopefully improved greatly.

**Ruppel** – Mr. Rogas, I just want to applaud your call to get involved in this process, I have, I forget Chief, ten or eleven years been involved in this process. Apathy has been an ongoing problem in this community in terms of getting involved in the issues and trying to reach a consensus in the community. In addition I'd like to assure you that this is not the only contentions meeting we've ever had.

**Terry Plimpton** – Elgin Arizona. First I'd like to express my objections to the increase to the SEFD Fire District tax rate for the fiscal year 2011/2012. Relying on property owners and tax payers for a steady stream of income is a major flow into most government agencies. As an alternative to this approach I'd like to challenge the Fire District to examine opportunities for increasing revenue on their own. I'm concerned that SEFD is not optimizing the income generating eligibility of its ambulance service. So I'm going to suggest some options for becoming more self-sufficient. On June 17<sup>th</sup> I had a conversation with Harry Eth, CON Manager for the Bureau of EMS, the information I obtained is this. The Current basic ambulance transport for SEFD is \$684. This rate is one of the lowest in the state. The average rate for ambulance service for the state of Arizona is over one thousand dollars per transport. The current mileage charge for the SEFD transport is \$11.71 per mile. Medicare currently reimburses its members \$13.00 per mile and other insurance carriers reimburse at a higher rate. Disposable medical supplies are currently built into the SEFD transport rate, these items could be broken out \_\_\_\_\_ (not understandable) . The ambulance service should increase its transport mileage charges by the following methods. Every year there's an automatic rate increase for ambulance transports and mileage charges. For 2011 the automatic increase is 4.3% for each of these charges. This request takes about 30 days. A general rate increase above the automatic rate increase for transport mileage can be requested as an amendment to the CON, this process allows the ambulance service raise their rates any amount with substantiation from the Bureau (BEAMS) and takes approximately 60-90 days to process. An ambulance service can request an increase in the transport and/or mileage rat...(hard to hear) (beeper going off) ...to date SEFD has not requested a rate increase. Here are some basic figures for you. The Sonoita-Elgin Fire District Proposed Budget for 2011/2012 has estimated that there would be approximately 236 medical transports during the next fiscal year. Proposed revenues at the current rate are \$161,624. By raising the transport charges to one thousand dollars, the SEFD could generate \$236,000, which is a difference of about \$75,000. Once you factor in a raise in the mileage rate then service rates could increase by a combined total of approximately one hundred thousand dollars just by bringing rates into line with other ambulance services

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in Arizona. The objective of the Fire District Board should be that of making sure the Fire Department and the Ambulance Service are optimizing the revenue options available to them. Currently I do not believe those options are being fully utilized. It's time to stop going to the public for them to bail out, \_\_\_\_ (not understandable) \_\_\_\_ ways to be more self-sufficient. Thank you Board.

**DeWolf** – First of all Terry, I'd like to thank you for your input. SEFD has applied for a rate increase, we're in the process right now of doing this – a rate increase as well as a mileage increase. Where you take over a CON you have to match what the other provider is billing for one fiscal year. Then you can ask for a rate increase from your own CON. We're approaching that one year and we're going in for a rate increase. Thank you very much for your research on that.

**Izzo** – the CON – you're gonna to hear some acronyms and terms here, I'm sorry \_\_\_\_ The CON is a Certificate of Necessity, and that is what gave us the legal authority to run an ambulance transport. We actually took over the CON from another agency. What Chief was saying is we had to keep that rate for the one year.

**Carla Cafarelli** – Good Evening Board, I am a Sonoita resident for ten years now. I have one comment and one question. Chief, when you put up the chart on comparative home prices and what the tax rate would be, just a real quick look from the back of the room there indicated that all of those home prices had actually dropped. I think there's a bunch of people in this room whose home prices \_\_\_\_ their evaluations, are \_\_\_\_ so I think that was a little, um, I'd like to have seen some homes that have actually gone up and what the tax rate would be assessed to them. The second thing; I looked through last year's well, the independent accountant's report from Assurance Professionals, which is a CPA firm in Scottsdale, Arizona. And the Sonoita-Elgin Fire District had their books looked at by these guys for FY 2010, this letter is dated January, 2011. This was not an audit because the accounting principles differ, the accounting principles used for this, the budget and the money and of the Fire District are not in, they differ from the accounting principles generally accepted by the United States of America. Now this is their cover letter. So we spent \$6,000 with Assurance Professionals, for something they couldn't perform..... and it's a report. So, my question to you is will they be using Assurance Professionals of Scottsdale at another six grand for the 2011 fiscal year?

