

## **Pine-Strawberry Fire District**

### **PINE-STRAWBERRY FIRE BOARD REGULAR MEETING MINUTES July 24, 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** – Elsa Steffanson from Pine Strawberry Fuels Reduction reported that they have been very busy with community outreach. They are currently working with Gila County to adopt a fire-wise ordinance and are seeking partners to fund advertising for “Fire Restrictions” info on the Tonto National Forest and within Pine and Strawberry so the short-term renters will have advance notice when open fires are not permitted. They are also working on operation “Spark Arrest” which uses old fire hoses as tow chain covers to prevent sparking which in turn ignites dry brush along the roadways.
- 4) **Correspondence** – Five letters of thanks were received from citizens in favor of adding “Invocation” to the monthly Board agenda. Additionally, One letter of thanks was received from a family member whose mother recently passed away.
- 5) **Call to the Public** – None
- 6) **Approval of Previous Minutes**
  - a) **June 17, 2025** – Regular Meeting Minutes – Dave Burkhart made a motion to accept the minutes as written. Bob Bennett seconded the motion, and it passed with Four ayes. Chuck Ackerman abstained.
- 7) **Financial Report of June 2025** – Ben Archer-Clowes of the James Vincent Group was in attendance and presented the financials for June. 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.)  
**Emergency Activity-**

Total Dispatches for June = 72 Total Calls for Service - Previous Month 79  
53 Rescue and EMS  
0 Fire  
16 Misc. Service Calls  
3 Motor Vehicle Accidents

**9) Other Fire District Related Reports**

- a) **District Board Chairman's Report** – None.
- b) **Public Safety Personnel Retirement System Local Board Report** –None (Board Member Burkhart took this opportunity to report on the Arizona Fire Chiefs Conference)
- c) **Firefighter's Association Report** – None
- d) **Labor Organization Report** – None.

**10) Old Business –**

- a) Discussion and update on Bond Issuance – Paul Voakes reported in Chief Brandt's absence. Paul stated that he has been to most all of the businesses in Pine and Strawberry and requested letters of support from them. To date, we have received 24 letters of support and have not heard any negative responses or comments. These letters of support will go to the lawyer and then on to Gila County.  
Paul also stated that the owner, Sherri, at Fancy Finds Gift Shop has graciously allowed us to use her property for our booth set up, and we really appreciate her support.  
Elsa Steffanson will be doing a radio spot on September 19<sup>th</sup> on KRIM. She will also try to schedule a time on KMOG radio as well.  
No action taken.

**11) New Business –**

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

- a) Discussion and Possible Action on Interim Fire Chief.  
Chief Joel Brandt has accepted a position with the Arizona Department of Forestry and Fire Management and will be retiring from Pine Strawberry Fire District in August.  
Board Member, Dave Burkhart stated that he has talked to many of the long-timers (crew members) and that they were all in favor of Captain Paul Voakes Stepping into the "Acting Chief" position and Paul Voakes is also willing to assume this role. Therefore, Dave Burkhart made a motion that Paul Voakes serve as Interim Chief, and authorize Board Chairman Ackerman to negotiate compensation with him on the Board's behalf.  
Bob Bennett seconded the motion, and it passed unanimously.
- b) Discussion and Possible Action on recruiting a Fire Chief.  
Mr. Burkhart also took the opportunity to provide the Board with a copy of our last recruitment announcement as well as the requirements we previously listed for a Fire Chief along with a printed job application. Mr. Burkhart suggested that the Board look over this information and bring back any changes they may want to the August Board Meeting.  
Mr. Papke noted that we have used an online service for promotional testing and recruitment recently, and although the Board must have input and final say, this might be an option to narrow the field should there be multiple applicants.

Mr. Palmer noted that the Board must be careful not to pressure any potential applicant who might have family, financial, or career concerns.  
No action taken.

12) **Future Board Meeting Date** – Thursday, August 21<sup>st</sup> at 3:00pm.

