



**FOREST LAKES FIRE BOARD  
REGULAR SESSION MEETING MINUTES  
MAY 15, 2021**



*The Board and Chief Rodriguez have concluded that enough progress has been made in controlling the pandemic that we now feel it is safe, while still maintaining CDC recommended safety protocols, to reopen the station and to resume holding in person meetings. We began that process for today's meeting. As of May 13<sup>th</sup>, fully vaccinated people no longer need to wear a mask or physically distance in any setting, except where required by local business and workplace guidance. For today's meeting masks were not required, but we still employed socially distanced seating.*

- 1 The meeting was called to order by Chairman Tom Cummiskey at 10:05 am.
- 2 Chairman Cummiskey led the gathering in the pledge of allegiance.
- 3 Roll Call of Fire Board Members. In addition to Chairman Cummiskey, Clerk John Hennessey, Member Dennis Massion, Treasurer Pete Batschelet and Member Israel Torres were in attendance. All board members were present. We had a quorum of the board. For the record, Chief Dave Rodriguez was in attendance. We had two special guests - see agenda item 4. There were fourteen members of the public plus four ODS/POC in attendance.
- 4 Chairman's Welcome and Activity Report. Chairman Cummiskey noted this is our first face to face board meeting in over a year, and welcomed all those in attendance. He then welcomed two special guests: Judy Begay, Coconino County Supervisor-District 4 and Cheryl L. Barlow-Coconino County District 4 Director. Judy has forty years of public service experience and we look forward to building a strong relationship with her. Judy will deliver some prepared remarks following the adjournment of the board meeting, which includes her and Cheryl's contact information, and will be available to answer any questions from the public. Her presentation will be issued as a supplement to the official board meeting minutes and will be available on the FLFD web site. The main topic of today's meeting will be the board presentation by Pete Batschelet, Treasurer and Chairman of the Finance Committee, of the proposed FY2021-2022 proposed budget and the FY2022-2023 budget forecast.
- 5 Call to the Public/Audience Comments. There were no comments from the public.
- 6 Review and Approve the Minutes for the April 15, 2021 Regular Board Meeting. Member Massion made a motion to approve the minutes as presented. Treasurer Batschelet seconded, and the motion passed unanimously.
- 7 Review and Approve the Financial Statements for April 2021. Treasurer Batschelet reviewed the General Fund financial report for the previous month, and provided a brief summary report. We are 83.33% through the year. In relation to our published Not-To-Exceed (NTE) budget, YTD revenue is at 82.3% while YTD expenses are at 68.3%. The end of the month cash balance was \$405,610.31. The Projected Year End Cash Balance is \$366,919. We are in a very strong position financially. Treasurer Batschelet made a motion to approve the financial reports as presented. Member Massion seconded, and the motion passed unanimously.

In accordance with the statutory requirements of A.R.S. 48-807, by virtue of accepting the entire detailed financial report the Board certified that:

- a) The District has reconciled all balance sheet accounts for the preceding fiscal month, and the Board has reviewed them.
  - b) The District has produced a financial report for the preceding fiscal month, including a register of all checks, warrants, and deposits; a statement of the District's financial activities; and a statement of the District's net assets.
  - c) The District has produced a cash flow projection report for the current fiscal year, and said report has been updated to include the actual revenues and expenditures for the preceding fiscal month.
  - d) The Governing Board has reviewed the financial reports, the updated cash flow projection report, and all month end fund statements and reports of the preceding month, including any reports provided by the County Treasurer and each of the financial institutions in which the District maintains an account.
  - e) The District is in compliance pursuant to A.R.S. 48-807 (N) & (O) and no reports indicate an adverse impact on the ongoing operations or liquidity of the District.
- 8 Business
- a) Presentation, Discussion and possible action: Public Review of FY21/22 Budget and FY22/23 Projection. Treasurer Batschelet presented the Public Review of the FY21/22 Budget and FY22/23 Projection



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(attached). Treasurer Batschelet thanked the members of the Finance Committee, of which he is the Chair: Chief Rodriquez, Chairman Cummiskey, Clerk Hennessey, and Admin Assistant Megan Rutherford. The group has met three times subsequent to the publication of the 2020 STRAP update document in February to make any final adjustments to the published STRAP financial plan. Today's presentation to the public offers residents an opportunity to review the budget plan for the next fiscal year and the projection for the following fiscal year and to make comments prior to the final budget approval at the June board meeting. The FY21-22 Budget is a balanced "not to exceed" proposal, with expenses equal to revenues. The budget includes best practices adjustments for inflation as well as a contingency line item equal to 10% of total expenses minus debt service and capital expenditures. Our intention is to spend less than we take in and cash balances may be higher at the end of the year. As can be seen, the biggest expense driver is staffing for full service with paramedics supported by our local paid on call staff. We have a wonderful crew and feel the expenses are well justified. Chief adjusts the staffing levels based on call volume, including extra coverage for holidays. We have included a new employee benefit, participation in the Arizona State Retirement System (ASRS), for Chief and Megan. We have debt service for the new fire station and the Front End Loader (FEL). The balloon payment for the FEL is included for February 2022, thereby retiring the Lease-Purchase Agreement with Caterpillar Financial. Our Capital Expenditures includes funds for renovating the Annex, computer infrastructure and a new replacement heart monitor. It is significant to note that the fire district operates under severe constraints for property tax revenues: our Mil rate is capped, and the year over year increase in property valuations is limited to a maximum of 5%, regardless of actual valuation increases. We have pursued new means of revenues and appreciate the generosity of the Auxiliary and community for additional support. It is important to note the Green Waste Transfer Site (GWTS) is operated a break-even operation, with fees offsetting costs of site attendants and FEL operator, fuel and maintenance costs. Treasurer Batschelet made a motion to approve the budget presentation and to allow it to be posted on the web site for public review prior to the June meeting. Member Massion seconded the motion, and it passed unanimously.



2021-05-15 Budget  
Presentation Revised.1

- b) Status update re: GWTS Permit Move to FLFD. Chief reported there has been no progress. Member Massion pointed out that the FLOA Board will be meeting in person at Forest Lakes today and this issue can be addressed at that time.
- c) Status update re: Grant activities. Chief reported that lot clearing under the Hazardous Fuel Grant is active. Kudos to the residents who have signed up for lot clearing per Firewise Grant standards.
- d) Status update re: ASRS Participation. Chief reported we have been approved to participate in ASRS effective July 1<sup>st</sup>.
- e) Status update re: Pension Board activities. Chairman Cummiskey reported the Pension Board continues to work with Nationwide Insurance regarding moving administration of our Pension Plan, which covers ODS and POC members, from the current administrator to Nationwide. The Pension Board Chairman is LJ Waggoner, a POC member.
- f) Status update re: Governmental Advocacy Committee. Governmental Advocacy Committee Chairman Torres welcomed District 4 Supervisor Judy Begay. We will continue to pursue similar visits from our state and federal elected officials. Now that COVID restrictions are easing and elections upcoming in 2022, we anticipate those visits to happen in the near future. We will keep Judy advised as the meetings are scheduled. There is no more activity at the legislature on Fire District related issues as committee activity have stopped. The proposed budget is expected to be released on Monday, at which time there may be further opportunities to address Fire District concerns related to Mill rates.
- g) Status update re: Master Planning Committee Activities. Chief Rodriquez reported the new commercial grade perimeter fence will be completed early next week. Portions of the old chain link fence, which was declared surplus, was donated to FLOA. We are in discussions with the Coconino County Sheriff's Department for a three-year lease of much needed office space in the Annex for Deputy McKeever and a second deputy (planned.) The space would also serve as an emergency operations center. The lease is a



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win-win for the Sheriff, the Fire District and the community and reinforces our long-standing commitment to improved 911 response, which often involves law enforcement and firefighters working together.

- h)** Status update re: Provide funding target(s) to the Auxiliary. Chairman Cummiskey reported he had previously notified the Auxiliary Board that we would like assistance in paying for a new, replacement Heart Monitor, which is currently in our Capital Expenditure budget. Auxiliary President Jan Cummiskey said the Auxiliary Board met this morning and committed to \$10,000 to help defer the cost of a new heart monitor, which has a 3 to 4 year service life.
- 9 Fire Chief's Report. Chief Rodriguez reported fire danger is high, with fire danger accelerated about 1 month compared to last year. The high winds and low moisture are similar to the conditions prior to the Rodeo-Chedeski fire. He is pursuing the possibility of COVID related monetary assistance from the many government programs available. There is a waiting list of about 100 property owners for the two year, \$250,000 Hazardous Fuels Grant. We can service about 50 property owners this year.
- 10 Call to the Public/Audience Comments. There were no comments from the public.
- 11 Fire Board Comments. Chairman Cummiskey stated he appreciated everyone being here. This is the first in-person meeting in over a year. He is "Zoomed" out. Clerk Hennessey noted the recently published 2020 Strategic Plan (STRAP) update is available on the FLFD web site. It is the best source of information about the Fire District, including district finances.
- 12 There being no further business before the board the meeting was adjourned at 10:57 am.

Note: In order to promote openness and transparency, all materials presented at the board meeting are available to be viewed on the FLFD Web Site: [flfdaz.com](http://flfdaz.com), and following the web site prompts; or by going directly to the URL, [flfdaz.com/board-meeting-minutes](http://flfdaz.com/board-meeting-minutes).