



Sedona Fire District

2860 Southwest Drive, Sedona, Arizona 86336
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REGULAR BOARD MEETING

Station #1 – 2860 Southwest Drive – Sedona – Multipurpose
Room Tuesday, January 17, 2023 / 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 4:30 PM on Tuesday, January 17, 2023. 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; Helen McNeal – Clerk; Gene McCarthy, Scott Springett, Janet Jablow – Members. Others Present: Fire Chief Ed Mezulis; Assistant Chief Jayson Coil (telephonically); Director of Administrative Services Heidi Robinson (telephonically); Gabe Buldra, JVG; Bill Whittington, Attorney (telephonically); Fire Marshal Dori Booth; 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 14 Police Officers and firefighters who passed away since the previous Board Meeting.

II. PRESENTATION OF AWARDS/STAFF RECOGNITION

A. Acknowledgment of Years of Service: Battalion Chief Dave Cochrane was acknowledged for 25 years of service to SFD. Fire Chief Ed Mezulis outlined BC Cochrane's background and experiences in the fire service, which began long before he began working at SFD. Chairman Soto thanked BC Cochrane for a job well done and said that his contributions have not gone unnoticed. BC Cochrane remarked that the days were long but the years were short.

B. Promotion/Badge Pinning (Engineer): Fire Chief Ed Mezulis stated that Engineer Price had previously been promoted and that SFD had missed pinning his badge. Again, Chief Mezulis gave a short bio of Engineer Price's experiences prior to SFD and his employment. Engineer Price's wife pinned his badge, with his 2 sons in attendance. Chairman Soto thanked and congratulated Engineer Price.

Chairman Soto called to recess for 10 minutes for pictures with the honorees at 4:40 p.m.
The Meeting reconvened at 4:50 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 the 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. December 13, 2022, Board Minutes

Board Chair Soto asked for a motion to approve the Consent Agenda, Board Clerk McNeal motioned to approve, Janet Jablow seconded. There was no further discussion and the motion passed unanimously.

C. Financial Report – Gabe Buldra, Finance Director

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

Gabe Buldra of JVG Associates provided the December 2022 Financial Report outlining the status of SFD funds and accounts. He mentioned that there was a collection of property tax and marijuana tax in December, and that, overall, SFD is exactly where we need to be, 6 months into the fiscal year.

Board Member Jablow asked about the percentage of tax collected on marijuana sales. Mr. Buldra reported that it's part of the sales tax and the distribution to public safety was part of what sold the legalization to the voters. SFD receives payments in December and June.

Chairman Soto asked about the number of vacancies counted towards the personnel costs and between Mr. Buldra and Fire Chief Mezulis, the vacancy number was five positions.

Chairman Soto made a motion to approve the December 2022 Finance Report, Member McCarthy seconded, there was no further discussion and the motion passed unanimously.

D. Staff Items:

1. December 2022 Monthly Fire Chief Report

a. Administration Updates – Director of Administrative Services Heidi Robinson

News and Events – The awards committee has met, and all awards have been selected.

AFDA Conference in Laughlin, NV was held last week. Compliance training is available online for those board members who need to attend, please let us know if we can assist you in registering.

Upcoming – RunSedona ½ Marathon, February 4. SFD will be providing support as we have in the past.

A “Need to Meet” email will be sent out for Board Workshop dates, to determine the best February date.

The St. Patrick’s Day Parade is on City calendar and SFD looks forward to participating as we have in the past.

Staffing Updates – BC Promotional Testing on February 1-2. There are four candidates.

Engineer Promotion Testing will occur later in the spring, there are nine candidates to evaluate.

Mental Health Moment: January is Mental Wellness Month.

b. Operations Activities – Assistant Chief Jayson Coil

Assistant Chief Coil briefed on the unusual precipitation activity in a La Nina year and discussed that SFD is preparing for flooding that may arise from the unusually wet winter.

Chief Coil briefed regarding a spire rescue that SFD assisted in, with DPS. The activity stressed the importance of additional cold weather gear for SFD operations personnel, which is currently being sourced.

Wet winter weather has alleviated the drought in Northern Arizona at this time and the additional moisture should push back catastrophic spring fires. Snowpack all around N. AZ exceeds expectations with the Verde Valley basin being 228% above predicted. There is continued precipitation in the forecast for the coming weeks which, if it is a rain over snowfall situation could produce flooding.

