

**PUBLIC HEARING AND REGULAR MEETING MINUTES OF THE
VERNON FIRE DISTRICT BOARD
6/24/2025 AT 5:00 PM AT THE VERNON LIBRARY**

1. **CALL TO ORDER PUBLIC HEARING**, John Vehar called the public hearing to order at 5:00 pm.
2. **ROLL CALL OF BOARD MEMBERS**, present: John Vehar, Grey Murphy, Gregg McClendon.
3. **PUBLIC COMMENTS ON THE 2025/2026 TENTATIVE BUDGET**, no comments were made.
4. **ADJOURNMENT OF PUBLIC HEARING**, adjourned at 5:02 pm.
5. **CALL TO ORDER REGULAR SCHEDULED BOARD MEETING**, John Vehar called the regular meeting to order at 5:30 pm.
6. **PLEDGE OF ALLIEGENCE AND PRAYER**, The Pledge of Allegiance was recited, and Randy Mifflin prayed for the meeting.
7. **RECOGNITION OF GUESTS**, Wendy Sharp, Chief John Connolly, BC Kevin Vickers, FF Toby Carlock, Captain Sarah Jones, Captain Chris Allman, FF Brittany Hunsaker, Paula Johnson.
8. **CALL TO THE PUBLIC**, John Vehar gave the call for public comments; there were no members of the public who gave comments.
9. **REPORTS & CORRESPONDENCE**
 - A. **Chair Summary** – John Vehar reminded everyone of the open house on Saturday from 10-2. A courtesy notice will be posted as there will be a quorum present. Vernon Day is August 2 at the park. VFD will have a table there.
 - B. **Chief's Report and discussion** – Chief John Connolly reported slightly below average calls for the month. Summit will be training the EMT's to be able to train the public in certain skills. There was a significant MVA involving a trailer on the highway. There was wildland service called on for the Coyote and Greer fires last month. Equipment update: Kevin Vickers and John Patterson have been doing work on a vehicle that will be sold soon – the white Battalion truck. The new tender is being outfitted and ready to deploy within two weeks. It is marked available on CFRA, but a radio has not been installed. Handhelds are an option until then. No update on the damaged engine. Chief Connolly and BC Vickers met with Show Low dispatch, and training on the system and then the transfer will be made in the next two to three months. This will be helpful not only because Show Low has more employees, but also because they use EMD, a program to help callers assist victims with CPR or other support before responders arrive. Facebook reach and engagement was up during the last month. Water day at the elementary school was well attended and enjoyed by all.
 - C. **Financial Report and Discussion** – Jacob York reported revenue for May being \$340,000 putting us over budget \$143,000. This is from tax revenue being \$203,000, over by around \$52,000. April was under, so this is being made up in May as far as tax collection. Non-tax revenue was \$137,000, which is over budget by \$90,000. Wildland revenue was down, but there was a large insurance reimbursement, and subscriptions are also over what was expected. Expenses were approximately \$107,000, under budget approximately \$29,000 due to personnel expenses being lower, as well as travel and training being lower. Year-to-date revenue is around \$1.8 million, putting us over budget \$165,000, primarily driven by wildland and grant revenue. Year-to-date expenses are around \$1.8 million, over budget \$521,000, due to wildland expenses tied to its revenue, vehicle repairs/maintenance being over budget, and grant expense being over budget (these will be balanced out in June). Cash as of May 31 is about \$793,000. \$66,000 of this was the insurance reimbursement, and the expense has not been incurred yet, so the number is inflated by that amount. Looking forward, the end of the fiscal year is set to have a higher ending balance than originally anticipated, around \$750,000.
10. **CONSENT AGENDA**
 - D. The Board has reviewed the Financial Report for the month of May, 2025.
 - E. The Board has reviewed and approved the meeting minutes for 5/27/25.
11. **BUSINESS**
 - F. Grey Murphy motioned to approve the Consent Agenda, and Tony Anderson seconded the motion. Grey Murphy called for a vote, and the Consent Agenda was approved unanimously.
 - G. **Discussion and possible action: 2025/2026 Budget**, John Vehar asked for a motion, and Grey Murphy made a motion to accept the budget as written. Randy Mifflin seconded. A roll-call vote was taken, and Tony Anderson voted yes, Greg McClendon voted yes, Randy Mifflin voted yes, John Vehar voted yes, and Grey Murph voted yes. John Vehar signed the 2025/2026 budget.
 - H. **Discussion and possible action: County funds**, this item will be tabled until the next meeting.
Discussion and possible action: Future projects, Chief Connolly stated that Ben Archer-Clowes asked if board meetings could be moved to Wednesdays moving forward. Board members discussed schedules and responded in the affirmative if it was the fourth Wednesday of each month. The move will likely not take place until January, but it may be possible to move sooner; Wendy will research as to logistics. Chief Connolly then reported that he met with the Lava Run wind project representatives, noting that projects will not begin until 2027. There was a lot of good information shared, such as the project representatives did not know that Vernon Fire District would not receive any of the funding they assumed we would, because their property will not be located within the district. Also, the land cannot be annexed as it is state trust land. A one-time payment was discussed in the past, however, nothing has been brought to the board, so talks will begin anew with that payment possibly being part of a final deal, but not the finality in and of itself. Also discussed: VFD emergency responses to their location would put our personnel in deficit, a possible subscription fee, a helipad, water sources, and other emergency planning. Checking this company's references was also discussed. When something is more final, there will be a board meeting scheduled on the subject. There is a second wind project in the area that approached the Concho Fire District for services, and CFD stated that they could not offer any services, so those representatives will be talking to Vernon Fire District in the future.
 - J. **Discussion and possible action: Grants**, Sarah Jones applied for and received a \$2,700 NAEMS grant, which allowed us to obtain EMS supplies as well as an IV training arm to practice on. She is still waiting to hear from the Dell E. Webb Foundation where \$750,000 was requested. VFD met with two vendors for vehicles if that grant is approved, and we could have a Type 3 engine by March. Other engine

options are three years out. Captain Aho is working on a Gary Sinise Foundation grant; the amount is unknown. There is a Denis Leary grant for turnouts, as well as a 100 Club grant for turnouts being applied for. There is a fire management assistance grant program that the county notified us of, and since we are in the area near where the Greer fire took place, we should receive top priority to apply for a \$2 million grant. This would be a cost share of 75/25, but hopefully that can be successful. The next grant opportunity will be DFFM in December, and after that, there is a radio communications grant that can be applied for, Firehouse Subs, Dickies, Lowes Hometown Heroes, Gila River and Ft McDowell. The question was asked, when will we know about the Webb grant, and it will be after their next board meeting. If it is received, there will need to be board action from VFD.

- K. Discussion and possible action: Vehicles,** BC Vickers has brought oil change fees down from \$380 per truck to \$128 per truck. Engine 251 should be back in service in the second week of July. He has done two tire rotations and an alignment on the smaller trucks for simply his hourly wage. Tires will be needed soon for two engines. Tire tools could allow that work to be done in house as well. The last time the Type 1 engine had tires, the cost was \$3,800. BC Vickers can do the job much cheaper once he has the needed tools. Tender 251 did have to go to a diesel shop to have repairs done that couldn't be done in-house. One vehicle will be sold as mentioned earlier.
- L. Discussion and possible action: Collection of bad debts,** Wendy Sharp contacted two collection companies that work with our billing company and is waiting to hear back from them regarding their fees. Other collection agencies that were outside our billing agency were contacted as well. One fee was 50%, one was 30%. Liens were discussed, but it turns out that procedure is not possible.

12. FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS: County funds, grants, moving meeting days, vehicles.

13. 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 6:32 pm.