



**FOREST LAKES FIRE BOARD
REGULAR SESSION MEETING MINUTES
SEPTEMBER 17, 2022
DRAFT**



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 with the May 15, 2021, board meeting, and will continue until further notice.

- 1 Call to Order. The meeting was called to order in the main equipment bay of the fire station by Chairman Tom Cummiskey at 10:02 am.
- 2 Pledge of Allegiance. 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 Massion and Member Torres were in attendance at the fire station. Treasurer Pete Batschelet was absent. Also in attendance were Chief Dave Rodriguez, Admin. Asst. Julie Mattila and Communications Specialist/Public Information Officer John Nelson. Attending from the public were Dick Zimmerman, Julie Swanson, and John Swanson. For the record, we had a quorum of the board.
- 4 Chairman's Welcome and Activity Report. Chairman Cummiskey welcomed all to the meeting. He noted we will be having our first STRAP Update session following this meeting and a short break for lunch. On a sad note, he announced the passing of former fire board member and current Pension Board member John Fahrendorf. He was an asset to the community.
- 5 Call to the Public/Audience Comments. There were none.
- 6 Review and Approve the Minutes for the August 20, 2022, 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 August 2022. In Treasurer Batschelet's absence, Chairman Cummiskey reviewed the General Fund financial report for the previous month and provided a brief summary report. We are 16.7% through the year. In relation to our published Not-To-Exceed (NTE) budget, YTD revenue is at 22.9% while YTD expenses are at 23.4%. The end of the month cash balance was \$246,592.46. In spite of still being in the tax trough, we are in good shape financially. Chairman Cummiskey made a motion to approve the financial report 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: Water Tender Activities and Next Steps. Our attorney Bill Wittington, and Member Torres, also an attorney, are collaborating on a Demand Letter to DB Trucks to either give us all our money back or allow us to take the truck back. It was stated DB Trucks may have a potential buyer of the unit. Dave took the action to assemble one or more written estimates of what it will take to bring the new water tender, should we choose to retain it, up to the level of performance we expect. He is to do this as expeditiously as possible as the results may be needed to be used in the demand letter. Further, Dave is to follow up with Bill Wittington to push him to complete the demand letter asap so it can be reviewed by the Board



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prior to its release to DB Trucks. A motion was made by Member Massion to authorize the transmission of the Demand Letter, once completed, and approved by the board, to DB Trucks. Member Torres seconded, and the motion passed unanimously. Since timing is an issue, board member review of the letter is to be accomplished expeditiously.

- b) Status update re: Grant activities. Dick Zimmerman is pursuing a grant from either the Governor's Office for Highway Safety or Firehouse Subs to procure battery powered extrication equipment. John Nelson gave a status update on the current Hazardous Fuels Grant and announced we have secured a follow-on grant that will become effective once the current grant is closed out. He also reported he has submitted a grant application to create a Community Wildfire Protection Plan (CWPP) to address the needs of Forest Lakes. The two-year grant, if awarded, would cover a two-year time frame with a total cost of \$37,400. The grant requires a 10% match from FLFD. The work would be accomplished by a trusted service provider with assistance by FLFD personnel, administered by FLFD, monitored by the fire board as a monthly agenda item and included in our STRAP Plan. A project description follows:

Project Description

The purpose of this project is to develop an initial CWPP for the Forest Lakes Estates subdivision of Coconino County. Even though the Forest Lakes community is in the wildland urban interface (WUI) and is at risk for wildfire, we have never been included in any CWPP, nor have we ever developed our own. Development of the CWPP will be in collaboration with all of the area stakeholders, including local and state government representatives and the appropriate federal agencies.

In accordance with the Cohesive Wildland Fire Management Strategy the Forest Lakes CWPP will include plans for making our community more resilient to fire-related disturbances and for strengthening our population and infrastructure capabilities for withstanding wildfire in or near the community without loss of life or property. Additionally, the CWPP will ensure that all jurisdictions, especially the Forest Lakes Fire District, participate in making and implementing safe, effective, and efficient risk-based wildfire management decisions.

The CWPP will also be fully coordinated with the Arizona Forest Action Plan as published by the Arizona Department of Forestry and Fire Management. Page 142 of the October 1, 2020 publication clearly shows the importance of including Forest Lakes in future planning, especially with regard to wildfire risks. It will address issues such as wildfire response capabilities, hazard mitigation, community preparedness (which includes smoke readiness), community education, structure protection, or a combination of these issues, and will greatly assist all of our stakeholders and participants in planning and prioritizing project work. Identification and prioritization for hazardous fuel reduction treatments will be emphasized. The CWPP will also provide recommendations to homeowners for measures they can take to reduce ignitability risk to their structures.

Forest Lakes requires a Community Wildfire Protection Plan (CWPP) to serve as a basis for future community planning and for coordination with Federal, State, and local organizations. Forest Lakes Estates is an unincorporated subdivision in Coconino County. There is no local governing authority, therefore the Forest Lakes Fire District (FLFD) has agreed to sponsor the development of the CWPP. FLFD has only 2 full time employees, and it is expected that most or all of the CWPP development will be contracted to a trusted service provider.