Izzo – thank you.

**DeWolf** – We didn't pay six thousand dollars, we only paid \$2,500 for a review and it goes onto the tax amount and our tax amount is under a million, which means we only have to have a review done and all we had done was a review. Oh, it was \$1,500 not \$2,500 – for the review not an audit.

**Izzo** – This is done by statute, this is not an option that we have. Statute requires that we have a review, so that's what it was not an audit. Matt Parrilli, did you have another statement?

**Matt Parrilli** – No, we're fine.

**Cheryl Rennie** – I'm Cheryl Rennie and I'm very pleased to follow along Mrs. Cafarelli's comments. I have a bachelor's degree in business management and a master's in public administration and I have spent hours on your financial statements and I do not understand the purpose of this tax increase. I have spoken with the Chief, I thank you very much for spending two hours with me. And I've read Mr. Ruppel's letter to this Michelle Cardillo. You state in there that basically, I understand the purpose of this is for salary increases and for the leach field; I understand that the purpose for the salary increase was because of turnover, but that was contradicted by Mr. Ruppel in his letter to Mrs. Cardillo and so I really don't know what the purpose is. As far as the leach field for \$20,000, it does not make sense to have a \$20,000 one item prorated over 30 or how many years for a tax increase. We should have a fund raiser to do that. But more importantly, I'm very, very disappointed with the presentation tonight because based on the financial independent accountant's report, this accounting process is based on cash-modified basis of accounting. There's no accrual here. It isn't possible for me or anyone else to see what is in your figures and to understand them. So I request that you change this from a modified cash basis to the generally accepted accounting practices with the accrual basis and I request an audit. You have a budget of one million dollars, you're asking us to increase our taxes with no support. I have written all of you, an email, and asked of you – compare what the difference would be the impact the performance of the fire department with and without this tax increase. I ask you to present it at the meeting. There was no

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response from any of you and it was not presented. I also asked you how it would (beeper goes off) impact the life and safety of the firefighters if it was not approved and there was no response. And I asked for a cash flow rundown so we could explain and understand the purpose of this and there was no response. So I am disappointed in the lace of presentation, the lack of detail and especially in the kind of financial report that you expect us to approve as taxpayers – on the modified cash basis.

**Ruppel** – Miss Rennie, I appreciate your comments this evening and the time that you put into this issue. the accounting principles are used at this fire department are the same ones that are required to be used by all Fire Districts. As far as your other comments, I think that's better left to discussion between you and I privately.

**Rennie** – I'm sorry, if I could respond....

**Izzo** – I'm sorry Miss. Rennie, We cannot get involved in that, we just don't have the time tonight.

**Rennie** – I know, but I asked for information, you didn't provide, I'd just like to ask...

**Izzo** – I'm sorry, we need to move on with the meeting. I'm very sorry, you can approach any Board member and get information on an agenda for a future meeting. This is a public hearing of the Budget, we need to allow opportunity for other people to address the Board.

**Susanne Jenkins** - Good evening. I've lived here for ten years, I'm the owner of the Viaggio Italiano. Slightly different budget question. First of all I'd like to know if the Fire Department is on its own well for purposes of filling trucks, tanks, tankers and fire house everyday use? Do you have your own well?

**DeWolf** – We do have a well, we have 40,000 gallon tank that we use to refill, we have a well here on the premises that fills a 40,000 gallon tank that supplies all fire suppression. Our buildings, our restrooms are on a joint well with all the businesses down the side.

