



# Sedona Fire District

2860 Southwest Drive, Sedona, Arizona 86336  
Telephone (928) 282-6800 FAX (928) 282-6857

## REGULAR BOARD MEETING

Station #1 – 2860 Southwest Drive – Sedona – Multipurpose Room  
Tuesday, November 15, 2022 / 4:30 PM

~ MINUTES ~

### I. CALL TO ORDER/ROLL CALL

Pursuant to notice, a regular meeting of the Sedona Fire District (SFD) was called to order by Chairman Dave Soto at 4:31 PM on Tuesday, November 15, 2022. Executive Assistant, Kim Smathers recorded the minutes. A quorum was present, and the meeting, having been duly convened, was ready to proceed with business.

Board Present: Dave Soto – Chairman; Gene McCarthy – Clerk; Al Comello, Helen McNeal, Janet Jablow – Members. Others Present: Fire Chief Ed Mezulis; Director of Administrative Services Heidi Robinson; Gabe Buldra and Dominic Filosa, JVG (by Zoom); Attorney William Whittington; Assistant Chief Jayson Coil (by Zoom); Acting Fire Marshal Kirk Riddell; and Executive Assistant Kim Smathers – Recorder.

#### **A. Salute to the Flag of the United States of America and Moment of Silence to Honor all American Men and Women in Service to Our Country, Firefighters, and Police Officers.**

Chairman Dave Soto led the Pledge of Allegiance and Chief Ed Mezulis requested a Moment of Silence for the 4 Police Officers and 5 firefighters who passed away since the previous Board Meeting.

### II. PRESENTATION OF AWARDS/STAFF RECOGNITION

**A. Acknowledgment of Years of Service:** Battalion Chief Buzz Lechowski was given his 25 years of service pin, as he was missed on his October anniversary. Chief Mezulis gave some background information on BC Lechowski and he was recognized by the audience. Chairman Dave Soto thanked BC Lechowski for his dedicated service and shared some personal thoughts about his continued journey.

#### **B. New Promotion Recognition – Badge Pinning**

New Engineer Joe Kinzel received his Engineer badge with pinning by his brother, a retired FDNY firefighter and his girlfriend.

New Captain Mike Pace received his Captain badge with his family in attendance and his son pinning his badge.

Chairman Soto congratulated the promoted staff.

*Board Chairman Soto adjourned the meeting for a 10 minute recess for photos with the personnel and their families, along with Board Members and Chief Mezulis. Chairman Soto reconvened the meeting at 4:53 p.m.*

### III. REGULAR BUSINESS MEETING

#### **A. Public Forum:**

*Speakers are limited to three-minute oral presentations, but may submit written comments of any length for Board files. Board Members may not discuss items not specifically identified on the Agenda. Therefore, pursuant to ARS 38-431.01(H), Board action taken as a result of public comment is limited to directing staff to study the matter, responding to any criticism, or scheduling the matter for further consideration and decision at a later date.*

**1. Public Comments**

**2. Executive Staff Response to Public Comments**

There were no requests to speak.

**B. Consent Agenda – Discussion/Possible Actions:**

*All matters under Consent Agenda are considered by the Board to be routine (i.e. Minutes and/or signatory authority for bank accounts), and will be enacted by a single motion approving the Consent Agenda. If discussion is desired on any particular consent item, a Board Member may ask that item be removed from the Consent Agenda to be considered separately.*

1. October 18, 2022 Board Minutes

*Board Chair Soto made a motion to approve the Consent Agenda, Board Member Comello seconded, there was no further discussion and the motion passed unanimously.*

**C. Financial Report and Updates – Dominic Filosa and Gabe Buldra, Finance Director**

**1. Discussion/Possible Action: Review and Approval of October 2022 Finance Report**

Dominic Filosa, JVG associate, gave a financial overview for the month of October showing numbers across board in revenue under the budgeted amounts for October.

Expenditures in personnel costs were over budget due to wildland deployments.

Year-to-date numbers are showing approximately \$90K under budget and expense percentages are maintaining in comparison to the prior year.

Board member McNeal asked Mr. Buldra, at what point do we become concerned about tax revenues not coming in as anticipated? Mr. Buldra replied that there are mitigating factors and fluctuations due to Treasurer’s office getting bills out late, etc., but property taxes do not fluctuate as much as other revenue streams so this was not a major concern, at this time.

Chairman Soto followed up with a question about revenues that seem to be consistently under budget and Mr. Buldra stated that it depends on what they are and that as an overall picture, the numbers are good and SFD is ahead overall year-to-date.

