

Pine-Strawberry Fire District

PINE-STRAWBERRY FIRE BOARD REGULAR MEETING MINUTES December 16, 2021

The meeting was called to order at 6:00 pm

1) **Pledge of Allegiance**

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

3) **Presentations** – None

4) **Correspondence** – None

5) **Call to the Public** –None

6) **Approval of Previous Month’s Meeting Minutes**

November, 2021, Regular Meeting Minutes – Mel Palmer moved to accept the minutes as written and authorize the Board Clerk to sign them. Chuck Ackerman seconded and the motion and it passed with three “ayes”. Dave Burkhart abstained.

7) **Financial Report** – Approval of Previous Month’s Finances

November, 2021 Financial Reports - Ben Archer-Clowes of the James Vincent Group was in attendance and he presented the financial report to the board. Dave Burkhart moved to accept the financial statements and authorize the Board Clerk to sign them. Mel Palmer seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

8) **Fire Chief’s Report**– Including but not limited to:

- Arizona Department of Forestry and Fire Management once again conducted burns in camp Lo Mia last week with good results. PSFD personnel and equipment assisted in the efforts. Thank you Captain Joel Brandt for coordinating and representing PSFD in this project and a special thanks to Rick Barnes who worked much of the time running our brush engine.
- The crews have completed testing and we have now ordered the powered extrication tools awarded in the Governor’s Office of Highway Safety. Holmatro was the selected vendor which will mean that all of our powered extrication tools are from a single manufacturer.
- Captain Paine has ordered the two new cardiac monitors awarded in the Gila River IC grant, with an expected delivery in 120 days.
- AZDEQ has informed me that PSFD will be awarded \$4,000 dollars in gas testing equipment. This is not the total amount requested, but it will be helpful.
- Currently no fire restrictions are in place in The Tonto National Forest or the fire district.

- The Fossil creek recreation area is closed due to the Backbone fire and may remain closed until next year.
 - The Engine 411 apparatus committee is working with one of the vendors to complete the details of our new specification. Afterwards, it will be sent out to vendors for proposals/bids. We should then be able to know more about pricing and delivery time-frame.
 - The policy review committee met December 14th and agreed on a plan to work through the review process. Draft minutes from that meeting have been provided in your board book.
 - Mr. Mark Reader of Stifel, Nicolaus and Company, Inc. presented me with some preliminary data on potential PSPRS pension debt restructuring as well as bonding capacity for our district. I recommend the board call for work study session on the subject in the near future. I could work with Mr. Reader to find a date that works for everyone.
 - I have assigned Captain Joel Brandt, Office Manager Carmen Wailes, and Engineer Tommy Cordova to compile wage and benefits data from other fire districts and departments in effort to determine if our current career staff wage scale is remaining competitive. I hope this data will allow PSFD to compare how we stand up against similar agencies, and regional agencies. It may prove useful to determine if our COLAs have kept us in pace with others.
- a) **Significant emergency incidents**
 - b) **Other non-emergency Fire District Activity -**
The Fire Marshal's office has reviewed 10 plans, adding 12,569 square feet of construction and totaling \$2,769.48 of revenue.
 - c) **Progress report on Fire Board directed business activities or projects –**
Grant funded extrication equipment testing is completed. Holmatro equipment was selected and is consistent with District equipment.
AzDEQ grant gas detection equipment has not yet been received.
PSPRS & ASRS contribution rates both reduced for the upcoming year.
 - d) **Report on emergency call volume from previous month –** responded to 56 calls for service.
 - e) **Report on vehicle maintenance from previous month –** \$1,701.22
 - f) **Report on training activities from previous month –** No report given.
 - g) **Specific program updates or demonstrations –**
Board authorized Policy Manual Committee met and adopted an initial plan for review and incorporation of policies as provided by vendor and current manual.

Stifel Public Funding provided some initial information on restructuring the unfunded PSPRS retirement obligation – estimating a move from 7.3% to 3.79% and a savings of \$3.39 million over 26 years.

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 reported that a card and donation were given to Chief Bramble last month and that he was very touched and humbled by the gift.
Tommy also reported that the Fire Fighters Association is working on getting a separate account for the funds for the "Employee's Assistance Fund", however they have run into issues with the bank due to the fact that two signers on the Fire Fighters Association no longer work here. They will continue to work through the process of updating their account to reflect current members.
Tommy also reported that the Association has 'adopted' a family in the community that has been identified as having extreme financial needs. The Association is planning on purchasing toys and bikes for the children as well as much needed clothing and also providing food for this family. They will be presented with these items on December 23rd. Funds for this project have come from donations as well as money gifts from the Association members.
- d) Labor Organization Report – Tommy Cordova reported that he, Captain Joel Brandt, and Office Manager Carmen Wailes have been asked by the Chief to do a wage and benefit comparison study and stated that this will allow us to see if we are staying competitive with other Districts.
Tommy also reported that this Saturday, December 18th is the Local "Shop with a Hero" event. Local children will be shopping with Police Officers and Firefighters in Payson.
- e) Fossil Creek Access Report – Fossil Creek remains closed.

10) **Old Business**

- a.) Discussion and possible action related to developing a fee schedule. Nothing to report at this time.
- b.) Residential Lock Boxes – The Board will hear an update on this topic. Chief Wisner reported that he spoke with our attorney, Bill Whittington, on the phone and read him the proposed wording on our application form and Mr. Whittington thought is sounded good. Board Chairman Chuck Ackerman commented that the \$20 fee for these lock boxes is so minimal that he would like to just provide these at no cost to our tax paying citizens. The other Board members agree. Dave Burkhart made a motion to have Chief Wisner proceed with the Residential EMS Lock Box Program Application after removing any reference to "fees" for them. Mel Palmer seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

11) **New Business** – No new business

12) **Future Meeting Date** will be Thursday, January 27, 2022, at 6:00 pm. Items for consideration- District fee schedule

13) **Adjournment** –Bob Papke made a motion to adjourn. Mel Palmer seconded the motion and it passed unanimously at 7:57 pm.