**Jenkins** – So you are on a Sonoita Valley Water Company well?

**DeWolf** – Yes M 'am.

**Jenkins** – So the question really is, for those of you who don't know, the SVW Well is located between my restaurant and the auto shop. The water company, last year, doubled our rates, and has asked us to cut our usage first by 30%, not by 50%. Are you dependent at all for anything more than just this firehouse? If your well is pumped, would you rely on it – the other well?

**DeWolf** – no we have taken out our standoff. We cannot we don't have a way to fill trucks off that well any longer – it has been taken down.

**Jenkins** – In that case, since you have your own well, but you're still dependent upon the Sonoita Co. well, would you be willing to work with other local businesses to help us address the issues at the Arizona Corporation Commission on this cutback on water usage – because you are also affected by the 30% now 50% cutback? Would the Board consider that?

**Izzo** – Is that the end? (Yes) First off, would you put that on a future agenda please (don't know who Mr. Izzo is talking to.) If I mispronounce some of these names I apologize.

**Bill Schock** – I think I have had the pleasure of making everyone's acquaintance here at the fire house. I was raised here in the 1950's and 60's; I've owned land since '84; and I built a house 4 years ago; so I am very familiar with how this works. The New Mexico Stockman says Wal-Mart says more shoppers are running out of money much faster than they did a year ago; we're seeing poor customers under a lot of pressure. Wal-Mart shoppers are living paycheck to paycheck and typically shop in bulk at the beginning of the month when their pay checks come in. Like me they are running out of money at a faster rate. The thing is, the problem is, is that we have the assessed values on our homes; we have an awful lot of fixed income people around here. The assessed values are wonderful, even though it's dropping on the land rate, people are still paying these out of liquid assets – a lot of people moved here, they built their dream house, they thought that their income would keep up with their expenses. Right now I know a tremendous number of people who are not here tonight because they can barely afford the gas to get here. I may have this wrong. I looked at last year's budget; it looked to me that my taxes, money taxed of the community was \$616, 377. This year's proposed amount is \$741, 863. That's over a hundred thousand more dollars that will be taxed out of the pockets of this community's citizen, these residents, and put into the pockets of the Fire Department. I hear that the Fire Department is having trouble, they feel our pain, (beeper goes off). One thing I was going to say was from what I can tell is 350 square miles that is in the District, only

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40% is privately owned, that means 60% is government owned. Is the government paying an equivalent amount of tax for their land? If so, ..... (unreadable due to laughter.)

**Rene Prentice** - Members of the Board and community, friends and neighbors. My Family has been here over a hundred years. My name is Rene Prentice and I've personally been a member of this community for well over 40 years. I've seen this Fire Department go from nothing to a professionally run, responsive to the community – not only tax-wise, now we've got full coverage. As the community has grown so has the fire department has grown. And when it came time to vote for or against the Fire Department, I asked myself only a couple of questions. I raised four children in this community and what I do if one of my children were under a four-wheeler and I couldn't get the four-wheeler off? I would want the quickest response time possible to save that child. If I was out picnicking in Gardner Canyon, and a bear attacked me, I would want the quickest response time possible. If I had a heart attack, I want the quickest response time possible – time saves lives. This Fire Department has already fought a fire that came within 200 feet of my house. I appreciate all their efforts, they have personally helped me with blood pressure; one time I was ill I didn't know whether I needed to go to the hospital or not I got an assessment. This is personal to me to. I am a teacher, talk about living under constrained circumstances – I have to watch every penny I have. I had to actually get a job in-order-to keep my property because of the taxes. Nobody watches that more than I. (beeper goes off) We're here because we love this community and we love this land. I am grateful to the fire department for being as professional and for being here as you are. Thank you.

**Michelle Cardillo** – Thank you everybody for showing up tonight. I would like to say that when the first email went out, a courtesy copy was sent to all the Board Members. And I copied the Chief on it. I was very fortunate to have been responded to by three Board Members. Mr. Ruppel was the first responder, it was immediate, I appreciate it; Larry and Jerry. The other two of you, for whatever reason didn't respond and I hold you no grudge. I would like to say that with the departments around, and I have called them all, everyone's freezing salaries. We can save \$13,550 by freezing staff salaries and \$15,867 if you don't take your raise. I would like to see the belt tightened here because you've heard from many people really do appreciate you completely – I most of all appreciate a well-run fire department, but you're killing us with the taxes. Tighten your belts. Please hear what we're saying. The situation is that we need to have you – I appreciate the fact that you care about growing your department, but you need to care about how growing this department is affecting the citizens. Since I lived here before it before it became a fire district I never felt slighted in any way by the fact that it was volunteer fire department ran by some of the ladies that I know very well to support and I'm sure that people would be willing to do that. One thing that I would like to say in closing is that if I send an email to a Board member, you're an elected official, I don't want to hear from your wife.

**Ruppel** – Just so we're all clear on this I've never been able to control my wife anyways.

**Ed Schaeffer** – Elgin, I thank the Board for their service. I have a specific question. The 2011/2012 SEFD Budget, there is an item regarding the Santa Cruz County Sheriff's Office under the heading Dispatch Service and Vera Earl. The quote is Santa Cruz County Sheriff's office at this time doesn't charge for dispatching. SCCSO is looking at charging \$13 per run and SEFD projecting 500 runs in FY 2011/2012. At \$13 per page-out that equals \$6500 annually. After talking to the Santa Cruz County Sheriff's Office, have they verified that there is no plan to charge for page-outs? The Dispatch Office is unaware of any type of page-out charges looming in the future. According to Dispatch Officers, there two forms of dispatch used. One is radio dispatch – the Sheriff's office cannot charge for this service according to state law. The other is computer dispatch and there are no plans by the Sheriff's Department to begin charging for this service. We'd like to know where the SEFD get its information that the Santa Cruz County Sheriff's Department would begin a full-charge dispatch program and along with the other question, we keep hearing 500 call-outs, just, you know, when we're not even up to 400, why are we budgeting at 500?

DeWolf – Actually we've heard this from the County Manager and the Sheriff himself. By Arizona Statute they can charge for dispatch – they have to cover so much if they do dispatch. That's why one of the teetering points Santa Cruz County is on in balancing their budget. If they tone us out – which is what they do right now – they come up on the air, they tone us out and they say respond to 62 Thunderhead

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Trail. That is the extent of dispatch. If they increase their dispatch, which they from our sources they are looking to do, they would give us more. We do our own dispatching – in fact there's an individual sitting in there right now – what they will do is stay in touch with our contacts and take our times. So when we arrive on scene, they would time-stamp us. If we need additional resources, they would get us those additional resources, they would do that. They (SCCSO) do not do that. That is what they are looking into and they may charge us for that.

**Ruppel** – the reason we upped that is we've taken on the ambulance service, which we project will be self supporting. But in addition to that it has always been our policy to project our budget based on what we think the call-outs will be, not wait until it happens and react to it.

**Steve Rutter** – he had to leave.

**Gary Brown**– Good evening Board members What are the true factors causing this tax increase? It's hard to perceive how the rate increase can be sustained. Is this a valid episode of Mission Creek or will it be Empire? Or are we just looking at duplication of services with public providers. Bill Schock had made mention of something like this. I think we need to approach the county, especially Assessors. We've got assessments that all across the board from \$.29 to \$2.69 and we need to approach the assessor and the county supervisor and we have a \$31 million tax base here and I don't see our fair share here. So we need to approach these people and get our money's worth here. Your Board, its decision will affect homeowners, their day to day safety as well as their pocket books. So, please look at it real hard guys. We've had a lot of community people that put into this building, Vera Earl donated the land, we had plenty of contractors and building materials that were donated on this. If the Vera Earl quits blazing we will be blazing. We do have a high fire zone here too. So that's the building and planning and zoning, and we can do some cost-sharing with the federal and state monies that are also put forward to the wildfires. And those things we need to look at as well. There's a lot of money out there that we can share. And we can make an agreement with the county on this. Those are possibilities. (Beeper goes off.)

