

**FRY FIRE DISTRICT
MINUTES OF REGULAR BOARD MEETING
May 23, 2023**

CALL TO ORDER

Mr. Huish called the Regular Meeting of the Fry Fire District Board to order at 6:00 p.m.

ATTENDANCE

Board Members in Attendance:	Joseph Huish, Board Chairman Eric Andersen, Board Clerk Thomas Tucker, Board Member (electronically) Norman Sturm, Board Member
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Board Members Absent:	Robert McMurtrie, Board Member
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Staff in Attendance:	Mark Savage, Fire Chief Diana Jones, Billing Supervisor Billy Seamans, Deputy Chief Kaleb Mauzy, Deputy Chief Ben Archer Clowes, JVG Steven Rodriguez, JVG
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PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE AND INVOCATION

Mr. Huish led the Pledge of Allegiance and Mr. Sturm gave the invocation.

CONFLICT OF INTEREST

Mr. Huish reminded board members that they shall declare any conflict of interest. No board member declared a conflict at this time.

CALL TO THE PUBLIC

Mr. Huish opened the call to the public at 6:01 p.m.

There were no comments from the public.

Call to the public closed at 6:01 p.m.

EMPLOYEE RECOGNITION

a. Firefighter / EMT Eric Friedenber Oath and Badge Presentation.

Eric Friedenber was absent due to being on an ambulance call. His badge and oath will be presented at next month's meeting.

- b. Lieutenant / CEP Jorge Alba and Silverio Yanez Oath and Badge Presentations.

Lieutenant Jorge Alba and Lieutenant Silverio Yanez read the oath of office. Chief Savage presented them with badges and helmet shields.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

- a. Regular Board Meeting on April 4, 2023.

Mr. Andersen made a motion to approve the Regular Board Meeting minutes of April 4, 2023. Mr. Sturm seconded the motion.

Vote: 4-0.
Motion Carried.

FINANCIAL REPORT

- a. Review, discussion and possible action on the monthly financial report for April 2023.

Steven Rodriguez from James Vincent Group (JVG) gave a PowerPoint presentation reflecting the financial reports for April 2023 and the fiscal year-to-date. We received our second wave of tax revenue placing us over budget for the month and year-to-date. Non-tax revenue is under budget due to predicted wildland revenue not being received. Expenses were mostly inline for the month. A discussion followed. The board reviewed the warrants for the month and there were no questions.

Mr. Sturm made a motion to accept the April 2023 financial reports. Mr. Andersen seconded the motion.

Vote: 4-0.
Motion Carried.

COMMAND STAFF'S REPORT

Operations and Staffing – Huachuca City Operations are continuing to run smoothly. Through mid-May we have seen personnel staff Station 161 during non-peak hours roughly 2/3rds of the time. The remainder of the time, personnel are primarily floating to Station 142 to support operations and reducing the need for backfill overtime during non-peak hours.

We still have one full-time firefighter vacancy with recruitment and testing ongoing. We hired two new part-time employees who are working through their initial training. This brings our total part-time staffing to twelve.

Our wildfire season is continuing with personnel responding to support a few local fires with SVFMD, USFS, BLM, and DFFM personnel working collaboratively.

We have seen little local impact from border issues related to Title 42. Thanks to some solid advance planning, the Cochise County Office of Emergency Management has been able to

facilitate transportation for over 2000 people from the site of street releases in Naco and Douglas to Pima County with bus support from Pima County OEM and AZDEMA.

Apparatus and Equipment – Our new Type 1 Engine has been repaired and is back from Phoenix. Chief Seamans, Mr. Ayers, and Captain Kean will be conducting a post-construction inspection of the first of our new ambulances from June 5-8. The second ambulance is now projected to be here sometime later this summer.

The new Holmatro battery-powered extrication tools have been delivered and in-service training has been completed on all shifts. These were purchased under a grant submitted by Firefighter Friedenberg to the Ak-Chin Indian Nation.

Grants – Ms. Perry completed and submitted our request for \$209,000 from ICA which was allocated to offset the costs of Covid-19 industrial compensation coverage. Thanks to some great work by her, we were one of the first three fire districts in the state to provide what ICA was requesting under their revised format along with all the appropriate supporting documentation. A follow up email today indicated that ICA is hoping to have checks cut this week.

Mr. Ayers is continuing to work to install the Cradlepoints in our units. Feedback regarding the wireless connectivity has been positive. To date all our ambulances have been finished as well as DC142, E142, E1421, and B143. Two additional units were sent to Demers to be installed in the new ambulances; the remaining five will be installed in our remaining units as scheduling permits.

The Philips Tempus Pro assessment modules for our new cardiac monitors are still pending, however we are up to date with HRSA grant reporting.

We completed our first AHCCCS virtual site visit audit thanks to Ms. Jones, Deputy Chiefs Seamans and Mauzy.

We passed the first hurdle with Congressionally Directed Spending with Senator Kelly's Office including our request for gurneys, stair-chairs, and the AEDs in their initial legislation. Although this is no guarantee of funding given the federal budget process, we are one step closer.

SEACOM – Southeastern Arizona Communications is continuing to work though staffing shortages. They have five new trainees on the floor and are still working to get the rest of the Dispatch Academy Graduates through their medical and psychological evaluations.

The Interim Director, Tammi-Jo Wilkins is continuing to lead SEACOM in a positive and productive direction despite some continued hurdles with the HR Department in the City of Sierra Vista. Several partners are continuing to provide extensive support and we are excited about the opportunity additional trained dispatchers will provide.

Chief Mauzy completed delivery of the joint FFD / SVFMD Fire Officer 1 & 2 class held in conjunction with the City of Sierra Vista this month. We had seven (7) employees complete the training. Chief Mauzy also coordinated Engineer promotional testing with five (5) of our personnel.

OLD BUSINESS

- a. Review, discussion and possible action regarding new communications tower and associated lease.

Chief Savage reported AT&T continues to review our draft contract and although they have provided some updated drawings, there is nothing new on the contract end to report.

No action was taken on the item.

NEW BUSINESS

- a. Review, discussion and possible action regarding purchase of two (2) new Stryker gurneys.

Chief Savage requested approval for the purchase of two new Stryker Power-PRO gurneys to replace two aging gurneys in the new ambulances we are in the process of purchasing. Board Members were provided a copy of the bid from Stryker. The purchase would not exceed \$53,000.00.

Mr. Sturm made a motion to purchase two (2) new Stryker gurneys, not to exceed \$53,000.00. Mr. Andersen seconded the motion.

Vote: 4-0.
Motion Carried.

- b. Review, discussion and possible action regarding FY2024 Annual Budget.

Ben Archer Clowes from James Vincent Group (JVG) gave an overview of the fiscal year 2024 budget revenue and expenses discussed last month. Tax revenue increased with a 5.81% AV Growth. Non-levy revenue increased from Proposition 207, the Huachuca City contract, and ambulance revenue. Personnel expenditures increased with two additional FTE positions, the medic stipend increase, PSPRS contributions, qualifying step increases, a 2.25% COLA, and Workers' Compensation increases. Mr. Clowes reported managerial, travel and training expenses decreased slightly but all other operational expenses increased. The draft includes an additional cost of \$0.10 per 100 of LCAV. A discussion followed.

Mr. Sturm would rather increase the COLA for everyone than hire two new full-time employees and does not want to increase our tax rate. Mr. Tucker asked for the results from labor. Chief Savage stated the survey results from union members had the majority in favor of an additional tax increase, there was a split between prioritizing additional staff or additional pay, there was also a split between prioritizing additional COLA or step increases. Few employees would look for other employment opportunities if additional staff is not supported, more employees would look for other employment opportunities if there is not a pay increase. Chief Savage advised that he had not received any deliverable data to share with the Board or any additional budget recommendations. Mr. Tucker asked why Labor wasn't represented at the meeting.

Mr. Andersen asked if we have lost opportunities for revenue from not having the two additional positions filled. Chief Savage stated no, but additional staff will equalize shift staffing across the

organization while helping prevent the need for backfill overtime while reducing fatigue. Mr. Tucker stated he approves of the tentative budget because it is good operationally. Mr. Sturm's concern with hiring additional staff this year is labor requesting more pay next year based on the increase this year. Mr. Huish asked to hear from the Deputy Chiefs.

Mr. Sturm made it clear that the two additional FTE employees are in place of additional COLA, and it will not be made up the following year. Mr. Tucker thinks we will lose employees if we cannot maintain competitive pay.

Deputy Chief Mauzy stated he believes the extra employees will keep our fire engine staffed with three personnel more often, which has been proven to be more efficient. More staff will also allow us to do a better job for District residents. Deputy Chief Seamans stated he agrees with Chief Mauzy. The additional staffing will help prevent fatigue and backfill. It will absolutely be more efficient with two additional employees. Deputy Chief Seamans feels that the loss of employees is frequently due to their proximity rather than benefits and pay.

Mr. Tucker made a motion to tentatively adopt the FY2024 Annual Budget at \$7,686,579 with a tax rate of 3.999 and the bond rate of .3769 as proposed. Mr. Sturm seconded the motion.

Vote: 4-0.

Motion Carried.

REQUESTS FROM BOARD MEMBERS

There were no requests from Board Members.

ADJOURNMENT

Mr. Andersen made a motion to adjourn the Regular Meeting at 7:42 p.m. Motion seconded by Mr. Sturm.

Meeting adjourned at 7:42 p.m.

DATED THIS 24TH DAY OF MAY 2023.

Eric Andersen, Board Clerk
Fry Fire District Board