

**MINUTES OF REGULAR MEETING OF THE  
RINCON VALLEY FIRE DISTRICT GOVERNING BOARD MEETING  
HELD April 18, 2019**

A public meeting of the Rincon Valley Fire District Governing Board was convened on **April 18, 2019 at 6:00 P.M.** at RVFD Station 2; 14550 E. Sands Ranch Rd. Vail, AZ 85641. Present at the meeting were the following members of the Rincon Valley Fire District Governing Board: Chairperson Michelle Harrington, Clerk Mark Tate, Member Jennifer Spears, Member Christopher Klasen attended telephonically.

The following matters were discussed, considered and decided at the meeting:

**1. Call to Order** at 6:04 P.M by Chairperson Harrington

|  |                        |
|--|------------------------|
| A. Roll Call - Chairperson Michelle Harrington | present                |
| Clerk Mark Tate                                | present                |
| Member Terry Newman                            | absent                 |
| Member Jennifer Spears                         | present                |
| Member Chris Klasen                            | present telephonically |

- Also attending – Fire Chief Jayme Kahle, Administrative Manager Laura Bucklin. RVFD Attorney Donna Aversa was also in attendance.

**2. Pledge of Allegiance** – Firefighter Paramedic William Barber lead the pledge of allegiance.

**3. Date of next meeting scheduled for May 16, 2019 at 5:00 P.M.**

- Confirmed by four board members.

**4. Call to the Public**

- A Thank You note was written from a resident thanking B-Shift St. #2 Crews for bringing the fire truck to her son's birthday party.
- Chief Kahle mentioned to the Board that the Annual Arizona Fire District Association (AFDA) Conference is being held in July 2019, and highly recommended board members to attend.

**5. Consent Agenda**

**Approval of Consent Agenda** – Motion by Chairperson Harrington, second by Member Spears to approve all items on the Consent Agenda except for Item C. Motion to remove Item C from the Consent Agenda. Motion passed 4 to 0.

- Approval of the Minutes of the March 20, 2019 Regular Board Meeting.
- Review, discussion and possible action to approve Resolution #19-020 to establish the District Fee Schedule.
- Review, discussion and possible action to approve the Base Hospital Agreement with Carondelet. (Removed from Consent Agenda).

- D. Approval of Resolution #19-021 Margaret Witt Annexation (8051 S. Avenida Ana).

## 6. Reports and Correspondence

- A. **Fire Chief's Report** – Reviewed by the Board. Report on file.
- Chief Kahle attended the bi-monthly meeting at Rosemont mine. They have all permits to open.
  - Chief Kahle met with developer of Rocking K and they are planning to proceed with the project later this summer. Total build-out is 4,000 homes. Phase 1 is 1,150 homes.
  - We completed the cutover between TCR Solutions and GRFD IT.
  - Firefighter PM Recruitment – Our recruit has passed all tests and will start on April 8th.
  - Voter Issue. Sent letter requesting a waiver to Steve Christy's office. The total was \$4,900.
  - SAFER Grant. The SAFER grant was submitted. The published award dates start in June
  - Staffing. We hope to be only one person short due to industrial injury. Engineer Foster is now on modified duty. The Local Pension Board approved Paramedic Ben Wooley's request for catastrophic retirement and Ben has submitted his resignation for April 30, 2019. We have Ben's replacement starting on April 8, 2019.
- B. **March's Financial Reports** – Review, discussion and possible action, of the district's financial status including monthly summary reports.
- Monthly Financial Report for the month of March 2019.
  - Monthly Expense Report for the month of March 2019.
  - Monthly Bank Reconciliations and Balance Sheet for the month of March 2019.
- Motion by Member Spears, second by Clerk Tate to approve the district's financial reports for the month of March 2019. Motion passed 4 to 0.

## 7. Unfinished Business

- A. **2019-029a – Review, discussion and possible action concerning dispatch center options for Rincon Valley Fire District.**
- Chief Kahle would like the Board to approve the IGA with Northwest Fire District for dispatch services (SAFERC). As stated last month, the chief advantages are 1)the ability to offer more services for our citizens (PulsePoint), 2)improved reliability for our internal folks, and 3)reduced expense for our taxpayers. The chief disadvantage is a slight increase in call processing time. Estimated 1st year cost to be \$59,715.45. We have the potential to save \$21,784.55 over the proposed VECC cost for FY19/20.

