

## **Pine-Strawberry Fire District**

### PINE-STRAWBERRY FIRE BOARD REGULAR MEETING MINUTES January 19, 2023

The meeting was called to order at 6:00 pm

1) **Pledge of Allegiance**

2) **Roll Call** – Present were Board Clerk - Bob Papke, Member - Bob Bennett. Member - Melvin Palmer, and Board Chairman - Chuck Ackerman. Member - Dave Burkhart was absent.

3) **Presentations** - None

4) **Correspondence** – None

5) **Call to the Public** –

**Jim Hitch**– New Fire Science Coordinator at Eastern Arizona College – Payson campus. Wanted to introduce himself to the board.

**Michael Mattal** – Pine/Strawberry resident - Stated that he knows how important morale is in a Fire District and how it affects service and as a resident he feels concerned about how our team here is being supported. If former Chief Morris has not been approached, he would like to put that forward as a request to be considered.

**Fred Schoeffler** - Pine Resident since 1977 – As a former wildland firefighter and Hot Shot Superintendent, I understand how unique the Pine Canyon is, I would just hope that you will look for a new chief who has a very strong wildland and urban interface background.

6) **Approval of Previous Minutes**

a) **December 15, 2022** – Regular Meeting Minutes – Mel Palmer made a motion to accept the minutes as written and authorize the Board Clerk to sign them. Bob Bennett seconded the motion and it passed with three ayes. Chuck Ackerman abstained.

7) **Financial Report of December 2022, Finances** – Ben Archer-Clowes of the James Vincent Group was in attendance, and he presented the financial report to the board. Bob Papke made a motion to accept the Financial Reports as presented and authorize the Board Clerk to sign them. Chuck Ackerman seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

8) **Fire Chief's Report**– (Given by Interim/Acting Chief, Joel Brandt) Including but not limited to:

a) **Significant emergency incidents** –

b) **Other non-emergency Fire District Activity**

c) **The Fire Marshal's office** has reviewed 6 plans, adding 5,920 square feet of construction and totaling \$1,180.42 of revenue.

d) **Report on emergency call volume from previous month** – responded to 54 calls for service.

e) **Report on vehicle maintenance from previous month** – Total Vehicle expenses for the month of December were \$ 2,713.91. All vehicles in service.

f) **Report on training activities from previous month** –182 hours of training reported.

g) **Specific program updates or demonstrations** –

9) **Other Fire District Related Reports**

- a) **District Board Chairman's Report** – None
- b) **PSPRS Board Report** – None
- c) **Firefighter's Association Report** – Tommy Cordova said that they have a tentative meeting scheduled for next Wednesday, January 25, 2023. He is still trying to get with Stacy Figueroa to get all the bank accounts signed over. Due to a death in her family and her involvement with the legal issues that entails, it has been difficult to connect.
- d) **Labor Organization Report** – (see item c - meeting January 25, 2023.)

10) **Old Business** –

a) **Discussion/Possible Action on Recruitment of Fire Chief/Recruitment Packet**

Interim Chief – Joel Brandt stated that the job announcement has been posted on the Arizona Fire District Association website, The Arizona Fire Chiefs Association, Arizona State Training Committee, as well as Administrative email list and the Fire Jobs Facebook. Mr. Ackerman asked for opinions from board members on whether or not to list the salary range/beginning salary etc. The Board felt that is something that can be discussed in the interviews, however they did want to add, “Salary negotiable (*\$100,000 base*) depending on experience.”

- b) **Discussion and possible action on outside legal counsel of Policies** - Chairman Ackerman stated that we have the Policy Review Committee working on Policies and they are bringing them to the Board for approval. He wants to be sure that we have legal counsel go over them, especially with regard to personnel issues, to be sure that they are accurate and fairly represented on both sides. We know that the Committee has been bringing us the Policies for approval, but he is asking the Board to consider either approving the policies, pending legal counsel, or sending them to legal counsel for review first, and then bringing them to the Board for approval.

Board Member Papke, who serves as the Policy Review Committee Chairmen, stated that there are some policies that simply follow federal guidelines and that it would not be necessary to spend the money on having our attorney review them also. He added that if they are working on the “Disciplinary Action” policy, he would very much like to have those policies reviewed by our attorney. Mr. Papke pointed out that when the committee brings a policy to the Board for approval – that approval is what makes it “Policy”. The Board has the option of saying at that point that they would like to see that policy reviewed by legal counsel.

Member Mel Palmer agreed that they should be looked at case by case to determine whether or not they should be reviewed by the attorney.

Chuck Ackerman stated that the Policy Review Committee should review all the newly approved policies and bring to the next Fire Board meeting the ones they determine should be legally reviewed.

Mr. Papke stated that he didn't think there were any that we have already approved, (*i.e., Holidays, FMLA, Retirement plans, Jury and Court Time etc.*) that need legal review. He did say that the ones we are currently working on such as “Disciplinary Action” he would like to bring those to the Board with the recommendation that they are sent to the attorney before they are approved.

Chuck Ackerman gave direction to the Policy Review Committee to compile policies previously submitted for adoption for consideration of submission to legal counsel for review.

11) **New Business** –

- a) **Discussion and Possible Action regarding the District's Annual Audit**

Dustin Richards of BDR Richards, CPA's accounting firm, was present to present their findings. Nothing materially misleading. No disagreements with management. Internal financial controls properly in place. The auditors issued the highest opinion audit available. It is a clean audit.

*(Copy of the complete audit and financials available upon request from PSFD Administrative office)*

Chuck Ackerman made a motion to accept the audit report as presented. Mel Palmer seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

- b) Discussion and Possible Action regarding selection of PSFD Board Chairman and Board Clerk for the coming year.

Mel Palmer made a motion to nominate Chuck Ackerman as Board Chairman. Chuck Ackerman accepted the nomination. Bob Papke seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

Chuck Ackerman made a motion to nominate Bob Papke as the Board Clerk for the coming year. Bob Papke accepted the nomination. Mel Palmer seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

- c) Discussion and Possible Action regarding appointment of PSPRS Local Board Chairman.

Chuck Ackerman stated that he believed Dave Burkhart agreed to replace Bruce Dow on the PSPRS local Board, but seeing that he is absent, he moved to table this item until next month. Bob Bennett seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

- d) Discussion and Possible Action regarding the Chief's Job Description. The current job description needs editing for grammar and content. Interim Chief Brandt was directed to edit the current draft and bring it to the Board at the next meeting. No action taken.

- e) Discussion and Possible Action regarding outside legal counsel's review of Chief Contract template. Chuck Ackerman asked if Interim Chief Brandt could clean up the grammar on the contracts that we had for Chief Staub and Chief Wisner for comparison and send these to the Board Chairman. Chuck Ackerman stated that he will get the information to our attorney, Bill Whittington. The Chief Contract will be an agenda item for the February Board meeting. No action taken.

**12) Future Regular Board Meeting Date** – February 16, 2023, at 6:00 pm

**Items for discussion** –Select PSPRS local board chair, Policies for review by legal counsel, Job description and contract drafts for Fire Chief.

**13) Adjournment:**

Chuck Ackerman made a motion to adjourn. Bob Bennett seconded the motion and it passed unanimously at 7:30 pm.