**Items for discussion** – Bond Issue, Fire Chief selection

13) **Adjournment:** Mel Palmer made a motion to adjourn. Chuck Ackerman seconded the motion, and it passed unanimously at 3:58 pm.

cw

## Pine-Strawberry Fire District

### PINE-STRAWBERRY FIRE BOARD REGULAR MEETING MINUTES June 17, 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, Member - Dave Burkhart, and Member - Melvin Palmer. Board Chairman - Chuck Ackerman was absent.
- 3) **Presentations** – None.
- 4) **Correspondence** – Two letters of thanks were read.
- 5) **Call to the Public** –

**Woody Phillips** - The Pine-Strawberry Neighborhood Radio Watch reported that they now have radio communication with the volunteers at the Pine Brush Pit – which is significant because there is no cell phone service in that area. He again thanked the crews from the Fire District who helped to make this happen.

#### 6) **Approval of Previous Minutes**

- a) **May 15, 2025** – Regular Meeting Minutes – Dave Burkhart made a motion to accept the minutes as written. Bob Bennett seconded the motion, and it passed with three ayes. Bob Papke abstained.

- 7) **Financial Report of <sup>May</sup>~~April~~ 2025** – Ben Archer-Clowes of the James Vincent Group was in attendance and presented the financials for May. Mel Palmer made a motion to approve the financial report as given and to authorize the Board Clerk to sign. Dave Burkhart 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 May = 79 Total Calls for Service - Previous Month 55  
54 Rescue and EMS  
1 Fire  
20 Misc. Service Calls  
4 Motor Vehicle Accidents

PP  
1/3

**Training Report** – Total training hours completed this month were 502 hours.

**The Fire Marshal's Report** – The Fire Marshal's office reviewed 3 sets of plans, adding 1,707 square feet of construction, and totaling \$407.10 of revenue.

**Vehicle Report** – 5 District vehicles were serviced this month for a total of \$15,890. Of that total, \$11,147 was for the completion of new Brush Truck B416. All District vehicles are currently in service.

9) **Other Fire District Related Reports**

- a) **District Board Chairman's Report** – None.
- b) **Public Safety Personnel Retirement System Local Board Report** – Secret ballot elections were held to elect 2 new Board members to the PSPRS Local Board. Mike Tweet and Connor True will be the elected members serving on the PSPRS Local Board. Next meeting will be sometime in December.
- c) **Firefighter's Association Report** – None
- d) **Labor Organization Report** – None.

10) **Old Business –**

- a) Discussion and update on Bond Issuance – Chief Brandt reported that we are up to date with all the filings with Gila County for the Bond election. (More on this in item 11d.) No action taken.

11) **New Business –**

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

- a) Public Hearing for Fiscal Year 2026 Budget adoption - Dave Burkhart made a motion to open a Public Hearing regarding the adoption of the proposed Fiscal Year 2026 budget. Bob Bennett seconded the motion, and it passed unanimously at 3:28 pm.  
(No comments from the public.)  
Dave Burkhart made a motion to close the Public Hearing. Mel Palmer seconded the motion, and it passed unanimously at 3:29 pm.
- b) Discussion and Possible Action on adopting 2025/2026 Budget – Dave Burkhart made a motion to adopt the 2025/2026 Budget as proposed with the 3.5% tax rate and authorize the Board Chairman and Board Clerk to sign it along with the State Form and submit to Gila County. Mel Palmer seconded the motion, and it passed unanimously.
- c) Discussion and Possible Action on PSPRS Pension Funding Policy - Dave Burkhart made a motion to approve the PSPRS Pension Funding Policy and post it on our website. Bob Bennett seconded the motion, and it passed unanimously. (See website for PSPRS Pension Funding Policy under “Budget” section.)
- d) Discussion and Possible Action on Intergovernmental Agreement for Election Services – Chief Brandt explained to the Board that an IGA is required with Gila County Elections Department for the Bond Issue. A rate sheet was provided to the Board members with the costs for a Special Election. Questions were raised as to whether this would be a “mail-in” vote or if we would have actual polling places set up. Chief Brandt said that is yet to be determined. Dave Burkhart made a motion to sign the IGA and submit it to Gila County. Mel Palmer seconded the vote, and it passed unanimously.
- e) Discussion and Possible Action on change to monthly Board Agenda to include “Prayer”

