



*~ Note: These Minutes were approved by the Board on June 25, 2014. ~*

# Sedona Fire District

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

**PUBLIC BUDGET WORKSHOP AND REGULAR BOARD MEETING**  
**Station #1 – 2860 Southwest Drive – West Sedona – Multipurpose Room**  
**Wednesday, May 28, 2014 / 3:30 PM – Budget Workshop /**  
**4:00 PM – Regular Meeting**

~ MINUTES ~

## **I. CALL TO ORDER/ROLL CALL**

**Board Present:** Ty Montgomery – Chairman; Corrie Cooperman – Clerk;  
Nazih Hazime, Scott Jablow, Diane Schoen – Members

**Staff Present:** Kris Kazian – Fire Chief; Scott Schwisow – Division Chief; Buzz Lechowski – Division  
Chief; Gary Johnson – Fire Marshal; Ed Mezulis – Battalion Chief; Jayson Coil – Battalion  
Chief; Sandi Schmidt – Finance Manager; Tricia Greer – Executive Assistant as Recorder

**Others Present:** William R. Whittington – Attorney; 5 Citizens

## **II. FISCAL YEAR 2014/2015 SFD PUBLIC BUDGET WORKSHOP – 4:00 PM**

### **A. Proposed FY 2014/2015 SFD Budget; Board and Staff Discussion.**

#### **1. Discussion/Possible Action: Approval to Publish.**

Fire Chief Kris Kazian stated the blue pages the Board received indicated changes in the budget. He said staff had been waiting for final numbers for healthcare, general liability insurance, and other items, but we recently received those; healthcare came in at 7.1% increase which represents about a \$38,000 difference; Chief Kazian said if SFD had not taken the initiative to change the health insurance programs from PPO and HSA/HRA 100% to HSA/HRA 90/10, it could have increased substantially. He noted insurance costs include a premium tax from the Affordable Care Act of \$55,000. We have included an incentive for our employees and spouses to take advantage of the physicals included in insurance, which will help reduce our healthcare costs; SFD is the first organization to receive this type of incentive from Blue Cross/Blue Shield which will result in a 2% decrease in our premium if 75% of our employees and spouses have an annual physical representing about \$25,000 savings for next year. Division Chief Scott Schwisow read aloud the email received from our insurance carrier, Benefits Commerce, today: “This is the first time in Blue Cross/Blue Shield’s 75 year history that they have agreed to a trend premium reduction program tied directly to employee and dependent wellness efforts. Congratulations to Sedona Fire District for achieving this prestigious distinction.” Chief Kazian pointed out although we had a total \$38,000 increase in healthcare premium, other final numbers came in pretty well, so staff is recommending last month’s bottom line number as the Fiscal Year 2015 budget of \$13,539,663. He mentioned this was made possible by reducing a few items to create a \$50,000 net/net difference, such as changes to the grant contingency line, contingency from \$400,000 to \$375,000, and miscellaneous items such as training and specialized response team equipment. If SFD receives grants, we will use contingency to fund any matching funds.

This proposed budget will put our mil rate at \$2.133, as discussed last month. He said SFD received its FDAT amount from Yavapai County, and SFD has received a slight increase of about \$3,000; SFD is still awaiting the amount from Coconino County. Chief Kazian said this budget is streamlined and our efforts were focused on tracking expenses to make sure it is even tighter than before; staff is moving all overtime to separate budget sections to better track the amount. Chief Schwisow pointed out that means the Board will see all those budget amounts increase because of new overtime coding. Chief Kazian reminded the Board that new state law requires an estimated budget for the following fiscal year as well, and that although staff spent a great deal of time setting the FY 2015 budget, the FY 2016 budget is only a forecasted estimate. We must publish the

proposed budget on the SFD website for 20 days, and additionally, we will post the budget at the Sedona Library in West Sedona and at Stations 1, 3, 4, and 6. He then requested any questions from the Board.

Mrs. Cooperman commented it is very excellent to see the mil rate of \$2.13 at only a 5% increase over last year's because earlier in this process, staff thought it might be a bit higher; she stated this speaks to work done to bring down the budget, especially considering increases over which SFD had no control such as healthcare. She asked about capital reserves which had to be used to fund this budget; Chief Kazian responded SFD has had to use capital reserves since at least FY 2011 to balance budgets; he said this budget includes a \$1.100057 million from capital reserves and what will be left depends on additional revenues; he said about \$1,331,832 is projected to be in the account in June 2014, from which we will use \$1.1 million in this budget; he pointed out we will have some carryover from the current fiscal year to add, as well as additional revenue. Chief Kazian said although the mil rate is increasing, the budget is maintaining at a controllable growth without cutting services. Mr. Montgomery said as discussed at previous meetings, the mil rate was kept artificially low by previous Boards by spending capital reserves to balance budgets, which necessitated the increase to the mil rate, whereas the budget is not really the problem. Chief Kazian also pointed out this Board changed policy from the previously required 15% Board contingency to a flat \$2 million, which helped save levy amount.

Board Chairman Ty Montgomery stated there would be a Public Budget Hearing in June. *Mrs. Cooperman moved to publish the Fiscal Year 2015 Sedona Fire District budget at \$13,539,663; Mr. Jablow seconded, and the motion was unanimously approved.*

#### **B. Public Comments.**

Mr. Montgomery opened the floor for public comments, but there were none.

### **III. REGULAR BUSINESS MEETING – 4:00 PM**

#### **A. Salute to the Flag of the United States of America and a Moment of Silence to Honor all American Men and Women in Service to Our Country, Firefighters, and Police Officers.**

Mr. Montgomery led the Pledge of Allegiance; Division Chief Buzz Lechowski asked everyone to honor our American Service men and women who have died while serving our country, as well as the five firefighters and thirteen police officers who lost their lives since our April Fire Board meeting.

#### **B. Consent Agenda – Discussion/Possible Action.**

##### **1. April 23, 2014 Budget Workshop and Regular Business Meeting Minutes.**

*Mrs. Cooperman moved to approve the Consent Agenda, as presented; Mr. Jablow seconded and the motion unanimously passed.*

#### **C. Public Forum**

##### **1. Public Comments.**

Caroline Johnson – Chapel area: *We all know what an incredible group of people make up Sedona Fire District. I would like to share a story of another example of how wonderful they are. On May 12<sup>th</sup>, a very special friend lost her battle with cancer. Her name was Anne Conway and her husband is John Conway and as you will definitely remember, John had been a member of the fire district. In fact, Sandi had told me that he hired her many years ago. I did not know that Annie had been an EMS volunteer. After the fire district learned of her death, Tricia went to John's house and asked on behalf of the Chief, if he would like to have a Firefighter Honor Guard at her memorial service, since Annie had been an EMS volunteer. He accepted the offer and the service began with the Honor Guard resplendent in their uniforms coming forward carrying Annie's ashes. It was a very emotional moment. John has since told me it brought tears to his eyes. I saw Tricia among the many people in the sanctuary and after the service, I also saw the Chief and Sandi and Gary Johnson. This is just another example of the wonderful fire district we have in Sedona.*

Jim Evans – Chapel area: *I went to the Friday meeting at the high school and I thought it was exceptional. I've been reading the Flagstaff paper and following the fire on the net, but there were still a lot of questions I had at the meeting. And all my questions were answered plus a lot more things. It was an excellent presentation*

*and it was particularly interesting the fact that so many different people had something to do with fighting the fire, and to give us the gory details of what we do now. Hopefully, we never have to have a meeting like that again except for today. I just want to thank everybody concerned with that for a great job.*

## **2. Executive Staff Response to Public Comments.**

There was no Executive Staff response.

### **D. Business**

#### **1. Discussion/Possible Action: Review and Approval of April 2014 Financial Report.**

Chief Kazian said included in the Financial Report is the bank reconciliation and payroll statements for March and April. *Mr. Montgomery then moved to approve the March and April Financial Reports as presented; a second was provided by Mr. Jablow and the motion unanimously passed.*

#### **2. Monthly Staff Report – Fire Chief Kris Kazian.**

- a. Call Summary for Month and Year to Date.**
- b. Calls by Still District Summary for Month and Year to Date.**
- c. Emergency Response Times Summary for Month and Year to Date.**
- d. Regional Communications Center Dispatch Activity for Month and Year to Date.**
- e. Special/Significant Activities and Incidents.**
- f. General Update of Recent SFD Activities, Happenings, and Events.**
  - i. Pink Heals Event – June 18, 2014**
  - ii. Web Emergency Operations Center (EOC) Training – May 29, 2014**
- g. SFD Training Report.**
- h. Donations to SFD.**
- i. Update of Grant Activity.**
- j. Correspondence/Thank You Letters to SFD.**

