



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 **Thursday 04/20/2023 at 1:00 pm**. The meeting was held at **Meadview Civic Center (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

Meeting called to order at 1:04 pm by Clerk Phyllis Aitken

2) ROLL CALL OF BOARD MEMBERS 1:05

Director Johnson – present

Director Braaten – present

Director Nelson – present

Director Aitken – present

Director Koeppen – absent

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

Pledge of Allegiance and moment of silence were led by Director Aitken.

4) EXECUTIVE SESSION: (Board of Directors may vote to go into Executive Session pursuant to A.R.S §38.431.03 (A) (3))

Director Aitken called for a motion to go into executive session at 1:06 pm.

Director Nelson moved to go into executive session.

Director Aitken seconded the motion.

All directors present voted AYE and executive session began at 1:06 PM. **(0:47)**

Director Aitken moved to close executive session at 1:50 pm (44:21)

Director Braaten seconded the motion.

All directors present voted AYE and executive session closed at 1:50 pm

Executive Session Closed at 1:50pm (44:25)

Regular Session resumed at 1:51 pm

5) MINUTES

a. 3/16/23 Regular minutes

Director Nelson moved to approve the 3/16 minutes. (45:58)

Director Johnson seconded the motion.

Director Braaten abstained, all other directors present voted AYE and the motion carried at 1:52 pm. (46:21)

b. 3/16/23 Executive minutes

Director Nelson moved to approve the 3/16 executive minutes. (46:48)

Director Johnson seconded the motion.

Director Braaten abstained, all other directors present voted AYE and the motion carried (47:00)

6) CONSENT AGENDA

a. Chief Report: presented by Chief Bonnee at 1:53 pm (47:50)

(The governing body may not propose, discuss, deliberate or take legal action on this matter unless the specific matter is properly noticed for legal action. Therefore, action taken as a result of the Chief's report will be limited to directing staff to study the matter or scheduling the matter for further consideration and discussion at a later date. (A.R.S. 38-431.02.K.)

Run Report:

Amr Transports: 3

Med Calls: 93

Dolan Transports: 78

Dolan Refusals: 5

Dolan Public Assists: 7

Fire Calls:14

Mutual Aid calls: 0

Hwy 93 Calls: 31

Meadview calls: 11

Meadview transports: 7

Meadview Refusals: 2

Meadview Public Assists: 4

Meadview coverage days: 16

Meetings/Conferences/Training

- Run Review 3/14/2023.
- We will be doing a live burn training at St. 41 in May.
- The National Fire Academy class that 3 of us will be attending is scheduled for May 8-13 in Pinetop Az.

District Vehicles:

- The chevy ambulance is still in the shop getting a new wiring harness to fix the electrical issues.
- The Ford ambulance (currently operational but impaired) will be going in for repairs as soon as we get the Chevy back in service.
- The suspension that arrived for the new ambulance was the wrong one and the one we need is on backorder. The expected delivery date for ambulance is now mid-December.

District Properties:

- Update on Fuel system – We got the permit from the county and the fuel tank has been delivered and placed. The electrician is running electrical wiring out to it today, and installation/hookup of the pump system is scheduled for next Wednesday.

Projects in the works: (53:40)

- We will be starting hose testing May 1st.
- I wrote and turned in a grant through Firehouse Subs which is a no match grant for the district. This grant is for 2 full sets of extrication equipment for \$36,000, and the company that gave us the quote on the equipment will be coming out May 25th for a demo on the equipment. Should know whether we got the grant by the second week of June. (54:25)
- We will be doing a live burn training at St. 41 in May.
- The National Fire Academy class that 3 of us will be attending is scheduled for May 8-13 in Pinetop Az.
- Update on the federal lawsuit – all of the individual names have been dismissed from the suit; it is just the district named in the suit now.
- Station 43 was broken into, someone broke the door into the crew's quarters. This door will be replaced by a steel door with deadbolt. Discussion ensued about additional security measures for both Stations. (57:06)
- The move by the Mohave County CFO to charge the fire districts service fees on a per-parcel basis (4.5% of LMRFD tax revenue) was not received well by the county board as a whole. Objections were raised over issues ranging from the almost no-notice agenda item, Services the fire districts currently provide to the county at no change, and bad timing because most of the fire districts are in the middle of budget planning. The subject was tabled for further investigation and discussion at a later time. (1:02:47)

b. Financial Report: presented by Gabe Buldra of JVG. (1:03:47)

