

**MINUTES
SUN CITY FIRE DISTRICT
SPECIAL MEETING
TUESDAY, MAY 17, 2022
9:30 A.M.**

CALL TO ORDER: David Mann, Chairman

ROLL CALL:

Members Present: David Mann, Tim Wilmes, Phil LaBarbera, Stephen Arnold, David VanderNaalt

Members Absent: None

Staff: Assistant Fire Chief Rob Schmitz, Deputy Chief Jason Casey, Battalion Chief Sherry Hood, Office Manager Lisa Neubert, Payroll Specialist Liz Campos, USCFFA Vice President Adam Holliday, USCFFA Trustee David Musselman

BUSINESS CONDUCTED: The Committees of the Board discussed various matters within their areas of responsibility.

I. Legal and Insurance

- A. Board member Stephen Arnold made a motion to move this agenda item, Intergovernmental Agreement for Contracted Fire Chief Services, to agenda item VIII.A. Board member David VanderNaalt seconded the motion. The board voted unanimously to move agenda item I.A to agenda item VIII, A. (M: Stephen Arnold/S: David VanderNaalt; Ayes: David Mann, Tim Wilmes, Phil LaBarbera, Stephen Arnold, and David VanderNaalt. Nays: None)**

- B. Assistant Chief Schmitz gave an update on proposals for the engagement of a feasibility study with Arizona Fire & Medical Authority. So far one proposal has been received from Emergency Services Consulting International (ESCI), which he handed out to the board for their review. Requests for feasibility study proposals have also been sent to Policy Logic, Center for Public Safety Management (CPSM), Emergency Services Consulting International (ESCI) and Facets Consulting. Board member VanderNaalt**

asked if there was a closing date. Chief Schmitz stated that it would take a few months to do an official "Request for Proposal" for a bid submission process, so to save time he has directly contacted agencies who have performed fire service feasibility studies. He will forward on proposals to the board as he receives them.

- C. Chief Schmitz presented Resolution 22-0517A, a resolution for a call to election for the November 8, 2022, general election. This is routine resolution that is done bi-annually on election years. Board member Tim Wilmes made a motion to approve Resolution 22-0517A. Board member David VanderNaalt seconded the motion. The board voted unanimously to approve Resolution 22-0517A. (M: Tim Wilmes/S: David VanderNaalt; Ayes: David Mann, Tim Wilmes, Phil LaBarbera, Stephen Arnold, and David VanderNaalt. Nays: None)

II. Budget and Finance

- A. Finance Director Gabe Buldra presented the draft FY2023 budget. This year the district received a 4.6% increase on its assessed valuation. He recapped significant items in the budget as follows:
1. A 5.9% cost of living adjustment to all employees.
 2. Added positions – (1) deputy chief, (3) firefighter rovers, and increasing the part-time EMS administrative position to a full-time, 40-hour position.
 3. Increase and realignment of the EMS pay scale for EMTs and paramedics so that the separation between EMT and paramedics is uniform like it is within the suppression pay scales between EMT and paramedic positions. This change will also make the EMS pay scales more competitive in the employment market.
 4. Increased budget amount for turnout gear acquisition and contracting the use of a third party for turnout inspections, which has previously been done in-house.
 5. A large increase in worker compensation premiums due to the large amount of COVID claims filed and the changes in the law with respect to presumptive cancer.
 6. An increase in the fuel item line due to increasing costs for gasoline and diesel.

With all the of budget changes, the mill rate for the draft FY2023 budget is \$3.34. Mr. Buldra noted that this year the fire district tax levy cap was raised to \$3.375. Board member Wilmes stated that he would like to see money budgeted for a possible shared fire chief agreement and the cost of the upcoming feasibility study rather than taking money for these items from the district's capital account. Board member Stephen Arnold made a motion that two draft budgets be prepared for the May 24, 2022, board meeting. One budget as presented today with a mill rate of \$3.34 and one with the costs for the study and possible shared chief agreement with a mill tax rate of \$3.375. Board member Tim Wilmes seconded the motion. The board vote was four ayes and one nay to approve the presentation of two budgets at the May 24, 2022, meeting. The motion passed. (M: Stephen Arnold/S: Tim Wilmes; Ayes: Tim Wilmes, Phil LaBarbera, Stephen Arnold, and David VanderNaalt. Nays: David Mann)

III. Fire Department Operations

- A. None**

IV. Ambulance Operations

- A. None**

V. Grounds and Equipment

- A. Assistant Chief Schmitz presented a proposal for the purchase of six (6) new ventilator transport autovents. The autovents currently used by the district are twenty years old and it is becoming increasingly harder to find parts for repair. This purchase would put one new unit on each front-line ambulance and one on each spare ambulance. Board member David VanderNaalt inquired about the warranty. Randy Tirman will research what the warranty terms are. This item will be an action item on the May 24, 2022, board meeting agenda.**

VI. Special Projects

- A. Battalion Chief Adam Holliday, former chapter vice president of the United Sun City Firefighters Association (USCFFA), thanked the board for their good working relationship with the membership. He also introduced Kevin Brown, the new vice president of USCFFA, to the board. Board member Stephen Arnold presented Mr. Brown with a briefcase/portfolio for use in his new position.**
- B. The board at this time opened the floor for public comments by the union membership in attendance. Engineer Fred Ohrt, Captain Jaime Soto, and Firefighter Dustin Ashford all spoke, giving support to retaining Chief Burdick as the district's fire chief through a shared fire chief agreement.**
- C. Board member Stephen Arnold responded to criticism of the board by several individuals. He stated that the word "fair" is an arbitrary word and that the board's goal is to be "equitable" in their decisions and actions.**

VII. Executive Session

- A. Board member Stephen Arnold made a motion for the board to go into executive session pursuant to A.R.S. Section 38.431.03(A)(4) to discuss contract negotiations relating to agenda items I.A., Intergovernmental Agreement for Contracted Fire Chief Services. Board member David VanderNaalt seconded the motion. The board voted unanimously to go into Executive session at 10:35 a.m. (M: Stephen Arnold/S: David VanderNaalt; Ayes: David Mann, Tim Wilmes, Phil LaBarbera, Stephen Arnold, and David VanderNaalt. Nays: None)**
- B. The executive session adjourned at 11:21 a.m. and the regular meeting resumed.**

- C. Board member Tim Wilmes read a statement on behalf of the board. The statement read: "We, as a unified board, have decided that with the feasibility study going forward, the board is not going to take any action on the fire chief position. This means that we will not sign a shared fire chief contract and any decision on that position will be made after the feasibility study is complete." USCFFA vice president Kevin Brown asked who the fire chief is now as the former shared fire chief agreement has been voided. Board member Tim Wilmes responded that Assistant Chief Rob Schmitz will be the acting fire chief until the feasibility study is complete.

VIII. Adjournment

- A. Board member Stephen Arnold made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Board member David VanderNaalt seconded the motion. The board voted unanimously to adjourn the meeting at 11:26 a.m. (M: Stephen Arnold/S: David VanderNaalt; Ayes: David Mann, Tim Wilmes, Phil LaBarbera, Stephen Arnold, and David VanderNaalt. Nays: None)

FOR THE BOARD

Tim Wilmes

Tim Wilmes
Clerk of the Board
TW/lbn