



# Lake Mohave Ranchos Fire District



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## MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING OF THE LAKE MOHAVE RANCHOS FIRE DISTRICT GOVERNING BOARD

The Governing Board of the Lake Mohave Ranchos Fire District met in Regular Session on **09/16/2021** at **10:00 a.m.** The Meeting was held at **Dolan Springs Chamber of Commerce (16154 Pierce Ferry Rd Dolan Springs, AZ)**. 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. 10:08 AM

**Directors Phyllis Aitken, Douglas Braaten, Theodora Koeppen, and Chair Susan De Lara- PRESENT**  
**Director Mike Karash- PRESENT by phone**

### 2) ROLL CALL OF BOARD MEMBERS.

### 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

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 Koeppen**

**Seconded: Director Aitken**

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

a. Discussion regarding: Follow up with AG complaints (Director De Lara)

b. Discussion regarding: Legal considerations about the District (Director Aitken) **AMENDED- Ongoing litigation regarding the District (Director Aitken)**

c. Discussion regarding: Executive meeting – remote or virtual attendance via unsecured method of communication (Director De Lara)

d. Discussion regarding: Holding Executive sessions *prior to* the opening of regular meetings (Director Braaten)

**Motion to close executive session and return to regular: Director Braaten**

**Seconded: Director Aitken**

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

De Lara asked the attorney to stay on the phone for a while longer.

### 5) MINUTES

**Motion to approve August 2021 Regular Minutes as presented: Director Aitken**

**Seconded: Director Braaten**

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

**Motion to approve August 2021 Executive Minutes with corrections: Director Aitken**

**Seconded: Director Koeppen**

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

Braaten wanted confirmation that Director Karash was not present for the December 29<sup>th</sup>, 2020 meeting. Director Karash confirmed.

## **6) FINANCIALS**

Presented by Gabe Buldra from James Vincent Group.

Mr. Buldra started off by telling the Board that the District does not have a large budget and we are only two months into the fiscal year. Some of the figures in this month's report are due to Wildland expenses. As the revenue for the most recent deployments have not been received by the District at the time of writing the report, nothing was a cause for concern.

Revenue for the month of August is 23K, which is under budget by 33K. Tax revenue is 10K, which is over budget by 1K. Non-tax revenue is 12K, which is under budget by 35K.

Expenses for August totaled 119K, which is over budget by 24K. Vehicle fuel is over budget by 6K and vehicle maintenance is over budget by 3K. Overtime wages is over budget by 9K and PSPRS is over budget by 3K.

Mr. Buldra stated that most of the overages are because of Wildland. They will be corrected by the revenue coming in. Mr. Buldra will meet with Fire Chief Bonnee to break down the difference between District and Wildland expenses so the divide between the two is more clear.

Property tax collection is ahead, which Mr. Buldra said is a good thing. Non-levied revenue is over budget due to a grant that was received. Ambulance revenue is under budget but Mr. Buldra believes this will come back in line with what is expected. Fire Chief Bonnee added to this by saying that since switching to a different collections agency, a lot of back accounts are being collected upon.

Year to date, the District is over by 217K. However, 200K is from the grant. The 17K is because of fuel and maintenance.

Director Koeppen said everyone was surprised by the numbers, especially with the grant and wildland money.

Director De Lara asked how long it takes for Wildland funds to come in, and Fire Chief Bonnee said it depends. The District has 30 days to submit billing, and then the state has 30 days to send the District a check for the amount owed. Bonnee submits the billing within a couple days of the conclusion of each deployment, so it generally takes 30-40 days to see the funds. Mr. Buldra added that once Arizona's pool for paying out the funds dries up, it may take longer for the District to receive its money.

**Motion to accept financials as presented: Director Aitken.**

**Seconded: Director Braaten**

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

## 7) CHIEF REPORT

### **Run Report:**

AMR Transports: 0  
Med Calls: 97  
Dolan Transports: 81  
Dolan Refusals: 5  
Dolan Public Assists: 2  
Fire Calls: 19  
Mutual Aid Calls: 0  
HWY 93 Calls: 28  
Meadview Calls: 14  
Meadview Transports: 7  
Meadview Refusals: 2  
Meadview Public Assists: 1  
Meadview Coverage Days: 16

### **District Properties:**

The Fire Chief said that the inside of Station 43 in Meadview has been painted. There is still much that needs to be done to the building, however. Fridge just went out, water from the bay floods under the walls into the living quarters and kitchen, and floors are peeling up due to the water damage. Although the District is over budget when it comes to maintenance, there are issues that need to be addressed at Station 43.

