



DESERT HILLS FIRE DISTRICT

3983 London Bridge Road
Lake Havasu City, Az 86404
(928)-764-3333
www.Deserthillsfire.org

Desert Hills Fire District Board Meeting Minutes

Regular Meeting, April 15, 2026

1. Call to order

Board Member Roger called to order the Desert Hills Fire District Board meeting at **9:00 a.m. on Wednesday, April 15, 2026**, 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
Curtis Schafer
Rich Fountain
Dana VanLeuven
Linda Hanks

Also, in attendance:

Chief Stanec
Administrative Specialist Harrison

4. Call to the Public: None

5. Approval of Regular Meeting Minutes for March 18, 2026: Board Member Schafer motioned to accept meeting minutes as presented, seconded by Board Member Fountain, all in favor.

6. Reports:

a) **Fire Chief Report:** Chief Stanec reports the following;

- At the last Board meeting we talked about the DEA and purchasing drug boxes. After the board meeting, we started the order and the boxes are in production, they should be ready in a

couple weeks. Havasu Regional and Life Point has given us an extension to get our DEA license; it's supposed to expire tomorrow. We've been working with Havasu Fire and DHS on our unique problem. They are working on laws and ways for us to apply for a DEA license. With that information Life Point has granted us an additional extension until that portal opens up. We are good in the eyes of the hospital and DEA and once that portal opens, we will apply for that license.

- Communications; For the last couple weeks we've been testing between Desert Hills and Colorado City. We can hear them, they can hear us, and tone tests have been done. We go back to Colorado City at the end of this month to work with their team on building and deploying the CAD. This will be more focused on target areas within our district and our responses to those calls at those locations. We have to let all our partners (MCSO, DPS, the State, etc.) know of the changes; we just can't do it too soon. We're hoping we will be ready on May 15th. Our hard deadline to go live is June 23rd. We've been working through an IGA between the five (5) fire districts. Fort Mohave Mesa has a different attorney than the other four districts. As soon as their attorney reviews the IGA, it will be sent to our attorney, Bill Whittington, for review.
- New Fire Engine; Six weeks ago, the manufacturer said we were six weeks out. Talked to him on Monday and he said we're four to five weeks out. Captain Sayre and Captain Barragan volunteered to go to Michigan and do the final inspection when it was ready.
- Auxiliary; Our Auxiliary and the members of our community donated \$43,000 last week. The turnouts the board approved of from the donated funds are in production and should arrive at the end of the month.
- Hose testing; We're partnering with Havasu City Fire again this year. Their engines are being tested now and tomorrow Desert Hills Fire will start testing.
- Bathroom remodel; It's almost done, shower is working, floor is in. There is little bit of touch up to paint and trim that needs to be replaced. Big kudos to all the guys that stepped up and made this project happen.
- Agendas to be considered in the future; It's evaluation time for our entire department which also means for the board. Expect that on a future agenda.
- 2024 IFC Fire Code; The state is about to adopt it. Once the state adopts it, the county will adopt it. Once the county adopts it, we will have to adopt it. James has been working on that project, learning and reviewing the new codes.

- b) **Auxiliary Report:** Rich Fountain reports; The Auxiliary raised \$43,000 this year. At the last pancake breakfast served 431 breakfasts, our numbers were up for the year. I also got an additional \$1,500 donation from the Rods and Relics Car Club.

7. New Business:

- a. Discussion and possible action re: Approval of monthly Financial Report. Administrative Specialist Harrison states that the Grant Savings Account is \$3,093.32, Payroll Account \$12,787.98, Special Revenue Checking Account \$10,783.29, Special Revenue Savings Account \$81,302.67, Warrant Account \$2,728,823.68, Petty Cash \$127.57, with a total balance of \$2,836,918.51. Motioned by

Board Member Schafer to approve the financial report as presented, seconded by Board Member Hanks, all in favor.

- b. Discussion and possible action re: Approval for repairs for Engine 1521. Chief Stanec reports; Our new engine cannot get here soon enough. I reached out to the Chairman a couple weeks ago. Both of our in-service Pierce's need quite a bit of work; we need at least one of them running. Talking with our mechanic, Chris, and Captain Sayre we're trying to figure out which of the two engines is the best. When the new engine arrives, one of those engines will be surplus. They say 1521 is our best engine; it has the lowest miles, lowest hours and is the soundest. Unfortunately, it wasn't running right. Chris came and ran some fuel test on 1521; we had diesel leaking into the engines' oil. It was leaking through the seals on the injector. Engine 1541 is now at the Height's; this one needs a new radiator. After reaching out to BM Roger, I authorized the mechanic to begin the injector repair. The quote was about \$10,000. As of last night, the mechanic called and while working on the injectors they found the aluminum cam scored, which will eventually send metal into the engine if it's not fixed. That will be another thousand dollars plus labor. I'm anticipating the cost to be not more than \$15,000 based on his quote. Board Member Roger approves the repair, seconded by Board Member VanLeuven, all in favor.
- c. Discussion and possible action re: Budget Workshop; Chief Stanec presents a brief presentation on the proposed budget. I tried to capture anything where we saw a significant increase in the budget.

