

Pine-Strawberry Fire District

PINE-STRAWBERRY FIRE BOARD REGULAR MEETING MINUTES

May 16, 2024

The meeting was called to order at 6:01 pm.

- 1) **Pledge of Allegiance**
- 2) **Roll Call** – Present were Board Clerk - Bob Papke, Member - Bob Bennett, Board Chairman - Chuck Ackerman, Member - Dave Burkhart, and Member - Melvin Palmer.
- 3) **Presentations** – None.
- 4) **Correspondence** – None.
- 5) **Call to the Public** – None.
- 6) **Approval of Previous Minutes**

April 18, 2024 – Regular Meeting Minutes – Dave Burkhart made a motion to accept the minutes as written and to authorize the Board Clerk to sign them. Mel Palmer seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

April 18, 2024 – Special Meeting Minutes – Chuck Ackerman made a motion to accept the minutes as written. Bob Bennett seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

April 30, 2024 – Special Meeting Minutes – Bob Bennett made a motion to accept the minutes as written. Chuck Ackerman seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

- 7) **Financial Report of March 2024** – Ben Archer-Clowes of the James Vincent Group was in attendance and presented the financials. Mel Palmer made a motion to approve the financial report as given and to authorize the Board Clerk to sign. Chuck Ackerman seconded the motion and it passed unanimously. (See attached Financial Report.)
- 8) **Fire Chief's Report** – Including but not limited to: (See attached Fire Chief's Report.)
 - a) **Significant Emergency Incidents** –
 - Emergency Activity Total Dispatches for April = 40 Total Calls for Service
 - 0 Fires
 - 33 EMS
 - 1 Gas Leak/Hazmat/Electric
 - 1 Motor Vehicle Accidents
 - 5 Misc. Calls for Service

- b) **Training Report** – Total training hours completed this month were 647.5 hours reported for all career members and 116 hours reported for reserve members.
- c) **The Fire Marshal's Report** – The Fire Marshall's office reviewed 12 sets of plans, adding 15,463 square feet of construction, and totaling \$3,091.80 of revenue.
- d) **Vehicle Report** – A total of \$2,632.74 was spent on vehicle repairs this month. Ambulance 42 is out of service. All other District vehicles are in service.

9) **Other Fire District Related Reports**

- a) **District Board Chairman's Report** – None.
- b) **Public Safety Personnel Retirement System Local Board Report** – Dave Burkhart reported that we noticed his term expired in December which is why it is on the Agenda tonight. Carmen Wailes and Mariella Taylor made a trip to the PSPRS on May 2nd and met with Joann Lowy regarding D.R.O.P. forms and Local Board changes. Joann reminded us that all Local Board members are required to watch the training videos which are available online.
- c) **Firefighter's Association Report** – Bill Potter reported to the Board that the Association has adopted a design, including a new professionally designed logo, and art donated by Bob Papke, for coffee mugs and tumblers to be sold as fund raisers. Will have a booth at the Memorial Day Arts and Crafts Fair.
- d) **Labor Organization Report** – None.

10) **Old Business –**

- a) **Discussion and possible action on General Obligation Bond issuers.** Dave Burkhart made a motion to sign an engagement letter with Stifel. Mel Palmer seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.
Board Chairman Chuck Ackerman gave direction to the Chief to ask Stifel for a calendar of events.
- b) **Discussion/Possible action on retaining the services of a personnel attorney.**
Chief Brandt relayed to the Board that he had checked out Jeff Matura's references and that everyone he talked with was very pleased with his services. Chuck Ackerman stated that he also did a little background checking on Mr. Matura and found the same. Dave Burkhart made a motion to have Chief Brandt sign the letter of engagement with Barrett & Matura P.C. Chuck Ackerman seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.
Bob Papke reminded the Board that the Policy Committee has one policy – Policy 3.10 – Grievance Rights and Procedures, that is ready to be sent to the attorney.