Chair De Lara asked the Fire Chief if he will be preparing quotes for the repairs, and the Fire Chief said that he will.

Fire Chief Bonnee told the Board that Station 42 was opened for the crews that came to help with the Tipton fire. Director Koeppen asked about the accommodations at Station 42, and the Fire Chief told her there are full accommodations, including two beds.

Director Aitken explained that when crews are deployed to fight a fire, they plan on camping. However, it would be nice to make 42 more comfortable for the state and BLM when crews need a place to stay.

Chair De Lara asked about pest control at Station 42, and the Fire Chief confirmed that 42 is currently not being treated as the building is largely unused. The Fire Chief did agree that it may be a good idea to start up again.

Fire Chief Bonnee did mention that despite receiving monthly pest control visits, rodents are a large problem at Station 43 in Meadview, as they have been chewing wires and insulation.

Director Aitken asked about the contract for Station 43, as it is owned by the Meadview Civic Association. She wanted to know if the contract stated that the District is liable for repairs. Fire Chief Bonnee answered that we are responsible for repairs and upkeep.

Director Koeppen was grateful that Station 43 was being discussed, as it is great progress for the community in Meadview.

### **District Vehicles:**

B-416, a brush truck, had a turbo replaced. Ambulance R-415 had a drag link and two tires replaced, along with having a Ford recall taken care of. The ambulance is currently back in service. The Chief's truck C-401 had a hole in the radiator and that part was replaced.

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

Results for the AFG grant are still pending. The District has not received an approval nor denial.

Fire Chief Bonnee said that fuel is getting outrageously expensive. The Gas 'n Grub in Meadview and the Chevron stations in Dolan Springs are up to around \$4.50 a gallon. He suggested obtaining a fuel tank for diesel. The last time he looked into it the other year, it would cost a couple grand to set up a tank. Mr. Buldra chimed in and told the Board that the fuel will be charged at market rate, so it'll be cheaper than fueling up anywhere else.

After the extended power outage due to a microburst, the Fire Chief is also looking into having a generator installed at Station 41. The District rented one during the outage to continue operations. With no power, the District cannot function. Preliminary research puts a generator and the required wiring at around 25K. Mr. Buldra added that there is a level of operational readiness that the District needs to have. Mr. Buldra told the Board that the District does have the funds to make the purchase.

Director Braaten asked about putting a generator up in Meadview. Director Aitken said that she spoke with someone about the possibility, and it will most likely have to be approved by the MCA as it is their property and a generator would be a permanent addition.

Fire Chief Bonnee also mentioned that during the power outage, they allowed people on oxygen to come into the bay at Station 41 to plug in their concentrators. Chair De Lara was concerned about whether or not that opens up the District to liability and if an incident would be covered by the current insurance policy. It isn't known at this time.

Lastly, the Fire Chief said he's considering opening up Stations 41 and 43 for Halloween and trick or treating. The dates have yet to be determined. Director Koeppen said that an ad could be put into the community newsletters to advertise the event.

## **9) ADMIN REPORT**

Administrative Assistant Jen Gardner notified the Board that the website is now live. There were hiccups that have since been ironed out. There were display issues across multiple browsers that have since been rectified, however the Facebook feed is still being blocked on some Firefox browsers. Gardner is looking into ways to rectify that. She is also preparing to add new pages to flesh out the site further.

As the foundations of the website are complete, focus is shifting to SharePoint. A bare-bones version should be live by the end of October, and Gardner will be available to acquaint the Board members with the system and show them how they will be able to use it.

## **10) TECHNICAL COMMITTEE REPORT (Director Braaten/Ellen Reh Bower) 11:49**

Ellen Reh Bower presented the latest minutes from the Technical Committee. Reh Bower says that the Committee has been pursuing contracts with businesses in White Hills at the Fire Chief's request. In tandem, the Committee is also researching expanding the boundaries of the District. Due to limited resources and manpower, it may be better to expand the District instead

of negotiating with residents and business owners door-to-door.