**Vicki Rutter** – The Board has a responsibility to the residents of this fire district to see that the district has the funds necessary to provide emergency services to those residents. Your obligation does not lie with seeing that the residents pay the lowest taxes possible, if it jeopardizes the fire district's ability to function. The staff salaries in the proposed budget are not out of line. Those who think the staff is overpaid have not done their homework for our area and the level of training and ability of our staff. The choices you make aren't always easy or popular. You are not sitting on the board of a social club or trying to win a popularity contest. You will hear a few individual stories from residents that oppose the proposed budget. You can be sympathetic and wish things were better in their individual lives but you also represent hundreds of district residents who support the fire district and the proposed budget. Those residents want to see the staff fairly paid and want the fire district to move forward, not stagnate or limp along year after year. The hundreds of residents who are not here are just as important as the few who are here tonight. You represent them all and you were elected to the board by all the residents who voted, not just a few who oppose the fire district or the finding to keep the doors open. Remember, this decisions not about you, your neighbors, your social friends, or the district opponents. This is about what is right for the fire district. We have a dedicated Fire Chief that is a rock to this fire district. He runs a tight ship both with finances and staff. He recognizes the value of a well trained staff and struggles with the fact that they are underpaid. I know that he has gone through the budget line by line, time after time, trying to cut expenses wherever possible. If you do not pass the proposed budget, you need to step up and tell the Chief where to make the cuts. Please don't ask him to do it. He has already done it. And please, don't cut salaries and further erode the staff morale. This organization that you represent saves lives and property. Give them the resources they need to do it. Please vote in favor of the proposed budget.

**Dave Balanoff** – I've been living in Sonoita for eleven years, I have thirty-five years in public safety between fire and police. I've been on both sides of the budget issue. I was a Chief at Patagonia for a little while with the police, working at mid-level management with the Tucson Fire Department. I'd like to take that prior lady to task on saying you do not represent the fire department you represent us, we elected you as the oversight (too much clapping to hear words) That's all I'm asking, whatever fair is fair. But you need to look at our side because you represent us. There are a lot of people in this community that are

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really hurting. I just heard today that another business is leaving town and another business is going to half hours. We're all being taxed crazy here, I mean, this isn't personal I love this Fire District and I love the guys in the department. I've had personal involvement in the past months on a first aid call. You did a great job – I'm not asking that if this budget fails to pass to go away, I just want them to tighten their belts a little bit. I saw they have a strategic plan. Great. That's part of the planning process. Just saying hold off on your strategic plan maybe another year or two until the economy comes back. Our valuations come up then you can have enough money again. I really don't know what else to say, I'm just against opposed to any new taxes now. We're taxed for the school, we're taxed for the Fire District, we're taxed for the school. I pay taxes in two counties – one of those counties I get no services, just because I own property there. Just tighten it up a little bit. I've operated under that premise before, with a big department, we submitted budgets and it got cut, cut, cut, cut. We didn't have anybody that cut and run, we're dedicated people just like these guys are – they are not going to leave the community if they have one year when they've got to keep the tax rate the same. They're a good bunch – that's all I'm asking, just tighten your belts for a year at a time, see how it goes, and you guys be the oversight. Represent us don't represent them. (beeper going off) Make your own judgment. Thank you.

**Gene Davidson** - I live out in Brushy Canyon for about the last fifty years, I'm over twenty miles from this place. My house has burned down once\_\_\_(phone rang & drowned out sound)\_\_\_I get no homeowner's insurance reduction for the taxes that I pay so I would like to see your Fire District reduced to where people get tax reduction or some .Cause I actually get nothing for the taxes that I pay, if you raise them it's even worse.

**Izzo** – That concludes our public comments. We'll go back to Board member comments. Ian?

**Tomlinson** – I appreciate everyone coming. And I said at the last Board Meeting this proposed budget wasn't anything anybody had endorsed; it is simply a working budget. In a way it was good because it brought everybody out to hear their concerns. We can take your concerns and take issues you have and go back and work on the budget to accommodate the tax issue that everybody is kind of feeling. I assure you that that's what's going to happen. I don't think you're going to see a budget that is close to the one that is been put out.

