



Golden Valley Fire District

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MINUTES OF REGULAR MEETING OF THE GOLDEN VALLEY FIRE DISTRICT GOVERNING BOARD

The Governing Board of the Golden Valley Fire District met in regular session on **Wednesday, March 22, 2023, at 9:00 a.m.** The meeting was held at the Golden Valley Fire District Public Safety Training Center, located at 423 South Colorado Road, Golden Valley, AZ 86413. The Board may vote to go into executive session on any agenda item, pursuant to A.R.S. §38-431.03(A) (3) for legal advice with the district's attorney on matters as set forth in the agenda item. Board members or other participants may attend by telephonic conference. The following topics and any variables thereto, will be subject to Board consideration, discussion, approval, or other action. All items are set for possible action.

MINUTES

1. CALL TO ORDER

- Chairperson Foster called the meeting to order at approximately 9:00 a.m.

2. ROLL CALL OF BOARD MEMBERS

- Director George Payntar; Director Gary Juneau; Chairperson Sue Foster; Clerk Tony DeMaio and Director Jack Hommel were all present.

3. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

- The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

4. Prayer

- Pastor Mike Willis from The Abundant Grace Fellowship led the board meeting in prayer.

5. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

- A. Regular Meeting Minutes of February 22, 2023
 - Director Hommel motioned to approve the regular meeting minutes of February 22, 2023. Director Juneau 2nd the motion. All in favor, motioned carried.

6. REPORTS AND CORRESPONDENCE

- A. February 2023 Operational Report. (Chief Cunningham)
 - Chief Cunningham stated for the month of February there were 196 total calls: 9 fire calls and 149 EMS calls.
- B. Fire Chief's Report. *The governing body may not propose, discuss, deliberate, or take legal action on this matter unless the specific matter is described in detail. Therefore, action taken as a result of the Chief's report will be limited to directing staff to study the matter or scheduling the matter for further consideration and decision at a later date. (A.R.S. 38-431.02. K)*
 - District properties ~ Assistant Fire Chief Martin
 - All properties are good.
 - Equipment ~ Assistant Fire Chief Martin
 - Truck 125 had electrical issues and has been resolved.
 - Currently going through the fleet and making sure the preventative maintenance are done.
 - Training ~ Chief Cunningham
 - Currently doing a lot of in-house training.
 - Mindy attended the PSPRS Local Board seminar.
 - Meetings Attended ~ Chief Cunningham
 - AMR meeting tomorrow along with the Mohave County Fire Officer's meeting. Some of the items that were discussed at the Mohave County Fire Officer's meeting last month were the

Smart & Safe Fund, marijuana tax. The amount will be decreasing for all entities currently receiving these funds as some of the Tribes and the Department of Safety will now begin to receive them. We will be adjusting the budget accordingly, but it has always been difficult since the amount is based on sales. Another item discussed, JPA (Joint Powers Authority) or mergers for fire districts, a representative at the capital is pushing the County's Board of Supervisors to merge or create JPA's so funds can be saved, or the government will force this upon us. There will be more discussions in the near future.

- Local Chief's meeting with Northern Arizona Fire and Kingman Fire we discussed our budgets and the retention of personnel. The personnel are constantly changing as the biggest focus is pay. Our pay scale needs to be adjusted since we haven't revised it in years. The constant changing of personnel is affecting all the fire districts in Mohave County. Also discussed was apparatus and equipment, how hard it is to get the equipment, the wait times, and the cost. Another topic was inflation and how it's outpacing our income, which is affecting all districts. The question was how to increase district funds as we are already having fund raisers, annexing properties, doing contracts for service, and looking into JPA's. Bonds were discussed, bonds could be used for purchasing equipment as Golden Valley continues to grow, and this would have a lower cost effect on taxpayers. However, there is always concern that the bonds would be used for something other than what they were intended for. The board could form an oversight committee which could consist of board members and citizens to oversee the spending. The Board would have to approve a bond before it would go to the people for a vote.
- Next month, Assistant Chief Martin will be attending a Grant meeting in Prescott.
- Projects in the works ~ Chief Cunningham
 - Grants have been submitted for extrication tools, a fire engine, and a generator for the public safety training center. Safer Grant has also been submitted which would pay 100% funding for hiring four firefighters for three years. At the end of the three years, we should have the funds in the budget to continue their employment. Also, a Fire Prevention Grant for a fire prevention trailer for public education.
- Thank-You ~ Chief Cunningham
 - Pastor Mike for coming to the meeting.
- Anniversaries
 - None