Chief Kazian commented there were 361 incidents in April – a very busy month for SFD. He pointed out increased ambulance and interfacility transport calls represent those units being out of district for multiple hours to get patients to hospitals; he said multiple times we have had all the ambulances out on calls, which has been a resource management opportunity for Dispatch and Battalion Chiefs. He noted Station 6 responses have been added to the report and in this report for the period of time from April 26<sup>th</sup> through April 30<sup>th</sup>, one call was in the Station 6 still district, but there were actually 8 calls during those four days.

Chief Kazian stated per Clerk Cooperman's request last month, the year to date comparisons have been added. He also noted under Training, that five reserve firefighters completed their process and are now available to respond and staff stations for a total of nine reserves. He said as a point of interest, SFD provided wildland structure protection training, which was timely in light of the Slide Fire; he credited Captain PJ Lingley and Firefighter Todd Miranda for their fine work on this training. Last month, we also provided FMLA and Disability Act training to staff to comply with Federal law.

He noted the Pink Heals event for cancer awareness is scheduled for June 18<sup>th</sup>. Tomorrow morning, SFD will host Emergency Operations Center training for the City and Counties to talk about software and how it is implemented.

Chief Kazian stated SFD received the Blue Card Incident Command Training grant of \$82,000 written by Captain Pat Ojeda; this will require a 10% match of \$8,270. Board Member Diane Schoen congratulated staff on pursuing grants and she understands it takes a lot of work and is an example of our staff trying to get the best value. Chief Kazian concluded by asking the Board to review the attached thank you notes.

### **E. Items from Staff.**

#### **1. Update: Station #6.**

Chief Kazian said he was hoping this would be the last update for Station 6, but we are working to complete final numbers with LEA and Danson. He again noted the successful Dedication Ceremony and thanked everyone who helped with that event. He credited Division Chief Schwisow, Fire Inspector Kevin Sullivan,

Fire Marshal Gary Johnson, Finance Manager Sandi Schmidt, Finance Specialist Pam Wester, Executive Assistant Tricia Greer, Telecommunications Supervisor Bob Motz and his team – Telecom Technician Rich Scala and Lead IT Technician Jeremy Harris, as well as the Dispatch team of Communications Specialist Josh Violette, GIS Specialist Tammy Schuerman, and Division Chief Buzz Lechowski for the incredible amount of work done in the weeks leading up to the opening, as well as many more personnel made this station a success.

Chief Kazian stated Station 6 responded to 31 total calls from 4/26/14 to 5/17/14 (as a three-week “snapshot”) including responses to Station 3 calls 8 times, to Station 4 calls 3 times, and they were in the Station 6 district for 11 calls for a direct reduction in response times to 22 calls. Chief Lechowski added that not only did it help those calls directly, but it means the other crews are available for the next call in their area sooner.

Chief Kazian reported we will be under budget in all areas for this station. Mrs. Schoen commented the additional parking is helping both churches on either side of the station for overflow. Chief Kazian said we are monitoring traffic using the back driveway for “cross traffic” as we do not want that to become a nuisance for the synagogue or church. He also stated SFD has an obligation to repair the parking lot in a future fiscal year for potential slurry or seal coating per our agreement, and it is currently unbudgeted.

## **2. Update: Regional Communications Center.**

Division Chief Lechowski reminded the Board of the Regional Communications Center restructuring in reducing supervisors from five to one; SFD held a testing process for supervisor and the current Comm Center Supervisor Jeff Jennings retained his position. He reported we are also in the process of creating an eligibility hiring list for entry level Communications Specialist in an “open until filled” method; there are dispatch personnel retiring and leaving for other reasons. Chief Lechowski will be taking on more duties in the Comm Center, as needed, during this transition period. He also complimented the Comm Center staff for providing exceptional service to internal customers and our subscribers during a very challenging year. He gave high praise for the way the Comm Center staff handled the Slide Fire dispatching after receiving hundreds of phone calls. He thanked former SFD Assistant Chief Terry Keller for hearing the radio traffic and coming into help.