*Chairman Soto made a motion to approve the October 2022 finance report as presented, Board Member McNeal seconded, there was no further discussion and the motion passed unanimously.*

**D. Staff Items:**

1. October 2022 Monthly Fire Chief Report

a. Call Volume and Response Review – Fire Chief

- Incident Summary and Year to Date Comparison

Chief Mezulis at this time inquired of the Board what further information they were interested in, as in the one-on-one meetings, each had expressed a desire to see call times, response times, etc. and that he would like to present the desired information. There was some discussion and the consensus seemed to be that the time from alarm to on-scene was the most preferred. Member Comello stated that he did not think that the public realized how big the SFD response area is and the placement of 5 stations was so strategic to response times. Chief Mezulis agreed to develop a modifiable report to show at the next board meeting.

b. Administration Updates – Director of Administrative Services Heidi Robinson

- News and Events – Haunted Ambulance at Halloween Uptown was very popular and the turnout was excellent. There was a link to Red Cross blood donation sites by a QR Code created by Matthew Spinelli.

The updated website has been launched. Check it out and give feedback. Training for key personnel will begin soon.

Toy for Tots – Toy donation box in the office, outlined the bike ride up Mt. Everest and the tower climb by employees, taking place on December 3

- Staffing Updates – User tech position candidate screening interviews on November 16 for 2 viable candidates.
  - Upcoming – Pancakes with Santa, 12/3 with City of Sedona; Breakfast with Santa, December 4 with local chef; Bike “Rodeo” December 11; ASHER training, December 9-11 (Board and staff are welcome to participate)
  - Mental Health Moment: Prostate Cancer Awareness Month.
- c. Operations Activities – Assistant Chief Jayson Coil

#### **Telecom Report**

- Oct 18 and November 2 we experienced approximately 20-minute outages on Ch3 due to networking issues
- Main network switch at station 1 is having intermittent issues - two replacement interface cards are being shipped to help us while we wait for our shipment of new switches.
- **Fire Station 3 radio tower and Fire Station 4 radio tower** require additional evaluation of loading before they can proceed.
- **Met with Motorola on system design** and collected additional information for the Rough Order of Magnitude (ROM) to be used for the grant application
- Radio technician hiring process ongoing
- New website is live and tested with the developer.
- Help Desk ticketing system migration is mostly completed.

#### **GIS Report**

- Continue to integrate into the regional and state GIS community.
- Working with internal SMEs to better understand how we use GIS for response and pre-incident planning
- Updated Active911 with new hydrants, key boxes, and some changes per crew

#### Completed Training

- Mobile data collection Fieldmaps
- Surveys and Forms Survey123
- Spatial data analytics

#### Ongoing Training

- ArcGIS Online: Administration Essentials (upcoming)
- ArcGIS Online – custom (70%)
- ArcGIS Pro – custom (20%)

#### Other challenges or resolutions to challenges

- HP DesignJet Z5400 (large format printer) has been repaired and is operational
- ArcGIS Online Licensing:
  - Will purchase critical licenses to support CRR work and pre-planning
  - Additional licenses will be purchased in the new year to expand AGOL use and coincide with [existing] license renewals

#### Planned Future Efforts

- Diagram known GIS workflows
- Establish custom reports from ESO
- Add Evacuation Areas to web maps
- Update TRT Map – previous version from August 2020
- Establish a Training group in AGOL; sketch out training apps/exercises
- Attend Esri Southwest Summit 11/15

#### **Wildland**

- THIRA Development with both Counties and the City of Sedona THREAT AND HAZARD IDENTIFICATION AND RISK ASSESSMENT (THIRA)
  - Three-step risk assessment completed every three years

- Requires communities to identify threats and hazards of most concern Requires communities to set targets to determine a community's capability level to address core capabilities
- Helps communities understand their risks and determine the level of capability they need to address those risks
- Outputs from this process lay the foundation for determining a community's capability
- Some Core Capabilities
  - Public Information and Warning
  - Operational Coordination
  - Intelligence and Information Sharing
  - Long-term Vulnerability Reduction
  - Risk and Disaster Resilience Assessment
  - Threats and Hazards Identification
  - Evacuation
  - Fire Management and Suppression
  - Mass Search and Rescue Operations
- ENSO -El Nino Southern Oscillation
  - Forecasts indicate a 75 percent chance that La Niña—the cool phase of the ENSO climate pattern—will persist across the tropical Pacific for the third winter in a row. Impacts are normally warmer and dryer winter. Triple dip La-Nina is rare
  - 30-day climate outlook 33-40% chance of above normal temps, 33-40% chance of above normal precip.
  - 90-day outlook – 50% chance below normal precip with a 50% chance of above normal temperature.