-Motion by Clerk Tate, second by Member Spears to enter into an agreement with the NWFD for dispatch services. Motion passed 4 to 0.

**B. 2019-032a – Review and discussion concerning the Fiscal Year 19/20 Budget.**

- The draft budget maintains the tax rate at \$2.7834.

Significant Changes:

- Merit/COLA in 19/20 Pay plan
- 14th FF (SAFER)
- Contracted FM Services
- Improved Bereavement Pay (72 hours)
- Improved Paramedic Pay
- Improved pay for needed skills - wage differentials - Engine Boss, Fire Officer I, Driver/Operator, Special Ops, PM.
- Enhanced Health Insurance (HSA contributions)

Requested Revenue increase of \$483,050

Requested Expense increase of \$476,050

- \$424,050 for personnel (\$242,050 in wages/benefits, \$182,000 for new FFs)

Average Taxpayer - \$679.40

Taxpayer Impact 3.97% (\$25.94)

We currently have a balanced budget. This budget maintains our reserves at 29% and our total net income reduces by \$31,000. We do predict future shortfalls in our forecast (assumed 5.29% growth rate).

Member Spears and Chief Kahle have reviewed the 2<sup>nd</sup> Draft Budget. Member Spears recommended using any surplus to invest in our firefighters through wages/compensation and benefits.

Chairperson Harrington voiced concerns regarding the sustainability of the budget and recommended saving some expense for the future. She also stated that the list of changes to the budget is a lot to ask for in one year and recommended possibly trimming some of the expense. She also voiced concerns regarding maintaining the carryover of funds at the end of the year to the Capital Fund. Chief Kahle stated that we would continue to carry over funds for Capital Replacement expenses. Chairperson Harrington stated that she realizes the firefighters work hard and she has faith in what Chief Kahle is recommending, but she is not comfortable with the way the budget is now and wants to make sure it will be sustainable.

Member Klasen stated that he was good with the way the budget stands now.

Chief Kahle stated that his concern is in approx. 4 years, we will have a deficit, but he also stated that we need to compensate our folks to make sure we have the right people for the right job. Chief Kahle discussed investing in our firefighters. He is endorsing this budget, but he realizes it may not be sustainable every year. This year we had a 10% increase, but he cannot predict that it will happen again next year. He continued to say that we need to be competitive with compensation, and most of our benefit premiums increased drastically.

The Board gave Chief Kahle direction to continue with the current direction of the 2<sup>nd</sup> draft budget. Chief Kahle mentioned the next step in the budget process is to present a tentative budget and post a public notice. No action taken. Discussion only.

## 8. New Business

### A. 2019-033 – Review, discussion and possible action to approve Policies # 4-002 Holidays, #4-015 Bereavement Leave, and #4-003 PTO Policy.

- Local 5100 and Chief Kahle have collaborated to prepare these three policy changes. Holiday Policy changed to providing an additional 0.5 hours of pay for each hour a shift employee that works on a holiday. Holiday pay does not count as hours worked for FLSA overtime purposes. The old policy provided 4 hours to all shift personnel. Bereavement Policy benefit was tripled to provide three shifts off for bereavement for shift personnel and 50 hours for staff personnel. The old policy only provided 24 hours for shift personnel and 16 hours for staff. Policy also expanded the classification of family member to be more permissive. PTO Donation Policy changes includes the expansion of the use of PTO for bereavement and expands classification of family members to be consistent with Sick Policy and Bereavement Policy. Estimated at \$22,000 annually.

Member Spears voiced concerns regarding the deletion of one of guidelines in the Bereavement Policy pertaining to granting leave to the co-workers in the event of a death of a firefighter or co-worker. She wanted to know why it was deleted, and wanted to make sure the district would allow such leave.

RVFD Attorney, Donna Aversa explained the process involved in case of a firefighter death and that the district and staff would be covered. It is based on a case by case basis, but other fire agencies would essentially cover the district and the firefighters or co-workers would be allowed to attend the memorial /funeral services.

Chief Kahle also stated that we would absolutely make arrangements that any employee of the district would be allowed to attend the memorial /funeral services. Chief Kahle also stated the each employee has a Line of Duty Death (LODD) Emergency Contact Information form in his or her personnel file that is updated annually. This forms gives the district information on who to contact in case of a firefighter death. It also lists which department members would accompany a Chief Fire Officer to make the notification to family members.

