



Desert Hills Fire District

3983 London Bridge Road
Lake Havasu City, AZ 86404
(928) 764-3333 (FAX) 764-2397

Desert Hills Fire District Board Meeting Minutes Regular Meeting, March 18, 2020

1. Call to order

Board Member Hayes called to order the Desert Hills Fire District Board meeting at **9:00 a.m. on Wednesday, March 18, 2020**, 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 Hayes

3. Roll Call

The following Board Members were present:

John Hayes
Curtis Schafer
Brad Shelton
Char Beltran
Tom Rogers - absent

Also, in attendance:

Battalion Chief Stanec
Battalion Chief Bunn
Administrative Specialist Harrison
Consultant Pat Dennen

4. Call to the Public: None

5. Approval of Regular Meeting Minutes for February 19, 2020: Motioned by Board Member Beltran to accept February 19, 2020 Regular Meeting Minutes, seconded by Board Member Shelton; all in favor.

6. Reports:

a) **Fire Administration Report:**

- BC Stanec reported on COVID-19. It's been in the news; it's effecting our city and everyone. We've been working with the hospital, the county, emergency management, surrounding chiefs, and we're getting information from the CDC. But we're on top of it. We get approximately 50 emails a day on the covid-19 virus. Hospitals are requiring more information as we transport patients to the hospitals.
- We made changes at the station because of the virus, such as
 - limited access to the building.
 - Canceled the Spaghetti dinner on Saturday
 - The Pancake breakfast has been postponed for 2 weeks
- We submitted our Cooperative Fire Rate Agreement approved by AZ DFFM and are ready for the upcoming fire season.

b) **Fire Operation Report:**

- BC Bunn states we sent four (4) employees to WildLand Academy last week. David Nelson, Kane Wijngaarden, Jeremy Barragan, and Kyle Young.
- ATV and UTV training were conducted for entire department and the Ranger is in full service and ready to operate. We are working to get additional equipment on the Ranger.
- 1521R went to Fire Trucks Unlimited in Henderson with hopes it will sell quicker.
- Wild Land Refresher will be held beginning of April. Led by Captain Sayre and with the help Chief Leflet from Yucca
- Captain Spencer help rapid intervention training for the department a couple weeks ago.

c) **Correspondence:** None

7. **New Business:**

- a.) Discussion and possible action re: Approval of monthly Financial Report. Administrative Specialist Harrison states that the Grant Savings Account is \$15,011.96, Payroll Account \$22,257.44, Petty Cash \$100.00, Special Revenue Checking Account 22,902.58, Special Revenue Savings Account \$18,808.93, Warrant Account \$559,488.22, with a total balance of \$638,569.13.

We are at 66% into the year, our income is at 63.5%, which is a little low. That was due to the low volume of wildland fires. Our expenses our down at 41.99%. So, we are staying on track.

Board Member Beltran asked about the deferred property tax of .53 cents on the balance sheet. AS Harrison stated it was the auditors JE rounded off and she would correct it.

Approval of Financial Report motioned by Board Member Schafer, seconded by Board Member Beltran, all in favor.

- b.) Discussion and possible action re: Survey Results.

- Board Member Shelton states that we are coming up to our one-year mark with the tow (2) Battalion chief leadership structure and reminds the board that it's their responsibility to evaluate the structure. He states that there is a couple of mechanisms, one is input from Chief Dennen and his workings with the two (2) Chiefs and second surveying the department employees. Board Member have a copy of the survey results. BM Shelton feels there is no action needed. He would just like to open it up for discussion and states his personal opinion is there is a very good mixture of opinions. BM Shelton feels this structure of two (2) Battalion Chiefs is working.
- Board Member Beltran states her perception of the results is there some confusion about having two (2) leaders. BC Stanec responds that they are still learning their roles as financial and operations. There is still a learning curve with them and the department. The BC's are working together to establish each role with all employees and who will address issues. BM Beltran asked how it is affecting the overall moral of the department. The employees in attendance felt the moral is good.
- BM Shelton states he knows it uncomfortable for the two (2) BC's talking about this. This was in no way a headhunting mission. This is something unique and new and we know it would have highs and lows. The majority of employee's views are in the middle. Part of this was an evaluation of the two (2) BC's and part was an evaluation for the department and how we are doing a year later. BC Stanec and BC Bunn both feel this is a new road for everyone and they want the good and bad results to move forward and improve.
- Board Member Beltran asked if the BC's though about switching roles of Finance and Operations. Consultant Dennen stated he felt it was too soon switch roles. That they are still learning the roles they are in.

- c.) Discussion and possible actions re: FY2021 Budget. BC Stanec stated we came up with nine (9) wage projections. We didn't know which way the board was going to go with leadership. We have projects all the way from doing nothing to hiring an outside Chief, too leaving them as Battalion Chiefs. We met and went over all the wage projections and came up with projection #5 as the best choice for the department. Projection 5 is keeping Stanec and Bunn on as Battalion Chiefs, but switching us from engine captain/chief to chief roles as exempt employees where we would each work half the time. We would promoting 2 captains filling those vacancies. Also includes 15

firefighters and 2 more vacancies, so we would want those positions authorized and funded. Consultant Dennen state it basically takes the two (2) BC's off an hour rate and puts them on a salary. They would work for hour weeks. This would make sure there is a continuity of chief coverage for all shifts. It also provide wage increases for all employees. As for the vacant positions we would probably wait on filling those for a short period of time to see what the economy, the virus and presidential elect is going to do to the county.

Board Member Beltran asked if the BC's work overtime now and if so how would be compensated in exempt status? BC Stanec stated currently they are trying to do their due diligence to not log to much overtime. As an exempt employee there is no overtime. BM Beltran asked if we built any bonus structure to compensate for overtime. Administrative Specialist Harrison stated we did increase the annual base pay to compensate for any overtime.

Board Member Beltran asked if we were keeping Consultant Dennen. Yes we are.

Board Member Shelton asked if there was a wage projections with staffing at 3/2. There is not.

Board Member Shelton stated the only thing he would like to see is all employees get a wage increase and the two BC's are put on 40 hour work weeks.

Consultant Dennen asked that in case the exempt status does not work out the two BC's could go back to Captain status, as long as it isn't because of disciplinary actions.

Board Member Shelton asked if we still feel strongly that we need 3 FF at Station 2. Right now we are running 3/3, do we need to fill the current vacancy? If we lost an employee would we need to fill that spot? BC Stanec answered with if there was a large fire with only 2 FF they would not be able to protect the property fully. Consultant Dennen states NFPA recommends 4/4 so at 3/3 we are under recommendation.

Consultant Dennen states the wage projection is following the prior year's budget as directed by the board of staffing a 4 man and 3 man station and adding 2 BC positions.

Administrative Specialist Harrison stated workers compensation is going up extremely high and health insurance increased.

Motioned by Board Member Shelton to direct administration to limit our options for the wage projections and start the budget process focusing on wage projection #5, Board Member Beltran seconded, all in favor.

8. Board Member Comments:

- a) New Business to be considered on future agendas: None
- b) Comments: BC Stanec commented he sent out an email regarding open meeting law and the coronavirus. We should consider for next month's board meeting to conduct the meeting with a web based option or telephonically.

9. Adjourn: Motion to adjourn at 10:05 a.m. by Board Member Hayes, seconded by Board Member Beltran, all in favor.