11) **New Business –**

- a) **Discussion/Possible action on tentatively adopting Fiscal Year 2024-2025 proposed budget.**
Bob Papke made a motion to tentatively adopt the FY24-25 proposed budget and post it for 20 days. Bob Bennett seconded the motion and it passed unanimously. (See attached proposed budget.)

b) Discussion/Possible action on re-appointing PSPRS Local Board Chairman.

Chuck Ackerman made a motion to retain Dave Burkhart as the PSPRS Local Board Chairman with his new term ending 12/31/2026. Bob Bennett seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

c) Discussion/Possible action on Intergovernmental Agreement with AzDFFM regarding our cooperative agreement.

Chief Brandt explained to the Board that this is an Intergovernmental agreement with the Arizona Department of Forestry & Fire Management that allows us to contract with them for wildland fire service. This is a 10-year contract. Mel Palmer made a motion to approve and sign the Intergovernmental Cooperative Agreement with the AzDFFM. Dave Burkhart seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

d) Discussion/Possible action on Intergovernmental Agreement with the Coconino County Sheriff's Office regarding 5-mile Repeater site.

Chief Brandt explained that this contract allows the placement of Pine-Strawberry Fire District Radio equipment at the 5-Mile Repeater site located in Coconino County. This is a 5-year agreement.

Dave Burkhart made a motion to authorize the Chief to sign the Agreement with the Coconino County Sheriff's Office regarding the radio repeater site and equipment.

Bob Bennett seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

12) Future Board Meeting Date

Thursday, June 20, 2024, Regular Board Meeting starting at 6:00 pm.

Items for discussion – Public hearing and formal adoption of FY 24-25 Budget.

13) Adjournment:

Dave Burkhart made a motion to adjourn. Chuck Ackerman seconded the motion and it passed unanimously at 6:50 pm.

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Pine-Strawberry Fire District

PINE-STRAWBERRY FIRE BOARD REGULAR MEETING MINUTES April 18, 2024

The meeting was called to order at 6:26 pm.

- 1) **Pledge of Allegiance**
- 2) **Roll Call** – Present were Board Clerk - Bob Papke, Member - Bob Bennett, Board Chairman - Chuck Ackerman, Member - Dave Burkhart, and Member - Melvin Palmer.
- 3) **Presentations** – Board Clerk Bob Papke presented the Station 41 crew with a beautiful watercolor painting to be hung in the newly painted “Day Room.” Stop by the Pine Station and check out this awesome artwork!
- 4) **Correspondence** – One thank you card was received from the Pine-Strawberry Elementary pre-school class thanking the firefighters for a fun field trip to the Pine Fire Station.
- 5) **Call to the Public** – None.
- 6) **Approval of Previous Minutes**

March 21, 2024 – Regular Meeting Minutes – Dave Burkhart made a motion to accept the minutes as written and to authorize the Board Clerk to sign them. Mel Palmer seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

- 7) **Financial Report of March 2024** – Ben Archer-Clowes of the James Vincent Group was in attendance and presented the financials. Dave Burkhart made a motion to approve the financial report as given and to authorize the Board Clerk to sign. Chuck Ackerman seconded the motion and it passed unanimously. (See attached Financial Report.)
- 8) **Fire Chief's Report** – Including but not limited to: (See attached Fire Chief's Report.)
 - a) **Significant Emergency Incidents** –
Emergency Activity Total Dispatches for March = 50 Total Calls for Service
0 Fires
28 EMS
4 Gas Leak/Hazmat/Electric
6 Motor Vehicle Accidents
12 Misc. Calls for Service
 - b) **Training Report** – Total training hours completed this month were 1,023.5 hours reported for all career members and 73 hours reported for reserve members.
 - c) **The Fire Marshal's Report** – The Fire Marshall's office reviewed 6 sets of plans, adding 13,022 square feet of construction, and totaling \$2,758.08 of revenue.

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- d) **Vehicle Report** – A total of \$1,384 was spent on vehicle repairs this month. All District vehicles are in service.