BM Roger comments that now workers compensation covers all cancer for all fire fighters, you would think there would be a reduction in medical insurance. Did we bid out our medical insurance? Chief Stanec responds that we have looked elsewhere, and the health insurance doesn't care if we're a fire department; we are a group of people. The pool that we are currently in has fire departments, fire districts, cities, towns, and school districts in it. The market is very volatile when it comes to health insurance, in general. All the districts in our area have seen high increased rates this coming year. Rates in a pool are determined by claims. Admin Specialist Harrison reached out to EMI for an insurance quote, and they were very close to the same rates we are at now. Chief Stanec states that every year we actively try to find a better option and better cost.

The Organizational Restructure and new Shift Battalion Chiefs; Battalion Chiefs to everybody else except Desert Hills Fire is an entry level chief officer function. They managed a certain number of people, crews and stations. They have specialized tasks but not all the tasks for the whole fire department. BC Bunn and I being Battalion Chiefs wasn't the appropriate titles for our functions of running the fire department. In the structure of most fire departments, you have a Fire Chief, then you have a spinoff of the operations side, which could be Division Chief, Deputy Chief or Assistant Chief. The Operations Battalion I'm looking at making that into that a true Operation Chief position who then oversees the Shift Battalion Chiefs. The Shift Battalion Chiefs focus is making sure their shift (A, B, C,) has everything they need and has accountability for their shift. Each BC will have one or two operations they are responsible for, like EMS, fleet maintenance, etc. BM Roger asks, so we have A, B, and C shift, and we have station 1 and 2, so will the BC be over both stations? Yes, both stations and the captains would report to that shift BC to work on any issues of the day. We're looking to

correct some of the imbalance, we're bottom heavy and top light this adds an extra layer for added support to the top. BM Roger asks if there is enough work for the shift BC. Chief Stanec answers yes, we're not looking at bringing in outsiders into our system but strengthen from within.

Chief Stanec explains the Proposed Organization chart from the top. The Fire Board, next Fire Chief, under that to the side is Administration. Then the Operations Chief, underneath Operations Chief, there are three Battalion Chiefs and a Fire Prevention Specialist which will report directly to Operations Chief. Next are the six captains, six engineers, and six fire fighters that are responsible for running the stations and engines. The schedule will be the most adequate staffing we can have at each location. BM VanLeuven comments "he likes we are promoting from within".

We are proposing a 3% pay increase with an \$89,895 increase in personnel costs. By adding these additional positions, we will have an additional increase of about \$68,000, for a total increase of \$157,938.

Organizational impacts; expands career advancement opportunities, rewards experience and performance, improves morale and retention, improves operational leadership and support.

Dispatch and Communications; Colorado City will be our dispatch center; they are a true 911 fire-based dispatch center. We will continue collaborating with our neighboring, improved services, enhance our technologies, and continue to build on what we have started. There will be associated costs of dispatch will be \$35 per call and a one-time \$2000 implementation fee for all the work they are doing to build our cad. This fee was paid by all the departments. I overestimated our calls by 150. I budget \$35,000 for dispatch. The IT Consortium is budgeted at \$30,000. Through the IGA the group will help fund and grow the consortium. This is to ensure the backbone of the system continues to work; it will give access to IT for everything from technology, communications to improving our current platforms, to streamline our systems. It will account for unanticipated expenses and ability to support equipment deficiencies as we roll out our new dispatch center.

Health Insurance increased 17.2%, an increase of \$46,189. Workers Compensation; 7710 has dropped out of Arizona. Admin Harrison received a quote from Securis. The annual cost is \$110,912 and the capitalization is \$66,547 spread over 6 years. There is a 3-year contract. If you leave after 3 years, we will owe the remainder of the capitalization. We left the budget for workers compensation a little higher. If by the off chance the pool is underfunded, they can come back to the departments for the funding.

Revenues; the proposed budget presented did not include an increase to our levy. Chief Stanec stated he would like to see a .05% increase, but we worked hard to create a budget with our current levy of 3.5%. BM Roger stated he would like to stay at the 3.5% levy. The analogy we have on the proposed budget appears we can full fill these obligations without an increase. You guys have done a great job. The board agreed with BM Roger. Cheif Stanec reported the FDAT increased to \$379,140, an increase of \$29,324. The capital replacement plan we created last year is \$350,000. The Smart & Safe is estimated at \$60,000.

Final statement from Chief Stanec. As a department, we are balancing competitive pay, rising benefit cost, organizational needs, operational readiness, and long-term capital sustainability.

BM Roger asked the timeline for the budget. Also is there anything else you withheld from this budget that you would have liked to have added. Admin Harrison stated that May we post the proposed budget and June we post the Adopted Budget. Chief Stanec we feel we did a good job to balance the budget. The labor meeting was a really good meeting. The 3% pay increase was a little low. Would we like to increase the pay, but should we increase the levy. It was agreed to work into the budget a 4 to 5% increase in pay without increasing the levy.

8. **Board Member Comments:**

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

9. **Adjourn:** Motion to adjourn at 10:26am; Board Member Roger motioned to Adjourn, seconded by Board Member Fountain, all in favor.

