

Regular Meeting of Pinetop Fire Board
September 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 meeting to order at 5:00pm

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

Administration present; Attorney Bill Whittington remotely. Chief Jim Morgan, Asst. Chief Richard Wallace, Gabe Buldra (JVG) and Karen Robbins were also present

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 August 2023 Meeting Minutes, Ratify February and March Meeting Minutes 2023**
- 2) Approval of Warrants paid in August 2023**

Carla Bowen made the motion to accept the Consent Agenda as presented and ratify the minutes from February and March 23. Seconded by Edie Webber. Motion passed unanimously 5-0

III. Board Business

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

Gabe Buldra gave a summary of the July 23 financial reports. All reports were included in the board packet. Some highlights were;

Navajo County Revenue was under budget for the month of August by \$774.

Non-Levy revenue, and grants were all under budget for August by about \$167,919.

Wildland was actually under budget by \$123,288--and Grant Revenue was under by \$56,840 with fuels reduction over budget by \$14,476

Expenses for August were over budget by \$111,259 due to wildland fire assignments, personnel, vehicles and equipment. EMS is also trending over slightly for August

Total cash for the year was less than this time last year by about \$609,903.

Percentages were; Personnel 81%, Ops 13%, Admin 5%, and Communication 1%.

Edie Webber asked for an explanation of wildland fire deployment program. Chief Morgan gave a brief summary. He explained how we use funding for capital replacement.

Carla Bowen asked if the state was running out of Wildland Fire Money, Chief Morgan told them it is the Federal Govt that is running short of funding – not the state.

Gabe Buldra gave a brief explanation of EMS payment breakdown for Medicare and Medicaid.

Ben Borrego made the motion to accept the July 2023 Financial Reports as presented.
Seconded by Wayne Booher. Motion passed unanimously 5-0

2. **Discussion/Consideration/Possible Approval re: Authorizing the fire chief to enter into a grant agreement for Fire Incident Management software**

Chief Morgan; this item is part of our quest to find alternative funding for the district. In June of 2022 we were awarded a grant from ADOA for **Fire Management Software** – we were just notified in August of 2023. There have been some legislative changes since then, such as funding from 1 to 3 years and a State Purchasing cooperative contract which lists 2 vendors. The software is already configured to mirror our CAD system. This is for much needed Incident Command Resources and personnel accountability during incident operations, with expert tracking through all phases of the incident, allowing us to know where our personnel are at all times. We currently have the GPS on our vehicles, and now we will have accountability for our personnel from dispatch- to- return to quarters. It also will include tech for SCBA and radio technology.

Wayne Booher asked if we currently use ICS software. Chief Morgan explained we use Blue Card which is all manual on paper. There was a question if the software would increase the dispatch billing rates, Chief Morgan told them no. Mr. Booher asked if the software stored the information somewhere on Servers and if we would own the information gathered. Chief Morgan said yes, it would be stored in a couple of servers possibly the cloud and we would own all of the information. Keep in mind – currently we are doing this manually on paper, which is cumbersome, time consuming and has no capability for *real time* tracking.

Carla Bowen made the motion recommending the board authorize Chief Morgan to act as the agency representative for the Pinetop Fire District as the grantee. Seconded by Ben Borrego. Motion Passed unanimously 5-0

3. **Discussion/Consideration/Possible Approval re: Approval of ADASHI Incident Command Software Amendment**

Documents included in packet. Chief Morgan; this is the second half of the Incident Command Software. This will be huge step for our district which will aid and protect our crews during dangerous ops and regular incidents. This is for the purchase and maintenance part of the agreement.

Wayne Booher made the motion to approve the purchase of ADASHI Fire Management Software and authorize Chief Morgan to execute the three-year software service agreement for Fire Incident Management software through ADASHI, an authorized vendor through the State of Arizona Procurement system not to exceed the amount of \$130,000 inclusive of taxes and shipping. Seconded by Edie Webber. Motion Passed unanimously 5-0

4. **Discussion/Consideration/Possible Approval re: Updates on Larson Family Trust Land Purchase**

Chief Morgan summarized the process and ongoing purchase operations. He told them that the ALTA survey would be complete soon. The board requested a copy to read when available, Chief Morgan will email it to them. He told them we should begin closing by the end of the month. There was a hiccup during the ALTA survey with the surveyor, however, everything is currently back on track.

This is informational only – no board action

5. **Discussion/Consideration/Possible Approval re: Discuss the advantages of refinancing the current lease purchase agreement through National Bank of Arizona to include land purchase noted in item 4.**

Discussion to refinance ½ or \$750,000.00 of the property sale with National Bank of Arizona to bolster our capital reserves which- will be at an unacceptably low level directly after the cash purchase of the Larson property. Gabe Buldra (JVG) explained the process including to refinance the C.O.P.S. with Station 11 at a rate of 4.7% extending our loan by approximately 4 years – being a 10-year term, about \$30,000 a year for the next ten years. This will help to maintain cash reserves for management of long-term debt and capital asset funding while maintaining the levy rates for tax payers.

There was some discussion about the refinance process and the interest rate.

This is informational only – no board action today.

IV. Summary of Current Events

1. Chief Report

The report is included in packet –

Chief Morgan advised late Friday he was notified that we received another Healthy Forest Initiative grant for \$220,000. He told them we still have units and crews out on fires. We also could see the ARPA money soon.

There was some discussion about the property owners calling into the district for fuels mitigation and the allocation of grant money.

Carla Bowen told the board how proud she is about Chief Morgan receiving the Hall of Flame award. She said it was an honor to the district and to himself for his hard work all of these years.

Chief Morgan told them that John Rowlinson also was on the wall as well as former chief Paul Watson. We are very proud of Chief Morgan and his accomplishments here in Pinetop Fire District.

2. Board Chair Report

Mr. Rowlinson wanted to mention also - Chief Morgan's newest recognition, Congratulations – it is a great honor for himself and the district.

V. Future Meeting Dates: October 16, 2023

VI. Announcements

Chief Morgan; We will have the Finance Resolution next meeting. He explained, this will help our rolling stock problem – and our capital reserves. We can't sell our rolling stock for our capital replacement program because of the C.O.P.S. consideration as collateral. He explained we had to repurchase two of our old vehicles because of the problem, these vehicles need to be replaced as soon as possible.

Meeting was adjourned at 5:41 pm

Respectfully Submitted

Karen Robbins