



**FOREST LAKES FIRE BOARD  
REGULAR SESSION MEETING MINUTES  
MAY 16, 2020**



- 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 Joe Ruet and Member Dennis Massion were present. Member Israel Torres was absent. We had a quorum.
- 4 Chairman's Welcome and Activity Report. Chairman Cummiskey welcomed all those in attendance. Chairman Cummiskey acknowledged Pete Batschelet, a member of the public who has expressed interest in becoming a board member. Pete gave a brief summary of this background. There will be further discussion re: Pete in agenda item 8m). Chairman Cummiskey stated we are in unusual times but we have a strong board, we have good facilities and equipment and we enjoy strong community support. We are doing well.
- 5 Call to the Public/Audience Comments. There were none.
- 6 Review and Approve the Minutes for the April 18, 2020 Regular Board Meeting. Treasurer Ruet made a motion to approve the minutes as presented. Member Massion seconded, and the motion passed unanimously.
- 7 Review and Approve the Financial Statements for April 2020. Treasurer Ruet reviewed the General Fund financial reports for the previous month, and provided a brief summary report. We are 83.3% through the year. In relation to our published Not-To-Exceed (NTE) budget, YTD revenue is at 66.4% while YTD expenses are at 80.0%. Treasurer Ruet pointed out this percentage is high due to the payment we made for our new ambulance—with this adjustment, our percentage would be 61.3%. The end of the month cash balance was \$269,768. The Year-to-Date net gain/loss in our cash position is -\$182,273. The projected year-end cash balance is \$193,617, which exceeds our board guideline of \$175,000. Treasurer Ruet stated that as of May 12<sup>th</sup>, we have received 93.51% of our billed property taxes for the district. This compares with 96.1% this time last year. In response to a question from Member Massion, Chairman Cummiskey stated we do not anticipate Coconino County implementing a tax relief program. Treasurer Ruet 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) Discussion and possible action re: Public Review of FY 20/21 Budget and FY21/22 Forecast. As required by statute, Treasurer Ruet reviewed the budget presentation for the public for FY2020/2021 and the forecast for FY2021/2022. The presentation followed closely the budget discussion by the board at last month's meeting. There being no further comment or questions, Treasurer Ruet made a motion to post the presentation to the web site to allow public comment



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for the next 30 days. Member Massion seconded, and the motion passed unanimously. There will be an agenda item for next month for motion and possible action to approve the budget and forward it to the county.

- b) Status update re: Grant activities. Chief Rodriguez reported that John Nelson has agreed to take the lead for the new Hazardous Fuels Grant application. The \$75K grant will be for two years and will cover 50 properties. Chief is looking for someone to manage the new grant process. There are no funds this year for hazardous fuels removal. Grant pursuits by Dick Zimmerman have been put on hold due to the corona virus. Chief is pursuing reimbursement for COVID-19 expenses through the Department of Emergency Management in the amount of \$3,500. Our long range plan for grant pursuit for a new engine remains a priority.
- c) Status update re: Pension Board activities. Chief reported a Pension Board meeting is scheduled for Tuesday at 9 am. All members have committed to attend. The meeting is open to the public. An agenda is forthcoming.
- d) Status update re: Cell Tower Construction. A pre-construction meeting was recently held with all affected parties. Next step is the installation of antennas and related equipment, expected to take 4 to 6 weeks. Best estimate is Verizon will flip the switch at the end of July. Delays in construction were driven by winter weather conditions.
- e) Status update re: Station signage. Chief presented a handout with the signage he has selected. He has located a vendor in Payson who will install the sign for \$3,000, a significant savings over the original vendor. He will provide a 50% down payment on Monday to initiate the work, which is expected to be complete in 14 days. Chief is also pursuing double sided signs at the street identifying Administration/Triage and Employees Only entrances.
- f) Discussion and possible action re: Worker's Comp status and Resolution to join the proposed Arizona Workers Compensation Pool. Chief stated that, as previously reported, Copper State will no longer be providing Workers' Compensation insurance coverage for the district. 7710 is no longer considered a viable option. Our only alternative at this point is to join the proposed Arizona Workers' Compensation Pool. A sample resolution was reviewed providing language needed to be approved by the board in order to join the pool. Since the formal FLFD resolution was not available, Clerk Hennessey took the action to prepare a formal resolution incorporating the required language based on the sample resolution. Following some board discussion, Member Massion made a motion to approve a resolution to be prepared by Clerk Hennessey following the language of the sample resolution allowing FLFD to join the Workers' Compensation Pool. Treasurer Ruet seconded the motion, and it passed unanimously. In order to expedite the signature process, all board members authorized Megan to use signature stamps or electronic signatures. For the record, coverage under the Arizona Workers Compensation Pool will be the same as currently provided by Copper State, with similar costs. The issue of firefighters' cancer coverage remains unresolved.
- g) Discussion and possible action re: Review of Board policy 13 – Personnel Records. Policies, Procedures and Bylaws Chairman Massion provided a brief review of the subject policy, which had been previously distributed for board member review. There being no further comment, Chairman Massion made a motion to approve the policy as presented. Treasurer Ruet seconded, and the motion passed unanimously.
- h) Status update re: Auxiliary Recognition effort. Member Massion reported he is still hopeful for a July celebration date for the Auxiliary Recognition event. A recent posting in the Happenings has resulted in several responses to update the list of names.
- i) Status update re: Governmental Advocacy Committee. There was no report.
- j) Discussion and possible action re: Preparation for Board members elections in November and Resolution 2020-001 Call for Election. Clerk Hennessey reported he has notified the county that two board positions will be open at the November 3, 2020 consolidated election. He briefly



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summarized resolution 2020-001, which had been previously circulated to the board, a formal resolution of the governing body of the Forest Lakes Fire District calling for an election of board members in the November 3, 2020 consolidated elections. There being no further comment or questions, Clerk Hennessey made a motion to approve the resolution as presented. Member Massion seconded, and the motion passed unanimously.

- k)** Status update re: Master Planning Committee Activities. Master Plan Committee Chairman Hennessey reported that nothing has been done due to the decision to put the committee's activities on hold until November. Chairman Cummiskey asked that the committee provide a prioritized list of actions to be taken once a go-ahead has been given, and that this list be provided by the end of June, in accordance with the STRAP Update.
  - l)** Discussion and possible action re: Designating John Nelson to be the District's "Authorized Agent" to request Public Assistance funds for COVID-19 Cost Recovery. Chief Rodriquez advised we will be able to recover some COVID-19 related costs. These costs elements have been identified and aggregated. He is exploring the possibility of FEMA assistance for a new chest compression device since it would promote personnel safety. Chairman Cummiskey made a motion to designate John Nelson the District's "Authorized Agent" to request Public Assistance funds for COVID-19 Cost Recovery. Member Massion seconded, and the motion passed unanimously.
  - m)** Discussion and possible action re: Joe Ruet Board Status. Treasurer Ruet announced his intention to submit his resignation from the board in the very near future. He intends to support the district in a different way becoming a member of the Paid-on-Call staff, and has signed up for training sessions which begin June 13<sup>th</sup>. He will remain as Treasurer until such time as his replacement can be identified. This most likely will take place at the June board meeting, which will allow Treasurer Ruet to complete the actions required to obtain board approval of the FY2020/2021 budget and FY2021/2022 forecast. Resident Pete Batschelet has expressed interest in the position, which expires in November 2022. Chairman Cummiskey took the action to draft a communique to the public announcing the impending board opening and soliciting public interest in the position. Chairman Cummiskey made a motion to move forward with the communique to the public. Member Massion seconded the motion, and it assed unanimously.
- 9** Fire Chief's Report. Chief Rodriquez reported we have an adequate supply of N95 masks. He expressed appreciation to the county for the recent solid waste cleanup campaign. We are in the process of our ISO review, last conducted 4 years ago. It may be conducted remotely. Our rating is currently at a 4 level. We have received a donation from Sally Kennedy's son in her honor for display in the fire station foyer in recognition of Sally's many years of service, including being our first and only resident paramedic. We are looking into repairs of our chain link fence. Both ambulances recently passed their one year DHS inspection. In response to reduced operating revenues, Chief has taken action to reduce our annual personnel salary expenses for both he and Megan. In compliance with FLSA, Megan has been reclassified as hourly and will be limited to 32 hours per week. Chief has voluntarily reduced his annual salary by \$5,000. Both actions are subject to future review. Member Massion commended Chief Rodriquez for leading by example to help alleviate the impact of our reduced operational revenues. We have received the insurance check for recent repairs to AT1211. The Green Waste Transfer Site is fully operational, handling 50 loads per day. The fire season is close and we continue to enjoy an excellent relationship with the Black Mesa Ranger District. They will help as needed in the community. APS has started its fire mitigation efforts for trees and vegetation near their power lines and in property owners rights of way. Ambulance transports are down in spite of increased visitor presence in the forest. People appear to be behaving themselves and avoiding injury that might lead to hospitalization. We continue to exercise strict controls regarding COVID-19 exposure for our staff and EMS personnel. Our number one goal is to protect our workers. Chief is exploring a soft opening of our front office as the first



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step to expanding fire station access to the public, including small public gatherings, so long as we abide by CDC guidelines. The forest service is implementing cleanup operations on the south side, including a timber sale, to be followed up by burning operations to remove the undergrowth.

Residents on the south side are asked to continue to clean up their properties.

- 10 Call to the Public/Audience Comments. In response to a question from the public, Chairman Cummiskey stated we are not a 501(c)(3) organization. Donations to the fire district can be made through the Auxiliary, which is a 501(c)(3) organization, with said donations being tax deductible.
- 11 Fire Board Comments. Chairman Cummiskey thanked Joe for his service to the board, including Treasurer and Chairman of the Finance Committee, commenting he will need to put new brain cells to use as he embarks on his career as a Paid-on-Call member of the department. All members of the Leadership Team nodded in agreement.
- 12 Adjournment. There being no further business before the board, the meeting was adjourned at 11:52 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).

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