GIS is working with Lars Romig and the TRT team to produce new maps with additional features. Also working to pinpoint Active 9-1-1 features. GIS should have a heat map of incidents ready for the next board meeting.

Telecom had an incident on 12/28 when the Schnebly Hill tower lost power. With major roadways closed and generator working intermittently, the batteries would only last approximately 12 hours. Bob Motz and Mike Sheehan took the mechanic work truck and the UTV to the Schnebly exit and accessed the site with the UTV. While enroute, they encountered two lost hikers who had no winter gear and no working phone. They took the hikers and continued to the tower site to assess the situation. It was determined that a thermostat needed replacement. They came back to the work truck, dispatched the hikers to their party, obtained the needed parts off the work truck and returned to fix the problem. As this is going to be a continuing problem during bad weather, and the estimated outage time from APS was 36 hours, it was determined that additional propane should be on-site in case of extended outage. The road is washed out and will need to be bulldozed and improved to the tower. There will be some unforeseen expenses to open the road and install additional propane features (1,000 gallon tank) and to give the propane company to access the site. Board Chair Soto clarified that the precipitation levels and rain over snow event and asked what the saturation point of the and if SFD was preparing Public Service announcements regarding that situation. Chief Coil advised that ops continues to train for swiftwater rescues and 2 boats are available. SFD is working with Sedona Police should SR179 is closed.

c. Community Risk Reduction Activities –Fire Marshal Dori Booth

Chief Booth thanked her staff, especially Kirk and Carla, for holding down the fort and continuing operations of the office. She also thanked the Ops Light Duty personnel who have been assisting in inspections and plan reviews. She thanked the SFD “family” for everything from leave donations, to visits, to helping with chores and feeding her parents while she was out of commission.

CRR is back to working on amending the 2021 International Code for WUI and it should be ready for adoption by the end of the year. She is working on intergovernmental agreements with local agencies, as well.

This year is the 20th anniversary of the canyon cleanup, and the site will be moving from Uptown to somewhere in West Sedona. Currently, sites are being evaluated for best placement and ease of use.

This morning Chief Booth was out taking photos of local creeks and rivers to assist and support Public Service Announcements about flooding activities and Chief Booth is working with Glendale FD Public Information Officer to distribute information regionally, as most of Sedona visitors are from the metro Phoenix area. Chief Mezulis stated that this is very much a Chamber of Commerce model and most of the day/weekend visitors coming into Sedona are from the metro area, this will get the word to those people earlier and make them aware of local area incidents and situations.

d. Operational Support – Fire Chief Ed Mezulis

Fire Chief Mezulis stated that Captain Pat Ojeda has been very helpful in filling this position while on light duty, ordering supplies and dealing with the hospital. He is also training and running pediatric codes with shifts on the HandTevvy system and upgrades.

Captain Wells is stepping up to again manage Pulsepoint with a soft launch on February 1. The community launch of the system will be on February 14. This is grant funded at this time.

The TRT chassis has arrived and is heading for Colorado on Monday for upfitting.

Mechanic Mike Sheehan has received his Commercial Driver’s License. Engineers are not required to have CDL licenses to drive apparatus, but Sheehan felt that his on the road times with the vehicles warranted him obtaining one.

Over 17,000 training hours were completed in December.

Board Member McCarthy mentioned that the “father of EMS” Dr. Nagel had passed away this past week. He was the innovator of pre-hospital care and invented the Bio-Com, which transmitted EKG’s to hospital while enroute.

Board Clerk McNeal thanked Chief Mezulis for Pulsepoint. Chief Mezulis stated that the redevelopment of the product, including the narcotics overdosing made it more feasible and should get more people involved locally.

e. Fire Chief Activities – Fire Chief Ed Mezulis

Call Volume and Response Review

a. Incident Summary and Year-to-Date Comparison – remain relatively steady and as expected

b. Response Times – There are differing benchmarks for response times depending on NFPA or State of Arizona standards. Station 5 response times are a smaller data set and Chief feels that the construction and stoplight in Oak Creek Canyon contributed to the response times, but he will drill down further. Ambulance transports and interfacility transfers take a lot of time and the BCs do a great job of juggling resources to keep ambos available.

c. Strategic Plan:

Ops:

-IT Assessment/Implementation

The assessment has been completed and delivered. The scope of work was step 2 and the switches have arrived and are being programmed. Step 3 will be modernizing remote sites and upgrading systems and he will have some firm numbers for the budget workshop.

