



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 **Wednesday 09/27/2023 at 1:00 pm**. The meeting was held 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 1:02 pm

2) ROLL CALL OF BOARD MEMBERS

Director Nelson – present

Director Braaten – present

Director Garza – 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 Garza led the pledge to the flag and a moment of silence to those we have lost. **1:03 pm**

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 cancelled executive session for this meeting and directed that items scheduled for today be carried over to the October meeting agenda. 1:03 pm

Old Business for October:

- a. **Discussion and possible action:** Update on Jackson vs LMRFD from Atty Jeff Matura. (Director Koeppen)
Carried over to October meeting agenda.
- b. **Discussion and possible action:** Conversation with Atty Matura regarding legal action against former employees.
Carried over to October meeting agenda.

5) MINUTES

a. 8/17/23 Regular minutes

Director Garza pointed out that his votes were left out of the August meeting minutes. Note that his name will not appear at roll call since he was not sworn in and seated until later in the meeting. That being the only correction needed, Director Nelson moved to accept the minutes once that correction is made.

Director Garza seconded the motion.

All four directors voted AYE, the motion carried, and the minutes were accepted at 1:04 pm

6) CONSENT AGENDA

a. **Chief Report:** presented by Chief Bonnee

(Notwithstanding subsection H of this section, the chief administrator, presiding officer or a member of a public body may present a brief summary of current events without listing in the agenda the specific matters to be summarized, if:

- 1. The summary is listed on the agenda.*
- 2. The public body does not propose, discuss, deliberate or take legal action at that meeting on any matter in the summary unless the specific matter is properly noticed for legal action. (A.R.S. 38-431.02.K.)*

Chief Bonnee presented the chief's report at 1:05 pm; highlights as follows:

Run Report:

Amr Transports: 0

Med Calls: 92

Dolan Transports: 76

Dolan Refusals: 7

Dolan Public Assists: 5

Fire Calls: 17

Mutual Aid calls: 2

Hwy 93 Calls: 29

Meadview calls: 20

Meadview transports: 17

Meadview Refusals: 2

Meadview Public Assists: 3

Meadview coverage days: 17

Meetings/Conferences/Training

Run Review

District Vehicles: Nothing new to report

District Properties: We did get the split unit for the chamber building ordered. We went with a local vender here in Dolan for the unit and installation with a warranty.

Projects in the works:

- The grants awards are slowly starting to come out this last week so we should be hearing soon if we are going to receive either one of those.
- Wildland fire season has been underway for quite a while. Our ambulance just came back from Oregon; it was out there for a month. So far this season we have brought in over \$166,411.90 in Wildland revenue. This year's season is expected to last through November and into December.
- We will be having a booth at the Dolan Springs community celebration in October, and the crew will be doing an extrication demonstration for the public. We will also be bringing a tanker in the night before and wetting down the field to help keep dust down.
- The annual Halloween Trunk or Treat is being planned, but date is not set yet.

Director Koeppen asked if LMRFD can arrange to attend the Meadview Oktoberfest celebration on the 14th, and Chief Bonnee said he will check the calendar and do his best.

Director Braaten asked if getting the extrication demo (a one-shot thing because the car gets chopped up) on video so it can be replayed for the public is part of the plan and, yes someone is looking into that.

Director moved to accept the chief's report as presented.

Director Nelson seconded the motion.

All four directors voted AYE, the motion carried, and the report was accepted as presented at 1:16 pm.

c. **Financial Report:** presented by Steven Rodriguez of JVG

Steven Rodriguez of JVG presented the August financials; highlights as follows:

- Revenue for the month of August is \$124,041, which is over budget by \$40,924.
 - Tax Revenue for August is \$15,018 which is over budget by \$942.
 - Non-Tax Revenue for August is \$109,023 which is over budget by \$39,982.
- Wildland revenue was \$35,679 over budget.
- Expenses for August totaled \$225,626 which is over budget by \$95,069.
- YTD Total Revenue is \$159,356 which is \$16,527 under budget.
- YTD Expense is \$334,619 which is \$70,443 over budget.

Director Koeppen asked for clarification on vehicle maintenance costs and the Chief explained that vehicle maintenance was high because of a turbo failure on one Ford vehicle that required replacement of the top half of the motor at a cost of around \$20k. Director Nelson asked if the failed vehicle is still a good viable vehicle and the chief said most definitely yes.

Director Nelson asked about remaining expenses over budget and Steven explained that Wildland expenses account for most of that, and the billing from those Wildlands jobs will more than cover the difference.

Director Koeppen called for a motion to accept the financial report.

Director Garza moved the accept the financial report as given by JVG.

Director Braaten seconded the motion.

All four directors voted AYE, the motion carried, and the financial report was accepted as given by JVG at 1:27 pm.

7) REGULAR SESSION

Old Business:

a. **Discussion and possible action:** Status of last outstanding AG complaint (Director Koeppen)

Director Koeppen stated that she will carry this item into the October meeting agenda and report on it then. 1:30 pm.

New Business:

a. **Discussion and possible action:** New annexation requests (Director Koeppen)

Admin presented four new annexation requests, all from residents of Meadview, with all four properties eligible for annexation. Discussion ensued during which the directors were updated on existing outstanding annexation requests, and steps being taken to resolve issues with those requests.

Admin explained the process flow as the request moves from LMRFD to county, then to state, then back to county, and finally back to LMRFD. Director Nelson asked when we will begin coverage, and it was clarified that LMRFD policy has been to commence coverage immediately when an annexation request is approved by the board, even though the property taxes won't be adjusted until the county's annual update.

Director Braaten asked what can be done to move annexations through the system faster and admin responded that we think we have identified all the aspects of the process that have been problematical in the past. Director Nelson asked if the county office is part of the problem, and admin explained that the county personnel have been extremely helpful and could not have done a better job for us. Admin is tracking this current batch of requests daily to follow them and ensure that if any new snags pop up, they can be addressed immediately. Additionally, admin is using this opportunity to create an extremely detailed process flowchart to guide district personnel in the future.

Director Koeppen read aloud the details of each of the four properties, and there were no further questions.

Director Nelson moved to approve all four new requests for annexation.

Director Garza seconded the motion.

All four directors voted AYE, the motion carried, and the requests were approved by the board at 1:40 pm.

b. **Discussion and possible action:** Fire Academy candidates (Chief Bonnee)

Chief Bonnee reported that he has four people not yet fully certified at Fire 1&2, which means they are not allowed to go interior at a fire scene. Mohave Community College is putting on a 4-month fire academy beginning in January, and the chief proposed using some of the Wildlands income to sponsor these four individuals for the academy. Original cost per person is \$6500 but if they are sponsored by LMRFD the cost is at \$3000 per student. He emphasized that without the certs, firefighters cannot enter a burning structure to perform a rescue.

Director Braaten asked if the sponsored students will be bound to stay with the district for a reasonable time, and Chief Bonnee explained that each student will sign a contract to remain with the district for three years or reimburse the district a prorated amount for the cost of the training.

He mentioned that having the additional certifications on board helps the district's ISO rating, which has improved from a dismal 10 rating to 7.2 over the past two years. Director Nelson added that the improvement has quite an impact on homeowner's insurance. The Chief added that the only thing preventing LMRFD's rating from jumping up to 5 is the lack of fire hydrants.

After several more comments on ISO and the fire hydrant situation, Director Koeppen reminded the board of the subject under review and brought discussion back to the chief's request for training funds.

In response to a question from Director Garza, Chief Bonnee explained that the two students will be attending classes during off-duty hours three days a week, and there will be no loss of coverage due to the training.

Director Garza moved to utilize part of the wildland revenue to sponsor four people for the Fire Academy in order for them to get fully certified for Fire 1 and Fire 2 at the rate of \$3000 per student for a total of \$12,000.

Director Nelson seconded the motion.

All four directors voted AYE, the motion carried, and the training expenditure was approved at 1:48 pm.

- c. Discussion and possible action:** Pros and cons of setting some specific recurring bills up for autopay. (Director Nelson)
- Director Nelson reviewed the process for paying bills and pointed out that the USPS delays we experience, coupled with inherent delays in Bill.com processing flow, create a situation that results in our late payments. Particularly worrisome are major utility suppliers UniSource and Verizon. She has asked JVG to set both vendors up for auto-pay in order to get them paid on time. Going forward she will review both vendor's invoices in detail every month and work any discrepancies out with them on the back end. With four people reviewing the invoices as they pass through the system, efficient oversight will be maintained.

Director Koeppen asked if the Chief and his admin person supported this action, and both replied in the affirmative.

Director Garza moved to approve setting up UniSource and Verizon accounts for autopay.

Director Braaten seconded the motion.

All four directors voted AYE, the motion carried, and Director Nelson will move forward with setting those two vendors for autopay at 2:00 pm

- d. Discussion and possible action:** Taking steps to fill vacant board seat. (Director Koeppen)

Director Koeppen opened with remarks about Director Johnson's nine months on the board and called attention to the immense amount of effort he put into doing an excellent job for the people of Dolan Springs, Meadview and White Hills including:

- Researched records of LMRFD transactions going back to 2019
- Conferred and worked with JVG, Andres Medical and RFGI to determine how financial flows are currently working.
- Researched and analyzed existing contracts with JVG, Andres Medical and RFGI.
- Advised the board on possible better oversight based on his findings.
- Identified possible shortcomings with the annual audits.
- Identified issues in LMRFD processes that can lead to noncompliance with state and federal records retention requirements.
- Prepared final findings and presented them to the board in a two-hour special session on his last day as a board member.

With a final thanks to Director Johnson from a grateful LMRFD for the superb work he did in support of the organization and the community, Director Koeppen moved to formally accept Director Johnson's resignation.

Director Nelson seconded the motion.

Directors Koeppen, Nelson and Garza voted AYE

Director Braaten abstained.

The motion was carried, and the resignation was formally accepted by the board.

Since Director Johnson was engaged in such detailed undertakings, and not to lose the benefit of his efforts, Director Koeppen put forth a further step she has taken to ensure continuation of the effort to streamline and improve ambulance revenue billing and collections. She proposed forming a committee called "Risk Management/Ambulance Revenue". She read aloud a mission statement for the committee as follows: "The committee will identify and evaluate the risk and revenue of past and present ambulance billing and collection procedures and present ways to prevent future risk and increase our revenue." She said Gordon Johnson, Ellen Reh-Bowers and Director Braaten have all agreed to serve on this committee. There were no dissenting comments, so no further discussion on the subject. 2:07 pm.

- 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).*

No members of the public wished to speak.

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.

Director Koeppen called for a motion to adjourn the meeting.

Director Nelson moved to adjourn.

Director Garza seconded the motion.

All four directors voted AYE and the meeting was adjourned.

10) NEXT REGULAR BOARD MEETING DATE & LOCATION. (Subject to change, notice/announcement will be posted via District Website, if any changes occur.) **10/19/2023 at 1:00 p.m. at the Meadview Civic Center (247 Meadview Blvd, Meadview, AZ 86444).**

MINUTES prepared by: Glenn Gardner

Date: 09/29/2023

MINUTES signed/posted by: Jen Gardner

Date: 09/29/2023 6:30pm

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)