

Regular Meeting of Pinetop Fire Board

July 21, 2025

Pinetop Fire District Station 12

Video & Conference Available

1845 S. Pine Lake Rd, Pinetop AZ 85935

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

Roll Call of Board Members, Present John Rowlinson, Edi Webber, Ben Borrego, Steve Voldal and Marcus Harding.

Administration Attending: Chief Jim Morgan, Asst Chief Richard Wallace, Karen Robbins, Gabe Buldra and Sara Simonton. Also present were Attorneys, Jeff Matura, and Melissa England from Ins. and Attorney Bill Whittington.

VFIS

1. Call 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.

Approval of meeting minutes for June 2025

Approval of Warrants paid June - 2025

Edith Webber made the motion to approve the consent agenda as presented. Seconded by Ben Borrego. Motion passed unanimously 5-0.

II. Public Hearing in Consideration of Adoption of the Proposed 2025/2026 Budget

Hearing opened at 5.03 pm. Chief Morgan and Gabe Buldra from JVG, advised there were no public comments, emails, or complaints. Public hearing closed at 5:04pm

III. Board Business

1. Discussion/Consideration/Possible Approval re: Adoption of Tentative 2025-26 Proposed Budget.

Gabe Buldra gave a brief summary of the Budget numbers and mentioned the Pension funding policy for 2025-2026.

After some general discussion.

Ben Borrego made a motion to adopt the 2025/2026 fiscal budget, fee schedule and wage scale as well as the pension funding policy as presented. Seconded by Edi Webber. Motion passed unanimously 5-0.

2. Discussion/Consideration/Possible Approval re: Adoption of PSPRS Pension Funding Policy for the 2025/2026 Fiscal Year.

Adoption of the Policy was combined with the Budget approval in #1.

3. Discussion/Consideration/Possible Approval re: Presentation and approval of June 2025 Financials

All financial reports were included in the board Packet. Financial highlights were:

Navajo County Property Tax Revenue for June was over budget by \$40,000.00.

Non-Levy Revenue was under budget by \$1,857,851. Both Grant and wildland income were under budget.

Total Expenses were over budget by about \$35,000.0.

Travel and training were over budget driven by higher than anticipated state land expenses.

Personnel were also over budget, driven by Salaries and OT wages.

Communications and dispatch were Over due to timing of Dispatch fees.

Year to date Revenue was under budget by \$43,500.0 also driven by Wildland revenue and grant Revenue.

Year to date Expenses were over budget driven by additional wildland deployments.

Total Cash was \$13,009,231 which was \$9,935,151 more than this time last year – due to the GO Bond Proceeds.

Please refer to the board reports and any questions or concerns should be directed to Gabe Buldra or Sara Simonton, from the James Vincent Group.

A question about the training and travel being so high, Sara Simonton told them it was partially from the air travel to Alaska for the Fuels Mod, which will be reimbursed later. There was another related question about backfill and if it was reimbursed by the fires, Chief Morgan assured them it would be.

Marcus Harding made the motion to accept the 2025 June Financial reports as presented. Seconded by Edi Webber. Motion passed unanimously 5-0.

4. Discussion/Consideration/Possible Approval re: Current Wildfire Conditions.

Informational Only – Discussion about the local wildfire conditions. We are slightly out of the woods so to speak, but we need to still be careful. They may lift restrictions soon – we all need to be super aware of living in a wildland fire corridor. This is information no board action.

5. Discussion/Consideration/Possible Approval re: Personnel Matter Regarding JD Ottman's Demotion Process and Board Action

V. Possible Vote to go into Executive Session

Discussion/Consideration/Possible Action re: possible vote to go into executive session pursuant to A.R.S. §38-431.03(A)(3) for legal advice and A.R.S. § 38-431.03(A)(4) to give instructions to legal counsel re: JD Ottman personnel disciplinary appeal.

Ben Borrego made a motion to go into Executive Session for Legal advice regarding the appeal. Seconded by Marcus Harding. Motion to go into Executive Session passed unanimously 5-0.

Executive Session at 5:26pm

Back into Public Session at 6:16pm

Edi Webber made the motion to adopt Resolution 25-02 affirming the judge's decision regarding disciplinary action issued by Fire Chief Jim Morgan regarding JD Ottman, to formally close out the appeal action. Seconded by Ben Borrego. Motion passed unanimously 5-0.

Ten Minute Break.

6. Discussion/Consideration/Possible Approval re; Selection of a Consulting Firm for Fire Chief Replacement

Edi Webber made a motion to enter Executive Session for legal advice concerning HRS Consultant on the ideal Fire Chief Candidate and timeline. Seconded by Ben Borrego.

Motion passed unanimously 5-0.

Executive Session at 6:32pm

Public Session at 7:23pm

There is no board action, this is discussion only with HRS Brenda Tranchina

VI. Summary of Current Events

1. **Fire Chief Report** –Chief Morgan – report is included in the board packet; he did want to let them know that all 3 Battalion Chiefs had taken their positions and were actively working. They were all doing in person training with other districts BCs and getting experience.
2. A few of our folks have their 20-year anniversary. Cory Esparza, Omar Apodaca, just to name some and Chad Berlin next week.
3. Circle K next to St 11 will have their soft opening around August 1.

VII. Announcements.

None.

Next Board Meeting is August 18, 2025

Meeting adjourned at 7:27 pm

Respectfully Submitted

Karen Robbins