7. BUSINESS. *Public wishing to speak on agenda items must complete a speaker card and present to the Board Clerk prior to the start of the meeting.*

A. Discussion and possible action regarding: Approval of February 2023 Financial Reports.
(Administration)

- Comptroller Kindelberger noted for the month of February 2023 the ending register balance for the warrant account at Wells Fargo Bank was \$1,290,513.27. Capital reserve account at Wells Fargo Bank was \$75,298.99. Payroll account at National Bank of Arizona ending register balance \$100,001.03. Income \$213,027.14; Expenses \$266,046.76.
 - Clerk DeMaio motioned to approve as presented. Director Hommel 2nd the motion. All in favor, motion carried.

B. Discussion and possible action regarding: Revise the pay scale effective July 1, 2023. (Cunningham)

- Chief Cunningham stated that we haven't had a major overhaul to the pay scale since approximately 2010, the main complaint at that time was it mostly benefited the employees at the bottom of the scale. There is no way to avoid that happening because as minimum wage increases and you don't increase the whole pay scale but just the lower steps, the pay scale becomes compressed. We don't want our firefighters making almost the same as engineers and engineers making almost as much as the captains, etc. We know that minimum wage will continue to go up and it is to be \$15.00 by 2025, so we are trying to get to that rate beforehand. Some of the changes to this pay scale is the way step increases will be given, probationary through step three will be every year and then pay increases every two years thereafter. The annual raises from probationary to step three are an incentive to get new employees to stay. Everyone is going to receive a pay increase, the lower paid

employees closest to minimum wage will receive a higher percentage raise. The employees higher up on the scale will move to the closest step with an average increase of 2.6%. Other changes are the paramedic stipends are going from \$1.50 to \$2.25, POC FFI&II/EMT going to \$14.50 and POC FFI&II/CEP going to \$17.50 per hour. These increases are based on what the surrounding districts are paying. Other district have a range for their Fire Chiefs and Assistant Fire Chiefs so this pay scale has the Assistant Fire Chief's position with step increases; this is a salaried position. On our current pay scale there was no range for this position, which seemed to have been overlooked in the past. Other local fire districts have this position on their pay scales. Comptroller Kindelberger added that she and the Chief put together multiple pay scales before settling on this one. The compression issue is hard to correct, but this pay scale will open up opportunity for the employees that are topped out. It will push them back down in steps, giving them room to advance in pay before the end of their career. Clerk DeMaio stated the new proposed pay scale has an Administrative Captain, Fire Marshal and Battalion Chief that is currently not being staffed. Is that correct? Chief Cunningham stated that is correct. Clerk DeMaio stated that he knows from his own personnel experience that this is going on nationwide, statewide, and everywhere. My employer just implemented a similar situation; we don't have an organized pay scale like this one. When I talk to firefighters and they are looking for jobs and where they want to work, I tell them to look for an organized pay scale. At my work we come in at a rate and we may stay at that rate, we have proposed COLA's (cost of living adjustments), etc. Clerk DeMaio believes that we should move forward with this pay scale, it hurts our budget but this one seems to be better than the one at my own personal place of employment. Clerk DeMaio stated he appreciated the amount of work that has gone into this pay scale.

