

# Clerk's Notes (Minutes)

## February 20, 2025

### Pine-Strawberry Fire District

#### REGULAR BOARD MEETING

**Thursday, 2-20, 2025, beginning at 3:00 PM at the Pine-Strawberry Fire District Fire Station 41 conference room,** located at 6198 Hardscrabble Mesa Rd. in Pine, Arizona.

<https://zoom.us/j/92880955224?pwd=0ME3PbhpqgaoEUarAC8UJRxT1eChU7.1>

Meeting ID: 986 5595 1077

Passcode: 811315

**CALL TO ORDER** 3:08 by C. Ackerman

**1) PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE:** X

**2) ROLL CALL OF BOARD MEMBERS:**

C. Ackerman, Chairman: X

R. Papke, Clerk: X

B. Bennett, Member: absent

D. Burkhart, Member: X

M. Palmer, Member: absent

**3) PRESENTATIONS:** See item 11.C

**4) CORRESPONDENCE:** None

**5) CALL TO THE PUBLIC -** No response

**6) APPROVAL OF PREVIOUS MINUTES**

**a)** January 23, 2025, Regular Board Meeting Minutes

Motion to approve the minutes as presented: D. Burkhart. Second: C. Ackerman

Vote: 3-0

**7) FINANCIAL REPORT**

**a)** Approve the January 2025 Financial Report

Ben from JVG was presented and presented the Financial Report

Motion to approve the Financial Report as presented and authorize the  
Clerk to sign: C. Ackerman Second: D. Burkhart Vote: 3-0

Signed and delivered to: J. Brandt

**8) FIRE CHIEF'S REPORT – Discussion/possible action or direction on the following items:**  
**(See attached report)**

**Emergency Activity** – Total Dispatches for January = 63 calls for service

1 Fire

37 EMS calls

1 Gas Leak/Hazmat/Electric

5 Motor Vehicle Accidents

19 Misc. calls for service

Last month there were 48 calls for service.

**Vehicle Report** – 5 district vehicles had minor service this month. \$1,088 was spent on vehicle maintenance this month, and all District vehicles are in service.

**Training Report** - Total training hours completed this month were 495 hours reported for all career members, and 44.5 hours reported for reserve members.

**Plan Reviews** – The PSFD Fire Marshall reviewed 4 sets of plans this month with a total addition of 2,347 SQ FT. The total fees collected this month were a total of \$401.04. Mr. Ackerman asked that a year-to-year comparison be included going forward.

Chief Brandt also reported that the hiring site using Public Safety Answers as the vendor has been set up and is live. It has been active for 3 days, we've received 3 applications. Applications close 3-27. The vendor administers the advertising, application, interview and testing process at an estimated cost of \$1,000. To \$1,400.

One job conditional offer has been made to one of our reserves, in house.

**9) OTHER FIRE DISTRICT RELATED REPORTS**

*(Items to be presented, considered, reviewed, discussed only.)*

a) District's Board Chairman Report & Discussion: None

b) Public Safety Personnel Retirement Board Report: Will meet to process the new hire from PSFD reserves

c) Firefighter's Association Report Need to elect a secretary to fill a vacancy. FFA adopted 2 families and 3 children over the holidays. Planning for events in 2025, an end of the school year

event is tentatively planned for May. May include a Fire Pup Naming contest at the elementary school.

d) Labor Organization Report: None

## 10) OLD BUSINESS

a) Update/Discussion on Bond Issuance.

Dominic Massey, Garrett Turley and Trey Shill will participate in a station planning committee. Currently looking for PAC (Public Awareness Committee) members.

## 11) NEW BUSINESS

*(Items to be considered, reviewed, discussed, and possible action on.)*

a) Discussion/possible action on adding the practice of seating newly elected Board Members on December 1<sup>st</sup> of election years to the Board Bylaws: Carmen said, by phone that she has had conversations with the County Elections Office and that they are requiring that new Board Members be sworn in and seated on December 1, following a November election. D. Burkhart said that he believes that state law requires that members be seated in the month following the month in which the County Canvas of election results is completed.

Clarification is needed. No action taken at this time.

b) Discussion/possible action on Policy 3.9 Disciplinary Appeal Procedure

R. Papke, Personnel Policy Review Committee Chair and D. Burkhart Committee member presented the draft of a revision of Personnel Policy 3.9, Disciplinary Appeal Process based on experiences and legal advice from a Disciplinary Appeal which was process this past year moving directly to the state Personnel Board without local review, as per the policy in effect at the time. This process was lengthy, cumbersome and expensive. The current draft provides for a local review of Disciplinary Actions involving loss the the District Member (ie. Suspension, demotion, termination). The policy has been reviewed by the District's legal counsel.

Motion: To approve and adopt the revision of Policy 3.9 as presented with an effective date of 3-7-25:    D Burkhart   . Second:    R Papke    Vote:    3-0   

c) Discussion/Presentation on Public Agency Retirement Services (PARS)

Carter Kimberly and Charlie Francis of Public Agency Retirement Services (PARS) presented on their company's IRC Section 115 Trust program for funding PSPRS contributions. Hand out material and their power point slides made available.

