



*These Minutes were approved by the Board on 10/18/17.*

# Sedona Fire District

2860 Southwest Drive, Sedona, Arizona 86336  
Telephone (928) 282-6800 FAX (928) 282-6857

## REGULAR BOARD MEETING

**Station #1 – 2860 Southwest Drive – Sedona – Multipurpose Room  
Wednesday, September 20, 2017 / 4:30 PM**

~ MINUTES ~

### I. CALL TO ORDER/ROLL CALL

**Board Present:** Ty Montgomery – Chairman; Corrie Cooperman – Clerk; Tim Ernster, Abe Koniarsky, Dave Soto – Members

**Others Present:** Fire Chief Kris Kazian; Assistant Chief Jeff Piechura; Division Chief Ed Mezulis; Fire Marshal Jon Davis; HR Manager Betty Johnson; Finance Director Gabe Buldra; Captain Ralph Kurtz; Executive Assistant Tricia Greer – Recorder; Attorney Bill Whittington; 3 Members of the Public

#### 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.

Board Chairman Ty Montgomery called the meeting to order at 4:30 PM and led the Pledge of Allegiance. Division Chief Ed Mezulis asked all to honor the memory of the 6 Firefighters and 16 Police Officers killed in the line of duty across our nation since our last Board meeting.

### II. REGULAR BUSINESS MEETING

#### A. Public Forum:

1. Public Comments.
2. Executive Staff Response to Public Comments.

No one requested to address the Board.

#### B. Consent Agenda – Discussion/Possible Actions:

1. August 16, 2017 Regular Board Meeting Minutes.

*Mr. Montgomery moved to approve the Consent Agenda, as presented; Board Member Tim Ernster provided a second and the motion was unanimously approved.*

#### C. Staff Items:

1. Financial Report and Updates – Finance Director Gabe Buldra.

##### a. Discussion/Possible Action: Review and Approval of August 2017 Finance Report.

Finance Director Gabe Buldra presented the August Financial Report, as distributed in the Board packets. For the month of August, Mr. Buldra said we started off with \$25,000 in tax revenue and projected \$35,000 – off by \$10,000; our non-levy revenues were impressive for August at \$417,000 compared to the budgeted \$187,000 – the two biggest reasons for this were ambulance billing and wildland revenue. Personnel costs were under budget at \$917,000; Vehicles and Equipment were under budget at \$51,892, and Utilities and Communication were in line with the budget. Managerial expenses were under budget at \$60,995; Capital and Contingency was at \$168,532. For the month of August, SFD's total expenses were just over \$1.2 million – under budget by \$132,000, which is less than 1% variance. Looking at fiscal year to date, total revenue was at \$710,521, slightly under on timing of collection from the counties; however, wildland and ambulance revenues are pushing us over our year-to-date budget. Personnel expenses were under at \$1.6 Million; Vehicles and Equipment were under budget at \$99,000; Utilities and Communications are trending right in line with the budget. Managerial is slightly over in year-to-date at

\$241,000; Capital and Contingency is under budget at \$209,000. Total expenses year-to-date are just over \$2.2 Million, which is under budget by \$486,000, less than a 2% variance from budgeted to actual.

Board Member Dave Soto requested Mr. Buldra add a single bar to the two bar graphs reflecting the total for that given month and for fiscal year-to-date; Mr. Buldra said he would do so.

Percentage of personnel expenses was at 74%; Capital and Contingency is at 9%; Operations at 8%, and Managerial at 6%. Looking at a year-over-year cash position, we ended the month of August at \$3.1 Million in cash compared to \$2.5 Million last year at this time; in addition, there was the large payout for PSPRS and we are now getting a credit for a portion of our payments that we would otherwise be making to PSPRS. Mr. Buldra said we will actually see our cash position improve. He also noted on PSPRS, they are still working through Legislative changes in reporting; as part of the payout provisions, SFD is to still pay the employee contributions – we are not required to pay the employer contributions; until reporting changes are worked out, agencies will actually make no payments, even on the employee side. There is still no determination on the interest portion of payments, but supposedly, is forthcoming. Finance Specialist Pam Wester is working hard getting the books closed for the annual audit; auditors are scheduled to be here next month; as occurs each year, a Board Member will be interviewed by the auditor at that time. *Board Clerk Corrie Cooperman moved to approve the August 2017 Financial Report; Mr. Soto provided a second and the motion passed unanimously.*

- 2. August 2017 Monthly Fire Chief Report – Chief Kris Kazian.**
  - a. Incident Counts by Station.**
  - b. Call Summary and Response Times Year to Date.**
  - c. Rescue Incidents.**
  - d. Community Risk Management Update.**
  - e. SFD Training Report.**
  - f. Donations to SFD.**
  - g. Update of Grant Activity.**
  - h. Update of Recent/Upcoming SFD Activities, Incidents, and Events.**
    - i. Bond Election, November 7, 2017.**
    - ii. Cottonwood Public Safety Communications Center.**
    - iii. Correspondence/Thank You Letters to SFD.**
    - iv. 9/11 Observance Ceremony.**

Fire Chief Kris Kazian presented the August Fire Chief report; SFD is trending under in Rescue/EMS and Interfacility columns. He said we underwent a review of our policies with the hospital and some interfacility reductions are based on recent protocol changes. Patients from the Village of Oak Creek are, primarily, going to Verde Valley Medical Center in Cottonwood, rather than transporting first to Sedona Emergency Center. He noted we have now actually surpassed the total number of calls over last year. Division Chief Mezulis said SFD has had many iterations of where/why we transport patients from different medical directors over the years; currently, in working with Dr. Shank, we requested allowing our Paramedics decide. He said numbers show we have been doing it in an efficient way. Chief Kazian said it is all about patient outcome and quality of care, and it is disruptive to have a two-step patient transport piece and want to avoid it when practicable. 152 emergency responses averaged 6 minutes and 3 seconds response time – overall, our response times are down. There were 10 backcountry rescues – we are averaging about 10 a month. Mrs. Cooperman commented she likes having more discretion on where to take patients – saving them time and SFD’s money.

Under Grants, Chief Kazian confirmed we did receive the grant for HazMat equipment/tools, which will save SFD about \$5,000 in expenses. Staff is still waiting to hear about the FEMA grant request. SFD received a \$6,000 NAEMS grant which will fund one-half of the cost of a documentation class in December. Although Walmart granted us \$800 for infant car seats, those funds have not yet arrived.

Staff is still working on reporting responses by station. SFD received several donations in August for a total of \$500. Captain Matt Fleece is still on light duty and working feverishly to go through all surplus equipment; he is finding items SFD no longer uses and putting them on a public auction site, which has been successful in adding revenue to SFD. Captain Fleece has announced his retirement on 1/11/2018.

Fire Marshal Jon Davis announced another busy month in Community Risk Management (CRM) and said CRM has been slowly transitioning and focusing efforts on assembly and residential occupancies. He said there are 4 new hotels and an apartment building in the plan review process. Chief Kazian announced Firefighter Eric Walter has accepted a new position as a Community Risk Reduction Specialist in CRM to help with the backlog of work, and also will serve on the Community Integrated Paramedicine (CIP) program, which Division Chief Mezulis has been handling by himself. Chief Mezulis said the CIP program averages a steady 5 patients, but had 7 recently before they were discharged from the program; he is working with Northern Arizona Healthcare doctors to create a pamphlet for newly released Sedona patients; staff is reaching out to primary care physicians in the area; Chief Kazian thanked Chief Mezulis for his work in CIP and said it is improving the quality of life for discharged patients; he is also “testing the waters” on finding revenue streams. Mrs. Cooperman commented the CIP program provides a wonderful continuity of care for recently discharged hospital patients.

Chief Kazian stated Firefighter Adam Deringer is at the end of his probationary period and recently took the written and practical tests, and was the first person to score 100 on both. Chief Kazian reminded the Board that last month, we swore-in 3 new Firefighters to fill vacancies and will soon have them on shift. There are 3 other Firefighter openings through attrition to be filled in the next couple of months.

Chief Kazian noted several thank you letters including one from a local businessman who was helped by our new firefighters; another from Pastor Brandfass of Christ Lutheran Church regarding a CPR class we taught; a thank you letter from patient Lenore Kerr for whom the crew cleaned up soup she had spilled when she fell. He said our folks are out there doing great stuff every day and we are very proud of them.

Updates of recent activity:

- The bond election is on November 7<sup>th</sup>; Chief Kazian will be speaking at numerous service groups over the next few months.
- Transitioning to MDT is on Cottonwood Public Safety Communication Center’s agenda; Assistant Chief Jeff Piechura said the IGA with them the Board passed about 2 months ago was finally approved and signed by Cottonwood and we are moving towards implementation. Mrs. Cooperman asked when they would be installed; Chief Piechura said he is not sure and it is a function of scheduling the Cottonwood team together with SFD’s busy personnel. Mrs. Cooperman asked if they had considered contracting out the installation; Chief Piechura said our system is unique and has a lot of tailored equipment, which would not fit well into a contract situation. Chief Kazian said there are many complexities in what we do, but MDT is prioritized and important, along with other pressing important projects, such as Station 4; currently, there is water seeping out of the asphalt in the parking lot, which means there is most likely a water leak underneath; the water company came out and instructed us to let no one walk or drive on it. Chief Piechura added that all underground utilities have been striped by contractors and we hope when the backhoe takes the first few shovels, it leaves all critical infrastructure alone. Mrs. Cooperman asked if this would be paid for by Arizona Water or SFD and Chief Piechura said we will find out when they dig in the 20’ X 20’ excavation area. Mrs. Cooperman commented it seems we cannot build the new Station 4 too soon.
- 9/11 Observance Ceremony – We had a good turnout of more than 75 people for this ceremony with well-presented speeches. Chief Kazian thanked Mr. Soto for his donated work on a new flag case for the 9/11 flag. The Sedona-Verde Valley Honor Guard did a great job of presenting the colors and one of its members sang the National Anthem.

- Wildland update – Chief Piechura said we have all but one personnel back from wildland assignment. One SFD Firefighter is finishing up his assignment on the Columbia River fire near Portland. Battalion Chief Jayson Coil is back, but will go out for a national mobilization committee to help fire teams assess risks. The Southern California fire season will start soon. Chief Piechura has been with the wildfire system since 1979, and only 3 times, has he seen the nation at Level 5 preparedness level (the highest), and this year, we have been at Level 5 for a month and a half; it has been a very long, arduous fire season for the nation and, now, with the hurricanes, FEMA is tapped out and calling for help through county emergency services groups; SFD personnel are now in a rest cycle, but will be ready to go back out in the next week or so. In 2005, Division Chief Mezulis took a team of personnel to help post-Hurricane Katrina, and those are the kinds of things we may be asked to do again. Currently, Battalion Chief Coil’s Incident Management Team may be pulled into Puerto Rico for hurricane recovery efforts. As always, SFD is seeking the balance of protecting SFD and helping others. Finances show that wildland reimbursement payments are coming in timely. Chief Kazian said our wildland revenue budget is at \$55,000 in FY 2018, and since July 1<sup>st</sup>, we expect over \$70,000 in net revenue with \$100,000 more billed; we have already exceeded net budgeted revenue. In an article from today’s newspaper, regarding a national perspective, over \$2 billion has been spent this year on Federal wildland from more than 48,000 fires and 13,000 square miles of fire. The Forest Service appreciates our efforts; currently, there are 18,000 nationwide firefighters like SFD’s contracting with Federal service and that gives a perspective of where we are in the big picture. Mr. Soto asked what is the number of personnel that can be sent to out of district fires and still maintain that balance to keep our home front safe; Chief Piechura said, generally, 6 to 8 personnel before SFD gets strapped. Chief Kazian pointed out that would not all be from one shift – it fluctuates a bit and is a constant balancing act in the Ops Chief’s office.

### **3. Recognition of Sedona Fire District by the Wellness Council of Arizona for Worksite Health and Wellness.**

Human Resources Manager Betty Johnson presented slides of the Wellness Council of Arizona’s awards luncheon where SFD received recognition for our wellness program. SFD works with an insurance broker, Benefit Commerce Group, on ways to reduce costs of our medical insurance program. Since Fiscal Year 2016, there has been a slight reduction in our medical costs for the employee-only, spouse, and family costs; up to Fiscal Year 2015, those costs were increasing. Mrs. Johnson said this has been discussed in former Board meetings, but we are in a “trend neutralizer” program to reduce costs. SFD has employer-sponsored wellness events, biometric screenings and physicals, on-line health assessment through Blue Cross; SFD gets credits off our premium costs for each of these items; we have a disease-management program where employees are encouraged to talk to a coach; we implemented a tobacco rate differential for employees who use tobacco to pay a higher premium for medical insurance; we have a high deductible plan with a health savings account; each of these gives a credit percentage to reduce our costs; that is what has led to reductions in the last 2 years.

Mrs. Johnson showed the awards SFD received – the Process, Progress, and Leadership in Worksite Health and Promotion award; SFD is now showing demonstrated progress in our trend neutralizer wellness initiatives; an individual award was also presented to Mrs. Johnson for Wellness Committee Champion – one of 30 individuals.

Mrs. Cooperman asked if the tobacco cessation program has helped some employees quit using tobacco and Mrs. Johnson said, yes, about 5 to 6 people since last January. She said we are now in the process of having everyone sign certification for being tobacco-free; she pointed out the credit we get off rates is not for people who have stopped tobacco, but rather, it is for implementing the program, which follows Federal guidelines.

As of July 1<sup>st</sup>, Mrs. Johnson said we have held 2 employee challenges – a hydration challenge to drink more water and record the amount – names were turned in and through a drawing, awarded gift cards; in August, we had an “Eat the Rainbow Challenge” for promoting employees to eat different colors of fruits and vegetables and record the amounts; there were 3 winners for that contest who received gift cards. Blue Cross offered SFD \$2,500 this year in wellness incentive money to award employees for completing healthy challenges.

Our biometric screening for employees will be next week to get credit for next year. Chief Kazian pointed out there is up to a 10% reduction on insurance premiums for these health initiatives. Mrs. Johnson said at the end of the last fiscal year, SFD had a 6.5% credit which was rolled over into this year’s premiums offset by a 5.5% increase in our rates, which meant a net 1.9% reduction in costs. Chief Kazian recognized Mrs. Johnson for her hard work in helping this come to fruition; he was honored to watch Mrs. Johnson receive the award. He said David Spellicy and Benefit Commerce Group are also champions and very active in these awards. SFD was the “trial case” in Blue Cross-Blue Shield’s history to get a trend neutralizer, which shows our commitment to best practices; it is a “win/win” for our employees and the taxpayers.

**4. Discussion/Possible Action: Purchase Order #10962 to Kronos in the amount of \$36,758.47 for Telestaff upgrade.**

Chief Piechura stated this Purchase Order to Kronos is for the contract renewal and upgrade to the scheduling program utilized by our personnel and management for payroll purposes; it is moving from server-based to Cloud-based, and in order to do that, we had licensing and other one-time expenses. The provider’s cost is \$36,758; it is an existing SFD vendor and a budgeted item. The reason staff is requesting approval for a not-to-exceed amount is for travel and training. ***Mr. Soto moved to approve Purchase Order #10962 to Kronos in a not-to-exceed amount of \$40,000, as budgeted; Mr. Ernster seconded and the motion was unanimously approved.***

**III. FIRE MARSHAL’S SAFETY MESSAGE**

Chief Kazian wished Fire Marshal Jon Davis a happy birthday. Fire Marshal Davis said the week of October 9<sup>th</sup> is Fire Prevention Week – the theme this year is “Every second counts – plan two ways out”. Fire Marshal Davis said there have been studies showing in a fire, people have died as a result of walking past an exit in unfamiliar buildings to go back out the way they came in; he suggested whenever you go into an unfamiliar business or restaurant, look around and make sure you know where the closest exit is – it is a good habit to make.

**IV. ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting was adjourned at 5:20 PM.

*Original signed by Corrie Cooperman*

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Corrie Cooperman, Clerk of the Board

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