Key points:

- Revenue for the month of March is \$73,657, which is over budget by \$4,690.
 - Tax Revenue for March is \$32,645 which is under budget by \$8,447.
 - Non-Tax Revenue for March is \$41,012 which is over budget by \$13,137.
- Ambulance revenue is over budget \$12,069.
- Expenses for March totaled \$108,024 which is over budget by \$2,976.
 - YTD Total Revenue is \$1,046,094 which is \$86,406 over budget.
 - YTD Tax Revenue is \$634,915 which is over budget by \$43,101.
 - YTD Non-Tax Revenue is \$411,178 which is over budget by \$43,304, driven by sale of assets (tender).
 - YTD Expense is \$935,828 which is \$63,517 over budget.
 - Vehicles maintenance is \$56,636 over budget.
 - Vehicle fuel is \$21,062 over budget.

From a profit and loss standpoint, LMRFD net income was budgeted at 87,377.35 and current income is overbudget at 108,213.00.

Mr. Buldra pointed out that, although we made money in some areas, fleet maintenance costs are hurting the budget, and he is working with the chief on ways to handle that in the upcoming budget. Also, lowering fuel costs with the new fuel tank and pump at Station 41 will provide some relief, and the newer incoming equipment should not require as much maintenance. (1:07:00)

Director Nelson asked about Wildland costs, and Mr. Buldra explained that although in the end LMRFD is reimbursed for all Wildland expenses, the costs do show in the budget and monthly financials. Over the next several minutes Mr. Buldra and Chief Bonnee explained the intricacies of Wildlands budgeting, cost tracking and billing. Mr. Buldra stated that Wildlands participation has been very good for the district, especially in equipment replacement, and is the primary source of surplus money that has helped replace aging equipment. (1:10:57)

Director Johnson asked about the allowance for doubtful accounts and Mr. Buldra explained that the line item is primarily directed at ambulance services and covers the difference between what we bill and what the insurance providers, including Medicare, will pay. He explained how our billing company picks up the transport records and generates the billing for each transport. (1:13:40) Director Johnson asked for more information on how doubtful or accounts are handled and collected, and how our collection agency reports to us. Director Johnson questioned why the chief's report shows a higher number of transports than the number of transports we are billing for, spurring several minutes of discussion about all the reasons why LMRFD can't collect for much of the activity. (1:25:40) Mr. Buldra referenced the January report from the billing company which shows \$86,000 in charges, with \$23,000 in adjustments for which we will not be paid. He said this area also produces a lot of bad personal and tax debt, but the bad tax debt situation has been improving. Also recent changes in credit reporting law no longer allow us to even report debts under a certain threshold, giving us less leverage to collect.

Directors Nelson and Johnson asked for a report from the billing companies; Chief Bonnee and Mr. Buldra said they will look into what can be done and how LMRFD can access the information, being careful to remain in HIPPA compliance.

Director Aitken pointed out that there are some funds for purposes that have not been utilized and asked if those funds can be reallocated for other purposes (01:37:10). Mr. Buldra responded yes, that can be done because the budget approval is for the total budget, not item by item. Director Aitken then asked Chief Bonnee about the cost for specific equipment needs he had mentioned, including halogen lamps, ladder and a pumpkin for the Wildlands tender, all of which will pay for itself on its first Wildlands deployment. This equipment would cost approximately \$8,000 and Mr. Buldra said that is available in capital funds. Per Chief Bonnee, the upcoming wildlands fire season is projected to be very bad, and is expected to run from late May through January.

Director Aitken again brought up the subject of Board access to QuickBooks. She said that since the reason was that it wasn't in the budget, she requested capital funds be allocated for the purpose.

Director Nelson moved to utilize financial reserves as discussed to purchase the needed Wildlands equipment and the board member QuickBooks access.

Director Johnson seconded the motion.

All Directors voted AYE and the motion carried.

Chief Bonnee wrapped up the financial session with news that when Director Koeppen spoke at the COM meeting in Meadview, a local citizen and the Chamber of Commerce each committed to paying for half the initial cost of getting the new TRAX software installed and operational.

7) REGULAR SESSION

Old Business:

a. **Discussion and possible action:** Board by-laws review and update (Director Aitken) 2:54 pm

Director Aitken stated that the change previously proposed by Atty Cornelius concerning use of personal equipment for handling LMRFD data contained the word "should" in several places where Director Koeppen thought the wording should use the stronger "shall". Use of the specific wording was tabled, but discussion ensued about the scope of the restriction against personal equipment use.

Director Johnson moved to table the by-law review and update for further discussion at 3:07 pm.

Director Braaten seconded the motion.

All directors voted AYE and the motion carried at 3:07 pm (2:01:40)

New Business:

- a. **Discussion:** Budget workshop conducted by Gabe Buldra of JVG (Chief Bonnee) 3:09 pm (2:03:40)

Mr. Buldra presented a summary of the draft budget he and chief Bonnee prepared.

Highlights:

- 6.17% increase in assessed value (largest in over 10 years)
- \$69,734 in additional tax revenue (reflective of going from 3.37 to 3.50 tax rate)
- Fire District Assistance tax – holding flat for next year.
- Property tax collection rate has come up, resulting in lower delinquency.
- Non-Tax Levy Revenue – holding flat for next year.
- Anticipating \$1,554,733 in revenue, an increase of \$88, 927.
- 3% pay increase for personnel.

At this point, there was some discussion about LMRFD funding health insurance and implementing Health Savings Accounts, no action. (2:15:00) General consensus was that some form of relief for the insurance deductible should be worked into the final budget. (2:20:19) Mr. Buldra pointed out that we are in a good position but must be very careful with our use of funds because the economy will continue to degrade. Chief Bonnee pointed out that we just lost a full-time employee to Golden Valley because they have a better health insurance deal.

- Communications/IT budget increased by \$8500.
- Travel and training holding flat at \$10,000.
- Total managerial expenses projected to increase by \$3800.
- If we win the SAFER Grant, that will require a budget rework because it is for appending on hiring additional employees.

Mr. Buldra stated he will work on budget with today's discussion in mind and present a draft budget at next month's board meeting. 3:51pm (2:47:05)

- b. **Discussion and possible action:** Replacement of Chief's vehicle (Director Johnson)

Director Johnson reviewed the condition and capabilities and lack thereof of the current Chief's vehicle and proposed that the chief research a working, capable and dependable replacement vehicle.

Director Nelson moved to research the best course of action and possibly replace the Chief's vehicle with a reasonably priced vehicle in the \$25,000 - \$30,000 range.

Director Braaten seconded the motion.

All directors voted AYE and the motion carried at 3:57pm

- c. **Discussion and possible action:** Audits, past and future (Director Johnson) 3:58pm (2:57:380)

Per Director Johnson, his questions have been answered in earlier discussion so this item can be closed.

Issue resolved.

- d. **Discussion and possible action:** Roberts Rules of Order (Director Johnson) 4:05pm (2:59:36)

Director Johnson stated he feels that discussion on this item needs all five board members. Item is tabled for a future meeting.

Director Aitken moved to close the Regular Session at 4:07 pm

Director Johnson seconded the motion.

All directors present voted AYE and the motion carried.

Meeting closed at 4:07pm

8) 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).*

There were no attendees from the public, call to the public went unanswered.

9) CONSIDERATION OF FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS.

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

10) NEXT REGULAR BOARD MEETING DATE & LOCATION. (Subject to change, notice/announcement will be posted via District Website, if any changes occur.) **05/18/2023 at 1:00 p.m.** at the **Dolan Springs Chamber of Commerce (16154 Pierce Ferry Rd Dolan Springs, AZ).**

Minutes prepared by: Glenn Gardner

Date: 04/24/2023

AGENDA signed/approved by:

Date:

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)
LMRFD Website (www.lmrfd.org)