

## MEETING MINUTES OF THE VERNON FIRE DISTRICT BOARD

### 5/27/2025 AT 5:30 PM AT THE VERNON LIBRARY

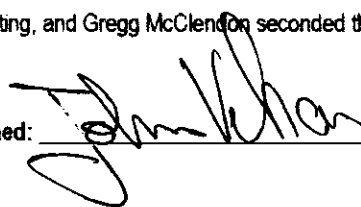
REGULAR BOARD MEETING OF VERNON FIRE DISTRICT, 25 ACR 3142, VERNON, AZ 85940. PHONE: (928) 537-4895.

1. **CALL TO ORDER REGULAR BOARD MEETING**, meeting was called to order at 5:30 pm.
2. **ROLL CALL OF BOARD MEMBERS**, present were John Vehar, Board Chair, Grey Murphy, Board Clerk, and Randy Mifflin, Board Member. Board Member Gregg McClendon attended via Zoom, and Board Member Tony Anderson was absent.
3. **PLEDGE OF ALLIEGENCE AND PRAYER**, The Pledge of Allegiance was recited, and Randy Mifflin prayed for the meeting.
4. **RECOGNITION OF GUESTS**, Wendy Sharp, Chief John Connolly, FF Daniel Brubaker, FF John Patterson, FF Chris Allman, Captain Kevin Vickers, and Captain Sarah Jones.
5. **CALL TO THE PUBLIC**, John Vehar gave the call; there were no members of the public who gave comments.
6. **REPORTS & CORRESPONDENCE**
  - A. Chair Summary – John Vehar requested for members not to ask staff members or firefighters about the outcome of calls.
  - B. Financial Report and Discussion – Jacob York gave the financial report for April. Revenue was around \$35,000, which is under budget by \$78,000 for the projected month, but approximately \$42,000 over the year-to-date budget primarily due to wildland. Total income is over budget by \$522,000 due to wildland revenue and grant revenue. Year-to-date expenses are at \$1.7 million, over budget by \$545,000 primarily from wildland expenses, vehicles, and grant expenses. Cash is \$588,000 as of April 30. Jacob York called for questions; there were no questions.
  - C. Chief's Report and discussion – Chief John Connolly reported 65 calls for April, the majority being EMS at 37. The rest were made up of public assistance, MVA, and fire calls. There is ample training being done. Significant calls were wildland calls. Kevin Vickers spoke of the mutual aid calls for service on wildland events, calls for numerous illegal campfires in the forest, and notable MVA's and UTV crashes. Chief Connolly then spoke about equipment being back in service, and pursuing more Engine Boss qualified personnel, and qualifying Captain Vickers as Strike Team Leader. Sale of the parcel on Highway 61 has been initiated with a letter to adjacent property owners.
7. **CONSENT AGENDA**
  - D. The Board has reviewed the Financial Report for the month of April, 2025.
  - E. The Board has reviewed and approved the meeting minutes for 4/22/25.
8. **BUSINESS**
  - F. Grey Murphy motioned to approve the Consent Agenda, and Randy Mifflin seconded the motion. Grey Murphy called for a vote, and the Consent Agenda was approved unanimously.
  - G. **Discussion and possible action: Proposed Budget**, Jacob York shared the proposed budget for fiscal year 2026, including timeline, objectives, tax revenue growing, non-tax revenue remaining the same, and billing growing to \$50,000 in the coming year, conservatively. Grants are estimated to be \$500,000, which is an increase of \$200,000 (grant revenue tends to be an "in and out" item). For personnel expenses, there is a step increase in the budget for eligible employees, but overall wages are decreasing along with payroll taxes and workman's comp insurance. There will still be some funding coming from reserves, but it is a decrease from the previous year. Wildland is budgeted as a zero-sum item, to be conservative. Jacob York called for questions, and there was a question about what the Zoll payment was for. Jacob answered that it is for cardiac monitors. It was also clarified that this was not a grant. John Vehar asked what was under Managerial Services, and it was explained that this is a broad category encompassing professional fees and single items such as perk testing. Public Services were inquired about, and that account is for the 911 signs.  
Randy Mifflin motioned to approve the tentative budget, and Grey Murphy seconded. A vote was taken, and the vote was unanimous.
  - H. **Discussion and possible action: Audit Presentation by Saunders**, Mr. Saunders explained what an audit is, and the items that are examined during an audit. He then explained that after an audit is completed, there is a report containing the auditor's opinion of the findings during the audit. He explained that there was one minor discrepancy in an account that contained a double entry. This item was corrected, and all other findings were opined to be accurate, having sufficient controls and procedures, and no compliance issues. There are also state-mandated standards that are required for an audit, such as verifying that spending did not exceed revenue, and those criteria were met.
  - I. **Discussion and possible action: Grants**, Chief John Connolly has named Captain Sarah Jones as a point person for grants. The other Captains will also participate in grant activity along with the Chief, but Sarah Jones will be the main contact to consolidate information. She has found an opportunity with Dell E. Webb, which can be from \$500,000 to \$3,000,000, and is for any need. The first application will be for \$750,000 for a Type 3 Engine, and an answer will be received within three weeks. Kevin Vickers also mentioned that once the proposal is accepted, we will be notified within 72 hours and then certain financial information will be requested, and that will complete the process. Once it is approved, a check is released within 60 days. John Vehar asked how far out a Type 3 would be as far as time is concerned, and Kevin Vickers stated that he knew of a couple of engines that were ready to go because previous buyers backed out of their commitments. For new engines ordered from scratch, the process is between 12 months and 3 years.  
Chief Connolly also stated that Captain Aho is looking into a grant for an extractor, which cleans turnouts much better than a standard washing machine, removing more particulates that are potentially harmful. There is another grant application in process with the Denis Leary Foundation for radio mic's and turnouts, and the same with the 100 Club, also for turnouts. Results are pending.
  - J. **Discussion and possible action: Vehicles**, Chief Connolly reported that the check was received today for the insurance claim on the engine that was in an accident. Repairs are being done, but the timeframe for completion is not known. The Type 3 Engine is back in service.

from a valve leak. It has a smaller leak that needs to be repaired with a gasket. The title for the new water tender has been received, so it can now be registered to get it in service. The radio will be installed hopefully on Friday and then it can be approved by state fire authorities. Lastly, there are two pickup trucks that are not being used and could be sold. The goal would be to sell them for at least as much as is invested in them. The board asked for a report on the details and affirmed that it would be agreeable to the idea. Randy Mifflin asked about the Type 3 Engine that was discussed previously, and Kevin Vickers said that is still a possibility. There are some details to be worked out, but it looks like that engine will be granted to Vernon Fire District.

- K. **Discussion and possible action: Pay Step Increase, Employee Realignment**, Chief Connolly spoke of the step increase being overdue, as most employees have not had an increase in 2-4 years. It is in the budget, so step increases will begin soon. Some employees may still be behind, but increases will begin with one step increase to begin the process slowly. For realignment, a temporary position will be offered to Captain Vickers to be the Wildland/Battalion Chief Coordinator for six months. This will free him up to work wildland and be available for other tasks without using backfill positions. Chris Allman will be Acting Captain for this period, and Firefighter Brittany Hunsaker will move to B-Shift. The program will be evaluated monthly, but this will be a cost saving measure due to the backfill situation, as well as having Kevin Vickers available to perform vehicle maintenance as needed.
- L. **Discussion and possible action: Banking-Remote Deposit**, Wendy Sharp explained the need for a check reader to be used to reduce trips to the bank for deposits. The reader will allow checks to be deposited remotely. This discussion is required to be entered into the meeting minutes for National Bank of Arizona to move forward with issuing the check reader and setting up the bank account to receive these remote deposits. John Vehar spoke for the record: Board and District information for National Bank of Arizona, this is the Vernon Fire District. On May 27, 2025, contact the office, (928)537-4895. Board: John Vehar, Chair, Grey Murphy, Clerk, Gregg McClendon, Randy Mifflin, Tony Anderson, enter into board meeting minutes on May 27, 2025.
- M. **Discussion and possible action: Call for Service Protocol**, Gregg McClendon spoke about VFD being dispatched to calls that fire personnel shouldn't be dispatched on. This is based on what he is hearing on radio, and an example of one of these calls would be a domestic violence call. Kevin Vickers explained that the initial dispatch for service is what the call is described as when it goes out on the radio. If EMS is required to be on standby, that fact is not always described in the initial call for service. Certain information is kept off the radio and is relayed via cell phone to keep personnel safe and privacy paramount.
- N. **Discussion and possible action: 20 Year Anniversary Rescheduled**, June 28<sup>th</sup> is the new date for the anniversary open house, from 10:00am to 2:00pm. Official announcements to come.
9. **FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS**: Employee Recognition (due to a notable call that happened in May), public discussion on the budget at 5:00pm, finalizing the budget, updates on grants and vehicles (if necessary), challenge coins.
10. **ADJOURNMENT**, Grey Murphy motioned to adjourn the meeting, and Gregg McClendon seconded the motion. A vote was called and unanimously approved. The meeting adjourned at 6:50 pm.

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_



Title: \_\_\_\_\_

