



**FOREST LAKES FIRE BOARD
REGULAR SESSION MEETING MINUTES
JULY 18, 2020**



For the record, the Fire Station remains closed to the public, especially with the recent increase in reported COVID-19 cases. The board meeting was held in compliance with current COVID-19 guidelines, including social distancing. Chief Rodriguez will monitor the situation closely and determine if, and when, the Fire Station can be reopened to the public.

- 1 The meeting was called to order in the main equipment bay of the fire station by Chairman Tom Cummiskey at 10:00 am.
- 2 Chairman Cummiskey led the assembly in the pledge of allegiance.
- 3 Roll Call of Fire Board Members. In addition to Chairman Cummiskey, Clerk John Hennessey, Treasurer Pete Batschelet, Member Dennis Massion and Member Israel Torres were present. We had a quorum.
- 4 Chairman's Welcome and Activity Report. Chairman Cummiskey welcomed all those in attendance. He welcomed Pete Batschelet as a voting member of the board, having passed the mandatory 30 day waiting period. He noted we have just completed the past fiscal year, and especially wanted to acknowledge all the good things we have accomplished. The Master Plan Committee was very active, resulting in the refurbishment of the annex exterior and development of a go-forward plan. We have a new ambulance, thanks to a grant from the Gila River Indian Community, for which FLFD representatives travelled to their Community Center with the ambulance to acknowledge their donation. We entered into a lease agreement for a new cell tower on FLFD property that will provide a long-term income stream. We approved the purchase of a new Lucas Chest Compression System using Auxiliary funds as well as proceeds from the Annual July 4th Parade and matching donations. We procured a new Thermal Imaging Camera. Thanks to the Auxiliary we have a dozen new folding tables to help with seating at social events. On the administrative side, we lost two board members and gained two new ones, and we lost one admin assistant and gained one new one, all of which was accomplished with minimum disruption to district operations. It is significant to note that we added new capital equipment while underspending our capital equipment budget. Tom acknowledged the efforts of Chief Rodriguez and the board in making good decisions to make all this happen.
- 5 Call to the Public/Audience Comments. There were none.
- 6 Review and Approve the Minutes for the June 20, 2020 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 June 2020. Treasurer Batschelet thanked Joe Ruet for his assistance in putting the June report together. He reviewed the General Fund financial reports for the previous month, and provided a brief summary report. We are 100.0% through the year. In relation to our published Not-To-Exceed (NTE) budget, YTD revenue is at 72.7% while YTD expenses are at 88.7%. Treasurer Batschelet pointed out the expense percentage is high due to the payment we made for our new ambulance. With that adjustment made, we ended the year with a net gain of \$35,151.25. The end of the month cash balance was \$233,250, which is also our year-end cash balance, which exceeds our board guideline of \$175,000. The Year-to-Date net gain/loss in our cash position is -\$214,081. Chairman Cummiskey added that our favorable year end position was aided by June revenues being higher than expected, including +\$17K for EMS operations and underspending CAPEX by \$53K. Treasurer Batschelet made a motion to approve the financial reports as presented. Member Torres 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.