#### **Programs and Projects**

- Internal challenges in government and normally based on process, policy, and people.
  - Lots of effort on defining and memorializing process, BC JD and testing in January, Engineer JD and testing in March.
- d. Community Risk Reduction Activities – Acting Fire Marshal Kirk Riddell
 

Acting Fire Marshal Kirk Riddell reviewed inspection, plan review and consultation numbers for the month of October.

Fire extinguisher training was held at SEC, with more to follow.

Two smoke detectors and a carbon monoxide detector were placed in a home referred by ACCESS with the monitors donated by the Red Cross.

FM Riddell and Firefighter Puyana are now certified Arson I investigators. Next class is in March, which they will be attending.

There was one fire investigation on Topki Drive this past month. The homeowner was replacing boards and staining the back deck and spontaneous combustion fire occurred that evening.

FM Riddell spoke about “Freddy the Fire Engine” that was re-deployed for public affairs at Uptown Halloween. Jeremy Vargas cleaned and revitalized the fire truck, which was used at public events in the past but has been sitting in the annex. Chief Mezulis said Freddy has a voice modulator and squirts water and Vargas is a genius with fixing things and had it all up and ready to go for Halloween festivities. They are replacing the cassette player with a Bluetooth speaker and will continue using for public events.
- e. Operational Support – Fire Chief Ed Mezulis
 

Fire Chief Mezulis expressed his appreciation to Pat Ojeda while he was on light duty for all his assistance with EMS activities. He assisted in coordinating advanced training and inventory supply issues, including the Rapid Sequence Intubation (RSI) training that was recently completed. This training is very useful during rescues as the drugs used to paralyze and sedate are administered on scene to enable transport. Guardian Air provided high tech training tools and was instrumental in the training activities, as well.

There are many changes at Northern Arizona Health that are creating a noticeable impact on SFD operations. More cardiac patients are being transported to Flagstaff, taking our ambos out of

service for the drive time. There are no more blood products at SEC and Verde Valley ambulance is experiencing increased activity and reduced availability. Also, the increased frequency of transports to Phoenix and Flagstaff are impacting SFD.

Fleet needs are few and Mike has been able to do everything in house, rather than ordering parts and repairs. Board Member McCarthy inquired about what type of drugs are being administered during the RSI and Board Member McNeal expressed concern about the NAH decision to not have blood products. Chief Mezulis stated that NAH decisions are out of SFD's control, and they continue to try to work and meet with the CEO to determine pathway forward. The Fire Chief is continuing to try to re-engage with NAH as a strong community partner and is now asking for reasoning behind decisions rather than just adapt and adjust mentality. Chief Mezulis stated that it is an on-going process as they go through leadership changes, staffing issues, etc., but he will stay engaged.

Board Member Comello asked if there was not a benefit to transporting by helicopter vs. ground. There was a discussion regarding arial services, costs of air transport, and weather stoppages to flying. Chief Mezulis mentioned that there is a possibility of another helicopter in Verde Valley upcoming. Guardian has been basically down since September due to upgrading aircraft and staffing changes.

f. Fire Chief Activities – Fire Chief

- Station 4 Construction: Chief Mezulis and Chief Coil had a meeting with Wilmeng Construction regarding the 2 options. Chief Mezulis continues to work with the City of Sedona regarding vacant properties that might better serve our needs and could be traded or work together to accomplish a better situation.
- Radio Infrastructure – This project continues to move forward and packages are being put together for upgrades and improvements. As there is an 8-month lead time for parts, SFD is trying to stay ahead of that timeline with ordering, installation, etc.
- Purchase Orders between \$10,000 - \$50,000 since the last Board Meeting  
Lexipol – annual contract for policy and procedure storage \$10,201  
Stryker – contract of ambo gurney maintenance \$15,948
- Correspondence/Thank You Letters to SFD  
\$50 donation from Snead Family Trust in memory of Larry & Donna Brooks  
Thank you card from Lori Mannella (hit by car while riding bicycle)
- Public Outreach and Communication  
Social media engagement is down a little, could be changes in personnel at Twitter.