A cost analysis will have to be performed on the proposed new boundaries since there will have to be a new station erected and more personnel hired.

For community outreach, an ex-volunteer may come back to the District. Also, a flyer will be posted to further see if there's a way for the community to get involved in helping the District and our communities.

## 11) REGULAR SESSION

### a. Discussion and possible action regarding: Follow up with AG complaints (Director DeLara)

Discussed in executive. No action at this time.

### b: Discussion and possible action regarding: Legal considerations about the District (Director Aitken) **AMENDED-Ongoing litigation regarding the District (Director Aitken)**

Discussed in executive. No action at this time.

### c: Discussion and possible action regarding: Executive meeting – remote or virtual attendance via unsecured method of communication (Director De Lara)

Discussed in executive. De Lara stated that per state statute, Board members are permitted to phone in for executive sessions but must take care that no other individuals are present.

No action taken at this time.

### d: Discussion and possible action regarding: Holding Executive sessions *prior to the opening of regular meetings* (Director Braaten)

Director Braaten told the Board that making the public wait outside in the case of an executive session drives people away. Chair De Lara replied that she is in favor of listing Executive first on the agenda, but the executive sessions may take ten minutes or an hour, depending on what's being spoken about. Duration is an unknown.

Director Aitken suggested that the regular sessions begin at 11am. If the Board has executive items to discuss, then executive sessions may begin at 10am- an hour before the start of the regular session.

**Motion to change format of meetings to advance executive session to 10:00am to 11:00am, with regular session starting at 11:00 am: Director Braaten.**

**Seconded: Director Aitken**

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

### e. Discussion and possible action regarding: Purchase of station generator for emergencies. (Chief Bonnee, Director Aitken)

Discussed in Chief's Report. Tabled for future agenda item.

**f: Discussion and possible action regarding: Discussion of fuel supply for the Fire District. (Chief Bonnee, Director Aitken)**

Discussed in Chief's Report. Tabled for future agenda item.

**g: Discussion and possible action regarding: Discussion and possible action regarding having legal counsel present for all Board Meetings (Director DeLara)**

Chair De Lara told the Board that due to the increase of complaints, she proposes that the attorney reviews the agenda each month and be present for the duration of the next few meetings. She believes the AG would look upon the proactiveness favorably. Director Karash and Director Braaten both agreed, saying it will keep the District from further complaints or litigation.

Attorney Cornelius also agreed that it may be good. He did state to the Board that the longer the meetings run, the more of a chance of people getting off track and discussing things that are not on the agendas. Meetings should not take longer than an hour to an hour and a half. The Attorney also stated that he would probably not be required for the entire duration of meetings.

Fire Chief Bonnee told the Attorney that the District will send him the meeting agendas so he may be aware of items that might require his presence.

Director De Lara further explained that the Attorney will act as a stopgap for the time being, as she does not want to see financial consequences for members of the Board who volunteer their time.

**Motion to send agendas to the Attorney and utilize his legal counsel during meetings via teleconference for the next two months, then revisit: Chair De Lara**

**Seconded: Director Koeppen**

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

**Director Aitken- ABSTAINED**

**AMENDED- h: Discussion and possible action: Changing Board meeting dates. (Director De Lara)**

Director De Lara noted that there are people that cannot attend the meetings due to scheduling conflicts. She suggested moving it to a different day of the month. Wednesdays were suggested. Item will be tabled until an upcoming meeting.

- 12) 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 wanted to thank the Board, Chief, Accountant, and others for doing good work for the District.

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

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

**14) NEXT REGULAR BOARD MEETING DATE & LOCATION.** (Subject to change, notice/announcement will be posted via District Website, if any changes occur.) **10/21/2021 at 10:00 a.m.** at the **Meadview Civic Association, 247 Meadview Blvd, Meadview, AZ, 86444.**

**Motion to close the August 2021 meeting at 12:24 PM: Director Aitken**  
**Seconded: Director Braaten**  
**Vote: Directors Aitken, Braaten, Karash, Koeppen, and Chair De Lara- AYE**

MINUTES prepared by: Jennifer Gardner

Date: 09/19/21

*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)

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))

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