**Pfitzenmaier** – I think this has been a good meeting. I hope everyone else does, I really do. It's the first one like this I've been to – the others I've just seen on TV and I hope to never be part of one of those. A lot of good discussion here, I tell you this, we are listening. I'm retired, living on fixed – we all can tell our own story. We're all in this together. We've got to provide the fire service that you want and that you deserve, that can take care of us and it's got to be 24/7; at least if it is coming to my door I want it 24/7; we've got to do it as inexpensively as we can. There in the course of email traffic and communication in the community in the past several months; there have been comparisons made with statistics and data from other Districts in other locations. I just ask all of us on every side of this table to take into account that many of those pronouncements do not include apples to apples, oranges to oranges comparisons – and it's on all sides of this. So don't jump onto a comparison without really, really doing some homework – some people have done that. I have a page in front of me where I can list five adjacent communities who have tax rates of over \$2.50. None of us want to move there. So, we're in the game folks, we're doing okay, we're going to do better after we sit down and talk about this. But don't think that, uh, somehow we're way out in left field – we're not.

**Ruppel** – I've been involved in the Fire Department for ten or eleven years now and was involved in the formation of the Fire District. I've seen it as a volunteer department; I've seen it as the professional organization it is now. Unfortunately for my family, I've also had on several occasions enjoy the services of the department. So in some ways I think that gives me a different perspective on what we're talking about. Because I have sat by the side of the road, with my son's head in my hands, hoping and praying that the siren I could hear coming in the distance was on top of a fire truck that was filled with well-trained and well-equipped, well-motivated people. And fortunately it was. But that doesn't happen by accident and I guess the main message that I would like you to go away with this evening from me is that you don't fill the Fire Department with emergency services providers at the level that we need in the community based on what happens on a bright and sunny afternoon. You plan for what is reasonably

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possible. Now everybody can disagree about what might be possible, in terms of what might befall our community. But I would wager that there are several thousand people in Sierra Vista, Palominas and Hereford, this evening, who never foresaw that eventuality. The very same thing could happen here – we have narrowly averted it on several occasions just in the last year. Now I'm sure there will be people who will take those comments and say that's just fear mongering – be that as it may – it's a fact. So, I would ask you for patience and understanding as the Board deliberates on this. I would ask that you maintain a sense – as demonstrated this evening – a sense of civility, knowing that people on both sides of this table have issues and that in the end whether or not you agree with the stated – what the Budget ends up being in 2011/2012, that you continue to support the brave young men and women - the staff and volunteers of this Fire Department, because they're the ones who's service is unseen and unappreciated so much of the time. It is not enough to just say well, we support the fire department, those are nice words and we certainly appreciate them. Sometimes it's also necessary to dig deep in your pocket or dig deep in your time, we can always use volunteers, we can always use supporters of all talents. Unfortunately, they're hard to come by sometimes. And what suffices instead of that is money, to pay someone else to help take care of those needs in our community. Thank you for your time.

**Izzo** – Again I just want to thank everyone for coming, this is the democracy at work, it's really good to see you guys. I hope we see you at the next meeting. All of our meetings are open to the public. You can always find out when we're meeting we are required by law to post at the post office, you can also call the fire station, you can go online and you can also contact each of us. Now, at this time our next regular scheduled meeting which was for the purpose of deliberating the budget and taking a vote, is scheduled for July 18<sup>th</sup>. We may move that we'll let you know. Right now we'll leave it at that. We'll be sure to get that word out. We are in contact. There are several people in the community that have email going back and forth between some of us, so we're trying to get that word out as well. Again I want to thank you very much tonight. Is there a motion for adjournment?

**Ruppel** – So moved.

**Pfitzenmaier** – Seconded.

**Izzo** – All those in favor? Aye (unanimous) meeting adjourned.

These minutes were approved at the Regular Meeting of the Board of Directors of the Sonoita-Elgin Fire District on August 15, 2011. Aye votes: Tomlinson, Ruppel, Izzo and Pfitzenmaier. Abstain: Bianchi.

\_\_\_\_\_ dated 25 August 2011  
Administrative Assistant to the Chief