

Regular Meeting of Pinetop Fire Board
Monday November 28, 2022 - Postponed from November 21, 2022
Pinetop Fire District Station 12
Video & Conference Available
1845 S. Pine Lake Rd, Pinetop AZ 85935

Call the meeting to Order: Chairman Rowlinson called the meeting to order at 5:08 pm

1. Roll Call of Board Members; present- John Rowlinson, Ernie Lawes by video Conference, Carla Bowen in person, Brad Baker excused and Ben Borrego Absent

Also present in person; Chief Jim Morgan, Asst Chief Wallace. Bill Whittington and Gabe Buldra JVG, present electronically

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 for October 2022
- 2) Approval of Warrants paid in October 2022

Ernie Lawes asked if there needed to be a correction on the original agenda for the 21st, it was already caught and corrected on the *updated* agenda for the meeting on the 28th, so noted, no correction needed.

Carla Bowen made the motion to accept the Consent Agenda as presented. Seconded by Ernie Lawes. Motion passed unanimously 3-0

IV. Board Business

1. Discussion/Consideration/Possible Action re; Presentation of August 2022 Financial Reports

Gabe Buldra (JVG) gave a brief summary of the October 2022 financial reports.
All documents and reports are included in the packet.

A few highlights;

Navajo County Revenue for October was \$2,006,890 which was \$118,921 under budget.

Non-Levy Revenue was \$488,667 which was over budget by \$422,660

Wildland Revenue was over budget by \$422,660 and grant revenue was under by \$48,679

Expenses for October were \$888,262, which was under budget by \$15,275

Note: Communication was nearly \$14,000 over budget due to timing of dispatch fees.

Travel/training expenses were \$11,217 over, mostly due to wildland deployments

Personnel expense was \$47,589 under budget, probably due to a decrease in backfill with folks still out on assignments.

Year to date total revenue was \$3,574,349 which was \$506,563 over budget

Wildland Fire was \$625,268 over budget.

Grant income was \$194,418 under budget.

Year to date expenses were \$2,824,989 which were over by \$506,563, mostly due to wildland fire expenses -including personnel at \$315,030 over and travel/training at \$95,143
Total Cash was \$4,510,975 – which was \$426,747 less than this time last year.

District Percentages were; Personnel 78%, Ops at 15%, Admin at 5% and communications 2%

Chief Morgan told them that we were still receiving State Wildland Money and would likely see that reflected at the next meeting.

Ernie Lawes made the motion to accept the October 2022 Financial reports as presented. Seconded by Carla Bowen. Motion passed unanimously 3-0

2. **Discussion/Consideration/Possible Approval re: Accepting a State Homeland Security Grant in the amount of \$57,574.00.**

All documents are included in the board packet. This is a homeland security grant (SHSGP) for joint regional AZ Interagency Radio System (AIRS) Radio Project for improvement of interoperability communications. It is in addition to the grant we discussed last meeting for the tower installation at St 11.

This grant will enhance our ability for mutual aid and provide a much-needed V-MED 28 channel. Communications will be mutual aid, land to med/air, hopefully allowing for safer landing zones. It will also provide redundancy for our current communication operations, providing improved coverage and reliability. The technology equipment will be sited at an ADOT location in Show Low. Once accepted this award will be fully reimbursable, the grant covers approximately 100% of acquisition and installation.

Carla Bowen made the motion authorizing the fire chief to execute subrecipient agreement 22-AZDOHS-HSGP-220103-01 accepting grant funds for communication improvements in the amount of \$57,524.00 as presented. Seconded by Ernie Lawes. Motion passed unanimously 3-0

3. **Discussion/Consideration/Possible Approval re: General discussion on assessed Valuation Changes and the current variance from the 2008 high.**

All documents included in packet. Gabe Buldra (JVG) gave a brief summary of District financials in regard to our current AV rate and where we are headed in the near future. He included a couple of graphs in the presentation. In 2009-10 PFD AV was at \$187 million and had continued to lessen over the next 5 years to a dismal \$121 million. The district suffered a loss of approximately 1million dollars in operating revenue - if you take the peak of 2010 at the applied rates. Since 2015/16 we have increased about 3% annually but are still behind about 18%. Currently we are doing well at 4.87M with some room to adjust the tax rate if need be.

