



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 07/20/2023 at 1:00 pm**. The meeting was held at 07/20/2023 at 1:00 p.m. at the **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

Chairperson Koeppen called the meeting to order at 1:01 pm.

2) ROLL CALL OF BOARD MEMBERS

Director Johnson present

Director Braaten present

Director Nelson present

Director Koeppen 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)*

Director Johnson led the Pledge of Allegiance followed by a moment of silence.

Director Nelson moved to close regular session and enter the scheduled executive session at 1:02 pm.

All board members present voted AYE and the motion carried.

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

Director Koeppen called the executive session to a close at 1:33 pm

5) MINUTES

a. 4/20/23 Regular minutes 1:35 pm

Director Nelson moved to accept the minutes as written

Director Johnson seconded the motion

All directors present voted AYE and the motion was carried, minutes approved. 1:36 pm

b. 4/20/23 Executive minutes 1:36 pm

Director Nelson moved to approve the executive minutes

Director Braaten seconded the motion.

All directors present voted AYE and the motion was carried, executive minutes approved at 1:36 pm

6) CONSENT AGENDA

a. Chief Report: 1:36 pm

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.)

Fire Chief Tim Bonnee presented the monthly Chief's report at 1:36 pm, highlights as follows:

Run Report:

Amr Transports: 0

Med Calls: 79

Fire Calls:16

Mutual Aid calls: 4

Hwy 93 Calls: 20

Dolan Transports: 41

Meadview calls: 14

Meadview transports: 11

Meadview coverage days: 16

Meetings/Conferences/Training

Run Review 6/12/2023

District Vehicles:

- Vehicles are in service; regular maintenance and upkeep is all we did in June.
- No major repairs or breakdowns.
- The new Chief-401 vehicle went into service.

District Properties:

Nothing new to report, except that it was being noticed by all present during the meeting that the current small A/C unit at the Chamber of Commerce building cannot keep up with the heat and needs replacing.

Projects in the works:

- We got our first 3 wildland assignments for our tender this year. First one (Yuma fire) is billed out and payment is mailed already. The second assignment (Stockton Hill fire) will be finished this week. Third was the Mesa View fire off I-40. These three short assignments have made over \$28,000.00 for the district. 1:40 pm
- Still waiting for grant outcomes, but the outlook for the apparatus grant is good because this year there are only around 1000 competing requests, where last year there were over 20,000. 1:41 PM
- Due to the heat, we ordered an ice machine for the station so we can have cold water available on all the rigs.

- We did have a rig and personnel representing LMRFD at the 50th anniversary of the BLEVE in Kingman.
- We have posted the open board vacancy on the website and at all posting sites.
- We have 5 more new volunteers (4 Dolan Springs and 1 Meadview) and picked up 3 more POC's.
- Pilot program is planned for August to add a POC to Meadview when Station 43 is staffed. Two-man crew will allow them to do their own transports and leave the other ambulance free to respond to more calls.
- The MCFOA is pushing a JPA which would consolidate all the fire districts into one fire department operation. Chief has reviewed that plan with JVG, who recommended against it. There would be one chief (probably the Bullhead chief), who would be able to pull LMRFD resources for duties outside our district. When Chief Bonnee asked how that would affect our shorthandedness in Meadview, he was told "that's not a big priority".

As usual in this situation, it appears that the little districts suffer while the big ones profit. The LMRFD board would still exist, but there would be a controlling board with one rep from LMRFD board, and that controlling board could pull from any district budget.

MCFOA wants to do a feasibility study at a cost of \$4000 per district. Chief is set against the JPA and advised against playing along because it will so obviously hurt our fire district.

- We are using about 750 gallons of fuel (roughly \$3000) every three weeks. Continuing at this rate, we will save \$48,000.00 compared to last year's fuel expense, meaning the new fuel system at Station 43 will pay for itself in the first year. 1:50 pm

Director Nelson then asked about reports she had heard that the county attorney won't prosecute for illegal burning. She wanted to know if anything is being done about that. Chief Bonnee responded that the MCFOA is putting together a letter requesting that the county atty reevaluate his position because it is a problem for all the districts. They have been told that it is not a priority issue and any tickets they write for illegal burning will go in the trash. The Chief said LMRFD is experiencing a real problem with newcomers being repeat offenders who will put out their fires when told to do so, but then burn again as soon as the fire department's back is turned. 1:53 pm

Director Nelson said she is going to the Mohave County Board of Supervisors because they need to deal with this.

Director Koeppen noted that this part of the discussion will need to be addressed as an agenda item.

Director Johnson requested a copy of the MCFOA's JPA plan and the chief said he will make it available.

Director Braaten questioned the fuel cost savings given earlier by the chief and the chief explained how it was calculated and the validity of the factors included. 1:58 pm

b. Financial Report:

- **Monthly financials**

Steven Rodriguez of JVG presented the monthly financial Report via phone at 2:01 pm, highlights as follows:

Key points:

- Revenue for the month of June is \$67,467, which is under budget by \$232,912.
- Tax Revenue for June is \$25,504 which is under budget by \$19,134.
- Non-Tax Revenue for June is \$41,963 which is under budget by \$232,912.
- Grant revenue was \$190,000 under budget.
- Expenses for June totaled \$94,677 which is under budget by \$223,863.
- Grant expense was \$200,000 under budget.
- YTD Total Revenue is \$1,285,973 which is \$215,521 under budget.

- YTD Tax Revenue is \$784,317 which is over budget by \$31,323.
- YTD Non-Tax Revenue is \$501,655 which is under budget by \$246,845, driven by grant revenue.
- YTD Expense is \$1,241,907 which is \$151,375 under budget.
- Grant expense is \$200,000 under budget.

Director Koeppen called for questions from the attending board members and there were no questions. 2:04 pm
Presentation of the monthly financials ended at 2:05 pm.

Director Johnson moved to approve the June financial report as written at 2:05pm.

Director Braaten seconded the motion.

All directors present voted AYE and financial report was accepted at 2:05 pm.

7) REGULAR SESSION

Old Business:

- a. **Discussion and possible action:** Request Atty Cornelius to provide specific section(s) of AZ law that prevents the board from establishing by-laws that require all five board members' approval for certain actions. (Director Koeppen) 2:07 pm
Attorney Cornelius joined the meeting via phone. Director Koeppen reminded Mr. Cornelius that he has given his opinion on the subject several times already, but she requested that he verbally explain his response so that the whole board and the public can hear it. He once again explained that the law is set up for decision by majority vote of a quorum of those present at the meeting. He said that, while he sees nothing in the law prohibiting the board from establishing such a by-lay, he thinks it is a very bad idea, first and foremost because there can be situations where it is impossible for all board members to be present for a vote. 2:10 pm
After discussion about the intent and content of applicable statutes, it was determined that the board will take no action on this item. 2:15 pm.
- b. **Discussion and possible action:** Roberts Rules of Order (Director Johnson)
Director Johnson asked if the other board members were in favor of using Roberts Rules of Order. Director Koeppen said we are using a modified Roberts Rules now and it is working. Director Johnson recommended formalizing that the board will use Roberts rules. Director Nelson supports a modified version. No action taken. 2:20 pm
- c. **Discussion and possible action:** Follow-up on LMRFD letters in response to recent County Board of Supervisors vote concerning charging fire districts for services (Director Johnson) – carried over from last meeting
Director Johnson pointed out that no one had been assigned to write the letters so he will write them. He had assumed the Clerk would take on the task, but that turned out not to be the case. Some discussion ensued and it was determined that Director Johnson will produce 2 letters: one of appreciation for those who supported us at the County Board meeting and one to Jean Bishop expressing LMRFD's extreme disapproval of her failure to support the district in this matter. 2:24 pm
- d. **Discussion and possible action:** Update for the Board on Director Johnson's ongoing analysis of district billing and collection practices (Director Johnson), to include:
 - Fire Recovery/EMS billing

- RFGI collections
- Unpaid and partial paid invoices
- Annual audit
- Compliance with Federal and State records management and retention requirements

Director Johnson reported that he has learned much about how the ambulance service billing works and he still has the feeling that some money is not being collected that we should be able to collect. He added that the billing process is complicated, with multiple entities involved. He and the Chief spent several minutes explaining the information flow. 2:35 pm

Another several minutes of presentation revealed that there are perceived inconsistencies in billing as reported by Andreas Medical and RFGI that are not yet understood, and he will continue to investigate until he has a coherent picture to report. No board action taken at this time. 2:48 pm

New Business:

- a. Discussion and possible action:** Suggestion from the public concerning Board access to QuickBooks and other financial software (Director Koeppen)

Director Koeppen once again addressed this issue again at the request of the public. She asked Director Johnson if he had any problem getting the financial information he needs without access to Quickbooks and other financial systems. He said everything was provided by admin and the chief as and when he asked for it. Director Nelson pointed out that we have a structure set up that allows transparency in the financials and any board member can get additional information upon request. She indicated she feels that the request from the public is not necessary when all the players are doing their jobs correctly without micromanagement. She reminded the Board that their responsibility is high-level financial management, not down-in-the-weeds micromanagement of operational spending. 2:58 pm

- b. Discussion and possible action:** Board responsibilities, limitations, and procedures for working with the Fire Chief (Director Nelson) – carried over from last meeting

Director Nelson took a moment to update Directors Johnson and Braaten about the discussion at last month's meeting, reminding the board that they are responsible for the budget management, but the Chief is in control of operations and the board needs to be careful of overstepping their established boundaries. Chief stated that he has no problems with within-bounds suggestions from the board members, and he also has no problem informing a board member if he thinks they are overstepping. No action needed or taken at this time. 3:07 pm

- c. Discussion and possible action:** Status of open board position (Director Koeppen)

Director Koeppen notified the board that vacancy notices were posted and the application is available on the LMRFD website.

- 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).*

Director Koeppen made the obligatory call to the public, and Ellen Reh-Bower, a Dolan Springs resident, spoke to assure the current board that her requests for additional controls are aimed at preventing a backslide into previous times when the board members may not have had the best interests of the district in their hearts.

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.

Move to adjourn at 3:12 pm by Director Nelson, seconded by Director Braaten.
All directors present voted AYE and the meeting adjourned at 3:12 pm.

10) NEXT REGULAR BOARD MEETING DATE & LOCATION. (Subject to change, notice/announcement will be posted via District Website, if any changes occur.) **08/17/2023 at 1:00 p.m. at the Meadview Civic Center (247 Meadview Blvd, Meadview, AZ 86444).**

Minutes prepared by: Glenn Gardner
Minutes signed/posted by

Date: 07/24/2023
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)