



Lake Mohave Ranchos Fire District



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MINUTES OF REGULAR SESSION OF THE LAKE MOHAVE RANCHOS FIRE DISTRICT GOVERNING BOARD

*The Governing Board of the Lake Mohave Ranchos Fire District met in Regular Session on 04/15/21 at 10:00 a.m. The Meeting was held at **Meadview Civic Association, 247 Meadview Blvd, Meadview AZ, 86444**. 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 and A.R.S. §38-431.03(A) (4) for legal direction with the District's Attorney on matters as set forth in the Agenda item. 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.*

1) CALL TO ORDER. 10:05 AM

2) ROLL CALL OF BOARD MEMBERS.

Board: Directors Phyllis Aitken, Douglas Braaten, Mike Karash, Theodora Koeppen, and Chair Susan De Lara- PRESENT

Staff: Fire Chief Tim Bonnee and Office Assistant Jennifer Gardner- PRESENT

3) PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE & MOMENT OF SILENCE. (To honor those who serve our Country and within Public Safety and to those we've lost).

4) EXECUTIVE BUSINESS- 10:10 AM

Board of Directors may vote to go into Executive Session pursuant to A.R. . ~38.431.03 (A) (3).

Motion to enter Executive Session: Director Aitken. Seconded: Director Braaten

Vote: Directors Aitken, Braaten, Karash, Koeppen, and Chair De Lara- AYE.

- a. Discussion regarding: Attorney response to complaints about Open Meeting Law Violations. (Chair De Lara)
- b. Discussion regarding: Previous employee payment shortage (Director Aitken)
- c. Discussion regarding: EEOC complaint (Director De Lara)

REGULAR BUSINESS

Motion to reconvene after short recess after Executive Business: Director Braaten. Seconded: Director Aitken

Vote: Directors Aitken, Braaten, Karash, Koeppen, and Chair De Lara- AYE.

5) MINUTES- 11:21 AM

03/18/21 Minutes review:

Director Aitken noted the incorrect spelling of her name. Director Braaten suggested clearer language to use in the 02/18/21 Minutes review portion under item 5.

Motion to approve minutes with corrections: Director Aitken. Seconded: Director Koeppen

Vote: Directors Aitken, Braaten, Karash, Koeppen, and Chair De Lara- AYE.

6) FINANCIALS – GABE BULDRA OF JAMES VINCENT GROUP PRESENTATION 11:30 AM

Report:

Gabe Buldra noted that for the month of March, the Fire District was over budget in a few areas due to facility maintenance and repairs. However, personnel was under budget. Currently, the District is 131K under budget for the year.

Chair De Lara inquired about how competitive the Fire District is when it comes to pay, and mentioned Peach Springs is currently offering a higher wage. Buldra responded that the District is currently not very competitive.

The option of offering one-time bonuses was discussed. Buldra expressed this as an alternative to permanent pay raises for compensation since it would not create long term liability for the District.

Director Koeppen asked why Ambulance Receivable was down 20K from last year. Buldra said that it is something that is recorded at the end of the fiscal year.

Director Koeppen inquired about how well the new collection agency is doing. Chair De Lara said that the attorney added an addendum to the contract with the collection agency, and they have now started working with the District. Currently, they have not been collecting long enough to see much progress.

Director Braaten asked that with reduced tourism, would revenue to the District drop? Fire Chief Bonnee said that there were 157 more calls this year than this time last year, including 68% higher call volume from Kingman.

Buldra explained the process for the projected budget for the 2021-2022 fiscal year. There will be a tentative adoption at next month's board meeting, then it will be posted to the public. After which there will be an official adoption.

In the 2021-2022 fiscal year, Buldra believes that there can be an increase in ambulance service revenue. Also, Wildland revenue can be increased.

Chair De Lara asked for suggestions on how to use Wildland funds. Buldra responded that whatever needs to be spent for that purpose can be brought before the board and allocated as needed. Director Braaten then asked if part of those funds could be used for bringing in more personnel, and Buldra responded that it can, but only temporary.

Director Braaten brought up using Wildland Funds for bonuses. Buldra confirmed that it can be used as such, however it cannot cover volunteers.

Grants were discussed, of which the dollar amount was brought down from the last fiscal year. Buldra mentioned that the Board can still accept larger grants, however the Board will then have to adopt an amended budget.

Fire Chief Bonnee mentioned that there are two grants waiting for new equipment to arrive, which will happen within the next couple weeks. Grants for new trucks will be a part of next year's budget.

Buldra discussed the budget for personnel. It will cover 6 full-time suppression employees, the fire chief, and part-time office support. There will be enough coverage for overtime and to staff Station 43 for up to 20 days a month, as well as a 50 cent increase to pay for full-time suppression staff.

There are also increases in the proposed budget to liability insurance, pension contribution, utilities, station supplies, EMS supplies, and repair maintenance.

Chair De Lara asked for recommendations on a new auditor. Gabe agreed, and said an auditor should be selected no later than August or September. This was noted as a future Agenda item.

There was a discussion about Workers' Compensation. Due to a proposed Arizona bill that extends the number of cancers covered under Workers' Compensation and strengthens existing law, the number of insurance companies offering Workers' Compensation to firefighters has dropped. Currently, there are two companies that offer coverage.

Securis is offering a Workers' Comp pool, and Buldra confirmed that our current rate is good. Director Braaten asked if this was a mutual fund pool, where the policy holders are also the owners. Buldra said that yes, this is the case. It was also noted that volunteers are also covered by the pool.

Director De Lara recommended bringing in a representative

Motion to approve financials: Director Karash. Seconded: Director Aitken

Vote: Directors Aitken, Braaten, Karash, Koeppen, and Chair De Lara- AYE.

A future agenda item was noted for the tentative adoption of the 2021/2011 fiscal year budget, which has to be published at 3 posting sites and the website.

7) CHIEF'S REPORT 12:47 AM

Run Report:

Amr Transports: 1
Med Calls: 57
Dolan Transports: 34
Dolan Refusals: 5
Dolan Public Assists: 4
Fire Calls: 19
Mutual Aid calls: 0
HWY-93 Calls: 19
Meadview calls: 11
Meadview transports: 6
Meadview Refusals: 3
Meadview Public Assists: 2
Meadview coverage days: 15

Incidents:

Fire Chief Bonnee noted a sharp increase in motor vehicle accidents in the month of March compared to this time last year. There has also been an increase in fatalities, due to either accidents or medical calls. Fire Chief Bonnee stated that he does respond to calls himself, and discussed a previous incident where it took three hours to respond to a medical call. The reason was because the fire department was already on two calls, and no resources could be spared.

Meetings/Conferences/Trainings:

3/15, there was a MCFOA meeting via Zoom. They are looking to start meetings in person again in May.

District Properties:

Garage doors have been ordered for both Stations 41 and 43, with expected delivery at the end of May. The awning that had blown off of the front entryway of Station 41 had been rebuilt.

Director Aitken asked if insurance was billed for the awning, and Fire Chief Bonnee replied no. The cost of replacing the awning did not reach the deductible.

There was discussion about what repairs and upgrades were being done to Station 43. It is the intention to set up a proper office in the building, and work is being done to make that happen.

Chair De Lara had a question about how Station 43 responds to ambulance calls when there is only one

person manning it. Fire Chief Bonnee responded that it is always a medic on duty. He also mentioned that he schedules someone to man Station 43 as call volume dictates. 82% of Meadview calls over the last seven months have occurred on Fridays.

Director Koeppen mentioned that there was a discussion about volunteers becoming drivers. Fire Chief Bonnee expanded on this point by explaining that volunteer drivers, called EMRs (Emergency Medical Responders), can only drive and nothing else. They may transport to helicopter landing zones within our CON (Certificate of Necessity) or to the bounds of our CON and no further.

District Vehicles:

Ambulance R 415 had two blowouts and had four new tires put on the rear. Ambulance 1161 was placed on public auction and sold for \$6,350. The district is obtaining two new vehicles, a Type-3 engine and a Type-6 brush truck. An old 1992 Ford has been repaired and is going to be used as a brush truck at Station 43.

Projects in the Works:

Personnel are undergoing training for Wildland qualifications. They will be finished at the end of April.

Fire Chief Bonnee has been in contact with business owners on Highway 93 to obtain contracts for fire coverage. So far, one business owner has agreed. Details are still being collected to be sent to the Attorney. The Fire Chief stated that the Fire District has the right to decline to respond to fire calls outside of the District.

For burn permits, they may be obtained 7 days a week given there are personnel present at Station 41.

Director Braaten asked if there was a plan to put admin staff at Station 43 at least once a week. Fire Chief Bonnee responded that it is a goal, however we are still in the process of cleaning up office operations at Station 41.

8) TECHNICAL COMMITTEE REPORT (Director Braaten) 1:22 PM

The Technical Committee met on April 12th, 2021.

The Policies Update Task Force had completed their project and that task force has been dissolved.

the Website and Communities Task Force: The Technical Committee voted to dissolve the website portion of the Task Force and leave the Community Outreach portion intact.

Fair-Funding Task Force: Ellen-Rey Bower and Walt Kiffer determined the biggest discrepancy (\$100K) in their calculations from data received from the County Assessor and Treasurer was due to a transcription error. The rest (40-50K) was due to imprecise borders for the Fire District in Meadview. The Assessor's office sent data based on estimated properties, and the Treasurer's data was from what was actually taxed. The Committee discussed the need of expanding the tax base for the Fire District.

New volunteer Zachary Valentine-Flora suggested a “bake off” or cookout for fundraising purposes and to offer education to the public. It was also suggested that signs are made to help recruit Community Outreach Task Force members in the Meadview area. Douglas Braaten will contact Meadview C.O.M. and the Neighborhood Watch to set up a presentation to get support for funding efforts.

The Communications Task Force is now closed down since the only volunteer, Jay Fleming, resigned.

Attendee Randy Stults was asked to volunteer on the Committee. He presented ideas such as a 40-hour work week for staff Monday through Friday, and volunteers the rest of the time.

Larry Tennant had several suggestions on the minutes. He insisted that we were out of compliance in several areas in the policy manual. Fire Chief Bonnee requested this information. The Fire Chief says that Tennant was going off of the old policy manual, and the new one that the Chief is bringing to the board is covered by statute.

Director Braaten expressed a question about the number of Board members that can be a part of committees. Director Aitken and Chair De Lara explained that per policy, only two Board members may be members of a committee. Director De Lara suggested he send his questions to the attorney.

9) REGULAR SESSION 1:30 PM

a. Discussion and possible action regarding: Attorney response to complaints about Open Meeting Law Violations. (Chair De Lara)

The attorney was consulted on this issue. He requested more information to submit to the Attorney General. When everything has been sent, and the District has received a response, the information will then be made public.

Chair De Lara noted that she believes that the response that was generated is already adequate.

Motion for the Office Assistant to send meeting minutes, correct spellings of all Board Members' names, and email addresses to Attorney. Also, When Board Members receive the Oath, they need to be notarized and sent to attorney immediately via email, with the Office Assistant CC'd: Chair De Lara. Seconded: Director Aitken

Vote: Directors Aitken, Braaten, Karash, and Chair De Lara- AYE.

Abstained: Director Koeppen

b. Discussion and possible action regarding: Previous employee reimbursement and/or shortage. (Director Aitken)

Motion to send all applicable documentation requested to the Attorney and to table further discussion for a future meeting: Director Aitken. Seconded: Chair De Lara

Vote: Directors Aitken, Braaten, Karash, Koeppen, and Chair De Lara- AYE.

c. Discussion and possible action regarding: Cameras for security and surveillance at Stations 41 and 43 (Fire Chief Bonnee)

Fire Chief Bonnee expressed concern about the lack of security at LMRFD fire stations. He suggested putting up cameras on the exterior of the buildings with monitors for camera feeds.

Motion to obtain more information on security and surveillance systems for Stations 41, 42, and 43, including cost: Chair De Lara. Seconded: Director Karash.

Vote: Directors Aiken, Braaten, Karash, Koeppen, and Chair De Lara- AYE.

d. Discussion and possible action regarding: Vacant LMRFD Board Clerk position (Director Aitken)

Chair De Lara noted that the Board Clerk position needs to be able to sign checks and documents within a quick timeframe. She nominated Director Aitken as the new Board Clerk.

Motion to approve Director Aitken as acting Board Clerk: Chair De Lara. Seconded: Directors Koeppen and Karash

Vote: Directors Aitken, Braaten, Karash, Koeppen, and Chair De Lara- AYE.

10) CALL to the PUBLIC. *(The Fire District Board is not permitted to discuss or take action on any item(s) that are not on the Agenda that are raised in the call to the public. 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 due to restriction of the Opening Meeting Law).*

Ellen Rey Bower suggested a policy that the full board needs to be present to make major policy changes, or changes to the bylaws. This was noted as a future agenda item.

11) CONSIDERATION OF FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS

▪Specified tabled items will move to following month's Regular Meeting, unless noted otherwise and/or pending additional information.

12) NEXT REGULAR BOARD MEETING DATE & LOCATION.

(Subject to change, notice/announcement will be posted via District Website, if any changes occur)

**5/20/2021 at 10:00 a.m. at the Dolan Springs Community Council, 16022 N Pierce Ferry Rd,
Dolan Springs, AZ 86441**

11) ADJOURNMENT: 1:45 PM

Motion to adjourn meeting: Director Aitken. Seconded: Director Braaten

Vote: Directors Aitken, Braaten, Karash, Koeppen, and Chair De Lara- AYE.

Minutes finalized by: Jennifer Gardner, Office administrator.

Date: 05/27/2021