



**FOREST LAKES FIRE BOARD  
REGULAR SESSION MEETING MINUTES  
SEPTEMBER 19, 2020**



*For the record, the Fire Station remains closed to the public. 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 10:01 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 announced that due to time restrictions for several members of the Leadership Team we will have an abbreviated business meeting, with an abbreviated STRAP session following. The business meeting agenda this month is shorter than usual, and all agenda items will be addressed fully.
- 5 Call to the Public/Audience Comments. There were none.
- 6 Review and Approve the Minutes for the August 15, 2020 Regular Board Meeting. Member Torres 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 August 2020. Treasurer Batschelet reviewed the General Fund financial report for the previous month, and provided a brief summary report. We are 16.66% through the year. In relation to our published Not-To-Exceed (NTE) budget, YTD revenue is at 6.9% while YTD expenses are at 13.4%. The end of the month cash balance was \$155,049, which is below our board guideline of \$175,000. The Projected Year End Cash Balance, a more meaningful measure versus our guideline, is \$225,732, reflecting a nice recovery from last month's projection of \$175,002, and more in line with our beginning cash balance of \$233,350. Treasurer Batschelet noted two expenditure categories he needs to follow up on with Megan: 5004, GWTS Attendant/Fuels Management Salary and 5057, FLFD Pension Transfers. 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: APS Microgrid System. Chief reported we have signed a Right of Entry document allowing APS and its designees access to FLFD property to perform inspections.



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studies and investigations regarding the potential lease for an APS designed and installed microgrid power generation system. Once the size of the proposed site is determined FLFD and APS will enter into negotiations for a long-term lease agreement, including lease payments to FLFD.

- b) Status update re: Grant activities. Chief reported we continue to remain active in the grant arena. We have submitted an Assistance to Firefighters grant application in the amount of \$14,000 to replace our outdated vehicle mounted portable radios. We have been awarded a State Forestry grant that will allow clearing 50 lots per year for the next two years, beginning next year, with a per lot allocation of \$2,500. The grant includes \$12,500 to cover administration fees. In response to a question from Chairman Cummiskey regarding pursuit of the Firehouse Subs grant (with Dick Zimmerman as grant writer) Dave indicated that this grant was not a priority for him at this time but that we may pursue it in the future. Chairman Cummiskey noted this means we will not have this equipment to perform snow removal around the fire station this winter.
- c) Status update re: Pension Board activities. Chairman Cummiskey reported a Pension Board meeting was held last month between the Pension Board and the plan administrator. He is pleased to report the board is gaining traction and moving forward. He reviewed several instances of pension payouts where action needs to be taken to avoid future issues. The By-Laws are in the process of being updated, with an expected completion date in time for Fire Board approval in October. Investment performance will be an agenda item for the next meeting. Additional details can be reviewed in the Pension Board meeting minutes.
- d) Status update re: Cell Tower Status. Chief reported the cell tower is fully operational for Verizon customers. There were some startup issues, most of which were traced by Verizon engineers to the devices people were using to access cell service. We have been receiving lease payments of \$750/month from Verizon since November 2019. With each additional carrier the fire district will receive \$250/month. We are anticipating a long-term total monthly revenue stream of \$1,500 once all carriers are signed up. Note: residents are encouraged to let their carrier know about the new cell tower. Many Verizon users are reporting 3 to 5 bars of 4G service, including much improved data service. On a side note, Chief reports the new 150 foot monopine cell tower is the #1 tourist attraction in Forest Lakes.
- e) Status update re: Station signage. Chief reported the new station signage is complete with the addition of the sign in the front of the station to complement the sign over the Administration wing. The only item left is a small dedication plaque acknowledging the donors of the new flag pole.
- f) Discussion and possible action: Review and approval of Policy 12 (Grievance Policy). Policies, Procedures and Bylaws Chairman Massion provided a brief review of the subject policy, which had been distributed to all board members prior to the meeting. There being no comments or changes, Chairman Massion made a motion to approve the policy document as presented. Member Torres seconded, and the motion passed unanimously.
- g) Status update re: Governmental Advocacy Committee. Governmental Advocacy Committee Chairman Torres reported no significant activity at the legislature. We will be looking to schedule a visit to Forest Lakes from our Congressional (District 1) and Legislative (District 6) representatives in the April/May 2021 time frame.
- h) Status update re: Board members elections in November. Clerk Hennessey reported the Coconino County Board of Supervisors met August 25<sup>th</sup> and approved a recommendation from the County Board of Elections to cancel the upcoming Forest Lakes Fire Board elections and declare Israel Torres and himself elected. Chairman Cummiskey will place an agenda item for either the November or December board agenda for him to administer the Oath of Office for both.
- i) Status update re: Master Planning Committee Activities. Master Plan Committee Chairman Hennessey reported activities are on hold pending progress on the APS Microgrid project (see