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- 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) Status update: re: APS Microgrid System. Chief Rodriquez reported on his actions since the last board meeting when the board approved entering into exploratory discussions with APS regarding installing the subject APS Microgrid system on FLFD property. The actions included touching base with all board members relating to any new concerns, if any; getting verbal input from all neighbors who border the FLFD property; engaging the community in verbal discussions; on-going discussions with the APS Project Manager; and setting up a special meeting at 1 pm today with APS and the three property owners immediately adjacent to the fire station. Overall sentiment has been in favor of the project. Board member Pete Batschelet, who has cell tower lease negotiating experience, has agreed to sit in on negotiations with APS regarding the leasing arrangement should the board decide to go forward. It was noted that the one hour power outage this past week would have been avoided had the Microgrid system been in place.
- b) Discussion and possible action re: Resolution No. 2020-003 Calling for an APS Microgrid Generation System on FLFD Property. Chairman Cummiskey introduced the subject resolution as a means of formalizing the exploratory discussion motion from last month's meeting. Based on the status and discussion as reported in agenda item 8a), it looks like we are good to go, and Chairman Cummiskey called the question. Member Massion made a motion to adopt Resolution 2020-003. Member Batschelet seconded the motion. There being no further discussion, the motion passed unanimously.
- c) Status update re: Grant activities. Chief reported we have been awarded a \$125K Hazardous Fuels Grant, which will be implemented over the next two years, beginning in 2021. It is intended to cover 50 properties total. Due to COVID-19 issues we may not have use of State Fire Crews for lot thinning. Kudos to John Nelson for his efforts to secure the grant. There are over 100 property owners on the waiting list. John Nelson has also been successful in the pursuit of a cost reimbursement grant for COVID-19 Personal Protective Equipment and supplies. The fire district be reimbursed \$2500 from the \$3500 it expended. The check is in the mail. Dick Zimmerman is pursuing grant opportunities with Firehouse Subs. Grants, if awarded, are in the range of \$25 to \$30K and for 100% of the amount requested, with no matching funds required. Our request is for a side-by-side all terrain vehicle with patient transport capability, the need for which has become more urgent with the increase of ATV accidents in the forest, far removed from normal road access.
- d) Status update re: Pension Board activities. L.J.Waggoner, POC member and Chairman of the Pension Board, provided a status update. In addition to himself, the newly constituted board includes Assistant Chief Marty deMasi, Chief Rodriquez, FLFD Chairman Tom Cummiskey and citizen John Fahrendorf. The board has been dormant for about 10 years, and there is a lot of catchup work to accomplish. Two meetings of the new board have been held, with another scheduled for July 28th. Two key improvement areas have been identified: improving



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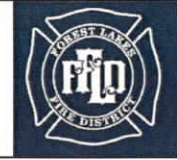


communications with all affected parties and resolving a disconnect with our financial adviser, Larry Ennis and Associates. The board will discuss merits of assuming a higher risk profile for the funds' investments, reducing the number of payout periods per year and guaranteeing payouts are correct.

- e) Status update re: Cell Tower Construction. Chief Rodriguez reported the cell tower go live date is now September. The latest delay was caused by the strategic decision to install fiber optic to the tower. Fiber optic has been run from SR260 to a power pole in the vicinity of the fire station. This week the fiber optic cable is supposed to be connected to the cell tower. There are no infrastructure problems. Scheduling for subcontractor work continues to be impacted by COVID-19 concerns. DW Towers, the cell tower owner, is motivated to get service up and running as soon as possible. Verizon will be the first provider to be up and running.
- f) Status update re: Station signage. The vendor is behind schedule, for various reasons, with no promise date for completion. As per our original agreement, we have thus far paid the vendor 50% of the project cost. In response to a questions as to what the final signage will look like, Chief responded that in addition to the Forest Lakes Fire District signage across the top of the bay doors, there will be signage indicating the Admin/Triage entrance and a sign/plaque near the base of the flag pole acknowledging its donors.
- g) Status update re: Worker's Comp status and Resolution to join the proposed Arizona Workers Compensation Pool. Chief reported we are officially part of the subject pool, joining with a large number of fire districts across the state. The new pool meets all statutory requirements and we have made our first payment. As previously reported, for the first three years, we are paying into a reserve pool as well. In response to a question regarding whether the pool addresses COVID-19 issues, Chief responded there are separate federal requirements to address COVID-19 claims.
- h) Discussion and possible action re: Purchase of the Lucas Chest Compression System. Following board approval at last month's meeting, we have ordered the new Lucas Chest Compression System, which has a 3 to 5 week lead time. Many thanks to the Auxiliary for their generous donation of ½ the cost of the \$15K system, to Scooter and Chris Bennett for donating the proceeds of the annual 4th of July Parade (\$5,200) as well as matching contributions from the community.
- i) Status update re: Auxiliary Recognition effort. Member Massion displayed the scroll with all the past Auxiliary Board members listed. All agreed it was well executed and met the desired intent. Chairman Cummiskey thanked Dennis for his diligence in bringing this assignment to completion. The scroll will be on display in the fire station once a suitable recognition celebration can be arranged and a location identified.
- j) Status update: Board policies needing update. Policies, Procedures and Bylaws (PP&B) Chairman Massion presented his summary of our current policies, including revision status and how that summary compares with the web site listing, the result of which indicates several discrepancies. Both the summary and status had been sent to all board members for comment prior to the meeting. Chairman Cummiskey replied back to Dennis with actionable feedback, which was briefly reviewed. PP&B committee member Hennessey agreed to work with Chairman Massion to resolve the discrepancies and develop a single, consistent summary, including a go-forward plan for updating those policies in need of revision.
- k) Status update re: Governmental Advocacy Committee. Governmental Advocacy Chairman Torres reported the legislature is currently not in regular session due to COVID-19 concerns. There has been some discussion about convening a special session but Governor Ducey does not support such a session. The next regular session is currently scheduled to begin in mid-January. Most likely, nothing will happen in the legislative arena until then.
- l) Status update re: Board members elections in November. Clerk Hennessey reported he had contacted the County Elections Department and only two nomination packets had been submitted



