

APPROVED MINUTES 12172024

**MINUTES
SUN CITY FIRE DISTRICT
REGULAR BOARD MEETING
TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 19, 2024
9:30 A.M.**

CALL TO ORDER: Board Chairperson Tim Wilmes

ROLL CALL:

Members Present: Tim Wilmes, Phil LaBarbera, David VanderNaalt, Phil Griswold, Charles Vickers.

Members Absent: None.

Staff: Fire Chief Rob Schmitz, Assistant Chief Jason Casey, EMS Chief Kyle Henson, Division Chief Tony Van Roekel, Captain Brian Chamberlain, Finance Director Gabe Buldra, Office Manager Lisa Neubert

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE: Board Member Phil LaBarbera

INVOCATION: Board Member Phil LaBarbera

I. CONSENT AGENDA ITEMS FOR CONSIDERATION AND APPROVAL

A. Board member Phil Griswold made a motion to approve the consent agenda items which were the Board of Directors Special Meeting Minutes for October 22, 2024, the Board of Directors Board Meeting Minutes for October 29, 2024, and Board of Directors Executive Session Minutes for October 29, 2024. Board member Charles Vickers seconded the motion. The board voted to approve the consent agenda items. (M: Phil Griswold /S: Charles Vickers; Ayes: Phil LaBarbera, David VanderNaalt, Phil Griswold, Charles Vickers. Nays: None. Abstain: Tim Wilmes.)

II. CORRESPONDENCE AND SPECIAL RECOGNITION

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- A. Special recognition was given to Youngtown Mayor LeVault, Independent reporter Scott Tynes, and Board member Vicker's wife, Marcie Vickers.**
- B. Chief Schmitz read several thank you letters as follows:**
 - 1. A letter of appreciation for a lockbox installation.**
 - 2. A letter of appreciation and a \$500 donation for the department's EMS coverage of a recent pickleball tournament.**
 - 3. A donation of \$100 in memory of Jean Travolian.**
 - 4. A letter of appreciation from Grace Bible Church for our services when a parishioner had a medical emergency.**
 - 5. A donation of \$50 in appreciation for checking a resident's smoke detector.**
 - 6. A letter of appreciation from homeowners who had a house fire.**
 - 7. Chief Schmitz reported that the auxiliary has received (16) donations in excess of \$200 and we have one donor who donates monthly to the auxiliary.**
- C. There were no new hires or promotions.**
- D. Fire Chief Rob Schmitz recognized the following employees for their years of service: Captain/Paramedic Bryan Sapp for ten years of service; Engineer/Paramedic Rodney Bebee for ten years of service; Paramedic Travis Marano for three years of service; Fire Mechanic Izacc Ramos for three years of service.**
- E. There were no retirements.**
- F. Board Chairman Tim Wilmes reported that an "In Memory" rocker and a plaque honoring Firefighter Shane Godbehere have been mounted in the community room. A matching plaque will be presented to the family soon.**

III. COMMITTEE REPORTS

A. Budget and Finance

- 1. Finance Director Gabe Buldra presented the financial and bank reconciliation report for the month of October 2024. Board member Phil Griswold made a motion to accept the October 2024 financial report. Board David VanderNaalt seconded the motion. The board voted to**

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accept the finance report for the month of October 2024. (M: Phil Griswold/S: David VanderNaalt); Ayes: Phil LaBarbera, David VanderNaalt, Phil Griswold, Charles Vickers. Nays: None. Abstain: Tim Wilmes.)

2. Board member Phil Griswold inquired about the Qasimyar case. Finance Director Gabe Buldra reported that the Maricopa County Board of Supervisors took action in July to cover the costs that fire districts would have incurred due to this lawsuit.

B. Legal and Insurance

1. Chairperson Wilmes tabled the PSPRS report to the December 2024 meeting.
2. The next Prop 207 distribution will be in December 2024.

C. Fire Department Operations

1. The report for fire department operations was given for October 2024, which included an overview of the incident counts, types, and response times.

D. Emergency Medical Services / Ambulance Operations

1. The ambulance operations report was presented for the month of October 2024. The report included the incident counts, types, and transports.
2. EMS Division Chief Henson reported the following for the EMS Division:
 - a. (3) Image Trend meetings, senior leadership IT.
 - b. CQI 15 chart reviews.
 - c. Pediatric EMS Conference (sent 5 employees).
 - d. New cardiac monitor presentation for AFG.
 - e. 100 Club grant.
 - f. New Boswell Prehospital coordinator.
 - g. AZDHS data submission.