*[Handwritten signature and initials]*

Marilyn Bennett requested this item and requested the Board to consider this item. Marilyn stated that the Gila County Board of Supervisors begin their meetings with prayer. The United States House of Representatives and the United States Senate begin their meetings with prayer. Mrs. Bennett stated that a simple prayer could be read at the beginning of the meetings and provided a "sample" prayer.

The idea was discussed at length by all the Board Members. Ultimately, Dave Burkhart made a motion to add this as item #2 on the Agenda as "Invocation". Bob Bennett seconded the motion. Dave Burkhart, Bob Bennett, and Mel Palmer voted aye. Bob Papke voted No. Motion carried 3-1.

- 12) **Future Board Meeting Date** – Due to the summer AFDA conference, the next meeting date will be Thursday, July 24<sup>th</sup>, at 3:00. (Chief Brandt stated that he will not be here, but that he can have one of the Captains take his place.)

**Items for discussion – Bond Issue**

- 13) **Adjournment:** Bob Bennett made a motion to adjourn. Dave Burkhart seconded the motion, and it passed unanimously at 4:12 pm.

cw



To the Pine/Strawberry Fire Board,  
Thank you so very much for  
voting for prayer/invocation  
during your meetings!

It is so important to invite  
God's favour to bless our  
community and help in these  
difficult times.

Your wisdom is appreciated

Blessings,

Cynthia Wilson  
3740 N. Cochise Ln.  
Pine AZ 85544

Dear District Board

First, I want to thank you for what must be both tireless and thankless. I am especially elated to hear of your decision to include prayer to your meetings. It gives me even greater confidence in your efforts.

Peter J. Wilson

3740 N. Cochise Ave  
Pine, Az



Pine-Strawberry Fire Board:

I understand you have  
approved paper before the Board  
meeting.

Thank you so much for  
doing this.

Paul & Penny Field  
8697 W. Elk Road  
Strawberry, AZ

Jun 23 2025

Dear members of PSFD Board,  
I applaud the direction  
you are facilitating by  
voting in to have  
an invocation included  
in the beginning of  
the Board's meetings.

I am thankful for  
all that the board  
does to protect our  
precious area that  
we live in.

Best Regards  
Virginia Hammond  
PO Box 1612  
Pine, AZ 85544

We recently heard of the  
Board of Directors to  
begin opening your  
meetings with prayer.  
We both serve on two  
different Boards, one  
International and one  
National. We have always  
opened our meetings  
with prayer.

Thank you for choosing  
to add prayer to your  
agenda. It's a wise choice,

Thanks  
Joe + Tammy  
Callaway

Hello,

Thank you for all that you did during such a difficult time for our family. We're truly grateful for your kindness, compassion, and professionalism when you came up to help my dad, and my mom in her final moments.

Your presence and calm made a heavy moment feel a little lighter, and we appreciate the care you took to ease our stress- especially for the lady who cleaned up and make things a bit more comfortable for my dad.

Thank you for treating us with dignity, understanding, and kindness. It means more than words can express.

-The Cady Family

Alexis, Jess

Devlin's

"Honor her for all that her hands have done, and let her works bring her praise at the city gate."

Proverbs 31:31



## Pine- Strawberry Fire District

6198 W Hardscrabble Mesa Rd  
Pine, AZ 85544



### Monthly Financial Report – June 2025

Attached are the following for your information and review:

1. Balance Sheet as of June 30, 2025.
2. Summary of Reconciled Cash Balances as of June 30, 2025.
3. Income Statement of Revenues and Expenditures for June 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 June is \$258,319 which is \$44,527 under budget.
  - Tax Revenue is \$154,167 which is \$6,726 under budget.
  - Non-Tax Revenue for June is \$104,152 which is \$37,801 under budget.
- Expenses for June totaled \$275,910 which is under budget by \$63,539.
- Year to Date Revenue is \$4,142,378 which is over budget by \$124,029.
- Year to Date Expenses is \$3,879,269 which is over budget by \$47,061.