9) **Other Fire District Related Reports**

- a) **District Board Chairman's Report** – None.
- b) **Public Safety Personnel Retirement System Local Board Report** – Dave Burkhart reported that they hope to schedule the first of the 2 required biannual meetings for the Local Board, possibly in June.
- c) **Firefighter's Association Report** – The Association has elected new officers. Bill Potter is President. Garrett Turley is Vice President. Dan Green is Treasurer. Zach Graham is Secretary. They are still working on getting artwork for t-shirts that they can sell.
- d) **Labor Organization Report** – None.

10) **Old Business** – None.

11) **New Business** –

- a) **Discussion/Possible action on General Obligation Bond issuers.**

(Both Stifel and RBC gave presentations in the Special Board Meeting prior to the Regular Board Meeting.)

Dave Burkhart made a motion to table this item until next month's meeting when all Board members have had a chance to thoroughly read through the information presented. Bob Papke seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

- b) **Discussion/Possible action on retaining the services of a personnel attorney.**

Chief Brandt arranged to speak with Attorney Jeff Matura on the phone during this portion of the Board meeting.

Matura has been an attorney in Arizona for 25+ years, mainly representing public entities. For the past 10-15 years, he has worked directly with or through insurance referrals representing fire districts. Matura has experience in Policy Review, Open Meeting Law, General Litigation, and Employment Law, as well as other areas related to fire districts.

Matura stated that he is willing to travel to Pine-Strawberry Fire District to meet with the Board/Fire Chief as needed to build a relationship. When asked by Dave Burkhart if we would retain him or his firm, Matura stated that a letter of engagement would be for the firm but that he would be the default attorney completing our work.

Dave Burkhart also asked about Matura's experience with District Employment Law and Matura stated that he has handled district issues from development of policy, promoting actual application of policy and litigation, up through trial and appeal, focus on mitigating risk.

Bob Papke asked a question concerning turnaround time to review a potential (or actual) policy and Matura stated that in more cases we could expect an initial response within 24-48 hours.

For actual work, Matura's firm charges \$200 an hour, but they do not charge for communicating with the District. Matura stated that he sees his job as "advisement, mitigation risk/exposure, providing analysis of issues and options for proceeding (I think you should do X, but the decision is up to the Board)." There is no retainer fee. All fees are for work completed and are billed monthly (or as used).

Matura confirmed that the District can have more than one attorney and Chuck Ackerman asked Mr. Matura for his references. Directions were given to staff to gather references and engagement documents so the Fire Chief could contact references.

Dave Burkhardt made a motion to table this item until references and engagement letter have been received and include this item on next month's agenda. Bob Bennett seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

c) Discussion/Possible action on adopting Policy 2.7 – District Travel

Policy Committee Chairman Bob Papke explained to the Board that this policy, regarding District-related travel, is very basic.

Dave Burkhardt made a motion to adopt Policy 2.7 District Travel with an effective date of May 3, 2024. Mel Palmer seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

d) Discussion/Possible action on adopting Policy 3.10 – Grievance Rights and Procedures

Policy Committee members Bob Papke and Dave Burkhardt presented the draft of Policy 3.10 as presented to the Board. Chuck Ackerman felt that this policy should go to legal review before adoption. Dave Burkhardt and Bob Papke responded that currently, the District has no policy on grievance procedure for members to formally seek resolution to issues and concerns as covered in this policy. Their recommendation is that the Board adopt this policy as written and then send the policy to legal counsel for review.

Dave Burkhardt made a motion to adopt policy 3.10 Grievance Rights and Procedures as written with an effective date of May 3, 2024, with the caveat that it be sent for legal review once the engagement of legal counsel for employment law is resolved.

Bob Bennett seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

12) Future Board Meeting Date

Thursday, May 16, 2024, Regular Board Meeting starting at 6:00 pm.

Chief Brandt and Ben Arche-Clowes will publish potential dates for a Budget Workshop to be conducted before the May Regular Board Meeting.

Items for discussion – Personnel Attorney, Policies, General Obligation Bond, Budget.

13) Adjournment:

Bob Bennett made a motion to adjourn. Bob Papke seconded the motion and it passed unanimously at 8:00 pm.