-Microsoft 365 implementation – complete. Side benefit of having the light duty personnel learning the new software and being able to take it back to the floor and assist users.

-Other Strategic themes included addressing mandatory overtime, ambulance availability, wildland deployment. The policies are being reviewed and evaluated.

-Out the Door Response times are not able to be extracted from the current system used. Chief Mezulis will continue to work with ESO and personnel to obtain that information and should have a slide for next month's board meeting with those times.

Board Chair Soto asked about Microsoft 365 deployment and the ability to confidentially distribute board information as with Maas360. Assistant Chief Coil stated that there has been multiple issues with MaaS360 vendor and that another vendor has been identified and the program is in testing now to replace MaaS360. The new program will integrate more efficiently with Microsoft 365 and allow for more secure distribution of confidential information. Chief Mezulis and Assistant Chief Coil have weekly progress meetings with Bob Motz to stay informed and involved.

Chairman Soto then asked about shutting down engines to staff rescue/ambos. Chief Mezulis said that it is rare, but it has happened, usually in the summer months and that SFD does have reserve ambulances at the bookend stations, if necessary.

Admin:

-Development/Launch of new website – The website has launched and is active. Training of administrative staff next week will enable staff to keep content fresh and updated.

-SFD Marketing Plan – Chief Mezulis said he has not revisited this at this point.

Board Member McCarthy stated that Golder Ranch marketing plan has community involvement and to speak to them. Chief Mezulis stated that the Chief there was one of his long-time mentors and he would be in touch regarding the marketing plan.

-Digitizing Files – working on getting light duty personnel involved and should have progress made by the end of 2nd Quarter.

-Standardization of recruitment process (HR)- Chief Mezulis stated that there are only a few job descriptions that have not been rewritten and those are being developed per position. He would like to have the Training Officer more involved in the field. Administrative task books are being developed for administrative positions to ensure coverage.

Ops Support:

-Retool and update BC task books,

-Standardization of EMS consumable inventory

-Mechanic work requests

CRR

-Updating Fire Code

-Airport development – fuel tanks are on site.

Chief Booth stated that the airport has been working on infrastructure and new hangars and working to meet NFPA requirements.

d. Station 4 Update: Wilmeng Construction presented 2 scenarios, 1) purchase the adjoining property (owner does not want to sell) or 2) make it work as it is. Chief Mezulis found building

plans from 2016 that would rework the property design and Wilmeng is currently evaluating. The City of Sedona was willing to work with Chief Mezulis but asked that SFD exhaust all possible options before asking for a trade due to the tower issues/placement, and easement issues involved with the current property.

Chairman Soto said it was refreshing to hear that progress is being made but he would prefer that one or two areas are highlighted and to see a measuring device to show red to green progress areas. Chief Mezulis stated that the foundational pieces are now in place to show measured improvements. Board Clerk McNeal stated that implementation of things like Microsoft 365, take the win, and don't move the goals back. It HAS been implemented.

Chairman Soto stated that Station 4 should be taken out of the bullet points in Chief's report and agendaized so that the board can give direction and feedback. As it stands now, they do not have any method in which to direct movement. Chief Mezulis said that the AFDA training had reminded him of this.

E. Discussion/Possible Action: SFD Governing Board Workshop dates and content; coordination:

Chairman Soto stated that a February date needed to be chosen and asked that a "Need to Meet" email be sent and hours determined (8-4, 9-4, etc.). The Chairman stated that the blueprint had been made and presenters just needed to be plugged into time slots.

F. Board Member Items:

1. Discussion:

Gene McCarthy: Nothing to report as he has been out of town.

Janet Jablow: Nothing to report.

Helen McNeal: Usual activities, had one-on-one with Chief Mezulis and looking forward to her next meeting with him.

Scott Springett: Had his tutorial on the iPad today with Josh Clouch. He has been getting out into the community and trying to answer questions about his new position.

Chairman Dave Soto: Chairman Soto stated that continues to work with Firewise and Chief Booth. He also feels that his one-on-one monthly meetings with the Chief is not enough allotted time and he will be asking to schedule more. He stated that this agenda item, with Board members reporting their activities shows the community that they are active in what is happening and their involvement with SFD.

III. ADJOURNMENT

Chairman Soto adjourned the meeting at 6:31 p.m.

Helen McNeal, 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: