



# Lake Mohave Ranchos Fire District



Phone: (928) 767-  
3300

16126 Pierce Ferry Road or P.O. Box 611  
Dolan Springs AZ, 86441

Fax: (928) 767-3301

## MINUTES OF REGULAR SESSION OF THE LAKE MOHAVE RANCHOS GOVERNING BOARD

The Governing Board of the Lake Mohave Ranchos Fire District met in Regular Session on 5/20/2021 at 10:00 a.m. The Meeting was held at the Dolan Springs Community Council, 16022 N Pierce Ferry Rd, Dolan Springs, AZ 86441. 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- 10:50 AM**

**2) ROLL CALL OF BOARD MEMBERS- 10:50 AM**

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

Director Theodora Koeppen arrived at 10:54 am

**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 -12:15pm**

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

**Motion to enter executive session: Director Braaten.**

**Seconded: Director Karash**

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

a. **Discussion:** Regarding policy changes (Chair De Lara)

**Motion to end executive session and return to regular session: Director Aitken**

**Seconded: Director Braaten**

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

**5) MINUTES -10:53 AM**

04/15/21 Regular Meeting review:

A misspelling was pointed out in item 3 in the Minutes template.

**Motion to accept April 15<sup>th</sup> Regular Meeting minutes with corrections: Director Braaten**

**Seconded: Director Aitken**

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

04/22/21 Special Meeting minutes review:

Director Braaten requested a correction in the spelling of his name.

**Motion to accept April 22<sup>nd</sup> Special Meeting minutes with corrections: Director Braaten**  
**Seconded: Director Aitken**  
**Vote: Directors Aitken, Braaten, Koeppen, and Chair De Lara- AYE. Director Karash- ABSTAINED**

## **6) FINANCIALS 11:03 AM**

Gabe Buldra attended via phone call to give his financial report for the month of April.

Mr. Buldra was pleased overall with the financials for April.

Overall operating expenses this year to date is \$713,018, which is under budget by \$155,091.

Director Braaten asked to clarify payroll, and Buldra said that it was 26 times a year.

Gabe Buldra explained what leases mean for the District, since Director Koeppen pointed out that one of the District ambulances is listed as leased. Mr. Buldra stated that since the District cannot take out traditional loans for their vehicles, the District uses something called a lease purchase. This ambulance will be owned by the District upon payoff just as with a traditional loan.

Chair De Lara brought up a new state-sponsored program that will allow the District to borrow at a much lower interest rate for unfunded liability and asked if Gabe Buldra was familiar with it. He was, however explained that there was some risk involved. He advised that it would not be beneficial to the District at this time.

Director Koeppen supplied a handout for Public Agency Retirement Services. She asked for the Board and Gabe Buldra review the program.

Chair De Lara asked if it was possible for James Vincent Group to set up accounts on Bill.com so all Board members can view invoices and see what bills are paid. Mr. Buldra said that they will handle it.

Director Braaten asked if the District is still using QuickBooks and if it was still currently being paid for. Gabe Buldra said that QuickBooks is used for payroll and that the cost is included in the James Vincent Group service.

Chair De Lara wanted Mr. Buldra to explain to the Board the role of James Vincent Group in District operations. He said that his firm's services include financial oversight, accounting, bill pay, recording of bills and transactions, and payroll. He also said that although James Vincent Group is not a CPA firm, they also have certified public accountants on staff.

Director Koeppen questioned a payment to the city of Kingman for over \$5,500. Fire Chief Bonnee said that this was for dispatch. LMRFD used to handle its own dispatch, however that service was handed over to Kingman.

**Motion to accept financials as presented: Director Aitken.**  
**Seconded: Director Koeppen**  
**Vote: Directors Aitken, Braaten, Karash, Koeppen, and Chair De Lara- AYE**

## **7) CHIEF REPORT- 12:28 PM**

**Run Report:**

**Version: 1**  
**DC#:**

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**Updated: 6/18/2021**

AMR Transports: 0  
Med Calls: 80  
Dolan Transports: 51  
Dolan Refusals: 3  
Dolan Public Assists: 5  
Fire Calls: 16  
Mutual Aid Calls: 0  
Highway 93 Calls: 0  
Meadview Calls: 9  
Meadview Transports: 8  
Meadview Refusals: 1  
Meadview Public Assists: 0  
Meadview Coverage Days: 16

### **Meetings/Conferences/Trainings:**

Fire Chief Bonnee said he was unable to attend the MCFOA meeting due to responding to the Flag wildland fire.

Night fire training will begin soon.

Annual hose testing will begin on Saturday and take about 3 weeks to complete. Hoses are being brought down to Station 41 for the testing.

Chair De Lara asked if we should call the fire department if we see anyone burning during the current bans. Fire Chief Bonnee said yes, however LMRFD is currently not giving out citations due to issues with the courts.

### **District Properties:**

The new garage doors for Stations 41 and 43 have been finished and installation dates will be settled in the next two weeks.

More clutter has been removed from Stations 41 and 43 as part of the cleanup effort.

### **District Vehicles:**

The new Type-3 truck received from the state has had the LMRFD decals installed and it is now in service.

The newest engine was put in service up at Station 43.

Brush Truck 416 was repaired and put back into service.

The ambulance R-435 blew the motor en route back from a call and estimates are in works to get it repaired. It is Chief Bonnee's opinion that the it is worth getting the motor replaced since the transmission and rear end had already been replaced, among other things.

Chair De Lara asked if the current problems with 4-435 was due to lack of maintenance. Fire Chief Bonnee was not certain. She then asked if more than one estimate was being obtained, and if it was worth just replacing the ambulance. Fire Chief Bonnee responded that it was not cost-effective to replace the ambulance and that multiple estimates were being sought after for the work.

Chair De Lara stated that the Board could do a Special meeting to approve the work when the estimates are obtained so

work could begin as soon as possible. Fire Chief Bonnee also confirmed that it was the plan to tag this expense under the remains of this year's budget.

### **Projects in the Works:**

The new air packs received on the AFG grant have been shipped and we are awaiting delivery. New radios have arrived and are being programmed and installed in the apparatus.

Still waiting on Type 6 truck to be delivered from the state.

Billing has been submitted for LMRFD involvement in the Flag fire and we are currently expecting to be paid \$34,451.25 for that. Fire Chief Bonnee stated that none of the previous chiefs had participated in the Wildland project that this Flag fire was a part of and future payouts may meet or exceed 35K depending on how long the department remains on these fires.

The evaluation from the State for LMRFD on the Flag fire was exemplary. Copies of the evaluation are going to be provided to the Board and the public.

Fire Chief Bonnee expressed concern that there were rumors that he was stripping personnel and apparatus from the District while LMRFD responded to the Flag fire. The Fire Chief wanted to stress that the District still remained fully staffed and covered during this event.

Chair De Lara said that the residents that live in the area that the Flag fire affected are grateful, and due in part to our fire fighters' efforts those homes were saved. Fire Chief Bonnee replied that there was one deck and one well shed that sustained damage, but nothing else.

### **8) TECHNICAL COMMITTEE REPORT (Director Braaten/Ellen Rey Bower) 02:30 PM**

Ellen Rey Bower and Director Braaten presented that the Technical voted to go into Recess until September.

### **9) REGULAR SESSION- 11:38 AM**

#### **a. Discussion and possible action:** Tentative adoption of 2021/2022 fiscal year budget. (Chair De Lara)

Gabe Buldra presented the LMRFD 2021/2022 budget.

Some points of interest include a new payout from the state for tax revenue generated by marijuana sales. Gabe Buldra projects that the District will receive 15K a year annually if tax revenue holds. He stated that this was designed to pay pensions, and suggests the District use this money to pay off PSPRS.

Director Koeppen asked why the budget for fuel was reduced considerably. Mr. Buldra answered that historically, the District only spent 30K at the very most. So he budgeted accordingly.

Grants were also reduced to a 5K placeholder. If the District receives a small grant then it's okay to receive it with no amendment to the budget. However, if a large one comes in it is Mr. Buldra's recommendation that the Board amend the budget to accommodate it.

De Lara asked about workers' comp, since it's different from last year. Gabe Buldra said that it was based on actual expenses, which last year was not.

The proposed budget will be posted to the public to review, and then a vote to accept and adopt will occur next regular Board meeting in June.

**Motion to tentatively adopt proposed 2021/2022 budget: Director Karash**

**Seconded: Director Aitken**

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

**b. Discussion and possible action:** Request for proposals on auditor services. (Chair De Lara)

De Lara said that she has some concerns about the auditor used in the past and felt it would be in the best interest of the District to obtain quotes for the 2020-2021 fiscal year. She stated that she had reached out to Mr. Buldra and asked if he knew of some auditors.

Gabe Buldra said that James Vincent group will prepare a request for proposals summary and send them out to firms that work with fire districts. He said that the requests will have a set deadline by July 9<sup>th</sup>, and suspects that the District will have at least three proposals.

Chair De Lara asked what the price for last year's audit was, and Charlotte Kiffer stated that it was around 9K.

Charlotte Kiffer also asked if LMRFD owned the land that Station 41 is located on, because if so, it was not reflected on past audits. Fire Chief Bonnee responded that the District leases the land from BLM, for the amount of \$20 per year.

Chair De Lara asked to find out if the Dolan Springs Library and Chamber buildings were also on the lease.