Motion by Clerk Tate, second by Member Spears to approve the updates to Policy #4-002 Holidays, #4-015 Bereavement, and #4-004 PTO Donation effective July 1, 2019. Motion passed 4 to 0.

**B. 2019-034 – Review, discussion and possible action to authorize the overspending of the Overtime Budget.**

- Chief Kahle would like permission to exceed line item within the overtime budget for FY 18/19. As of March 28th, we have currently spent 99.9% of our unscheduled overtime budget and we are only at 75% of our budget. I anticipate that we will exceed this sub line item (5112) by approximately \$32,000 by year's end. We have two choices - 1) we suspend 11 person staffing, or 2) we absorb the expense. We will probably be able to absorb the overage within the overall Personnel and Salaries line item (5100). The cause of the overage is a multitude of factors. However, the largest impact is that of the number of firefighters that were off shift due to medical issues. Chief Kahle is informing the board since this is an unusually large amount and it will come near or exceed his spending authority. He is anticipating that we will be over budget by \$32,000 within sub line item unscheduled overtime (5112), but will be within budget overall under line item 5100, Personnel and Salaries.

Motion by Member Spears, second by Clerk Tate to authorize the overspending of the FT 18/19 Overtime Budget. Motion passed 4 to 0.

**C. 2019-035 – Review, discussion and possible action to enter into a Prevention Services IGA with Northwest Fire District.**

- Tabled to next board meeting agenda.

**D. 2019-036 – Review, discussion and possible action to enter into an EMS Billing Services Agreement with Golder Ranch Fire District.**

- Chief Kahle would like to enter into an EMS Billing Services Agreement with the Golder Ranch Fire District (GRFD). We are currently under contract with Mediclaim Data Services (MDS) for EMS billing services. Our contract ends on June 30, 2019. When contract is up for renewal, it is a good time to review options. Those options include renewal, solicit bids, or enter into an agreement. Although we have received great service from MDS, it appears we are paying a relatively high fee of 8% of collectibles. Chief Kahle remembered that GRFD also offers EMS billing services and they charge 6% of collectibles. Since GRFD already hosts our data, we may be able to also improve some efficiencies, such as faster collections. GRFD also has notified me that their average collection rate is around 65% whereas our 2017/18 collection rate was 46%. Please note that actual rates may vary depending on payer mix. A 2% reduction in EMS Billing Fees will save us approximately \$1,000 annually. If we increase our collectible rate to 65%, we could realize an additional \$105,000 in revenue. Chief Kahle does not recommend changing Ambulance Revenue (4210). First year though.

RVFD Attorney Donna Aversa advised the Board that she also represents Golder Ranch Fire District, and since this is not an IGA, but an Agreement, she does not have to sign, but has reviewed the agreement.

Motion by Member Spears, second by Chairperson Harrington to enter into an agreement with Golder Ranch Fire District for EMS Billing Services effective July 1, 2019. Motion passed 4 to 0.

**E. 2019-037 – Review, discussion and possible action to approve the Workers Compensation Insurance Renewal.**

- Chief Kahle recommends Board approval for the Workers Compensation Insurance Renewal with Copper Point. Rincon Valley has been with this agency for many years and staff has a good working relationship that ensures our employees are covered for work related injuries and illnesses. Please note that there is only one other firm and our broker does not recommend them. Our rate did increase this year since our e-mod increased to 1.23 from the prior year rate of 0.91. The estimated rate, without overtime, is \$110,553. Luckily, our broker was able to help us avoid the full impact of the increase this year. We have budgeted \$134,000 in 5130. Please note that estimate does not include overtime, pay raises, wildland pay, etc.

Motion by Clerk Tate, second by Member Spears to approve the Workers Compensation Insurance Renewal. Motion passed 4 to 0.

**9. Future Agenda Items (no discussion)**

- Annexations
- FY 19/20 Tentative Budget & Public Notice
- Base Hospital Agreement
- IGA for Prevention Services (NWFD)

**10. Adjournment -** Motion by Chairperson Harrington, second by Member Spears to adjourn. Motion passed 4 to 0. Meeting adjourned at 7:10 p.m.

Dated this 23rd day of April 2019.

Rincon Valley Fire District Governing Board

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Chairperson Harrington

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Clerk Tate

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Member Newman

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Member Spears

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Member Klasen