



# Sedona Fire District

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**SFD CITIZENS' ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING**  
**Station #1 – 2860 Southwest Drive – Sedona – Multipurpose Room**  
**Tuesday, April 25, 2017 / 9:00 AM**

~ MINUTES ~

**I. Call to Order/Roll Call**

**Committee Present:** *Board Member* – Tim Ernster; *Citizens* – Gary Johnson; Lonnie Lillie; Gene McCarthy; Wendy Tanzer; Dave Watters; *Staff* – Firefighter Greg Eberlein; HR Manager Betty Johnson

**Committee Absent:** Caryn Maxwell; Captain Pat Ojeda

**Others Present:** Fire Chief Kris Kazian; Assistant Chief Jeff Piechura; Telecom Manager Bob Motz; Tricia Greer – Recorder to Committee

Committee Chairman Tim Ernster called the meeting to order at 9:00 AM.

**II. Pledge of Allegiance to the United States of America**

Board Chairman Tim Ernster led the Pledge of Allegiance.

**III. Approval of Minutes**

A. Discussion/Possible Action: Minutes of April 17, 2017

*Dave Watters moved to approve the Minutes of April 17, 2017 and Gene McCarthy seconded; the motion unanimously passed.*

**IV. Open Dialogue/Review of Information Previously Presented/Questions**

Chief Kazian asked if there were any questions from the committee. Lonnie Lillie asked how Sedona Fire District compared to other departments in payroll amounts. Chief Kazian said personnel is the largest expense in our budget – typically, running at about 80% of our total budget; he said every fire agency has similar percentages of their budgets for personnel at 75% to 85% ranges.

Mr. Watters asked Chief Kazian to clarify if the interest rate for lease purchase is typically higher than what a bond would be; the Chief responded that Stifel (bond financial agency) had informed the committee that there is more risk in lease purchasing because bond funds are approved through an election, making it a lower risk with lower interest; however, Chief Kazian is not sure what the cost will be until after we get a bond rating; he will attempt to get a range of possible rates to give to the committee. Mr. Watters then asked when the committee would get estimates on the cost of remodeling Stations 1 and 3 based on proposals; Chief Kazian responded Core construction will be here on May 2<sup>nd</sup> to project cost estimates in general terms based on the market; he said if we get the projected numbers this week, we will forward them to the Committee. He cautioned that when we use the term, “estimate”, it truly is a projected amount roughly based on today’s market, but it could be higher or lower in the future. He said staff would be as frugal as possible to provide an operating facility with long term sustainability.

**V. Discussion: Telecommunication Capital Project Forecast- Presentation by Bob Motz (Telecom Manager)**

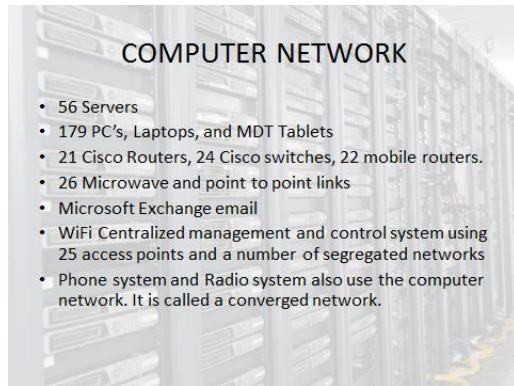
- Overview of SFD Telecom system and SFD’s role
- Radio infrastructure needs

Chief Kazian introduced Telecommunication Manager Bob Motz, who presented his PowerPoint on telecom needs, as follows. The presentation can be accessed here: <http://www.sedonafire.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/05/4-25-17-Telecom-Presentation-to-Committee.pdf>. Assistant Chief Jeff Piechura is Mr. Motz's supervisor.



Mr. Motz first characterized SFD's telecommunication and IT system as a mixture of fairly modern items and some equipment that pre-dates dial-up modems. In projecting future needs, staff is pretty certain of the items needed out to five years and fairly certain out to 10 years. After 5 years, however, there could be new disruptive technology we want to implement. Most of Mr. Motz' projections are based on historical technology refresh.

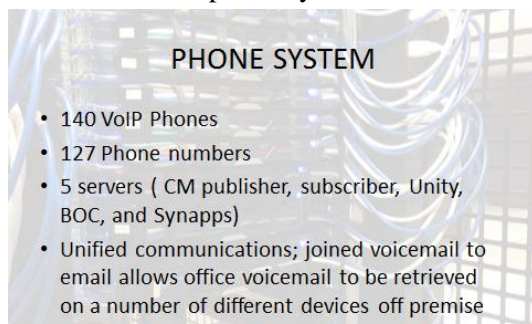
The current computer network resources were listed (below).



Mr. Motz then showed the radio system network (below).



He covered the phone system next.



Mr. Motz said regarding planning upgrades, we have the current system and a level of connectedness that we refer to as a “converged network”.

### Upgrades

Technology as it is today rarely has isolated devices that are not dependent on other items externally to function. This sets up the domino or puzzle piece effect where changing one item then changes the interaction with another item or group of items. For example, even if you never planned to upgrade a piece of software because you like it, you may be forced to do so if something else changes outside of it.

Upgrades currently taking place are listed below.

### Convergence Savings Strategy

- Converged networks save money by utilizing the existing network for multiple functions. This reduces the total cost of ownership. Savings can be as high as 65%.
- Care must be taken when planning changes that certain items are not removed from one upgrade project that might be a dependency for another system or planned project.

### Upgrades

- The point to point licensed microwave is currently in the upgrade process due to end of life support issues. We should be in a good support position for at least 7 to 10 years once the multiyear project is complete.
- The Channel 1 single channel dispatching channel is in need of an upgrade to simulcast. This will allow for a more simplified dispatching process in the alarm room and add needed receivers intended for the emergency call channel. The equipment manufacturer is projecting at least 7 to 10 years of service life on this equipment.

### Upgrades Continued

- The VHF radio infrastructure is currently in a phased upgrade. We are trading out old end of life equipment for new. It is unknown at this time when the FCC may require a change to ultra-narrowband VHF voice and data radios.
- The portable crew radios are also in need of replacement. These radios require all of the accessories to change when upgraded. The phased deployment approach will not work well with this group of equipment because it will leave the crew with incompatible accessories and programming software. This makes the most sense to change out in the same budget year.
- We would like to take advantage of the upcoming FirstNet system when it becomes available. The technology is still in development and is focused on wireless data only connectivity comparable to cellular. The amount shown in the line item is best guess round number.

Mr. Motz said FirstNet is a nationwide network, comparable to cellular, to be built specifically for the purpose of passing data for first responders; the expectation is it will save SFD money on its service plan

### Upgrades Continued

- Servers: Telestaff, Security door lock system, online storage, records management, email and VoIP phone systems.
- MDT tablets, wireless routers, LAN-WAN fiber and power system upgrades.

when available. A brief discussion was held about FirstNet and the possibility of Arizona opting out of the system. Chief Kazian said Fire Chiefs are watching this issue, as well as lobbying groups, to see what happens. Mr. Motz said if it comes to Arizona, it might be ready by 2020 or 2021, with some limited coverage ability. Chief Kazian said the network would be good for emergency response in the nation.



**Totals**

- \$2.25 million over five years
- \$3 million over 10 years.
- \$5 million over 15 years.
- Based on historical replacement cycles and projected future need.

Mr. Motz then presented the projected total expenditures for telecommunications systems and equipment over the years. These are cumulative amounts with the total of \$5 million dollars over 15 years. Chief Kazian said we are trying to create a system that is not so unique that no one knows how to work on it, but this equipment would be tens of millions of dollars if we were replacing everything.

Mr. Motz then moved to the proposed capital plan, which was emailed to the committee previously. He has added considerable amounts of Telecom over the last few years, as we realized the system was aging. Mr. Motz goes through extensive searching for parts (which are obsolete, but still needed in our system) on EBay or other on-line sites to keep our system operating; he has saved many dollars over the year through his diligent pursuit of equipment – rather than buying “off the shelf”.

Chief Kazian stated, as an agency, we are sensitive to the importance of communication needs, and highly respect Mr. Motz and his team for their efforts. He said just to buy telecommunications equipment “in a box, off the shelf” would be a huge cost. Additionally, many decisions made in the Telecom world are outside SFD’s ability to control, such as legislative mandates including the problems that were caused by narrow-banding requirements. We must understand the importance of redundancy of systems because when the power goes out or something fails, it is important for us to maintain the ability to broadcast and make sure mapping is working when we send out crews. A good example happened about 2 years ago, when construction in New River caused the 9-1-1 system to go down for all of northern Arizona – except for Sedona Fire because of the redundancy built into our system.

Mr. Watters asked if all the items included in the Capital Improvement Plan for Telecom is being proposed to be included in the bonding request; Chief Kazian replied that is one of the questions the committee must decide to include in its recommendation, and next week, Finance Director Gabe Buldra will be here to look at options and estimates to help the committee decide what would be prioritized under the bond. Mr. Watters asked Mr. Motz that assuming the Board decides to put this into bond funding and it is passed by the voters, how long would it take to install and implement this list of equipment; Mr. Motz said he does not have that lined out year by year, but wants the timing to be close so we do not have equipment that goes out of warranty before we have time to install it.

Mr. Motz said the replacement of the tower at Station 4 was not included in the discussion of the total because his plan is to have the carriers who pay us to co-locate their equipment on our tower, pay for the upgrade; we currently receive about \$180,000 per year for cellular tower rents; however, the real reason for the tower is to cover SFD needs.

Chief Kazian asked how much of our current Telecom equipment which was purchased used off a government surplus auction are still in use; Mr. Motz said it is a significant amount – with some from as long ago as 1984. There was a brief discussion of digital versus analog issues and the noise problems that occur on our personnel’s radio communication. Mr. Motz said for the foreseeable future, our operations will be on analog until our area is covered digitally 100%. He said Flagstaff Fire covers 59 square miles with its trunk system and just to do an upgrade of the electronics costs them \$10 million and they had to go to bond; SFD has 168 square miles with the addition of canyons, rock formations, and mountains which can cause communication problems, and the cost of the trunking system would be very expensive; additionally, those digital systems are made for high-capacity, such as 50,000 to 100,000 radios, but they are not made to have coverage in canyons and that would be a misfit for our area.

Mr. Lillie asked if this equipment is bondable; Chief Kazian replied affirmatively and said if we do decide to include this in the bond request, we would structure the bond so that these items would be paid off in the 7<sup>th</sup> – 10<sup>th</sup> year life span of these items.

Chief Kazian said Mr. Motz is highly qualified and has extensive background and experience in Telecommunications for many years. A few years ago, SFD had 7 personnel in Telecom and now, we have 3 – and there is more to do and a larger system to manage with less people. The district has been in the process of looking for an additional technician since last October, but we are having difficulties finding people with the right skill sets for the complexities of our system.

## **VI. Discussion: Status of Station 5 and potential relocation to Slide Rock State Park**

- **Letter from Garland Family Trust**
- **Board action to fund portion of Master Plan for Slide Rock State Park**

Chief Kazian said the committee was sent a copy of a letter from the Garland Family Trust, which owns a portion of the property where Station 5 in Oak Creek Canyon is located. The Garland family has given SFD 10-year leases for the last 20-plus years and we pay an exceptionally low annual lease of about \$3,600. Station 5 sits adjacent to the Garland's commercial property and businesses, which they are now exploring for long-term infrastructure of those businesses; they asked SFD to pursue other avenues for Station 5, and endorsed SFD working in partnership with State Parks to co-locate at Slide Rock State Park. The family is not interested in removing SFD from the property immediately, but there are opportunities coming to consider when our lease expires in 2020. Chief Kazian met with the Garland family and they are very supportive of the fire district.

Chief Kazian then moved to the master plan for Slide Rock State Park; back in 2005, SFD began discussions with State Parks about co-locating a fire station and there was progress made such as architectural rendering of a small station; the 2007 SFD citizens' advisory committee recommended Station 5 as a priority for the organization. However, the then-State Parks director decided to pull the project and end the possible partnership. He said we now find ourselves more than a decade later with the need to move forward with relocating Station 5; there are issues with the current station, such as water, septic system, and power. The septic system must be pumped every 10 to 15 days, which is very expensive. The Conditional Use Permit with Coconino County (recently applied for an extension) we are required to have to operate as a fire station is conditioned upon only 2 personnel in that station.

State Parks reached out to SFD a few months ago and expressed an interest in pursuing the co-location project again; they must complete a master plan for the site and asked us to help finance that in the amount of \$52,500, which the Board approved at its last meeting. Moving to Slide Rock would provide a fire station further north in Oak Creek Canyon, which would help response and bring some home insurance relief to homeowners in the north end of the Canyon, who are currently at the highest ISO rating of 10. State Parks is trying to determine what they would need in a building, meeting room, housing for seasonal help, and the US Forest Service may also be interested in space to house Hot Shot crews for the wildland season, which is all part of the master planning process; the plan would help determine power, water, ingress/egress, and traffic flow onto State Route 89A and that will require approval by ADOT. There are also land use agreements between State Parks and USFS which put restrictions on the use of the land. It would most likely be at least 3 years for State Parks to have the funding needed to complete the project, which would line up nicely with our replacement plan. Chief Kazian has Minutes from meetings as far back as the early 1990s, when staff realized Station 5 should be further to the north and the Garland Family Trust agrees.

**VII. Discussion: The process if Governing Board calls for bond election - Presentation by Captain Dave Rodriguez**

Captain David Rodriguez was scheduled for a presentation today, but has a sick child and asked to postpone. Mr. Ernster then tabled the item until the next meeting.

**VIII. Discussion/Possible Action: Discuss recommendations for Governing Board and Final Report Document**

- **How the committee presents the information to Governing Board**
- **Best format for final report to effectively inform citizenry/stakeholders of process the committee has undertaken and synopsis of how/why recommendation was determined**

Chief Kazian recognized David Watters, who has begun writing the draft recommendations for the Governing board; this would be an executive summary discussing the mission of the committee, the recommendations, detail about each option to finance necessary capital projects – bonding, lease purchase, or pay/go; the report would then include findings of facts identified that justify the recommendations; it would include addendums, such as Committee meeting Minutes, the architect’s analyses, Core Construction estimates, and footnotes. Wendy Tanzer had some input into the format, but agrees with using technology such as references to the YouTube videos of each meeting rather than lengthy summaries of meetings, but also believes there should be, at least, a full page graph of how the mil rate will be affected by bond, lease purchase, or pay/go. Mr. Ernster asked when Mr. Watters would have a draft available for the committee to review; Mr. Watters said he could have an initial draft ready today or tomorrow; he would then send it Executive Assistant Tricia Greer to edit and send to the committee. Chief Kazian said if the committee is comfortable with Mr. Watter’s proposal, there will be ample opportunity to express each member’s thoughts and ideas. This item will be on the next committee’s Agenda, so the committee can work together on the recommendation. The committee will have additional opportunity to continue to wordsmith the recommendation at the committee meeting on May 8<sup>th</sup> to finalize the report. And after that, if there are still areas for more input, the Board could continue its work on the report at the meeting on May 11<sup>th</sup>.

Chief Kazian said having Mr. Buldra here to answer financial questions at the next meeting will help the committee with some of the decisions in long-term planning.

There was a brief discussion about the \$15 million figure that has been discussed for the bond; Chief Kazian said that is not set in stone, and it was just a “ballpark figure” to begin the discussion; there was also discussion about the mil rate cap of \$3.25 and the scenarios that will be given for options. Mr. Buldra’s presentation next week will tell us a lot and the group may decide \$15 million is not right. Chief Kazian asked the committee to start thinking about where its comfortability level is to bond fire trucks and Telecom items, but if they are not included, there will still be the need and we will have to figure out how to pay for them.

**IX. Discussion/Possible Action: Future Meeting Dates If Needed**

<b>8<sup>th</sup> Meeting</b>	<b>May 2, 2017</b>	<b>0900</b>
<b>9<sup>th</sup> Meeting</b>	<b>May 8, 2017</b>	<b>1300</b>
<b>10<sup>th</sup> Meeting</b>	<b>May 11, 2017</b>	<b>0900</b>
<b>11<sup>th</sup> Meeting</b>	<b>May 15, 2017</b>	<b>1300</b>

Chief Kazian stated these dates are already on everyone’s calendars, as possibilities. He said we will have Core Construction attend the May 2<sup>nd</sup> meeting to give the construction estimate presentation, Captain Rodriguez, and the financial presentation of the impact of various decisions, and a discussion on the report/recommendation. Chief Kazian informed the committee that meeting could be 3 hours or longer. Looking ahead to the May 8<sup>th</sup> meeting, he believes that will be mostly consumed with working on the

recommendation report and a follow-up philosophical discussion about which capital projects to include in the bond, which should parlay into the final recommendation. He said if the committee does not feel comfortable with the report by then and needs more time to complete the recommendation; the Fire Board could hold a special meeting after the May 17<sup>th</sup> regular monthly meeting.

**X. Adjournment**

The meeting was adjourned at 10:45 AM.

*Original signed by Tricia Greer*

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Tricia Greer, Recording Clerk to the Committee

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