**Motion to place the audit of LMRFD 2020-2021 fiscal year out for bids: Director Aitken**

**Seconded: Director Koeppen**

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

**c. Discussion and possible action:** Wells Fargo line of credit request. (Chief Bonnee)

Chair De Lara explained that this line of credit was simply a renewal and there was no plans to actually use it. Gabe Buldra added that with the financial state of LMRFD, there was minimal need. However, it is good to keep in the event of unforeseen circumstances.

Chair De Lara asked who would be able to sign for this renewal, and Mr. Buldra said that the Chair can sign.

**Motion to approve and sign the Wells Fargo Line of Credit Request: Director Braaten.**

**Seconded: Director Aitken**

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

**d. Discussion and possible action:** The possible pursuit of acquiring a loan to satisfy the unfunded liability funds for RSPS at a lower interest rate than what we are paying currently. (Chair De Lara)

Discussion for this item was covered during the Financial presentation in section 6.

**e. Discussion and possible action:** Lexipol renewal. (Director Aitken)

Director Aitken explained that Lexipol generated policies and procedures for LMRFD in the past. However, with the current work done by District to overhaul LMRFD policy manuals, she felt that Lexipol's services were no longer required. Chair De Lara agreed with this opinion.

Gabe Buldra stated that he did not include Lexipol in the proposed budget.

**Motion to discontinue the use of Lexipol services: Director Aitken**

**Seconded: Director Braaten**

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

**f. Discussion and possible action:** Review of Policy and Procedure Manuals. (Chair De Lara)

Policy and Procedure manuals were distributed to the Board via thumb drives. At this time, not everyone had time to review them. Chair De Lara requested that the manuals, including the latest AFDA manual, be available to the board through an employee portal.

Chair De Lara asked if the removal of particular items in the manuals had been completed. Fire Chief Bonnee answered that it was done.

Fire Chief Bonnee brought up the accrual rates for PTO. He stated that we currently offer the lowest rates in the state of Arizona and suggested that it be increased to 3.16%. This number is still very low, but better than what was stated in the previous manuals. That would amount to 4 days off a year.

Chair De Lara was worried about the low accrual rate. Director Koeppen suggested that the Board should be supplied with a printout for suggested changes to the accrual rate before a decision was made.

Chair De Lara asked about sick leave. Fire Chief Bonnee said that 48 hours of sick time is provided. The Board agreed that this was reasonable and fair.

**g. Discussion and possible action:** Labor Commission complaints. (Phyllis Aitken)

Director Aitken said that Gabe Buldra supplied paystubs for former employees in question. She said she found some inconsistencies in reported vacation time for one individual, and that there was an overpayment.

Chair De Lara suggested that this discrepancy is addressed in a small claims suit.

Director Koeppen added that the Board should wait for the Labor Commission to finish their investigation before moving forward, as further documentation from them may present a stronger case.

Director Aitken then said that for another ex-employee, there was a question about sick leave.

**Motion to wait until Labor Commission results are available before resuming discussion: Director Koeppen  
Seconded: Director Aitken**

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

**h. Discussion and possible action:** Email backup issues and solutions. (Chair De Lara)

Adam Barnes of Drive By Geek was not able to be present, however briefed Chair De Lara prior to the meeting on an upcoming email disruption. She explained to the Board that Mr. Barnes has found a way to quickly and efficiently back up emails, but it will involve password resets for all affected accounts. Mr. Barnes will give notice before this occurs and be in contact with Board members to reset their passwords.

Director Aitken asked if it was necessary to back up email addresses currently in use. Glenn Gardner spoke up and said it was important to do so, as it is possible for current emails to still be permanently lost. Chair De Lara also stressed that the District was still under an AG investigation and may request access to emails- even personal ones.

There was also discussion about bringing web duties back in-house and will be investigated further.

**i. Discussion and possible action:** Adoption of a formal policy requiring the LMRFD Fire Chief to be a CEP. (Chair De Lara)

CEP: Certified Emergency Paramedic.

Fire Chief Bonnee expressed that with the number of staff and apparatus, it is imperative that the Fire Chief has full certifications to fulfill any duty while out on a call. He brought up an example in the last two weeks where he was required to transport patients to the hospital himself as the other paramedic on duty was busy transporting other patients. If the Fire Chief did not have CEP certifications, then those patients would have needed to wait for transport until the paramedic on duty was able to come back and retrieve them.

Director Karash also added that Kingman Regional Medical Center (KRMC) also enforces restrictions that prevent EMTs from performing particular duties. Fire Chief Bonnee expanded on this by saying that, as an example, paramedics are the only ones that can restock drugs on the rigs.

Members of the public Charlotte Kiffer and Ellen Rey Bower spoke up. Kiffer stressed that it is important that LMRFD maintain a working chief and not just an administrative one. Bower agreed and suggested that it should be made policy.

Director Braaten asked what it would cost the District to employ another paramedic if the Fire Chief did not have the CEP certification. Fire Chief Bonnee said it would require two new employees at 100K total. He expanded on this by adding that to fully staff Meadview, it would cost 300K per year including paramedics.

**Motion to adopt a formal policy to require the LMRFD Fire Chief be CEP certified: Director Koeppen**

**Seconded: Director Aitken**

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

**j. Discussion and possible action: Fire Chief Bonnee performance review. (Chair De Lara)**

Performance review forms were distributed to the Board. De Lara explained that the Board members are making a decision on whether or not they approve of Bonnee as Fire Chief and whether or not to give him a pay increase up to 5%. If there are any concerns, they can be added at the bottom of the review forms. Also, if the Board wishes to read the reviews done by Bonnee's staff to help in their decision, then Director Aitken may provide them.

Director Koeppen asked to be excused from the evaluation as she felt she did not have enough experience with Bonnee as Fire Chief to make a decision. De Lara consented and told her that if she wished to fill out a review form, she is still welcome to do so.

Chair De Lara asked Fire Chief Bonnee if he wanted the discussions about his performance review to be in Regular session or done privately in Executive session. Bonnee said he was comfortable doing it publicly, and a T-38 form will be submitted.

**k. Discussion and possible action: Wildland program equipment. (Chief Bonnee)**

Fire Chief Bonnee said that there is equipment required for wildland assignments that LMRFD does not currently possess. For instance, the new radios are not useable in those kinds of environments. LMRFD was nearly kicked off the Flag fire for the lack of functioning radios, however a couple were lent to our fire fighters for the duration.

There is a single dealer for these required radios that operates out of Vegas. Bonnee supplied a quote to the Board for 4 radios at a steep discount. De Lara asked if Bonnee suspects that we may need more radios in a year, and whether or not the District should purchase a couple extra. Fire Chief Bonnee said he will ask the dealer about it.

The fire packs that LMRFD currently use are 25 years old and out of compliance. Fire Chief Bonnee found replacement packs along with complete clothing kits that are suitable for Wildland deployment. Director Aitken added that it may be a requirement for shirts to reflect specific information such as the designated number of the apparatus. Fire Chief Bonnee said that he could add info onto the shirts.

**Motion to order 4 radios and 6 complete gear packs: Chair De Lara.**

**Seconded: Director Aitken**

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

**I. Discussion and possible action:** Appointing a Chairperson for the PSPRS Board. (Chair De Lara)

Chair De Lara asked Director Koeppen if she would do it, and Director Koeppen agreed.

**Motion to make Director Koeppen Chairperson for the PSPRS Board: Chair De Lara**

**Seconded: Director Aitken**

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

**m. Discussion and possible action:** Regarding policy changes. (Chair De Lara)

Chair De Lara said that the attorney supplied counsel on this matter. The attorney stated that via statute, the District cannot make a policy that requires a super majority. A majority of the quorum is the only requirement to pass any motion.

**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 Open Meeting Law).*

Charlotte Kiffer wanted to express thanks to the Fire Chief for help with a CPR class held recently. Also, she would like to investigate getting a defibrillator for the facility. She expressed appreciation again and stated that she is thrilled with Fire Chief Bonnee's progress.

**12) CONSIDERATION OF FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS.**

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

**13.) NEXT REGULAR BOARD MEETING DATE & LOCATION.** (Subject to change, notice/announcement will be posted via District Website, if any changes occur.) **6/17/2021 at 10:00 a.m.** at the **Meadview Civic Association, 247 Meadview Blvd, Meadview, AZ, 86444.**

**Motion to end May Regular Meeting: Director Aitken**

**Seconded: Director Karash**

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

Minutes prepared by: Jennifer Gardner

Date: 05/21/2021

Minutes signed/posted by:

Date: 05/21/2021

*Pursuant to the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), the Lake Mohave Ranchos Fire District endeavors to ensure accessibility of all its programs, facilities and*

services to all persons with disabilities. If any disabled person needs an accommodation, please notify the Lake Mohave Ranchos Fire District at: (928) 767-3300, prior to the scheduled meeting time.

**LMRFD Official Posting**

**Locations:**

*Administration / St. 41 (16126 Pierce Ferry Rd Dolan Springs, AZ)  
Dolan Springs Chamber of Commerce (16154 Pierce Ferry Rd Dolan Springs, AZ 86441)*

*St. 43 (30250 Stillwater Meadview, AZ)  
Meadview Post Office (250 Pueblo Dr, Meadview, AZ 86444)  
Meadview Civic Association (247 Meadview Blvd, Meadview, AZ 86444)*

*LMRFD Website ([www.lmrfd.org](http://www.lmrfd.org))*