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

7-24-25

Date

# Pine-Strawberry Fire District



## Pine Strawberry Fire District Employment Opportunity

The Pine Strawberry Fire District is a full service fire and medical department. We are located in the pines just under the Mogollon Rim in Central Arizona. Our coverage area extends north onto the Rim and south to the Tonto Natural Bridge, west to Fossil Creek and east to Camp Geronimo, with lots of area in between. Our primary district area is 10 square miles with about 3000 full time residents and a major influx of visitors on most weekends.

We are a fully qualified structure fire department with 15 full time members and 6 reserves. We also perform full EMS and mutual aid services for a large area surrounding the district, bounded by the Payson, Blue Ridge, and Copper Canyon FD's. We have a Certificate of Necessity (CON) and three ambulances, performing 911 response and transport functions.

The Pine Strawberry Fire District is also in a major Wildland Urban Interface (WUI) area and is first due for wildland fires in the area. In addition, we have a robust cooperative program with the AZ DFFM. Our trucks and personnel have worked wildland assignments all over the west and as far away as North Carolina.

## **PSFD IS NOW HIRING FOR A FIRE CHIEF**

The Pine Strawberry Fire District is now accepting applications for the positions of Fire Chief. The starting pay for PSFD Fire Chief is \$ \_\_\_\_\_ per hour annual.

Below is a downloadable/fill able employment application, along with a list of required documentation to include with the application and resume.

To apply, fill out the application below, submit your resume and copies of the required documents and either email them to [cwailes@psfd.az.gov](mailto:cwailes@psfd.az.gov), or \_\_\_\_\_, or drop them off at our Administrative Office at 3741 North Prince Drive; Pine, AZ 85544, or mail them to PO Box 441; Pine, AZ, 85544.

Applicants must have and provide the application, resumes and copies of documents all minimum requirements and certifications. For further information or if you have any questions please contact Pine Strawberry Fire District Board Chair

\_\_\_\_\_ at \_\_\_\_\_ or \_\_\_\_\_.

Applicants Resume and Documents must be received by \_\_\_\_\_.

### **MINIMUM REQUIREMENTS**

1. Must be at least 18 years of age.
2. Possess a high school diploma or equivalent
3. Must possess a valid Arizona Driver License (or obtain prior to employment)
4. Firefighter 1 and 2 and HAZMAT Operations certifications.
5. NWCG S-130, S-190, L-180, and I-100 certifications (unless included in S-130).
6. Current CPR/AED certification.
7. Six (6) years experience in the Fire Service
8. Four (4) years experience in a Management and/or leadership position.
9. Experience or knowledge of Arizona Fire District regulations and laws.
10. Experience or knowledgeable of Federal, State, County, and Local Laws, Regulations
10. Experience in budgeting and financial management.
11. Experience in Public speaking and dealing with Community Groups.
12. Experience in Administration duties, using computers, etc.

### **IF OFFERED THE POSTION MUST**

13. Successful completion of the PSFD Physical Performance Assessment (PPA) (A medical clearance must be provided by the applicant prior to participation.)
14. Successful completion of the NWCG Arduous Work Capacity Test (A medical clearance must be provided by the applicant prior to participation.)
15. Successful completion of a fingerprint-based background check, along with a reference/employment check.
16. Qualify for PSPRS.

## **PREFERRED REQUIREMENTS**

1. Items 1 thru 16 under minimum requirements, Plus:
2. A degree or equivalent training in management and supervision.
3. Four or more years working in a Fire district.
4. Current EMT or CEP certification.
5. Current PALS, ACLS, and PHTLS certifications.

## **INTERVIEW**

Applicants will also participate in an oral interview with the PSFD Board.

