

**FRY FIRE DISTRICT  
MINUTES OF REGULAR BOARD MEETING  
May 27, 2025**

**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 Robert McMurtrie, Board Member Thomas Tucker, Board Member (electronically)
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Board Members Absent:	Norman Sturm, Board Member
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Staff in Attendance:	Mark Savage, Fire Chief Diana Mercier, Billing Supervisor Billy Seamans, Deputy Chief Dennis Ferrel, Local 4913 President Steven Rodriguez, James Vincent Group
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Others in Attendance:	John Price, Shive-Hattery Architects (electronically)
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**PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE AND INVOCATION**

Mr. Huish led the Pledge of Allegiance and Mr. Andersen 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 6:00 p.m.

There were no comments from the public.

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

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

a. Regular Board Meeting on April 22, 2025.

Mr. Andersen made a motion to accept the Regular Board Meeting minutes of April 22, 2025. Mr. Huish seconded the motion.

Vote: 3-0. Mr. McMurtrie abstained.  
Motion carried.

## **FINANCIAL REPORT**

a. Review, discussion, and possible action on the monthly financial report for April 2025.

Steven Rodriguez from James Vincent Group (JVG) gave a PowerPoint presentation reflecting a summary of the financial reports for April 2025, and year to date. The non-tax revenue was over budget due to ambulance and interest. Tax revenue was significantly under budget for the month and year to date. Total expenses for the month were under budget. Year to date non-tax revenue was over budget due to ambulance revenue, interest income, and wildland revenue. Total expenses were over budget. A discussion followed. The board reviewed the warrants for the month and there were no questions.

Mr. McMurtrie made a motion to accept the April 2025 financial reports. Mr. Andersen seconded the motion.

Vote: 4-0.  
Motion carried.

## **COMMAND STAFF'S REPORT**

Chief Savage provided Board Members with the following monthly report:

Operations and Staffing – Mark Prince will continue to serve as Interim Chief with Palominas Fire District through the end of June. We continue to offer him our support. Deputy Chief Seamans is pulling together our automatic aid data so we can discuss our ongoing collaborative efforts and streamline some of our automatic aid responses. Chief Prince is actively responding to calls in the Palominas area, which is a welcome change, and is providing our Duty Chiefs with a slight reprieve.

Deputy Chief Mauzy coordinated the promotional processes for Engineer and Captain this month. We are fortunate to have some excellent candidates and anticipate promoting an Engineer and Captain on July 1. We are incredibly grateful for the support from Donna Hilton, our HR Consultant, and Chief Officers from FHFD (Pearson), SVFMD (Dever), and PFD (Prince) with our Captain interviews.

The Town of Huachuca City selected the Fry Fire District to continue providing the Town with Fire and Emergency Services. The updated contract is on the agenda this evening under action items.

We hired Trystan Trudeau to replace Firefighter Dennis Rodriguez who has resigned to join Santa Rita FD which is much closer to his home in Tucson.

The proposed FY2026 budget includes funding for 2 additional Firefighters which will help us round out all three shifts with 14 personnel each. This should continue to improve our ability to provide 3-person engine companies and reduce the frequency of 2-person staffing.

We are continuing to meet with vendors and partners while we work to improve our wildfire readiness. A few months ago, we met with Orora Tech – a company that offers satellite-based early wildfire detection. Although they still have some time lag and gaps in peak burn hours coverage, the product has great promise. SSVEC has been unresponsive so far to a discussion about a public-private partnership that would allow us to share the fire detection data. This month we met with XyloPlan to discuss their wildfire pathway modeling. This product identifies likely wildfire pathways into communities in anticipation of upstream treatment that can buy time for responders prior to a wildfire's arrival in the interface. So far it appears that our partners at USFS may be able to provide similar modeling to better direct our future fuel reduction work. Fuel reduction, in conjunction with an adopted Wildland-Urban Interface Fire Code for new construction and strategic home hardening with existing homes can improve the readiness of our interface communities for wildfire.

Facilities – Deputy Chief Seamans is continuing to work with Shive-Hattery Architects to develop our options for Fire Stations 143. There is an item on tonight's agenda to continue moving this project forward.

We are still working to coordinate a matching paint job for the maintenance shop.

Apparatus and Equipment – The 2000-gallon tender that was loaned to Whetstone Fire District last month while their tender was in Tucson for repairs has been returned. It will be re-listed for sale on Public Surplus. We received no bids during the last cycle.

Grants – We will be working on a SAFER grant request over the next week with the hope of acquiring additional funding for Firefighters to continue to bolster our engine staffing and improve firefighter efficiency and effectiveness.

Firefighter Michael Bocook submitted two Congressionally Directed Spending requests. The first is for approximately \$80,000.00 in funding to purchase a Suburban to better support the Cochise County Regional SWAT Team. Funding was previously requested through the Southern RAC, and was unfortunately not funded. The second request is for approximately \$1.5M to support the Fire Station 143 and Training Facility renovations. Both applications have been successfully submitted. We are continuing to solicit letters of support from our local partners.

There has been no feedback on our Assistance to Firefighters (AFG) grant requests which were submitted for a regional air trailer and vehicle-mounted exhaust filters. Senator Ciscomani provided a letter of support for the regional air trailer request (FFD and PFD).

We have received no feedback on the Sunsites Pearce Fire District submission of a Gila River Indian Community Grant request in the amount of \$192,000.00 to update the Cochise County radio cache. We are serving as the host agency and would be responsible for managing the grant should it be approved and funded. Cochise County will serve as the initial recipient and pass the grant funds through to us. If funded, this request would establish two new radio caches (West and East) with 20 radios each.

We have received no feedback yet regarding our grant request to the AZ Governor's Office of Highway Safety for approximately \$90,000.00 to support the purchase of additional stabilization equipment and extrication tools for Station 141.

Our final report for the 2021 HFI Fuel Reduction Grant with DFFM was approved. We came in over on production with 170 acres treated (158.5 projected), and under on cost with our total project cost approximately \$81,000.00 less than projected. Our final reimbursement request in the amount of \$42,498.26 was recently approved and we should be receiving payment any day now.

We are continuing to make progress on our 2024 HFI Fuel Reduction Grant. Last week Captain Adam Short and Firefighter Roberto Iniguez supported two neighborhood chipper days in Ramsey Canyon. This supported the Firewise Community while removing a significant amount of fuels that were trimmed by residents around several different homes. The additional acreage supported by the chipper work will be included in the current grant. The grant funding stream is untapped to date and will provide approximately \$150,000.00 in funding to support the continued reduction of wildland hazardous fuels on another 100 acres in our highest risk interface areas.

There is still no feedback on an EMPG request for our newest command truck (DC141). This is a 50% match grant for reallocated federal funding that could see us reimbursed for emergency management-related capital improvement dollars we have already spent. If approved, we may see approximately \$53,000.00 in grant funds.

The Florian / 3am team is continuing to work to improve the usefulness of the system for departments like ours. We are scheduled for ongoing status meetings with them to ensure functionality is maintained on the platform.

SEACOM – Director Wilkins continues to improve operations at SEACOM. The center anticipates 5 new trainees starting over the next 2 months, bringing them to 18 full-time dispatchers – a significant improvement from a few years ago when they were down to 6 full-time dispatchers. We anticipate adding tactical channel assignments in July.

This month Chief Savage attended meetings with SEACOM as the conversation with the City of Safford and Graham County regarding expanding regional dispatch services continues.

LEGAL – Mr. Matura reviewed our agreement with the Town of Huachuca City and supports its adoption.

## **NEW BUSINESS**

- a. Review, discussion and possible action on the FY2026 annual budget.

Steven Rodriguez gave an overview of the FY26 Budget revenues, expenses, and current position. Minor changes were made to the proposed budget after meeting with and receiving requests from Operations.

The FY26 Budget tax revenue saw an increase of 6.45% in our assessed value. We are leaving our tax rate at the current rate of \$3.3999. We are keeping FDAT at \$400,000.00. For non-tax

revenue we are increasing our ambulance revenue by \$125,000.00, we are leaving the interest income the same, and we have a small increase in the Huachuca City contract revenue. Wildland and Grant revenue remain unchanged.

On the expense side, eligible employees will receive a step increase, a COLA increase of 2.5%, a significant increase in PSPRS, an increase in our paramedic stipend, and small increase in uniform allowance. The budget anticipates funding \$167,000.00 into capital reserves. A DROP incentive is listed if eligible employees elect to enter DROP; however, it does not affect the bottom line one way or another.

Mr. McMurtrie made a motion to adopt the proposed FY2026 annual budget. Mr. Andersen seconded the motion.

Vote: 4-0.

Motion carried.

- b. Review, discussion and possible action regarding design work and capital improvement planning with Shive-Hattery Architects for Fire Sta. 143. This item may include direction for moving forward with plans, phasing, a fee schedule, and developing a guaranteed maximum price.

Deputy Chief Semans stated the job was awarded to Marsh Development. We are working with Shive Hattery and Marsh Development through the contract details to come up with price points.

John Price, project manager and architect of Shive Hattery stated they are continuing with the design development portion of the project. The goal is to meet the needs of the District and stay within budgetary requirements. They are working with Marsh on the pre-construction contract.

No action taken on this item.

- c. Review, discussion and possible action regarding IGA with the Town of Huachuca City for Emergency Services.

Board Members were provided a copy of the proposed IGA with the Town of Huachuca City. Chief Savage stated the IGA has been reviewed by the Town's attorney and Mr. Matura. The new IGA has a four-year term with the option to extend without going out to bid, shared wildland revenue from their type 6 brush truck, and a year over year 5% increase.

Mr. McMurtrie made a motion to move approve the IGA with the Town of Huachuca City for Fire and Emergency Services. Mr. Andersen 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 6:39 p.m. Mr. McMurtrie seconded the motion.

Meeting adjourned at 6:39 p.m.

DATED THIS 28TH DAY OF MAY 2025.

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Eric Andersen, Board Clerk  
Fry Fire District Board