- Clerk DeMaio motioned to approve the pay scale as presented. Director Hommel 2nd the motion. All in favor, motion carried.
- C. Discussion and possible action regarding: Consideration of Boundary change request from Paul Dhaliwal of Bargain Brothers Inc. DBA: Crazy Fred's and possible signature of resolution to amend the district's boundary. (Cunningham)
- Chief Cunningham stated this was the item that I was trying to get on the board meeting last month but didn't get the signature in time. This will bring Crazy Fred's truck stop out on Route 66 into the fire district. We finally received the signature that was needed.
 - Director Hommel motioned to approve. Director Juneau 2nd the motion. All in favor, motion carried.
- D. Discussion and possible action regarding: Surplus 2006 International brush unit; approval of resolution regarding same. (Cunningham)
- Chief Cunningham stated this is one of our money pits. This is an apparatus that we would like to have but in the last four years we have spent almost \$83,000 on it. This brush unit is one of the units that we send out on wildland assignments. The last assignment it broke down and cost us a lot of money to have fixed. It seems like whenever this unit is used, something major happens to it and costs us quite a bit to fix. This vehicle was originally purchased in 2013 for \$212,000, it looks as good as the day we purchased it; however, it has had its issues. It is currently running, and we have had no issues, but I am afraid to keep it and send it out for fear that something bad is going to happen again. Chief Martin and I have had numerous discussions about this vehicle and I was actually going to surplus it last year but I figured we would give it another chance. But just this fiscal year to date we have spent 22k. Chief Cunningham stated he is in talks with an individual interested in purchasing this vehicle but told them it must go to the board first. If that sale falls through, then we would like to consign the vehicle to Fire Trucks Unlimited, which would receive ten percent of the sale price. Chief Cunningham said this would be better than the government surplus because people looking on that website looking to purchase as cheaply as possible. Chief Cunningham stated that Fire Trucks Unlimited offered to purchase the unit for close to \$120k, which is more than I thought it was worth. I was thinking around \$80k. Director Juneau asked the Chief if we knew when the new trucks would be arriving, Chief stated that those are different types of units, but it would be closer to July or August.

- Director Juneau motioned to approve the surplus and resolution. Director Payntar 2nd the motion. Discussion: Clerk DeMaio stated his understanding for this truck's life span for wildland fires is only three more years as they don't like trucks to be older than twenty years. This vehicle was purchased with taxpayers' monies and usually we use the surplus website, so I want to be sure we are not giving anybody any special deal. Chief Cunningham replied that the interested party was sent to us by Firetrucks Unlimited. Firetrucks Unlimited is going to let us deal directly with this individual and not take any cut of the deal. This person lives in California and was a hotshot in Prescott and is now starting his own business looking for equipment. This would be a direct sale between the district and this individual. If that doesn't work out then we would consign Firetrucks Unlimited. Call for the vote: All in favor, motion carried.

8. CALL TO THE PUBLIC. *Consideration and discussion of comments and complaints from the public. Those wishing to address the Golden Valley Fire District Board need not request permission in advance. The Fire District Board is not permitted to discuss or take action on any item raised in the call to the public, unless the item is specifically noticed for discussion or legal action. However, individual Board members may be permitted to respond to criticism directed to them. Otherwise, the Board may direct that staff review the matter or that the matter be placed on a future agenda. The Fire District Board cannot discuss or take legal action on any issue raised during the Call to the Public that is not on the agenda due to restrictions of the Open Meeting Law.*

- Sheri Hommel asked about the status of the garage door. Comptroller Kindelberger told Sheri that she could ask the Chief after the meeting.

9. ADJOURNMENT

- Chairperson Foster adjourned the meeting at approximately 9:33 a.m.

MINUTES prepared by: Bobbie Schott/Mindy Kindelberger
(This is a working draft, until Board approval)

Date: 03/22/2023

By: _____
Board Clerk, Tony DeMaio

Approved: _____