## **REQUIRED DOCUMENTATION**

Copies or PDF scans of the following documents must accompany a fully completed Pine Strawberry Fire District Employment Application and resume. Digital copies of the Application must be signed and scanned into a PDF format. Missing documentation will delay the process.

1. High school diploma or equivalent
2. Driver License
3. 5 year Motor Vehicle Report.
4. Firefighter 1 and 2 and HAZMAT Operations certifications
5. NWCG S-130, S-190, L-180, I-100 certifications (unless included in S-130)
6. Current EMT or CEP certification
7. Current CPR/AED certification.
8. If have current PALS, ACLS, and PHTLS certifications.
9. DD-214 for those with prior Military experience.

## **DUTIES AND RESPONSABILITIES:**

1. Serve as the Chief Executive Officer (CFO) of the District under the supervision, direction and discursion of the Pine-Strawberry Fire District Board.
2. Oversee the operations of the district consistent with mandates of the Governing Board, District policies and procedures, Federal, State and/or County laws and regulations.
3. Pursue the goals established by the Fire Board of Governors. Progress towards the goals will be reported monthly as part of the Fire Chief report at the Board of Governors monthly Board meetings.
4. Administer and oversee the administration of the District personnel matters including, but not limited to: hiring, firing, discipline, promotion, reassignment, replacement of, training and assignment of paid, reserve and volunteer members.



5. Maintain chain-of-command consistent with policies of the District, and established administrative regulations and operational procedures and guidelines consistent with national practices and legal requirement as well mandates of the Governing Board, and administer the District consistent with laws and regulations of the State of Arizona.
6. Serve as the lead official responsible for preparing the annual budget; effectively manage the budget within the expenditure provisions of the budget and District policy and authorized by the Governing Board; coordinate with the District Financial Advisor relating to the budget and district financials; coordinate with the District Financial Advisor in providing and presenting monthly budget and financial reports to the Board at the monthly Board meeting; arrange for purchase of all equipment, supplies and services necessary for the proper operation and maintenance of the District facilities and equipment.
7. Oversee and ensure the proper preparation, maintenance and retention of all appropriate District records, files and data; and comply with public record requirements which may be required by law and/or by direction of the Fire Board.
8. Oversee and ensure the joint development of Board of Governor's meeting agendas and proper public meeting posting and meeting preparation and operation for all Board meetings.
9. Oversee, prepare as needed, and ensure the preparation, accuracy, presentation and proper distribution of all reports and/or inquiries required and/or requested by the Board of Governors, state, county and any other official agency in a timely and proper manner.
10. Oversee the proper operation of the Districts Facebook, website, and other social media operations.
11. Coordinate the District operations with other governmental agencies including federal, state, county and local districts and local governments.
12. Maintain operational, administrative, and management skills and education as may be necessary to effectively complete the duties and responsibilities set forth herein the contract.
13. Ensure all district personnel are properly trained, and that they maintain proficiencies and certifications, physical condition, skills, and knowledge to accomplish their job duties and responsibilities.
14. Provide such services for the District as directed, from time to time, by the District's Board of Governors in the manner and to the extent permitted by the laws of Arizona.
15. Keep the District Board of Governors informed and current on federal, state, county laws and regulations that could affect the District. Keep the District Board of governors informed and current on the operation, efficiency, effectiveness and overall status of the District, its facilities, equipment, personnel and finances.

16. Provide the District Board of Governors information, data, options, and recommendations relating to district purchases, surplus equipment, agreements, contracts, changes to policies and/or procedures in which the Board of governors is required to take action on.

17. Refrain from intentionally, knowingly, or negligently committing an illegal act, or conduct in contradiction of the authority and directives granted and given by the Board of Governors.

18. The Fire Chief is responsible for attending and represent the District at meetings, conferences, government or community organization related meetings that are in the interest of the District or community. (The Fire Chief may assign a designee when needed)

19. Other duties and responsibilities can be assigned as need by the Fire Board.