- c) Status update re: Governmental Advocacy Committee. Governmental Advocacy Chairman Torres spoke about the importance of Prop 310 to the states' fire districts. If passed by the voters in November it would create a temporary one-tenth of one percent sales tax, all of which would go to support fire districts. In straightforward terms, it would mean an additional one cent tax on a purchase of \$10.00. Residents are encouraged to promote Prop 310 among themselves as well as with friends, acquaintances and family throughout Arizona using the accompanying Prop 310 Talking Points document.



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PROP 310 ARIZONA
FIRE DISTRICT SAFETY

- d) Status update re: Master Planning Committee Activities. The status update presented by committee members Hennessey and Chief Rodriguez addressed two areas: the new FEL garage and ancillary activities. The ancillary activities are as follows: 1) Underground electric to Tuff sheds, blue garage; 2) Water diversion along southern boundary, RR tie construction; 3) Annex garage door repainting; and 4) Cell Tower water incursion. The accompanying presentation is for record purposes as it was presented in its entirety.



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Plan Update Board M

Regarding the status of the FEL garage, as indicated in the preso, the committee recommended that the FEL garage be a design/build effort, with Chief Rodriguez as Project Manager, using a sole source approach for selecting the contractor. While this is acceptable per FLFD Procurement Spec 018, following discussion, it was agreed to pursue a competitive bidding approach, with Chief Rodriguez as Project Manager taking the lead to make this happen. Chief, who has previous experience as Project Manager, was asked to document the process up front he will employ. For overall guidance from a board perspective, in making sure our fiduciary duties are executed, it was suggested that project elements include the creation of the detailed spec, creation of a Request for Proposal (RFP), soliciting potential bidders in newspapers of general circulation and trade journals, hosting a bidders' conference and down-selection of the candidate of choice using a pre-defined process. It is expected contract award can be accomplished expeditiously and not significantly delay the overall timelines as outlined in the attachment.

Regarding the ancillary items: Chief reported he needs 7 days of dry weather before he can trench for the underground electric, taking extra caution with the fiber optic lines. Prep work is done for laying the RR ties and he is in the process of procuring heavy drill tooling to drill holes for rebar reinforcement of the RR ties. He is exploring chemical stripping of the annex garage doors and leaving them in their original factory white finish. And we have had no response from the county regarding water incursion from the county yard onto FLFD property.

- e) Discussion and possible action re: ODS Mileage Reimbursement/Average Price Check. Chief Rodriguez reported an internet search revealed the average price of gas for Maricopa County is \$3.98 per gallon. Therefore, the ODS mileage reimbursement will go from 62.5 cents per gallon to 50 cents per gallon. As per board motion, it will be reassessed again at next month's meeting. Note Julie has created a mileage reimbursement tracking spreadsheet that tracks reimbursement by individual, with totals, by month.
- f) Discussion and possible action re: National Special Districts Coalition. Chairman Cummiskey reported on a Zoom conference call he and Clerk Hennessey attended on September 7th, hosted by Coconino County Treasurer Sarah Benatar. Much of the material presented was repetitious with information we heard at similar meetings sponsored by FLFD. One element that was new, and has potential benefit to FLFD, was associated with the National Special Districts Coalition. Chairman Cummiskey sees potential benefit to the district based on his credit union experience, which has a similar national sponsorship. The Coalition offers a wide variety of support to members, including grant writing assistance. Israel took an action to explore the implications of participating in this association with AFDA.
- g) Status update re: Special Election Updates. Clerk Hennessey reported the county board of supervisors have deemed Pete Batschelet, Dennis Massion and Julie Swanson to be duly elected as board members and the November election has been canceled in this regard. Their terms of



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office begin December 1st. Current Clerk Hennessey, as interim acting Chairman, will convene a special meeting as soon as practical, on or after December 1st, to elect the new board chair, clerk and treasurer and designate standing committee chairs. In terms of general housekeeping, the oaths of office for the new members will be administered by Chairman Cummiskey at the November 19th board meeting and each new member, including incumbents, will be required to undergo OML training at least one day prior to taking office and signify as such by signing an Oath of Compliance.

9 Fire Chief's Report.

In collaboration with the Forest Service, we have created new helicopter landing zones, including one by the Visitor Center. Labor Day weekend was a busy one for the district. There was one fatality during an accident in the forest that happened the same time as the Poker Run but was not connected to the Poker Run itself. Neither FLFD, nor the Auxiliary, which is covered under our insurance, are sponsors of the Poker Run. Since this is a legal issue, Chief took an action to confirm our exposure, or lack thereof, with our attorney, Bill Whittington, and report to the board. The GWTS remains open to accommodate residents and contractors who are supporting the Hazardous Fuels Grant.

10 Call to the Public/Audience Comments. In response to a question from the public, since the mileage surcharge reimbursement is less than or equal to the federal rate, there are no tax implications for the ODS. The process is handled internally by QuickBooks and our payroll contractor.

11 Fire Board Comments. There were none.

12 Adjournment. There being no further business before the board, the meeting was adjourned at 11:34 am.

Notes:

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.