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by the July 6th deadline for the two open board positions. Packets were received from Member Torres and Clerk Hennessey. The write-in period for applications ends August 19th. If no additional candidates submit paperwork by August 19th the election will be cancelled and Israel and John will be declared appointed to the open positions by the County Board of Supervisors.

- m) Status update re: Master Planning Committee Activities. Master Plan Committee (MPC) Chairman Hennessey reported the committee is coordinating with Chief Rodriguez on the new Microgrid Project. The design of the Microgrid may impact some of the go MPC forward plan elements presented at last month's meeting, most notably the high priority task of replacing the fire district's boundary fencing. Approval to spend the \$25K in the current year budget to complete MPC activities is dependent on how tax receipts go for the first half of the year. We should have a good idea in the September/October time frame so that funds could be released in time to avoid winter time delays for the fence construction. Chief Rodriguez noted that the fences surrounding the Microgrid Project will be per APS design requirements and will be installed at APS expense. The challenge for the fire district is to choose fencing for the remainder of the property boundary that is compatible with the APS fencing and is within our budget.
- 9 Fire Chief's Report. Chief Rodriguez welcomed Pete to the board and his new role as Treasurer. Chief has procured a set of used forks for the Front End Loader that will expand its capabilities at both the Green Waste Transfer Station (GWTS) and the fire station as we complete the tasks outlined in the Master Plan. There was an issue with the fire district's credit cards that has been resolved. A fiber-optic line will be connected to the cell tower next week. It has 288 individual fiber-optic lines, each of which can accommodate 10,000 customers. The GWTS remains very active. Call volume is up. We have had 40 calls thus far in July, most of which have been significant events. This has validated our combination staffing model and service delivery model. Chief noted that the Forest Service assigned one of their personnel to count the number of vehicles leaving Woods Canyon Lake on Sunday July 5th. The individual counted 5,252 vehicles from 7:00 am to 2:30 pm, indicating the heavy use of the area around Forest Lakes. We are seeing more and more accidents involving side-by-side vehicles, many of which have bad outcomes and require the significant level of care provided by our On Duty Staff and POC personnel. Chief welcomed Joe Ruet to our POC staff. In response to a question regarding EMS receivables, Chief replied that we charge for ground transport from the accident scene to the receiving hospital at the rates approved by the Department of Health Services (DHS). For air transport to the receiving hospital, we charge for ground transport from the accident scene to the landing zone (LZ), again at rates approved by the Department of Health Services (DHS). In both cases we work with insurance carriers for additional cost recovery where warranted.
- 10 Call to the Public/Audience Comments. There were none.
- 11 Fire Board Comments. Clerk Hennessey reminded everyone that our annual update to the STRAP document will be kicking off soon. Chairman Cummiskey will review last year's process and will address the "plan for the plan" at next month's meeting.
- 12 Adjournment. There being no further business before the board, the meeting was adjourned at 11:14 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, and following the web site prompts; or by going directly to the URL, flfdaz.com/board-meeting-minutes.

Approved by the Forest Lakes Fire District Board on: August 15, 2020 _____.

John Hennessey, Clerk