

Pinetop Fire District Station 12  
Regular Meeting of Pinetop Fire Board  
Monday October 18, 2021  
Video & Conference Available  
1845 S. Pine Lake Rd, Pinetop AZ 85935

**Call the meeting to Order: John Rowlinson Called Meeting to order at 5:00 pm**

1. **Roll Call of Board Members: John Rowlinson, Carla Bowen, Ernie Lawes, Brad Baker**

**Gabe Buldra and Ben Archer present. Present by tele-conference, Attorney Bill Whittington.**

**II Call to the Public:** None

**III. Consent Agenda Board Business**

*The items on the consent agenda are considered routine and will be adopted in one motion unless a board member, staff, or member of the public in the audience requests, before the vote on the motion, to have the item considered separately. If any item is removed from the Consent Agenda, the Board Chairman will indicate when it will be discussed in the regular agenda.*

- 1) Approval of Minutes of Board Meeting held in September 2021
- 2) Approval of Warrants paid in September 2021

Carla Bowen made the motion to approve the September 2021 consent agenda, as presented, seconded by Brad Baker, motion carried unanimously 4-0

**V. Board Business**

**1. Discussion/Consideration/Possible Action re: Presentation of September 2021 Financial Reports**

All financial reports are included in board packets.

Some highlights were;

Monthly revenue for Navajo County was \$156,413 over budget by \$51,905.

Non-levy revenue was \$352,236 which also was over budget by \$84,333

Wildland income was over budget by \$237,261 and we are still invoicing.

Grant income is under budget by \$132,191, driven by timing of invoicing,

Expenses for month were over budget by \$57,194.

Personnel was over budget by \$100,851 driven by wildland fire expense, along with vehicles & equipment also over budget by 12,840 (wildland fuel) In that same category affected by wildland fire is travel, meetings and training were over budget by \$7,733, grant expenses under budget by \$56,174 possibly due to timing of invoicing.

Year to date total revenue is over budget by \$551,558 driven by wildland fire assignments which was over by \$921,860 and grant income was under by \$396,593 for the year.

Year to date expenses were over budget again due to wildland fire deployment by \$374,734 and our total cash was \$3,190,780 which is \$495,469 more than this time last year.

Percentages; 81% personnel, 13% Operations, Communications 2% and managerial 4%

There was discussion about the CAFR Audit.

Carla made the motion to approve the September 2021 Financial reports as presented, seconded by Ernie Lawes, motion passed 4-0.

2. Discussion/Consideration/Possible Action Re: Updates on 2021 Wildland Fire Season

Chief Morgan; Discussion about our positive cash flow due to wildland fire season. For this season we have generated \$2,073,262.39 from Jan to September 2021. He explained the revenue share percentage relating to our positive cash flow. He thanked everyone involved, the fire crews, fuels crew, everyone who stays behind to cover shifts and the families that support those away.

Currently our region is at a preparedness level 2 and nationally at a PL3, which puts us in a good place, however this could change if our weather circumstances change. The conditions as they are in the white mountains currently allow us to provide assets across the western United States. We currently have resources still out in California which seems to be the hot spot this year.

Informational only – No Board Action.

3. Discussion/Consideration/Possible Action re: Updates on Board Vacancy

Discussion concerning appointment of a new board member to take the place of Dr. Doug Wright who recently resigned from the fire board. Chief Morgan explained the advertisement has been running in the local paper and had not generated any letters of interest at the time of the meeting. The appointment will be valid into 2024. The ad will continue to run in the paper until November 12<sup>th</sup>, we have 90 days after date of resignation to select another member- if we cannot fill the vacancy the county board of supervisors would then step in and appoint an interim member.

Informational only - No Board Action.

4. Discussion/Consideration/Possible Action re: Form of Agenda and Issues Relating to Arizona's Open Meeting Law and Remote Access.

Mr. Whittington was present by conferencing to explain the Attorney General's new requirement for Board Meeting Agendas and the use of virtual streaming technology to conduct such meetings. Included in the board packet is a copy of the new opinion from Attorney General.

Mr. Whittington, explained that Pinetop Fire District is in compliance with the new direction. During Covid almost every entity in the US has been using some form of "face to face" meetings using online technology or teleconferencing.

The option to use technology for meeting remotely must be included on the agenda with clear instructions to aid the public, including verbiage that the meeting will be available by technological means, and provide the website for video and/or tele-conference. There must be clear direction for technical support provided by the district for questions, concerns or difficulty accessing a meeting. The district has been compliant since the pandemic began.

This is informational only – No Board Action

5. Discussion/Consideration/Possible Action re: Update on Status of Waste Management Land Purchase

Chief Morgan; this is an update to our purchase of the Waste Management Property.

The next step is to engage the testing firm, and sign the documents to proceed with the evaluations. Once phase 1 and 2 tests are complete and hopefully provide proof of a decline or stationary number in the BTX levels, we should be able to purchase the property. Mr. Thomas has had conversations with the firm of Haley and Aldrich and recommends them for the testing and inspection process.

Carla Bowen asked the Chief to please email them with testing schedule or any updates.  
Informational Only – No Board Action

**IV. Summary of Current Events**

Homeland Security Northern Regional Advisory Council Meeting that Chief Morgan chaired recently, provided updates on local terrorism liaison officer roles and expected grant rewards.

Discussion about how long folks had been gone on fires, with some over 100 days and the importance for suppression activities.

The legislative initiative regarding the TPT sales tax as an alternative to fire district revenue sourcing. It would likely be on the November ballot for consideration. Chief Morgan explained it would be a rescue plan with a 1/10<sup>th</sup> of a percent tax that would prove to be substantial, about 46% of our taxing revenue reaching upwards of 1.9 million dollars, reducing the reliance on FDAT share.

One opinion was that the initiative will be a service tax that would affect many people in the district, service people such as real estate, beauty shops, all contractors, everyone in the direct service business. Carla Bowen commented that the Board of Realtors has been fighting this type of tax for years – it would be a lot of money out of pocket for a lot of hardworking people. Another Opinion; a SIN Tax, there was discussion about how Pinetop-Lakeside is already taxed at a higher rate than other towns. Mrs. Bowen's fear is that it would drive out future businesses in Pinetop-Lakeside no matter what type of tax, sin tax or service tax either way it has to come out of someone's pocket.

Discussion only

***Future Meeting Dates:***

November 15, 2021

**VI. Announcements**

None

**VII. Adjournment**

John Rowlinson adjourned the meeting at 5:45 pm

Respectfully Submitted

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Karen Robbins