Mr Burkhart asked PARS to provide their short term (3 month) and long term (5 year) earnings history. They said that they would do so.

Following the presentation Chief Brandt said that there were other investment avenues also available including through Gila County.

An agenda item for a more general discussion of investment/earning options, especially relating to funding retirement obligations, and Capitol purchases will be included on the agenda for the next Regular Board Meeting.

No action taken at this time.

**d) Discussion/Possible Executive Session for Fire Chief's Evaluation.**

Chief Brandt elected to have his performance review in the Open Meeting. The three members present read their ranking of the Chief, on the newly adopted Chief's Evaluation Form. Mr. Burkhardt's overall rating of the Chief was 3.0 on a 0 to 4 scale, Mr. Papke's rating was 3.68 and Mr Ackerman's was 3.75. Mr Bennett's form was also read and his overall rating of Chief Brandt was 4.0. The mean score for the four ratings received was 3.61 on the same 0 to 4 scale. In general the Chief was viewed as an asset to the District and Performing at a high level, even while improving with experience. District members present at the meeting make positive remarks about the Chief.

**12) FUTURE MEETING AGENDA ITEMS and NEXT MEETING DATE**

Agenda Items: Pinning Ceremony, seating new elected/re-elected Board Members on 12-1, amending the Board By Laws, Investment strategies and opportunities, G.O. Bond Update

Next Meeting: Thursday 3-20-25 at 3:00 PM

**13) ADJOURNMENT**

Motion to Adjourn: R. Papke Second: C. Ackerman . Vote 3-0  
Meeting Adjourned: 5:05

## **Pine-Strawberry Fire District**

### **PINE-STRAWBERRY FIRE BOARD REGULAR MEETING MINUTES**

January 23, 2025

The meeting was called to order at 3:00 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** – Two letters were received.

One letter of thanks from Tom Brummell & Carol Smith who recently used our services due to a vehicle accident just south of town.

One letter of support signed by 14 PSFD employees to the PSFD Board Chairman showing support for the current Board and Fire Chief.

5) **Call to the Public** – Several members of the community were in attendance and the following people addressed the Board:

**Woody Phillips** – Founder of the Pine-Strawberry Neighborhood Radio Watch wished to thank Chief Brandt for his support which allowed them to acquire a free repeater, which will allow all of Pine and most of Strawberry to be able to talk to each other during emergencies when the cell phone service is out. Just wanted to thank the Chief and the Board for their support. The Board, in turn, thanked Mr. Phillips for his work on the project.

**Sean Erickson** – Wanted to congratulate the recently re-elected Board members Bob Papke, Bob Bennet, and Mel Palmer on their re-election. Secondly, he wanted to ask everyone to give a standing ovation to our Board, our Fire Chief, and our firefighters—especially in view of all the events in California right now– “we just really appreciate the GREAT job they are all doing!”

He went on to say that he is a retired firefighter himself, and that he has never seen in any department of small size all the way to large department where the morale and communication between the Board, the Chief, and the firefighters is so awesome. In talking with the guys, he has never seen a small department such as this where the morale is this good and he believes much of that is thanks to this Chief and the Board. “Community, let me tell you. We have a bunch of great guys!”

**RC Cristner** – The Pine-Strawberry CERT Commander also wished to speak to the positive changes she has seen since Chief Brandt has been on Board. The CERT team has received training that they had not been getting before, which is a huge benefit to the community. On a personal note, she also has utilized the services of our firemen and wanted to commend them

for their service and bedside manner – which is way better than the local hospital. She wanted to thank them, again, for keeping her alive – and for their presence in the community – “most places you don’t get to see them like you do here – its so nice to see them out here and see faces and get to know them. Thank you to Chief Brandt for that.”

**Elsa Steffanson – Member of the Pine-Strawberry Fuels Reduction** – Just wanted to say, “Congratulations, Guys – you are a fabulous Board!” She also wished to say thank you to Chief Brandt for all that he does. The Fuels Reduction group, along with Pine-Strawberry Fire District, is moving forward with the grant and stated that “Fuels Reduction will be putting out a flyer soon about the progress of that.” She further stated, “when we hired Chief Brandt, we appreciate that he is really out there in the community, like RC said. They’ve done fire extinguisher programs, CPR programs, as well as showing up to the trails crews – it’s an amazing benefit to the community that so many people are educated under his leadership – Thank you SO MUCH.”

**Marilyn Bennett** – Board member Bob Bennett’s wife read a letter thanking the crews that responded to their home on January 3<sup>rd</sup> – the first time she’s ever had to call 9-1-1. She relayed the story of what happened when her husband fell and broke his arm and the great job our crew did in responding and treating her husband with such skill and compassion. Her and her husband also wish to laud Chief Brandt for his leadership stating that “an organization such as this with so many moving parts is only as successful as its leadership.”

**Dominic Masse’** – Pine-Strawberry Fire District employee - wished to say that Joel is a great leader, and “we have a great Board, and it’s a lot of fun being here.” He’s looking forward to getting back to work and enjoying the progression of Joel’s leadership.