Fire Districts unfortunately have suffered from restrictions, downturns and legislation which pushed our district to take some measures to keep the rate steady.

Mr. Buldra told the board we are currently financially secure. He reminded the board that we just paid off a lease purchase in order to save the district money, we should not see a need to secure another lease purchase at the present time. The chief and Mr. Buldra assured the board we are in a good cash position currently.

There was discussion about the trends and projections, Mr. Buldra told them we project out approximately 5 years. Even with our current income and expenses, we should be able to function without having to take drastic measures.

This is informational only – no board action

4. **Discussion/Consideration/Possible Approval re; Adopting revised purchasing policy**

Documents included in the packets. Chief Morgan told the board that with the promotion of Division Chief Chad Berlin and the possibility of hiring a couple of battalion chiefs and/or a deputy chief we need to make a few adjustments in the purchasing policy for authorized approvals.

There was some discussion about the need for two signers and chief Morgan told them there is already policy in place for those types of purchases. We are amending the current policy to include the prospective positions and allowable approvals of purchases.

Carla Bowen made the motion to adopt the purchasing policy as presented. Seconded by Ernie Lawes. Motion passed unanimously 3-0

5. **Discussion/Consideration/Possible Approval re; Discussion on Fire District recourse to address homeless encampments on district property**

Attorney Bill Whittington sent information to the board just before the meeting. This is in addition to ongoing discussion and research for information about steps we could take if the need arose for homeless problems on district property. There was discussion about the 9th circuit court ruling revolving around homeless and any action you can take. It seems there is limited action and actually comes down to 3 possible solutions;

1. Civil Action (remote possibility)
2. Preventative (fencing perimeter)
3. Criminal (with no enforcement)

Probable solution would be to fence around the entire perimeter.

There was discussion about course of action and prevention. Carla Bowen asked about page 6 in the document from the Attorney, it stated that the Pinetop-Lakeside area had approximately 4500 homeless, which seems inflated. It also says there are several shelters with approximately 900 beds for homeless in the area which also seems impossible. Mr. Whittington agreed to reach out to his contact and have the information verified and available for the next meeting.

No board action, informational only

6. **Discussion/Consideration/Possible Approval re; Authorizing entering into a contract with GOHS for an equipment grant in the amount of \$30,000.00**

Pinetop Fire was notified on November 7, 2022 about the award for a Highway Safety grant for extrication equipment. Chief Morgan told the board we have already meet the criteria for the contract, we just need to accept the grant and purchase the equipment. There was discussion about the location of the equipment and chief told them it would be on one of the new Type 1

Engines. This grant is 100% reimbursable, it is extrication equipment that will replace our outdated equipment providing a Cutter, a Ram and a Spreader with batteries.

Carla Bowen made the motion authorizing the Fire Chief to execute contract agreement 2023-EM-004 accepting grant funds for extrication equipment in the amount of \$30,000.00 as presented. Seconded by Ernie Lawes. Motion passed unanimously 3-0.

V. Summary of events

1. Chief Report

- a. Chief Morgan told the board there were two of our people chosen for the FF and EMT of the year through the VFW. They would let them know who they are and when the awards are to be given.
- b. 3 of our personnel attended and passed Arson Training
- c. Fire Marshal Berlin was chosen for an executive board position with the State Fire Marshal Office.

2. Board Chair Report

Nothing significant to report as he has been out of town

VI. Future Meeting Dates: December 19, 2022

VII. Announcements

1. Update on encampments on district property and clarification of the statistical information included in the information.
2. Swearing in of board members and organizational dates
3. Possible resignation of a board member and the board needing to consider a replacement.

VIII. Adjournment

Meeting was adjourned at 5:56 pm

Respectfully Submitted

Karen Robbins