

Regular Meeting of Pinetop Fire Board  
**December 18, 2023**  
Pinetop Fire District Station 12  
Video & Conference Available  
1845 S. Pine Lake Rd, Pinetop AZ 85935

**Call the meeting to Order: Chairman John Rowlinson, called the meeting to order at 5:00pm**

**Roll Call of Board Members; Present- John Rowlinson, Carla Bowen, Wayne Booher, and Ben Borrego. Edie Webber was excused.**

Administration present; Chief Jim Morgan, Asst. Chief Richard Wallace, and Karen Robbins. Sara Simonton from (JVG) and Attorney Bill Whittington remotely.

**1. Call to the Public:** None

**II. 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 November 2023 Meeting Minutes
- 2) Approval of Warrants paid in November 2023

Carla Bowen made the motion to accept the Consent Agenda as presented. Seconded by Ben Borrego. Motion passed unanimously 4-0

**III. Board Business**

**1. Discussion/Consideration/Possible Approval re; Presentation of the November 23 Financial Reports**

Sara Simonton gave a summary of the November 2023 financial reports. All reports were included in the board packet. Some highlights were;

Navajo County Revenue was at \$532,254 which was under budget for the month by \$134,552  
Wildland revenue was over budget \$23,264 and Grants were under by \$11,434

Expenses for November were \$782,262, which were over budget by \$9,516,  
Personnel was also over by \$47,981 primarily driven by wildland deployments,  
Meetings and travel/training is over by \$29,607 were also driven by wildland deployments.

Year to date Revenue is \$5,308,625 which is over budget by \$773,052  
Year to date Expenses were \$3,411,747 which were \$433,498 over budget

Total Cash was \$3,679,610 which is \$1,223,644 less than this time last year.

Percentages were; Personnel 79%, Ops 14%, Admin 5%, and Communication 2%.

Carla Bowen made the motion to accept the November 2023 Financial Reports as presented. Seconded by Ben Borrego. Motion passed unanimously 4-0

2. **Discussion/Consideration/Possible Approval re; Adoption of 2024 Board Member Calendar**

Dates for future board meetings. There was minor discussion about the calendar dates. No one had any conflicts or changes.

Ben Borrego made the motion to approve the 2024 regularly scheduled board meeting dates to include the recommended February adjustments to accommodate the Federal Holidays as presented. Seconded by Wayne Booher. Motion passed unanimously 4-0

3. **Discussion/Consideration/Possible Approval re; Declaration of Board Member Conflict of Interest for 2024.**

Best practice is to get these forms signed proactively, this is an annual process that helps to increase transparency and discloses possible conflicts that could arise. No comments or questions.

All present Board members signed the document. Ms. Webber will sign at another time.

Informational only – no board action.

4. **Discussion/Consideration/Possible Approval re; Selection of Financial Firm to Develop General Obligation Bonding Information, Community Action Committee and Survey Opportunities for District Fixed Capital Project.**

At board direction from last meeting, the Fire Chief has compiled a list of 4 financial firms for interest in a possible bond process, to aid in funding for the New Fire Station #10. All financial firm proposals are included in the packet. Chief explained that 3 had responded, Raymond James Financial, STIFIL and Piper Sandler. All 3 are part of a joint purchase contract through SAVE. The district is hoping the board will choose one of the two we have the most experience with, either Raymond James Financial or STIFIL.

This will be Step 1 in the process. There was discussion about the school bond that failed and the TMFMD, Timber Mesa Fire & Medical District, bond a few years ago that also failed. Chief Morgan told the board, the thought was, from surveys and information after TMFMD bond, that it possibly was not successful due to the C.O.N. difficulties TMFMD was having with SLEMS, Show Low EMS, during that time- there was a bitter battle to acquire more ambulance territory. What came of that is a huge campaign to just say “no” to the bond when it came to a vote, a lot of money was spent on that campaign. Chief told them he had talked to several people involved including our former board member, Doug Wright and TMFMD Fire Chief Chevalier. Carla Bowen adding when she talked to citizens in our district and TMFMD about why their bond didn’t pass, everyone said it was mostly due to TMFMD and the merge process allegedly spending more money, then the public was led to believe. Chief Morgan commented that timing is always one of the most important factors and probably both things had something to do with their bond election not passing.

There was discussion about the economy and people not being able to afford extra expenses right now. We have some time but we need to start getting the word out – that we need this other station and the positives that go along with that.

John Rowlinson asked about the cost – will the \$153 – \$200,000 be a one-time cost – do we have to pay up front? Chief Morgan told them that the costs are usually included in the bond amount and there usually is a degree of wiggle room with the financing to allow for these types of costs.

There was discussion about the importance of public perception – how the district could sell the idea to the public. Carla Bowen made a comment about our crews- Fuels, Fire and Ambulance, being out in the public and how she was only receiving positive praise about them. They all agreed - this is how we can get the funding for the bond, we need to be out there always promoting the district positively. Once the public knows that we are only all about their needs, maybe we could get the support we need. The crews should know as well as the public that this is truly an investment in their future all the way around. We all need to promote the response times, the benefits and the exceptional quality of care we provide to the public. Our employees are our best asset when it comes to self-promotion.

Mrs. Bowen mentioned working with Nick Dodd and Raymond James, she said she highly recommended them.

Carla Bowen Made the motion to authorize the fire chief and James Vincent Group to begin discussions with Raymon James bonding consultants to provide the board with the necessary information to make informed decisions. Seconded by Ben Borrego. Motion passed Unanimously 4-0

#### **IV. Summary of Current Events**

##### **1. Chief Report**

Discussion about the profits from wildland fire season.

The Employee appreciation party was a huge success and next year we would need more room to accommodate all the people who work in the district and would like to attend.

Some discussion about the new policy - Treat and Refer policy as well and refusing transport- something to start thinking about.

Wildland Finance and preliminary 2024 team needs

##### **2. Board Chair Report – John Rowlinson told them it was a nice party and that he wished to thank everyone for another great year.**

#### **V. Future Meeting Dates: January 22, 2024**

#### **VI. Announcements; AFDA in January – Let Chief Wallace know if you would like to attend,**

Meeting was adjourned at 5:37 pm

Respectfully Submitted

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Karen Robbins