6) **Approval of Previous Minutes**

**December 19, 2024** – Regular Meeting Minutes – Mel Palmer made a motion to accept the minutes as written. Dave Burkhart seconded the motion, and it passed unanimously.

- 7) **Financial Report of November 2024** – Ben Archer-Clowes of the James Vincent Group was in attendance via Zoom and presented the financials for December. 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.)

**Emergency Activity-**

Total Dispatches for December = 48 Total Calls for Service - Previous Month 55

35 Rescue and EMS

2 Fires

10 Misc. Service Calls

0 Hazardous

1 Motor Vehicle Accidents

**Training Report** – Total training hours completed this month were 238 hours.

**The Fire Marshal’s Report** – The Fire Marshal’s office reviewed 4 sets of plans, adding 5,705 square feet of construction, and totaling \$1,220.16 of revenue.



**Vehicle Report** – All District vehicles are currently in service.

**Chief Brandt** – Gave an overview of the things the District has accomplished this year – see attached Chief's Report.

Board member Burkhart asked our Neighboring Fire Chief to stand and introduce himself. Chief James Stoltenburg of Tonto Basin Fire District addressed the Board and stated that his District has been a beneficiary of about half of the things that Chief Brandt just mentioned. They have partnered with Pine-Strawberry Fire District on many things, including Dan Green's Rope Rescue classes. (Chief Stoltenburg plans on teaching part of the course this year.) He stated that it's all a community effort, and we are trying to make ALL of Gila County better.

9) **Other Fire District Related Reports**

- a) **District Board Chairman's Report** – None.
- b) **Public Safety Personnel Retirement System Local Board Report** – The PSPRS Local Board had a meeting today to approve 2 new full-time hires for the PSPRS Pension system.
- c) **Firefighter's Association Report** – Bill Potter reported that the Fire Fighter's Association is doing well, and they are getting all their merchandise ready for the summer craft fairs.
- d) **Labor Organization Report** – Local 4135 Union President Chad Richey was in attendance and stated that he was grateful to be able to address the Board. We recently completed an appeals process and hopefully all the Board members have received a copy of that. Going through that is a very uncomfortable process for all involved but it was a leaning experience as well. They have realized that Pine-Strawberry Fire District does not have a member who is an elected official, and so they are currently working with the PFFA and their lawyer to get their own chapter so that they will have an elected official. He wanted us to know that they are in the process of re-writing their bylaws to allow us to have our own elected official to ensure that our folks have a fair playing field and due process. The Board thanked Mr. Richey for attending.

10) **Old Business –**

- a) **Discussion and update on Timeline for Bond Issuance** – Chief Brandt reported that Paul Ulan from Stifel came last month to report to the Board and that we are on track for going out for a Bond this year for the purpose of replacing this Station – which was built in 1969 and desperately needs to be replaced – as well as to purchase a new engine and hopefully to reinstate the Fuels Program that was terminated approximately 10 years ago. We are doing the groundwork for establishing committees for the process. One committee will be a Public Action Committee for the purpose of educating the public. One committee will be a Building Committee for the purpose of drawing up plans for the new building. No action taken.

11) **New Business –**

*(Items to be considered, reviewed, discussed, and possible action on)*

a) **Report on the Arizona Fire District Association Winter Conference**

Board members Dave Burkhart and Mel Palmer gave an overview of the sessions they attended. No action taken.

12) **Future Board Meeting Date** - February 20, 2025, at 3:00pm.

**Items for discussion** – Bond Issue, AEPPP Briefing.

13) **Adjournment:** Chuck Ackerman made a motion to adjourn. Bob Bennett seconded the motion, and it passed unanimously at 4:17 pm.

cw

Handwritten signature and initials, possibly "RN" and "AH", with a small number "4" below them.





**Pine- Strawberry Fire District**  
6198 W Hardscrabble Mesa Rd  
Pine, AZ 85544



**Monthly Financial Report – January 2025**

Attached are the following for your information and review:


1. Balance Sheet as of January 31, 2025.
2. Summary of Reconciled Cash Balances as of January 31, 2025.
3. Income Statement of Revenues and Expenditures for January 2025 including budget to actual and year- to-date balances.
4. Income and Expenses Graph FY25.
5. Monthly Disbursement Report.
6. 12-Month Cash Flow.

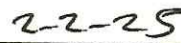
**Key points:**

- Revenue for January is \$189,116 which is \$64,401 over budget.
  - Tax Revenue is \$153,622 which is \$64,199 over budget.
  - Non-Tax Revenue for January is \$35,495 which is \$203 over budget.
- Expenses for January totaled \$533,886 which is over budget by \$144,228.
- Year to Date Revenue is \$2,582,891 which is over budget by \$91,769.
- Year to Date Expenses is \$2,492,163 which is over budget by \$174,306.

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](http://www.pinestrawberryfiredistrict.com)

### Fire Chief's Report - February 2024

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#### Significant Incidents and Events:

- We are completing the pre-award work for the DFFM 90/10 fuels reduction grant. This grant was submitted in June for \$668,000 and we will begin work as soon as possible.
- We are in the process of specking out the new slip unit, and we will place the order when we have found the one the guys want.
- All Paramedics have completed their paramedic refresher.