At this time, Chairman Soto asked Chief Mezulis about the IT audit/review and if the immediate needs had been determined from that audit. Chief Mezulis apologized and stated that the Pegasus report was complete and SFD received actionables from said report. He noted that the report was being used to help guide the next steps and serving as a guiding document for the future upgrades. Board Member McNeal followed up with a request to see the “road map” and the projected steps for next year. Chief Mezulis said that he will have something for the Board at the next meeting. Chairman Soto asked about the increased anticipated transports and if there were mutual aid agreements in place to assist. Chief Mezulis let the Board know that while SFD does have agreements in place, everywhere is experiencing greater call volume and that SFD is currently tracking data regarding the Phoenix transports and times when SFD is out of ambos to respond to emergency calls.

Board Member McCarthy stated that we are all noticing and experiencing the impacts to the healthcare systems and he was disappointed in the failure of Proposition 310, as it affects fire district service throughout the state.

E. Discussion/Possible Action: Approval of BAC request to replace E516, Type 6 Wildland Engine.

There was discussion regarding which Engine was being replaced, as two were referenced in the BAC. Chief Mezulis stated that there were typos and that it was Engine 516 being replaced.

Chief Mezulis stated that the current apparatus has been all over the country and took him to Canada on his first Wildland deployment for SFD. The current engine lacks the storage for the equipment necessary and the use has changed over the years it has been in service. SFD is in need of an engine that will safely seat 4 firefighters, house the necessary equipment, and have better 4-wheel drive capability. Chief Mezulis stated that with the 2-year build time/time to receive, this purchase aligns with the capital plan and this vehicle was scheduled for replacement this fiscal year. The manufacturer agreed to hold chassis and pricing until the BAC was approved by the Board. Chairman Soto asked if 3 bids were needed and Chief Mezulis stated the purchase was covered under the GACC and guaranteed to be the best price.

*Chairman Soto motions to approve the purchase of a new type 6 engine from BME/Hughes Fire Equipment for the amount of \$281,103.72. Board Member McCarthy seconds the motion. No further discussion was held and the motion was unanimously approved.*

#### **F. Board Member Items:**

##### **1. Discussion:**

Janet Jablow: One-on-One with Fire Chief was very enjoyable, impressed with his vision for SFD.

Helen McNeal: Also had One-on-One with Chief, Karpool Karaoke, to Station 4. She also supports his vision for SFD. She expressed an interest in meeting the firefighters and was able to do so on her ride with Chief Mezulis. Looking forward to ASHER training next month. She continues to sign a lot of checks!

Gene McCarthy: One-on-One meeting with Fire Chief and enjoyed hearing his vision for SFD. He also spoke about his "Hero" Alan Brunacini, from Phoenix, and the Customer Service booklets written by Chief Brunacini that Chief Mezulis is distributing to staff.

Al Comello: Attended Uptown Halloween and this is last official Board meeting. Member Comello spoke about being proud of what has been accomplished during his tenure on the Fire Board and stated that he never thought he would hold such a position.

Chairman Dave Soto: . Chairman Soto also had one-on-one meeting with Fire Chief and appreciates that when there is a common thread in all the meetings, that the Chief is addressing that to all members at the Board meetings.

Chief Mezulis stated that he wants to add value, not just content to the meetings and appreciates the requests and feedback he is getting from Board members.

Thanked Member Comello for his service on the Fire Board and said that he brought a different perspective to the meetings and humor to them, as well. Member Comello stated that serving on the Fire Board was the most important thing he had ever done and that he is amazed how much the public doesn't know about what SFD does. He stated that the general public is getting a LOT for their tax dollars, with SFD. He mentioned that he will attend the swearing in for new Board Member Scott Springett and stated that he appreciated how seriously Scott was taking the new responsibility. He said that he felt Scott would do a better job than he could ever hope to, and he is honored that Scott was willing to take his position on the Board.

Chairman Soto asked that the dates proposed for next year's meeting dates be placed on the agenda for approval for next month.

He spoke then about becoming involved in Firewise in the Prescott area and he has been appointed the Vice-Chair for that Board with Chief Booth serving on the Executive Board in an advisory capacity. He is looking forward to bringing the program local using Prescott's knowledge, funding and experience and getting local lots cleared of debris, brush and grasses.

### III. ADJOURNMENT

Chairman Soto adjourned the meeting at 6:32 p.m.

//signed Eugene McCarthy 12/14/22//

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Gene McCarthy, Clerk of the Board

*SFD Multipurpose Room is accessible to the handicapped. In compliance with Americans with Disabilities Act, those with special needs, such as large print or other reasonable accommodations, may request them by calling 928-282-6800.*

Posted by:

Date:

Time: