

**Sonoita-Elgin Fire District**  
**Minutes to the Board of Directors Meeting**  
**February 27, 2023**

**Chairperson Chris Johnson calls the meeting to order at 09:03AM**

**1. Roll call and confirmation of Quorum**

Russ Kolsrud, Eddie McArthur, Ruth Ann LeFebvre, and Chris Johnson are present. Robert Garber will join the meeting later. The Board has a Quorum and the meeting can commence.

**2. Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag.**

**3. Call to the public.**

There were no members of the public present at the meeting.

09:04AM Robert Garber joins the meeting.

(One member of the public arrived later in the meeting)

**4. Presentation of the FY 2021/2022 Audit**

Lisa Parke of Walker and Armstrong presents the summary of the Audit performed by W&A. Upon conclusion of the presentation of the Audit- Eddie McArthur motions for acceptance of the Audit as presented. Robert Garber seconds the motion. The board votes unanimously in favor of the motion, and the Audit is accepted by the board. Forms for acceptance will be given to the board.

A copy of the Audit is available at the Fire Station upon request.

The FY 2021/2022 Audit is also made available on the Sonoita-Elgin Fire District website. [www.SEFD911.org](http://www.SEFD911.org)

**5. Approval of the minutes to the January 23<sup>rd</sup> Board Meeting.**

A motion to approve the minutes as is, is made by Ruth Ann LeFebvre. Robert Garber seconds the motion, and the board votes, and the motion carries unanimously.

**6. Reports from the Fire Chief.**

- 23/24 FY Budget planning. Levy limits for Santa Cruz County have been released. Russ Kolsrud and Robert Garber have volunteered to participate in the budget planning committee.
- May the board will have to plan a special meeting to address the upcoming budget. Discussion ensues.
- Reminder to the board that the district would like to request a Tax rate increase for the 23/24 Tax year.
- PSPRS local board will have a spring meeting, dates to be determined.
- 55 calls throughout January: A/22 B/7 C/17

Zone 1/20 2/6 3/9 4/3 5/17 658. Fire calls are picking up early. The district has responded to 3 cardiac calls, including 2 in one day.

- A debriefing for the Sunday, 2/19/2023 MVA on the 82 will be held this week. It is a joint agency review at Canyon Vista including Fry Fire, and Whetstone Fire.
- Fire Fighter Carlos Lopez-Rodriguez has left his full-time position with SEFD, and has moved to Green Valley Fire District.
- Aileen Hardcastle has started full-time with SEFD. Aileen was part of a study team with Banner.
- There will be an upcoming skills lab at the Base Hospital.
- 832 needs 4 new rims, and potentially tires, and is in service, aside from that, all apparatus are %100 operable and in service.
- First Due incident management system is live! First Due offers a new feature called Community Connect which we have now accessible by the public for multiple purposes, for residence and business owners. This will be discussed with the community during the anticipated Coffee with the Chief event on Saturday March the 4th. The announcement for the event will be linked to the SEFD website, as well as shared on all district social media channels.
- Update on legislation- Bills introduced, at this point, these are the highlighted bills that have been introduced at this point.
  1. HB 2070 Schools to have an emergency plan in place. Elgin school and SEFD have a strong relationship set in place already.
  2. Sen 1172 Fire districts cannot Bonds beyond their statutory limit.
  3. HB 2015 If a member was in PSPRS, left their agency, and returned. They would be given the option to make a defined contribution, and not be required to participate in the pension option.
  4. HB 2028 would lower the number of contributions required by PSPRS.
  5. HB 2061 exempt food from tax.
  6. HB 2315 primary residence without mortgage would be exempt from paying property taxes.
  7. HB 2303 would prohibit employers from requesting vaccination records.
  8. HB 2068 to raise the threshold for annexing residence in your district from %50 to %60.
  9. HB 2144 open meetings- Open meeting laws say that there will be sufficient seating for the public to attend the meeting, and that the time the meeting venue will be accessible to the public must be listed in the meeting agenda.  
Discussion of bills ensues.

**Chris Johnson\*** opens discussion of BlueSpan internet success. And the potential to cut ties with both Viasat and TransWorld upon successful service provided by BlueSpan.

**Chris Johnson\***- Investigation update: Sherriff's office has concluded their investigation. It is being forwarded to the office of the County Attorney. The county attorney represented the District when DeWolf was Chief of SEFD, due to a conflict of interest, this investigation is being forwarded to the Office of the Attorney General. We are awaiting information regarding our point of contact on this matter going forward.

**7. Presentation and Approval of Monthly Financial Reconciliation and Reports for the Months of both December 2022, and January 2023.**

- Chief Meredith discusses the district finances to date, as well as where the district is projected at the end of the FY.
- The Board reviews and discusses the monthly financial reports for the month of December.
- There is a request made for an additional line item specifically listing the amount spent in overtime be made.
- All accounts are positive, and there is nothing to report.
- A motion is made to approve the December financials is made by Robert Garber. The motion is seconded by Eddie McArthur. The board votes to approve the financials unanimously, and the motion carries.
- The Board now reviews and discusses of the January financial reports.
- Requests are made to have additional detail on the financial reports, and a discussion ensues.
- All accounts are positive, and there is nothing to report.
- Board chairman Chris Johnson requests a motion to approve the January financials. Robert Garber motions to approve, followed by a second motion made by Ruth Ann LeFebvre. The board votes unanimously, and the motion to approve the financials carries.

**8. Review, discussion, and possible action- Water system instillation to remove reliance on paid connection.**

Over the last year, the crew at the SEFD station has had to be without running water on more than one occasion. This has been due to the company experiencing outages, among other things. We will be researching the possibility of using the existing well to provide water to the station in the future. Discussion of possible expense ensues. The discussion is tabled until it can be made an action item on a future agenda.

**9. Information Item- Updated job descriptions for operational staff (paid and volunteer)**

In the last 15 years of the district's operations, there have not been any changes to job descriptions. In order to stay up to date, and have the same standards across the board for all Captains.

The updated job description will include the change for all SEFD captains to be Paramedics. Currently there is only one Captain without this certification, and the choice to have SEFD sponsor him in obtaining this has been offered. The discussion will be left up to him. A discussion ensues to clarify the information on this matter.

Chief Meredith explains his decision to make these updates to the board, and further discussion ensues.

**(10:48AM Eddie McArthur had to depart the meeting prior to adjournment the board still has a quorum)**

**10. Recap of action items from the January 23<sup>rd</sup> board meeting.**

- Participation from the community on budget planning.
- PRT interview discussing fire codes. Will discuss further at the Coffee with the Chief event.
- Legal representation for SEFD. Discussion ensues about the legal needs and expectations of the SEFD when looking for new legal counsel.

**11. Information Item-**

The meeting for the month of March is requested to be scheduled early due to a training conflict for Chief Meredith taking place on the last Monday of the month. The date the meeting is to be held will be Monday March 20<sup>th</sup>, 2023.

**12. Agenda Items for Future Board meetings**

- Water/well information
- Legal representation

Russ Kolsrud makes a motion to adjourn the meeting at. Robert Garber to second the motion. The board votes unanimously, and the meeting is adjourned at 11:00AM.

**NOTICE: The Sonoita-Elgin Fire District Board of Directors may go into executive session for the purpose of obtaining legal advice from the fire district's attorney(s) on any of the above Agenda items pursuant to A.R.S. §38-431.03(A)(3).**

Minutes approved by Ruth Ann LeFebvre, Board Clerk, on 4/24/2023.  
Ruth Ann LeFebvre date