

**MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING OF GOVERNING BOARD OF THE
NORTHERN ARIZONA FIRE DISTRICT
THURSDAY, JANUARY 28, 2021**

NOTICE: Due to Coronavirus/COVID-19, Arizona Executive Order #2020-18, and CDC recommendations on social distancing, the building is closed to the public and this meeting will be conducted electronically. Members of the public may call in to hear the live audio by joining the Zoom meeting. Public comment or audio is not allowed during the meeting and attendants are to listen only, per the guidance published by the Attorney General for the State of Arizona.

The Governing Board of the Northern Arizona Fire District met via Zoom from remote locations this 28th day of January 2021, at 6:00 p.m. for its regular monthly meeting. The Zoom meeting website, meeting phone number and meeting ID were all listed on the Agenda that has been provided and posted.

1. **CALL TO ORDER** – The meeting was called to order by Board Chairman Jim Bailey at 6:00 p.m.
2. **PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE** – Chairman Bailey announced that the Pledge of Allegiance will be put on hold until we are back in a public meeting due to the delay in broadcast.
3. **ROLL CALL OF BOARD MEMBERS** – Board members present: Board Chairman Jim Bailey, Director John Bryant, Director Mike Collins, Director Sue Wilkin, and Director Sue Brown, were all present via Zoom from remote locations.
4. **APPROVAL OF MINUTES** (for approval by unanimous consent after corrections/additions)
Chairman Bailey moved to approve the Regular Meeting minutes of December 17, 2020 as submitted. Director Wilkin seconded the motion. Passed by unanimous decision. Motion carried.
5. **REPORTS AND CORRESPONDENCE**
 - A. Chief's Report – Chief Rhoades gave his report in accordance with his memorandum and the Monthly Performance Report, both in the board packet. All apparatus are in service. We have made some staffing changes for a few reasons. Right now, our Battalion Chiefs are back on an engine, they are stilling doing the administrative part of the Battalion Chief. Our mutual aid has been working marvelously which allows some of our chief officers to be involved in the response as well. We did just make offers to four firefighters with the intent to start on-boarding them in about 30 days. Kenny Cameron has been promoted to the position of Captain, assigned to A Shift. We did hire another Captain from Desert Hills. They both started their positions last week and are currently in Officer Development Academy in Bullhead. Fire Station 33 is out of service until we get our staffing level set. We plan to open the station July 1 with two personnel, one is just not effective. The volunteer recruitment, there are signs up at all our stations. 2600 Northern, we received an update of 60-days until completion. The new radios we received from the grant are in service. BC Dallman completed the Firefighter I & II certification process that we started when the City started the management agreement, with COVID-19 it delayed it about six months, because the state wasn't doing testing. Rebranding is moving forward; I hope to have the new logo at next months' board meeting. Chairman Bailey asked if we have any luck with paramedics. Chief responded that we have not. We have two young firefighters that are working on their pre-requisites. We did start a civilian medic POC program. We put them third out on an engine if it is a BLS engine for the day. We are continuing to recruit those individuals as well. It is not a full-time firefighter medic; it is a part-time civilian medic.
 - B. Financial Report – No discussion
 - C. Correspondence – No discussion

6. **DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE ACTION RE:**

A. Approval of the December Financial Report. Motion was made by Chairman Bailey to approve the December financial report. Director Wilkin seconded the motion. Passed by unanimous decision. Motion carried.

B. Discussion of boundary change and de-annexation of Truxton, Chloride and Valle Vista Fire Districts. Chairman Bailey clarified that he had said he could arrange for Donna to provide information to the people interested in this. Donna stated that she had prepared a couple-page document with the statute attached, just a general outline of what would be necessary to withdraw property from your district to then allow that property to be annexed someplace else. She has heard the phrase that the district could just de-annex the property and then give it to a newly formed district. That's a great concept, but that is not how the statute works. The people who would like to move forward with this de-annexation, would need to form a committee and designate some type of a spokesperson. How that group chooses to form, is up to that group. That group would need to prepare a budget because there are costs involved. They would need support by more than one half of the owners and one half of the assessed value of the property of that proposed area. The initial thought for that committee would be can we outline this particular area and would we be able to get that support to move forward. That committee will need to work with the County officials, the County Board of Supervisors, the Assessor's Office, the Recorder's Office, and the County Attorney. Legal descriptions have to be attained, maps have to be drawn, detailed lists of taxable properties – that is why the Recorder's Office and the Assessor's Office are involved. Estimates of assessed valuation, the change in tax rate evaluation must be made. There is a whole list of things that need to be done under the statute to generate a boundary change impact statement. Then it will go before this board and then the County Board of Supervisors. Once that whole process is done, I'm not sure how long this process would take, then the process to form another fire district would start, or multiple fire districts. Because she is the attorney for this fire district, she is unable to help anyone in this process. That committee will need to get its own legal representation or go without legal representation, but ideally some legal representation to help guide the process because it is very specific as to what is required. Director Wilkin stated that to the best of her knowledge, as of this time, there has been a lot of good progress done on this and she believes that group was doing it and is waiting on a legal matter.

C. Discussion and possible action regarding the possible sale of the current Station 31 and Fire Administration building. Chief Rhoades was approached by a realtor who has a party that is interested in the property so Chief is asking the board for guidance. Director Collins made the motion to put out a Request for Qualifications for appraisers and for realtors to review at the next meeting. Chairman Bailey seconded the motion. Passed by unanimous decision. Motion carried.

Chief Rhoades asked for clarification from the attorney. If he closes this in 10 days, can he send the packets out to the board members prior to the meeting to give them more time to review. Donna stated that there is no problem with that.

D. Discussion and direction regarding Chloride response. Chief Rhoades stated that the discussion of the effectiveness of responding from Station 33 and Station 31 over to responses in Chloride. Two or three months ago you saw an agreement for automatic aid with Golden Valley, Lake Mohave Ranchos, Kingman, and the District for automatic emergency response to that area. If you look at Station 33 and where it is located and even 31 with the route they must take to get to Chloride, down Stockton Hill Road to the 40 then out to Chloride. He would like to talk with Golden Valley, who is the primary on that automatic aid, and make it their primary response through an IGA. We would retain the administrative responsibility, the volunteer program that we have going but they would be the primary deliverer of emergency service and response.

Director Collins asked, how many calls are we talking about? Chief replied, anywhere from 38 to 50 a year, last year was 38. He believes he could bring back a couple of options for the board to review. Director Collins believes that would be good on our part, ultimately with automatic aid their getting there before we are so that would be worth exploring. Chief added that with automatic aid, is “as aid is available” too. This would put this in their primary run cards so it would be their responsibility, that would be part of it. Director Collins believes this would provide the best coverage. We inherited this dilemma; I think this would be the best way to address it.

Director Bailey stated that a few years ago we were told we had volunteers out there, however, what we were not told is that the volunteers actually lived out at Dolan Springs. Tim King had shared that once he responded to a full code or some sort of a serious medical call out there and he had responded from our district, down the 40 and up the 93 for it. By the time he got there, he expected to see the volunteers there, however, he was there about 10 minutes before they were. Chairman Bailey believes it is going to be a struggle to get volunteers out of that area that are going to be able to volunteer for us.

Director Bailey liked the idea of Chief Rhoades meeting with the Chief at Golden Valley and work out what is going to work best for us. Chief will try to have it ready for the board by the next meeting, at least some options for them to consider.

- E. **Discussion of the AFDA Statutory class scheduled for January 22nd in Kingman has been cancelled due to the recent COVID-19 spike. Mohave County’s class is tentatively scheduled for April 23, 2021.** They have rescheduled all these throughout the state. They understand the requirement of the board for new members to take the class. Director Bailey reminded all that they do have a year to fulfill the requirement, so there is still time. If they are unable to attend, he is sure they will provide an on-line way to fulfill the requirement.
- F. **Discussion and direction regarding part-time administration help.** Chief Rhoades stated that when the administrative assistant is out of the office, we lose some functioning capabilities. The administrative workload is, because she is not just an administrative assistant, she is HR, payroll, finance, she does a lot of those other functions. We don’t have a position of part-time help. I would like to put together some type of administrative job description for part-time help that we could solicit and advertise on an as needed basis to help with administrative functions. Director Collins said they should give Chief Rhoades direction to put together a job description and explore our options. Both Directors Bailey and Bryant agreed. Director Wilkin stated we have had interns from the college come over and work, basically for free. Chief said he would explore that option as well.

- 7. **CALL TO THE PUBLIC** – The District may, but is not required to, give the public an opportunity to speak to any issue. A.R.S. §38-431.01(H).

Call to the public has been suspended due to the guidance of the Center for Disease Control (CDC) and the recommendation and approval of the Attorney General’s Office, letter dated March 13, 2020, due to the impact of the COVID-19.

Public comments can still be submitted by the public in writing – including your name and address – to the NAFD Fire Administration office either through email, dropped off at the Admin office, or by mail. Comments must be received by 9:00 am on the morning of the meeting. All comments will be shared with the Board of Directors and made a part of the public record. Members of the public are welcome to watch or listen to the meeting via Zoom.

We received two comments that were shared with the Board of Directors prior to the meeting and are part of public record.

Donna advised the board that in the past she has pointed out the open meeting laws that states that the district may have a call to the public. The Arizona Attorney General's handbook, under the open meeting law states that you may have a call to the public, but you do not have to have a call to the public. You must have public participation, for example, in a budget hearing but not at your regular meetings. I have pulled up the Arizona Ombudsman Citizens' Aide page, the web page is www.azoca.gov and if you click on Open Meeting & Public Record Law, then Open Meetings, and then Frequently Asked Questions, you can go down to, "May the public body prevent members of the public from speaking at a public meeting?" The Ombudsman answer is, "Yes. The open meeting law does not require that a public body offer a call to the public. The public has a right to attend meetings, not participate in meetings. Ariz. Att'y Gen. Op. 78-1." Which is also referenced in the Arizona Attorney General's handbook. It goes on to say, "If the public body allows the call to the public, the public body determines when attendees may address the public body and may place time restrictions." Then it goes on to talk about how the board cannot address issues that are not on the agenda. If any member of the public or any board member have a question, the Arizona Attorney General's Office has a division, it is the Open Meeting Law Enforcement Team (OMLET), they are based out of the Attorney General's Office in Phoenix. They take complaints about open meeting law violations. The County Attorney is supposed to take complaints, every county handles them differently. Every County I have encountered has passed it on to the OMLET lawyers and Arizona Ombudsman's Office.

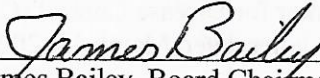
So, if you would like to discuss this and change this, you would need to put this on a future agenda to discuss it. In addition, in the letter from Ms. Eder, she also referenced that she has not had a response to any of the complaints that she has filed. The District has no control over that, so anybody who has filed a complaint, specifically an open meeting law complaint, would need to go to the entity where the complaint was filed, whether that's the Attorney General's Office or the Ombudsman. The District has no control over that or the timing of it.

8. ANNOUNCEMENTS –

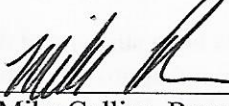
- * Tim King retired a little over two weeks ago.
- * Charlene Powers from Powers and Levitt, our insurance company, passed away about a week or two ago from complications from COVID-19.
- * Director Collins would like the Call to the Public on the next agenda as a discussion item
- * If anyone would like to complain about the agendas or anything relating to the agendas, Chairman Bailey is responsible for those so emails can be directed to him, not the Chief and not the secretary.

9. ADJOURNMENT – Director Wilkin moved to adjourn the meeting and Chairman Bailey seconded it. Passed by unanimous decision. Motion carried. The meeting was adjourned at 6:48 p.m.

These minutes were prepared and posted by Rhonda Johnson on January 29, 2021.



James Bailey, Board Chairman



Mike Collins, Board Clerk