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- agenda item 8a) for status.) There will be more discussion on the Master Plan in the STRAP session immediately following the board meeting.
- j) Discussion and possible action: Dave's contract renewal. Chairman Cummiskey reported Chief Rodriquez's employment contract expires October 31<sup>st</sup>. Copies of the current contract have been made available to all board members for review. A preliminary review by Chief Rodriquez and Chairman Cummiskey indicates the current contract structure and language, including salary, are acceptable for the new contract. Board member comments are due by October 12<sup>th</sup> so the final contract language can be developed in time for board approval at the October 17<sup>th</sup> board meeting.
  - k) Status update: Input for Dave's annual performance review. Chairman Cummiskey announced it is time for Dave's annual performance review which, for the past several review periods, has been conducted one-on-one between Dave and Tom, with inputs from all board members, collated and assembled by Tom into the final written review, which is subject to Executive Privilege. Board member comments, due by October 12<sup>th</sup>, are included verbatim in the final document, and should address Dave's strengths, areas for improvement and general comments. There will be an agenda item for October to allow Chairman Cummiskey to summarize Dave's performance. Member Torres stated he is OK with the one-on-one delivery of the performance review with Tom and Dave for this year but he would like explore options for future reviews, including a panel review with all board members. Chairman Cummiskey agreed to make this a future agenda item.
- 9 Fire Chief's Report. Chief Rodriquez reported the 6th Annual Poker Run was very successful, generating a \$14,239 donation to the fire district, the largest to date. The funds were donated with no restrictions. One of the items under consideration to be procured with the funds is an Infrared Vein Finder to assist our PMs and EMTs in starting IVs. Chief reported we have a running list of such items, usually recommended by our ODS based on their experience at their home departments. Member Torres asked for the list to be made readily available. Clerk Hennessey stated there was a Wish List generated for the Auxiliary in the recent past. He will send the list to Chief Rodriquez for review and update. The GWTS is operating with limited hours. The site is being prepared for the third pick-up/haul away of the season. Labor Day weekend was very busy. At one point we had all our emergency equipment and personnel out on calls, with no back-ups available. Chief was able to call Cris Lecher, ODS member and manager for Payson Lifeline Ambulance, who dispatched a back-up unit to Forest Lakes under our Mutual Aid agreement. Dave commented on how in May he had lowered his salary by \$5,000 per year, as well as Megan's, in an attempt to provide some financial headroom, primarily focused on the COVID related proactive recommendations the Finance Committee had approved in April. Then, in July, after having reviewed our positive and improved year end results, he reported that he decided it was appropriate for him to return his salary amount to his contractual amount of \$79,500. Israel commented that he felt Dave's gesture of lowering his salary, even if temporarily, showed Dave's strong commitment to the financial soundness of the District.
- 10 Call to the Public/Audience Comments. There were none.
- 11 Fire Board Comments. The fire board as a whole commented on the very positive effort over the unusually busy Labor Day holiday weekend. Member Massion asked if we have any indication of how property valuations are trending. Chief reported homes are only on the market for an average of 9 days. Chairman Cummiskey remarked that in the past we have scheduled a session with our County Assessor. It may be time to schedule another visit here at Forest Lakes. This will give us a first-hand picture of property valuations. In response to a question from Clerk Hennessey, Chief stated he has been at Forest Lakes as Fire Chief for 12 years, operating under semi-annual contracts.



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except for an initial 6 month temporary contract following the departure of Chief Greene. The semi-annual contracts have remained essentially unchanged throughout this period.

- 12 Adjournment. There being no further business before the board the meeting was adjourned at 10:48 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](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).

Approved by the Forest Lakes Fire District Board on:      October 17, 2020     .

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "John Hennessey".

John Hennessey, Clerk