

Water Wheel Fire & Medical District

Fire Board Regular Meeting

August 28, 2025

Station 71 – 10603 N Houston Mesa Rd – Payson – Training Room

~Minutes~

1. Call To Order

Pursuant to notice, a regular meeting of the Water Wheel Fire & Medical District (WWFMD) was called to order by Chairman **Steve Stevens** at **6:00**- PM on **August 28**, **2025** at the Water Wheel Fire & Medical District Station 71, 10603 N Houston Mesa Rd, Payson, Arizona. Admin/Firefighter Crystal Cameron recorded the minutes. A quorum was present, and the meeting, having been duly convened, was ready to proceed with business.

A. Roll Call

Board Present: Chairman Steve Stevens, Clerk Geoffrey Caldwell, Member Frank Church

Board Absent: Member Janel Croy, Member Mark Essary Staff Present: Chief Lecher, Capt. Hamilton, FF Cameron

Public Present: Sherri Church, Tom & Barb Cheatham, Stephanie Smith, Susie Durkin

Zoom: Ben Archer-Clowes, Ron Sattelmaier, and Linda

B. Salute To The Flag Of The United States

Pledge of Allegiance, Led by All in Attendance

2. Reports & Correspondence

A. Financial Report

i. Given By: Ben Archer-Clowes (JVG)

Motion: Clerk Geoffrey Caldwell

Motion Seconded: Member Frank Church

Motion Carried: 3/3

B. Reconciliation Report

i. Given By: Ben Archer-Clowes (JVG)

Motion: Clerk Geoffrey Caldwell

Motion Seconded: Member Frank Church

Motion Carried: 3/3

3. Reports & Correspondence

A. Chiefs Report

Fire Chief C. Lecher discussed the following topics:

- i. Call Responses (WWFMD)
 - 1. Total Calls for Service: 14
 - **2.** EMS: 4
 - 3. Special Duty: 8
 - a. Includes illegal fires, smoke checks, lift assists, stranded motorists, and agency assists.
 - 4. Still Alarms: 2
 - 5. Year-to-Date (YTD) Calls: 119

ii. General Updates

- **1. Remodel:** Kitchen and ADA bathroom remodel is 98% complete nearing drywall inspection.
- **2. ISO Evaluation:** Conducted on May 20th no updates to report.
- **3.** Tohono O'odham Grant (Solar for Station 71): Status pending/incomplete (text left unfinished in report).

iii. Equipment Update

- 1. Brush 713: Dash gauge issues.
- 2. Engine 71: Poly-tank leak.
- **3. Battalion 7:** Awaiting upfitting (ETA October).
- **4.** Water Tender 71 (WT71): Needs rear dump replaced.
- 5. Grant Status:
 - a. GRIC Grant: Submitted but not awarded.
 - b. **Firehouse Subs Grant:** Submitted awaiting response.
 - c. **AFG Grant:** Submitted no updates.

iv. Staff Updates

- 1. Birthdays:
 - a. Chief Cris Lecher
 - b. Captain Tyler Hamilton
 - c. Firefighter Mark Lynch
- v. Years of Service Celebrations: None this month.
- vi. Mashington Fire Summary (as of August 26, 2025)
 - a. Start Date: August 13, 2025
 - b. Cause: Lightning
 - c. **Location:** 11 miles north of Payson, AZ (Payson Ranger District)
 - d. Size: 515 acres
 - e. Containment: 98%
 - f. **Peak Personnel:** Over 600, down to 105 at final update

vii. 🔍 Incident Overview

- 1. The fire occurred in rugged terrain with chaparral, timber, and brush.
- **2.** Suppression efforts spanned two weeks and included:
- **3.** Type 1 & 2 helicopters
- 4. Fixed-wing aircraft (including MAFFS)

- 5. Engines, dozers, water tenders, UAS
- **6.** Over 600 personnel at peak

viii. 🚑 Firefighting Efforts

- **1.** Focused on securing control lines and protecting infrastructure (e.g., Mountain Ridge Cabins, Washington Park).
- 2. Dozers and hand crews reinforced lines with hoses and sprinklers.
- 3. Mop-up began August 19.
- **4.** Transitioned from a Type 1 to a local Type 3 Incident Management Team on August 26.
- 5. Support also extended to the **Sheep Spring Fire**.

ix. III Key Milestones

- 1. Aug 17–18: 6% containment; focus on perimeter security
- 2. Aug 19: 21% containment; suppression repair begins
- 3. Aug 20: 60% containment; crews sent to Sheep Spring Fire
- 4. Aug 21: 67% containment; continued patrol and repair
- **5. Aug 25:** 97% containment
- 6. Aug 26: 98% containment; final update issued

x. Safety Conditions

- 1. Monsoonal moisture helped with containment.
- 2. Gusty outflow winds and thunderstorms presented challenges.
- 3. TFRs (Temporary Flight Restrictions) were implemented for aircraft safety.
- 4. Stage 2 Fire Restrictions remained in place across **Tonto and Coconino**National Forests.

xi. W Evacuations & Closures

- 1. Initial "GO" evacuation status for Shadow Rim Ranch, Washington Park, and Mountain Ridge Cabins.
- 2. Evacuation levels were later downgraded or lifted.
- **3.** A closure order remained active during the incident.

- 1. Fire is nearly fully contained; active firefighting has ceased.
- 2. Crews continue repair and hotspot monitoring.
- 3. No further daily updates unless new activity occurs.

xiii. 💧 Equipment Deployment & Financial Impact

- 1. Water Tender 71 assigned from start; staffed by Captain Tyler Hamilton and supported by reserves.
- 2. Water Pump stationed at Rim Trail Rd crossing for crew access.
- **3.** The department earned approximately **\$10,000 plus reimbursement** for staffing costs.

B. Awards & Recognition

- i. Given By: Chief C. Lecher
 - 1. Given in the Chief's Report

4. Public Forum

No Public Comment Was Made At This Time

5. Regular Business

A. Consent Agenda

i. Minutes for July 24th, 2025

Motion: Chairman Steve Stevens

Motion Seconded: Member Frank Church

Motion Carried: 3/3

6. Public Forum

No Public Comment Was Made At This Time

7. New Business

A. Ice Program

- i. Discussion/Possible Action: Vote to Continue or Discontinue Ice Program
 - 1. It was a unanimous vote to DISCONTINUE the Program

Motion: Clerk Geoffrey Caldwell

Motion Seconded: Member Frank Church

Motion Carried: 3/3

8. Adjournment

Motion: Chairman Steve Stevens

Motion Carried: 3/3

This Meeting Adjourned at: 6:55 pm

Respectfully Submitted, Crystal Cameron, Admin/Firefighter