



**FOREST LAKES FIRE BOARD
REGULAR SESSION MEETING MINUTES
NOVEMBER 21, 2020**



For the record, as a general rule, the Fire Station remains closed to the public. Access can be achieved on a case by case basis. The board meeting was held in a virtual format using Webex conferencing software. Chief Rodriquez was at the fire station for members of the public to attend if they chose to do so. Chief Rodriquez will monitor the COVID-19 situation closely and determine if, and when, the Fire Station can be reopened to the public.

- 1 The meeting was called to order by Chairman Tom Cummiskey at 10:10 am.
- 2 Due to the virtual meeting format, Chairman Cummiskey dispensed with the pledge of allegiance.
- 3 Roll Call of Fire Board Members. In addition to Chairman Cummiskey, Clerk John Hennessey, Treasurer Pete Batschelet, Member Israel Torres and Member Dennis Massion were in attendance. We had a quorum.
- 4 Chairman's Welcome and Activity Report. Chairman Cummiskey related this was our first experience using Webex for an actual board meeting and so we would use it as a trial run to see if it would work for us going forward as long as we were still constrained from meeting in person due to the Covid pandemic.

Note: due to problems with Webex audio, we used our audio conferencing software for the remainder of the meeting. For the record, Chairman Cummiskey verified that everyone could hear and understand the proceedings.

- 5 Call to the Public/Audience Comments. There were no members of the public in attendance.
- 6 Review and Approve the Minutes for the October 17, 2020 Regular Board Meeting. Member Massion made a motion to approve the minutes as presented. Member Torres seconded, and the motion passed unanimously.
- 7 Review and Approve the Financial Statements for October 2020. Treasurer Batschelet reviewed the General Fund financial report for the previous month, and provided a brief summary report. We are 33.33% through the year. In relation to our published Not-To-Exceed (NTE) budget, YTD revenue is at 38.4% while YTD expenses are at 31.8%. The end of the month cash balance was \$319,496. The Projected Year End Cash Balance is \$262,664. Treasurer Batschelet noted there will be another round of tax and FDAT revenues next month. Not yet reflected is repair to the Red and White ambulance for about \$18K. Included in the expenditures is the large debt payment for the building, heart monitors and Battalion-12 LPAs. Our EMS receivables for the month were very favorable. 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) Status update re: Finance Committee Activities. Treasurer Batschelet reported he held a Finance Committee meeting November 11th. It was a good meeting during which changes to the 5 and 10 year budget projections were discussed. The only open issue at this time is participation in ASRS. The revised budget projections will be addressed in detail in the upcoming STRAP Session 3. Bottom line—we are in a good place financially.



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- f) Status update re: APS Microgrid System. Chief has contacted APS for an update on the Microgrid. He is awaiting a response, and will contact them again next week. At this point, the Microgrid on FLFD property does not look promising.
- g) Status update re: Grant activities. Chief reported we have not yet received the \$3K payment for COVID related expenditures. We have been designated to receive a state sponsored 4-Gas Meter. There has been no change in the status of the Hazardous Fuels Grant.
- h) Status update re: ASRS Participation. Chief and Megan have been in contact with ASRS personnel and are working on deliverables to support our participation in the program. Cost of participation is 12.22% for both the employee and the district. Pursuit of this program will be based on affordability. Once we are accepted, we can begin participation at any time (most likely FY21-22.)
- i) Status update re: Pension Board activities. Chairman Cumiskey reported he and Chief attended a recent Pension Board meeting. The question of implementing a loan program for participants was tabled. The amounts involved are low and do not warrant the overhead cost involved. A letter was written to Innes and Associates stating the board's position that we are not happy with the return on investment from the program's assets (about \$300K). The Innes response is that they use a standard asset allocation model and are not willing to change. They did agree to provide more detailed investment information so the board can review and make recommendations for changing allocations. Innes receives a 1% fee for their efforts (about \$3K annually). Our plan is unique, and Innes is the only provider for this type of plan. The board will continue to explore alternatives.
- j) Discussion and possible action: Review and approval of Policy 17a (Medical Leave) and 17b (Workers Comp). Policies, Procedures and Bylaws Chairman Massion provided a brief discussion of the proposed policies, noting that after considering the problems associated with drafting a single policy, his committee agreed to produce two policies, 17a and 17b, which refer to each other and preserve the established numbering system. 17a is a revision to the original Policy 17, whereas 17b, which is patterned after that of Heber-Overgaard Fire District, is new. Both policies had been provided for fire board review prior to the meeting. There being no changes or comments, Chairman Massion made a motion to approve the policies as presented. Member Torres seconded, and the motion passed unanimously.
- k) Status update re: Governmental Advocacy Committee. Governmental Advocacy Committee Chairman Torres reported that the House, Senate and Committee membership remained essentially unchanged with the election. A slow session is anticipated, especially with the uncertainties related to COVID-19. The impact on FLFD, if any, is unsure at this time. Walt Blackman retained his seat. He is a good advocate for fire districts, and is very safety oriented. Jim Parks was defeated in the recent election and has chosen to retire. Israel will gather some background material on his replacement and report back to the board. He volunteered to work with Chief Rodriguez to coordinate visits with our county, state and federal representatives, perhaps in conjunction with FLOA.
- l) Status update re: Master Planning Committee Activities. Master Planning Committee Chairman Hennessey reported he and Chief had updated the Priority Task list created in June in anticipation of this meeting. Two items were added: 3 new bay doors with openers and Exercise Equipment for fire personnel to maintain their fitness levels. Chief subsequently reported that 4 pieces of Exercise Equipment have been procured using proceeds from the Poker Run. The updated priority list, and the approval to release \$25K in CAPEX funds, already in the budget, will be on the agenda for December's board meeting.
- a) Status update: Dave's annual performance review. Chairman Cumiskey stated for the record he and Chief recently met face-to-face to conduct his annual performance review, which was based on comments and input from all board members, and Chief Rodriguez, and included accomplishments and areas for improvement. He emphasized the actual review is subject to executive privilege and will be provided upon request to board members only. He provided the following summary of Chief Rodriguez's annual performance review:

Overall, Dave's performance over this last year has been very strong with many achievements and accomplishments. The Board is pleased with this performance and it helps demonstrate why Forest Lakes Fire District is acknowledged as one of the very best fire districts in Arizona, a distinction we want to maintain. The Board also acknowledges that Dave has invested significant time and energy this year in getting all this done and we thank him for all his efforts. We note that potential improvement areas are largely administrative in nature, show improvement over the last year, and can be easily resolved if



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assertively addressed. We are pleased with all of Dave's efforts this year and are glad he continues in his role as our fire chief.

- m) Discussion and possible action: Administer Oaths of Office to John Hennessey and Israel Torres who ran unopposed for 4 year terms. Chairman Cummiskey administered Oaths of Office to John Hennessey and Israel Torres. Both had completed the required OML Training in accordance with requirements. Note: their terms expire November 30, 2024.

- 9 Fire Chief's Report. The GWTS has been chipped for the fourth time this year, with 28 total loads removed. The site is open today from 9 am to 1 pm, and will be available, weather permitting, on upcoming Saturdays, for the same times. Chief thanked all who participated in cleaning up their lots. Our ISO Regrade is up for renewal. We are currently at a Level 4, which is considered very good for a district our size. Level range is from 1 (best) to 10 (worst). During our last regrade we improved from a 6 to a 4. All the regrade work is being handled remotely due to COVID-19. The fire district and water district are partnering to upgrade their communication systems (phone and Internet) to fiber-optic. There will be no frontend costs because they will be prorated over the first 3 years. More details to be provided in December. Chief introduced the idea of changing our board meeting date and time. He noted the water district meets on Thursdays at 10 am. They used to meet on Saturdays at 9 am to accommodate the public but with a history of little or no public participation they moved to the Thursday meeting times, with no pushback from the public. Chief suggested a Thursday at 11 am meeting time, noting we also have low to no public participation. The proposed meeting time change has several advantages, the most significant being that it would allow Megan to participate fully in the meeting. The Thursday meeting would also allow her time to gather all the documents needed from the county to produce the monthly financials. This will be an agenda item for next month.

- 10 Call to the Public/Audience Comments. There were none.

- 11 Fire Board Comments. Chairman Cummiskey reported he met with Lee Davis of NBAZ regarding the possibility on refinancing our debt on the fire station. Lee responded NBAZ does not refinance their own debt. Chairman Cummiskey has asked Treasurer Batschelet, in his capacity as a commercial realtor, to explore whether there might be other commercial lenders we could work with. Treasurer Batschelet suggested a way to improve district income by working in conjunction with businesses in the Forest Lakes area to sponsor FLFD supported advertisements in the community in exchange for a tax deductible donation through the Auxiliary. Pete offered to have his wife Michelle work with the Auxiliary to firm up the details and report back to board.

- 12 Adjournment. There being no further business before the board the meeting was adjourned at 11:48 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: ___December 19, 2020___.


 John Hennessey, Clerk