Pine-Strawberry Fire District

PINE-STRAWBERRY FIRE BOARD SPECIAL MEETING MINUTES

April 18, 2024

The meeting was called to order at 5:01 pm.

1) **Pledge of Allegiance**

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

3) **New Business** –

a) Presentations by Stifel and RBC representatives regarding General Obligation Bonds.

Mike LaVallee, Managing Director for Stifel presented first. Materials were presented to the Board showing Stifel as the #1 underwriter by number of issues for small/medium sized local governments. Statistics for 2023 showed Stifel with 36 and RBC with 7 issues.

They have worked extensively with fire districts since 2007.

Stifel will function as an underwriter or private placement (with banks), whichever results in the lowest cost for the client.

Out of those 27 Fire District Bond elections, 25 were successful.

General Obligation (GO) bonds are secured by dedicated property tax revenue and require voter approval.

If the election fails, no fees are charged.

Fire District voter authorizations do not expire, so some can be sold for immediate needs, and some can be sold later for future needs.

Lease purchases (such as Certificates of Participation) are secured by collateral or real property and can be repossessed for failure to pay. Debt service must be included each year in the budget.

Fees are paid only at the time Bonds are issued.

Statutory limits on the amount borrowed are based on the currently assessed value of the property.

Tom Carlson, Director of RBC Finance, presented next. Mr. Carlson reminded the Board that they previously worked with RBC on the Certificates of Participation for the PSPRS unfunded liability debt, and although RBC was engaged for that process in 2022, the COP's were not issued due to drastically increasing interest rates.

The same people would be involved in the General Obligation (G.O.) bond process.

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The District rating at that time was (S&P) "A."

If approved by the voters, the interest is separate from the statutory rate cap of 3.75%.

PSFD's unrestricted cash position is positive.

Bonds can be used for buildings, engines, and other capital needs. They do not have to be used all at once.

General Obligation interest is tax free to the purchaser, unlike COP's.

PSFD can get Bond insurance if our credit rating is high enough, resulting in lower coupon cost and less risk. (Coupon pays the underwriting fees.)

The current year Tax Exempt Bond interest rate is approximately 4.26%.

Mr. Carlson suggests forming a bond committee to provide information to the public and reminded the Board members that THEY themselves can not advocate for the bond.

4) **Adjournment**

Dave Burkhart made a motion to adjourn. Bob Papke seconded the motion and it passed unanimously at 6:20 pm.

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Pine-Strawberry Fire District

PINE-STRAWBERRY FIRE BOARD SPECIAL MEETING BUDGET WORKSHOP MINUTES April 30, 2024

The meeting was called to order at 9:50 am.

- 1) **Pledge of Allegiance**
- 2) **Roll Call** – Present were Board Clerk - Bob Papke, Member - Bob Bennett, Board Chairman - Chuck Ackerman, Member - Dave Burkhart, and Member - Melvin Palmer.
- 3) **New Business** –
 - a) Discussion on 2024/2025 Budget planning.

Ben Archer-Clowes of the James Vincent Group was present along with Steven Rodriguez (via TEAMS meeting) to present the proposed 24/25 draft budget.

(See attached Budget Overview)

Individual accounts were discussed in more detail during the workshop.

Board Chairman Chuck Ackerman did not feel an additional meeting was necessary for budget planning. Direction was given to Chief Brandt and Ben to present a balanced tentative budget, based on the workshop draft, to the Board for consideration and possible action at the May Board Meeting. He asked that the James Vincent Group finalize the budget they looked at today with the few changes suggested by the Board and that it be emailed out to Board members prior to the May Board meeting for possible tentative adoption at that meeting.

- 4) **Adjournment** – Chuck Ackerman made a motion to adjourn. Mel Palmer seconded the motion and it passed unanimously at 11:37 am.

