

Sonoita-Elgin Fire District
Minutes to the Board of Directors Meeting
March 20th, 2023

1. Roll call and confirmation of Quorum

(Chris Johnson is not at the start of the meeting, and will Join at a later time.

Chief Meredith helps guide the board at the start of the meeting)

Russ Kolsrud, Robert Garber, Eddie McArthur, and Ruth Ann LeFebvre are present at the meeting and the Board has a Quorum. Ruth Ann LeFebvre will be acting as the Board Chair in Chris Johnsons absence.

2. Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag.

3. Call to the public.

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

4. Approval of the minutes to the February 27th Board Meeting.

Chief Meredith informs the Board that administrative assistant Kristen Dineley is out sick, and as a result there are no minutes to approve at this time. The item is tabled until the April meeting, at which time minutes for February and March will be up for board review.

5. Reports from the Fire Chief.

- **Administration and Budget**

- Budget planning for the 23/24 FY is underway. A meeting was held between Chief Meredith, Robert Garber, and Russ Kolsrud to start planning ahead as the new FY is getting closer. Some of the items discussed included making Standardized payrates for members.
- The adaptation of a wage scale would include specific rates for specific duties or certifications. Adopting wage scale for all positions, creating more transparency for members, and potential members to see what current and future earnings with the district would look like.
- Stability reserve will remain in place going forward. And will possibly be moved into its own separate restricted account for several reasons. Primarily to show that the money is separate.
- Adding and removing certain categories to the budget sheet will help wile budgeting going forward.
- Long term strategic planning for the next 3 years. And look beyond the current Fiscal Year.
- A secure email account for the SEFD was hacked this last week, and although it was a large-scale incident, it was contained and resolved

rather quickly. This was a reminder to be mindful of email accounts, and suspicious emails as well.

- A monthly planning schedule has been generated in order to make planning the monthly board meetings the same on a monthly basis for both the Chief, as well as administrative staff.
- PSPRS Local Board to hold spring meeting in the month of April, date TBD.
- February had a total of 51 calls during the 28 day timeframe. A/20 B/17 C/14, by zone: 1/19, 2/6, 3/12, 4/2, and 5/12. Noting that there were many large incidents that SEFD responded to over the month including the multi fatality accident on Highway 82.
- No new recruits have started during February.
- SEFD will be conducting a Hiring Event During April, as one FT FF will be moving outside of Arizona.
- No recruits have completed our program as of this last month.
(Chris Johnson has joined the meeting, and will resume role as the Chairman for the rest of the meeting 09:15am)
- Member Christopher Mulvaney has graduated from Pima Community College. With his associates in Fire Science. We congratulate him on this accomplishment.
- All apparatus remain in service, and have no restrictions at this time.
- FirstDue now has burn permits up and running, and will be live for incident reporting as of April 1st.
- Legislative update: No major updates. No changes from last month.
(A member of the public arrived and receives a quick up date on the meeting)
(Meeting is paused to address an emergency call that has crew dispatched from the SEFD)
- **Chris Johnson: Investigation update**
No updates on the investigation currently.

6. Presentation and Approval of Monthly Financial Reconciliation and Reports for the month of February, 2023

- Chief Meredith discusses the district finances to date, as well as where the district is projected at the end of the FY. As we are entering the final quarter of the fiscal year.
- Hughes Checking is actively being spent out of, and actively being deposited into. This is reflected on the balance sheet.
- Tax payments are due, which should result in more tax money received by the district in the closing months of the FY.

- Credit with PSPRS is still funding the payments on members behalf. The credit has come down to 28k.
- Stability reserve will still be moved into a restricted fund. Possibly with Chase, or National Bank of Arizona. Discussion ensues on the transparency and use of stability fund. As well as the potential utilizing the fund to gain capital in the long run as an investment.
- The Board reviews and discusses the monthly financial reports. Discussion ensues on the financial reports.
- On P&L are above on Profit, and have over all spent less then projected at this point in the year.
- Apparatus have cost more during this year than projected.
- Station and Fire supply have also exceeded the total we projected in the budget. For reasons like this, we will be in looking into recategorizing budget line items, in order to reflect more accurate spending.
- Overtime will be a highlight on the next months reports. Listing it on line 18.
- A question is presented in regards to donations, and if they are reflected on the cashflow reports.
- There is currently one fire that is outstanding, and that revenue is due to the district.
Discussion ensues further on the expense report. (In relation to labor or uncategorized expenses) As well as the reconciliation reports, followed by cashflow forecast.
- Chief reports that all accounts are positive, no potential adverse impact on operations, or liquidity of the district that requires reporting to the county board of supervisors.
- A motion to approve the financials as presented is made by Russ Kolsrud, and Robert Garber seconds the motion. The board votes unanimously in favor, and the motion to approve the financials passes.

7. Review discussion and possible action- Removing the reliance of a paid water connection.

- Additional research has been done on the current water connection.
- The water tank is in fact potable water. Going Forward, we will be able to tap into the water supply.
- BJ drilling who initially installed the tank on the property, has confirmed the information. And has suggested that they will make a donation of labor, resulting in a no cost, or minimal cost to the district.
- Discussion ensues on the connection and testing of the connections.
- More information will be provided at the next meeting on testing the water, as well as the potential cost.

- No action is taken on this matter at this time.

8. Review discussion and possible action- Selection of new legal counsel for future district needs.

- In previous meetings, proposals were presented to the board on new potential representation for the districts legal counsel.
- Thomas Benavidez recently provided counsel to the district in a prompt and professional manner.
- Chris Johnson expresses a friendship with potential candidate Ed Gaines. Eddie McArthur, Board member also expresses that she has a personal friendship with Mr. Gaines.
- Discussion ensues.
- No action is taken on this item at this time.

9. Information item- Statutory Training attended by E. McArthur, and RA. LeFebvre.

- Recap and discussion from the meeting.
- Open meeting laws are discussed.
- The potential for using Zoom in order to allow members of the public, as well as board members to attend the meetings electronically, while staying in compliance with open meeting laws.
(Robert Garber must leave the meeting at 09:57am)
- Further discussion of the training ensues.
- Board relations are discussed as well as standards and rules with in regards to communication with district members, and employees.

10. Recap of action items from February Board meeting

- Update on communication to residents and business owners about adopted fire codes and community connect.
- Information was presented at our "Coffee with the Chief" event. Members were welcomed and information was distributed. Another coffee event will take place towards summer. We will also be making ourselves more visible within the community, being present at events such as farmers markets.
- A pancake breakfast will be taking place on the 15th of April, we will be remembering Carol Hager at this event and serving her favorite dish that she use to make for the breakfast event. Carol will be missed.

11. Agenda items for future meetings.

- Robert will be looking into appropriate financial vehicles.
- Research on appropriate infostructure to host Board Meetings electronically.
- Make sure the OT is a separate line item on the budget report.
- Testing of the water in the tank on the property.

- Planning of a special meeting in the month of May for Budget hearing.
Discussion of future agenda items ensues.

12. 180 day check in with the Fire Chief

Russ Kolsrud motions to table item until the next meeting. Chris Johnson seconds the motion. The board votes, and unanimously decides to table item until the next meeting.

Russ Kolsrud motions to adjourn the meeting. Eddie McArthur seconds the motion. The board unanimously votes to adjourn. Chris Johnson calls the meeting to close at 10:25am.

A digital copy of this meeting is available to the public at the Sonoita-Elgin Fire District, located at 3173 AZ Highway 83 Sonoita, AZ 85637

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 7/24/2023.
Ruth Ann LeFebvre date