E. Resource Management

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- 1. Division Chief Tony Van Roekel asked the board to consider the purchase of an SCBA fill station for FS131. The current Mako fill station is over twenty years old and needs replacement. Chief Van Roekel received three bids for the SCBA fill station and recommended the proposal from Bauer. It is not the lowest bid however we currently have a Bauer at FS133 and it would be easier to maintain parts and repairs since both fill stations would be from the same manufacturer. Board member Charles Vickers made a motion that the board accept the Bauer SCBA fill station proposal in the amount of \$78,093.19. Board member Phil LaBarbera seconded the motion. The board approved the purchase of the SCBA fill station from Bauer in the amount of \$78,093.19. (M: Charles Vickers/S: Phil LaBarbera; Ayes: Phil LaBarbera, Phil Griswold, David VanderNaalt. Nays: None. Abstain: Tim Wilmes)**
- 2. Division Chief Tony Van Roekel asked the board to consider the purchase of a new Battalion Chief vehicle. The district has received a tribal gaming grant from the Gila River Indian community for the purchase of this vehicle. Board member Phil Griswold made a motion to approve the purchase of a new Battalion Chief vehicle. Board member David VanderNaalt seconded the motion. The board approved the purchase of a new Battalion Chief vehicle. (M: Phil Griswold/S: David VanderNaalt; Ayes: Phil LaBarbera, Phil Griswold, David VanderNaalt, Charles Vickers. Nays: None. Abstain: Tim Wilmes)**
- 3. Division Chief Tony Van Roekel reported the following for fleet/apparatus and equipment:**

 - a. BR 131 for auction on Public Surplus.**
 - b. New vehicle purchases.**
 - c. M134.**
 - d. LT131.**
 - e. Reserve Quantum.**
 - f. Fit Testing progress.**
 - g. Radio & MCT Inventory/Updates.**
 - h. 35' Ladder.**
 - i. PPE Testing/Inspections.**

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4. **Division Chief Tony Van Roekel reported the following for buildings/facilities and teams/members:**
 - a. **Station 131 Keypads.**
 - b. **Station 132 door repairs.**
 - c. **Cell extenders/WiFi Upgrade.**
 - d. **Station 133 Irrigation.**

F. Training/Professional Development

1. **Captain Brian Chamberlain gave the following report for the training division:**
 - a. **Captain/BSO Adam Lumbardo successfully completed the 2024 AFCA Battalion Chief Academy. Lumbardo is currently working on completing his Move-Up BC Taskbook.**
 - b. **On Sunday the 10th, we completed our latest Recruit Firefighter hiring process. We had a great turnout and feel like we established a deep list of quality candidates. The final step was the Hiring Combine, where we brought in the final 24 candidates for a day of testing. It takes a whole team to make this happen, and our department has excellent members to help make this happen.**
 - c. **The three Battalion Chiefs – Holliday, Cooper, and Murphy attended a training and conference in Charleston in the beginning of November. We learned a plethora of information, and we have more ideas for training now. (This is us in front of the oldest still in use fire station in North America, built in 1887).**
 - d. **Two of our local partners, AirEvac and Grand Canyon University Nursing College – Sun City, asked us to help them land a helicopter for their nursing students. L133 B shift went out assist and did so in style. We received a glowing review from the staff at GCU for our assistance.**
 - e. **At the end of November, we will be conducting Move Up Engineer testing. We have 3 members taking this assessment. If successful, we will add 3 additional move up Engineers to our ranks. Good luck to all candidates!**

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- f. Throughout November and December, crews will be heading to the City of Buckeye for Live Fire training at their training facility. We are excited to join them for this training

G. Administrative/Special Projects

1. No report.

H. Public Education/Community Outreach

1. Prevention volunteer hours summary.
 - a. The summary of prevention hours for volunteers was presented for October 2024. The total number of volunteer hours was 132 hours.
2. Community relations program report.
 - a. The report for the Community Outreach program was given for October 2024. There was a total of ninety-nine citizens served for October. Installation of lock boxes is scheduled through the middle of December 2024.
3. There were no community events for the month of October 2024.
4. The volunteer inspection summary report was given for the month of October 2024. There was a total of 101 inspections completed.

I. Fire Prevention

1. The construction inspection summary report was given for the month of October 2024. There was a total of twenty-two inspections completed.
2. Permits issued and revenue report.
 - a. The permit and revenue reports were presented for October 2024. There were fourteen permits issued with a revenue of \$48,015.75.
3. Fire investigation reports.
 - a. The fire investigation report was given for October 2024. There were four formal fire investigations that are still ongoing.
4. Large community projects.

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- a. An update was given on the large community projects within the Sun City District. There are currently seven large community projects in Sun City.
- b. There was an update on the ongoing projects in Youngtown. There are currently three large community projects in Youngtown.

IV. EXECUTIVE SESSION

- A. There was no executive session.

V. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

- A. Chairperson Wilmes started a discussion on the ESCI feasibility study. He expressed his disappointment that representatives from the Sun City Fire Fighters Association were not in attendance at this meeting. Mr. Wilmes stated that the report did contain some errors, but they were not critical errors. One such error was the use of “mutual aid” instead of automatic aid. “Mutual aid” is a common term east of the Mississippi River. The report highlighted that our department has better response times and if we were to join the Arizona Fire & Medical Authority (AFMA), our response times would increase. Additionally, there was no clear cost that our district would pay to join AFMA. The cost of administration was not disclosed. ESCI’s recommendation for the district to join AFMA was a 3.5 on a scale of 1 to 10. Chairperson Wilmes feels the best option would be to dissolve the authority and have all members come together as one large fire district.

Board member Phil LaBarbera agreed with Mr. Wilme’s comments and feels the reasons not to join AFMA outweigh the reason to join AFMA and that it serves us better to stay as we are for right now.

Board member David VanderNaalt agreed with the previous comments and stated that joining AFMA would not be beneficial to the district at this time.

Board member Phil Griswold stated that when reading this report he felt it should be based on needs such as to provide relief to the staff, save money by consolidating administrative costs, and to offer better professional development opportunities. However the savings was not made clear in the report. Our fleet is in better condition. AFMA finances are unclear and the effect to our taxing structure is not made clear. With the rating of 3.5 out of 10, it was self-evident that it is not good at this time.

Board member Charles Vickers stated as a constituent of the community, he never saw a benefit. He was unaware that the district was not getting all the

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information that it needed and with the 3.5 rating, he cannot see any benefit to our district.

Chairperson Tim Wilmes has been in contact with AFMA Chairperson Bookie and learned that no money comes from AFMA to help our district.

Chief Schmitz stated that the feasibility study had to be started over due to Buckeye Valley Fire District joining AFMA and this project was a lot of work in terms of data collection. He is not sure we got a true, full picture of the cost from AFMA. We are a busy department and that is why we are losing employees. Our personnel would benefit from joining AFMA because there are units with lower call volumes available to work on.

Marcie Vickers, a Youngtown resident, stated that if multiple departments all join together, the one that is the strongest financially will carry the load and believes that will be us.

Mayor Levault stated that coming from the private sector, consolidations can make sense if there are clear cut advantages. Based on what he is hearing, it doesn't make sense to join AFMA.

Captain Brian Chamberlain stated that it would be beneficial for personnel and allow for more opportunities, but financial stability is important. There is a lot to consider.

Chairperson Wilmes noted that our department does a great job with the staff we do have and the lack of upper staff that we don't have, yet we still get the job done.

Board member David VanderNaalt said a thought to consider is that the department would lose its identity. Our community knows their fire department and would they be happy with a new department?

Board member Phil Griswold stated that the good part of this study is that it will help Chief Schmitz with revising our strategic plan.

- B. Chairperson Wilmes stated that the board needs to vote on how to proceed with the results of the feasibility study. Board member Phil Griswold made a motion that the board accept the feasibility study report and choose not to act on the report at this time. Board member David VanderNaalt seconded the motion. The board voted to accept the feasibility study report and choose not to act on the study report at this time. (M: Phil Griswold/S: David VanderNaalt; Ayes: Phil LaBarbera, Phil Griswold, David VanderNaalt, Charles Vickers. Nays: None. Abstain: Tim Wilmes)

VI. NEW BUSINESS/FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS

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- A. Board Chairperson Wilmes asked that two items be put on the agenda for the December 17, 2024, meeting. The first item is to update the District's By-laws regarding the organizational meeting process. The second item is to reaffirm Fire Chief Schmitz's position and update his contract due to a new board being seated.

VII. PUBLIC COMMENTS

- A. None.
- B. No report from the United Sun City Firefighters Association.

VIII. NEXT GOVERNING BOARD MEETING

- A. The next Regular Board Meeting will be held on December 17, 2024, at 9:30 a.m. at the Sun City Fire Department Community Room located at 18602 N. 99th Avenue Sun City, AZ.

IX. ADJOURNMENT

- A. Board member Phil LaBarbera made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 10:58 a.m. Board member David VanderNaalt seconded the motion. The board voted to adjourn the meeting at 10:58 a.m. (M: Phil LaBarbera /S: David VanderNaalt; Vote – Aye: Phil LaBarbera, David VanderNaalt, Phil Griswold, Charles Vickers. Nay: None. Abstain: Tim Wilmes)

FOR THE BOARD

Phil LaBarbera
Board Clerk

PL/lbn