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Pine- Strawberry Fire District

6198 W Hardscrabble Mesa Rd
Pine, AZ 85544



Monthly Financial Report – April 2024

Attached are the following for your information and review:

1. Balance Sheet as of April 30, 2024.
2. Summary of Reconciled Cash Balances as of April 30, 2024.
3. Income Statement of Revenues and Expenditures for April 2024 including budget to actual and year-to-date balances.
4. Income and Expenses Graph FY24.
5. Monthly Disbursement Report.
6. 12-Month Cash Flow.

Key points:

- Revenue for April is \$604,309 which is \$42,542 under budget.
 - Tax Revenue is \$571,361 which is \$1,447 under budget.
 - Non-Tax Revenue for April is \$32,948 which is \$41,094 under budget.
- Expenses for April totaled \$233,352 which is under budget by \$59,081.
 - There was a delay in receiving the credit card statement from the financial institution, therefore credit card transactions are not included for the month of April.
- Year to Date Revenue is \$3,527,300 which is \$188,712 over budget.
- Year to Date Expense is \$2,964,771 which is \$28,393 under budget.

Please contact the Finance Department at (480) 422-9777 for any questions or concerns regarding this report.

This report and the attached detail reports have been reviewed and approved by the Fire Board.

Board Clerk

Date



Pine-Strawberry Fire District

P.O. Box 441 Pine, Arizona 85544

Phone: (928) 476-4272 Fax: (928) 476-4634

Website: www.pinestrawberryfiredistrict.com

Fire Chiefs Report-May 2024

Emergency Activity – Total Dispatches for April = 40 calls for service

0 Fire

33 EMS calls

1 Gas Leak/hazmat/Electric

1 Motor Vehicle accidents

5 Misc. calls for service

Last month were 50 calls for service.

Vehicle Report – C41 A to Z mechanical replace steering linkage assembly with upgraded kit and track bar bushing \$1375.61. A43 Left rear air bag went bad over nighted parts from Reyco Gaining \$1217.13. A43 installed amber fog lamps \$40.00. E41 Repaired ladder rack switch, repaired wiring for hose reel. E413 Repaired Ice chest tray sliders was rusted closed. A41 Installed amber fog lamps purchased in March. E42 installed handheld radio charger. A42 was sent to Ram Dealer for whine noise while driving. The rear axle assembly was found to be going bad and the parts were ordered. This repair is under warranty, and we hope to have it back in service week of the 15th. A total of \$2632.74 was spent and all district vehicles are in service except A42.

Training Report - Total training hours completed this month were 647.5 hours reported for all career members, and 116 hours reported for reserve members.

Plan Reviews – The PSFD Fire Marshall reviewed 12 sets of plans this month with a total addition of 15,463 SQ FT. The total fees collected this month were a total of \$3,091.80.

Significant Incidents and Events:

- We are continuing to work with Pine Strawberry Fuels Reduction INC. on a 90/10 fuels reduction grant.
- We have placed the order for a new UTV and expect to have it sometime in mid-June.

- We have applied for a regional grant with the Gila County Supervisors Office for Mass Casualty Equipment and Stop the Bleed training equipment in the amount of \$8,500. This Item is on the County Supervisors meeting next week.
- We deployed a type 3 engine to the Wolf Fire near Clints Wells.
- We received an automatic rate increase of 1.7% from DHS.



PINE-STRAWBERRY FIRE DISTRICT
Tentative Budget - Summary
Fiscal Year 2025

Tax Levy Revenues

Real Estate	2,953,187
Fire District Assistance Tax	251,662
Total Tax Revenues \$	3,204,849


Non Tax Levy Revenues

Charges for Services	620,000
Grant	100,000
Other Revenue	93,500
Total Non Tax Levy Revenues \$	813,500
Total Revenues \$	4,018,349

Expenses

Personnel Costs	3,134,901
Buildings & Land	65,000
Vehicles & Equipment	131,000
Communications & IT	57,700
Travel & Training	129,584
Managerial	158,863
Grant	100,000
Reserve/Funding	241,301
Total Expenses	4,018,349

Estimated Assessed Valuation	84,376,772
Proposed Tax Rate \$	3.5000



Joel Brandt
Fire Chief, Pine-Strawberry Fire District

5-16-2024

Date