



Desert Hills Fire District

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Desert Hills Fire District Board Meeting Minutes Regular Meeting, March 16, 2022

1) Call to order

Board Member Roger called to order the Desert Hills Fire District Board meeting at **9:00 a.m. on Wednesday, March 16, 2022**, at the Desert Hills Fire Station Si-Mock Room located at 3983 London Bridge Road, Lake Havasu City, AZ.

2) Pledge of Allegiance

Pledge of Allegiance commenced by Board Member Roger

3) Roll Call

The following Board Members were present:

Tom Roger
Brad Shelton
Curtis Schafer
Char Beltran
Jimmy Wilson

Also, in attendance:

Battalion Chief Stanec
Battalion Chief Bunn
Administrative Specialist Harrison

4) Call to the Public: None

5) Approval of Regular Meeting Minutes for February 16, 2022: Board Member Wilson motioned to accept the meeting minutes as written; seconded by Board Member Schafer, all in favor.

6) Reports:

Fire Administration Report and Operation Report: Battalion Chief Stanec is reporting;

On Friday we held Dee Moscou's celebration of life in the bay. It was a good turn out. Her family kept complimenting us on how they appreciated everything we did for the celebration of life and for the last five to six years of helping Dee when needed. We have to complement our Auxiliary Members, they baked cookies, made coffee and brought snacks. BM Wilson found a Chaplain to host the service, Scott Cameron from Calvary. It was nice to hear family stories, good or bad. It was a good day.

Captain Kyle Young suffered a knee injury at a house fire. We've contacted Rebound and Workers Comp. Captain Young went to a doctor in Las Vegas and had imaging done. He's been placed on light duty. We are hoping only six weeks till his follow up appointment and he can return to his regular duty. Currently there is no need for surgery, he is scheduled for physical therapy.

Next Thursday we'll be hosting the monthly County Chiefs Meeting here at Desert Hills Fire Station. Valarie from Care Flight will be hosting the lunch with a taco truck.

It's employee evaluation time, so this week I'll be send out the performance evaluation to the captains and have them collected by next Board Meeting.

Operation Report: Battalion Chief Bunn is reporting;

BC Bunn states we are currently at 212 calls for the service which is 89 calls since last board meeting. We had a structure fire on Erwin Lane. We received mutual aid from Lake Havasu Fire with 2 engines and a BC. That same C shift ran a motorhome fire in Yucca at a rest stop. We had mutual aid with Golden Valley. We have been inundated with vehicle accidents these past couple weeks. Our crews have been very busy

Engineer Lawrence and Firefighter Nelson attended the Wildland Academy in Prescott from 03/11 – 03/15.

We completed our annual Hose Testing on March 4th. We lost 2000 feet of hose.

Engineer Wijngaarden reports his Officer Development Class was a huge success. He went to Bullhead for 2 weeks of training.

Auxiliary reported they served 575 at the pancake breakfast last week. There will be one more spaghetti dinner on Saturday the 18th and the final pancake breakfast will be April 2nd.

We will be conducting Engineer testing next month to fill an eligibility list for the future.

Captain Sayre begun his wildland refresher training for everybody with pack test and field day.

We've been invited to do Active Shooter refresher training with LHCDF at the end of the month.

Correspondence: None

7) New Business:

- a.) **Discussion and possible action re: Approval of monthly Financial Report.** The Grant Savings Account has \$52,856.40, Payroll Account \$2,014.78, Special Revenue Checking Account \$49,252.93, Special Revenue Savings Account \$137,460.55, Warrant Account \$956,161.34, Petty Cash \$100.00, with a total balance of \$1,197,846.00 Motioned by Board Member Beltran to approve the financial report as presented, seconded by Board Member Schafer, all in favor.
- b.) **Discussion and possible action re: to accept DHFD Auxiliary's donation.** BC Bunn states that we lost a lot of hose and to replace it will be very expensive. Every year the Auxiliary donates an enormous amount of money to us. This year they donated \$11,700 to replace the fire hose that we lost. We ordered 2500 ft. to replace the fire hose. Mr. & Mrs. Bonadona are here representing the Auxiliary. They have been members for many years. Auxiliary Member Anita Bonadona interjects that after the spaghetti dinner and the pancake breakfast they will have another donation. The Auxiliary got a big thank you from DHFD. Motioned by Board Member Shelton to accept the donation from the Auxiliary, seconded by Board Member Wilson, all in favor.
- c.) **Discussion and possible action re: Budgets Workshop.** BC Stanec explains the Levy Limit has been 3.25% for the last 20 years in the state of Arizona. This year they are allowing us to increase that to 3.3750% which is a difference of about \$77,000. It's the Board's decision to adopt the Levy Limit increase. Pat Dennen interjects that the board has the legal statutory authority to raise that limit 5% each year to the max of 3.50. Inflation is over 8%, so a 5% increase is not even keeping up with inflation. With fuel prices and supply chain issues cost are going up. The expectation by the public is that we're going to be there and the fire house will be well maintained with highly trained personnel and can actually arrive at the scene. A \$77,000 annual increase is not a lot. BM Roger thanks Pat and speaks of the opinion for the general public and the tax payers. What Pat is describing is a ratio and that ratio is also related to inflationary factors that increase the budget for this department. Also, the increase in volume we have locally will also provide revenue. So, we have other options. We as the board represent the fire district and the public. What we need to do is review what we do with our tax dollars and what it is we need. Will it be satisfied without the increase? BM Shelton states he is not for raising the Levy Limits. There are very few departments that are not maxed out. If you manage our own household, you leave yourself a little room. Just like we have a cost of living and so does our constituents. When times are tough the last place government should go it to the people that are also having a tough time. \$77,000 is very minimal and will be very minimal to our operating costs. He feels if we can get by without the increase than we should and if we can-not next fiscal year we can increase the Levy Limit. BC Stanec asks if the board would like us to present two proposed budgets with 3.25 and 3.375? BM Shelton responds by recommending that we budget for what we need to run this department and if it goes over the threshold then we may need to increase the levy. We need to put a plan in place, if its land or equipment requisition, we need to stick to that plan. BM Roger states we need to look at the short-term budget and long-term budget.

Next topic is Health Insurance. We receive the quotes from Kairos and our insurance is going up approximately \$14,000 annually. Admin Harrison explains the increase will be lower because the three SAFER positions will be covered by the SAFER Grant. BC Stanec states that's a \$41 increase per employee per month. Traditionally we don't fund the spouse and family, but increases to the family and spouse are going up significantly. We have discussed increasing the \$41 that the department pays to \$50 per month to give them some relief. BM Roger asks to explain what contribution are made for the family portion. Admin Harrison explains the department fund the \$2,500 deductible for individuals, which is \$445 month. If the individual takes the higher deductible they will get more in their HSA. For the family/spouse if you take the higher deductible part of the that difference between the two deductible is applied to the family/spouse coverage and the HSA stays at \$30 a month. BM Roger asks what the monthly fee is for families/spouses monthly. BC Stanec answers about \$500 a month. BC Stanec asks if there are any thoughts from the board on increasing the departments contribution. The response is positive with an increase. The board would like to see the department covering more for families and spouse coverage and the impact on the budget.

Next topic is Chief's wages. BC Stanec states that he and Admin Harrison put an arbitrary wage of \$65,000 annually, which is step 5, as an example to present to the board. BM Roger suggests showing the budget with these numbers and an increase. BM Beltran felt \$75,000 would be a good increase and BM Wilson felt \$85,000 would be good. Admin Harrison states \$85,000 is not on our pay scale. All board members propose using \$75,000 or \$80,000 as the wage amount.

BC Stanec states Pat Dennen is our advisor built into the budget. Do we want to keep Pat on as an advisor? The Board agreed to keep Pat on as our consultant for as long as is necessary.

Rumors have it that Workers Comp is increasing 75 to 100 percent.

8) **Board Member Comments:**

- a) New Business to be considered on future agendas: Budget talks
- b) Comments: None

9) **Adjourn:** Motion to adjourn at 10:00 am by Board Member Beltran, seconded by Board Member Schafer, all in favor.