Most of the dispatch subscriber agencies are staying with SFD for at least another year. Cottonwood Communications Center is moving forward. Additionally, former Comm Center personnel have expressed interest in backfilling shifts on a part-time basis to help out; there is some uncertainty surrounding the future of the Comm Center. Chief Kazian said we want to provide stability and forecast for needs as best we can; he also praised the Comm Center staff for their professionalism and willingness to step up and do whatever necessary to get the job done.

## **3. Update: 2014 Wildland Fire Information; Evacuation Plans; Emergency Sirens; 12<sup>th</sup> Annual Sedona Clean-Up in conjunction with Defensible Space – May 16<sup>th</sup> – 18<sup>th</sup>, 2014**

Battalion Chief Jayson Coil has been working on the Slide Fire; he indicated on a map where the fire has spread and the small number of private property directly impacted by the fire. He said if it were not for the amazing work done by SFD crews and other agencies, many more structures would have been lost. Chief Coil said there has only been one reportable injury. He credited hot shot crews for keeping the fire from spreading more, and also to hopefully, mitigate some of the potential downstream flooding effects. He said APS is currently using a helicopter to lift power poles to the ridge, which is very dangerous work.

Chief Kazian stated our newest SFD Captain, Eric Lewis, was first on scene and made critically important early decisions. He said it is important to reiterate what Chief Coil said about the hot shot crews and their techniques and tactics. Also, Battalion Chief Dave Cochrane arrived quickly after the first crew and began important “watch out” work, and credit to Captain Pat Ojeda and his crew for keeping the early part of the fire from jumping Highway 89A and destroying more structures. Additionally, Chief Kazian thanked Fire Marshal Johnson and Fire Inspector Sullivan, who were coincidentally in the canyon doing fire inspections, for immediately helping with traffic control and evacuation efforts. He said we did not have a lot of things in our favor that day – with the heat, wind, and dryness – and our crews responded very calmly and professionally including Firefighters Jason Shook and Rick Evans who made a stand on a property. He is very proud of our

SFD personnel for their outstanding work on the Slide Fire; he also gave “kudos” to Chief Coil and commented SFD’s wildland fire training really paid off that day.

Chief Coil then referenced the Board’s packet of information and commented on the dryness of live fuels in Oak Creek Canyon and other areas of our district at such a level they are considered “available” to burn; right now, all our Juniper and brush, even if green, is available; historically, for the past 100 years in the Coconino National Forest, the Slide Fire is the largest fire recorded; he pointed out they normally happen in the last week of June or first week of July when the height of dryness is reached, but unfortunately, based on last year’s winter and because of the strong grass crop the year before from wet monsoons, we have now reached maximum dryness six weeks ahead of schedule. Chief Coil asked all citizens to think about priorities ahead of time for potential evacuations; he asked them to take the time to reduce fuels on their property through FireWise efforts, and to sign up for either Yavapai or Coconino Counties’ Code Red emergency alert system. He said the teamwork that took place on the initial day and night of the Slide Fire prevented the fire from spreading into the southern end of Flagstaff.

Mrs. Schoen said she received questions about West Fork Canyon; he said it is not “gutted” as previously feared, in large part due to the cautious work undertaken by the hot shot crews. Chief Coil said the fire is getting to the point of stabilization, although there are still small interior pockets burning fuel, but no large portions of land are being impacted by the fire. He also commented about the high level of smoke in Sedona and said this morning, the smoke monitor meter at Station 4 registered at 600, and 250 is considered hazardous; ADEQ has guidelines on its website about smoke sensitivity.

Division Chief Scott Schwisow credited the Station 1 staff for their work in answering phone and relaying information to citizens about evacuations during the first days of the fire, and also to the Communications personnel in the Canyon helping out where needed, as well as the mechanics; he said as Chief Coil mentioned, this really was a team effort. Chief Kazian commented that day there were “red trucks” (fire vehicles) and “green trucks” (Forest Service), but there was no difference when working on the fire; there was a seamless transition and everyone worked together. He said SFD still has one water tender, one Type 3 engine, one ambulance, one task force leader trainee, one facility unit manager, and Chief Coil assigned to the fire. Mrs. Schoen thanked Chief Kazian for inviting Board Members to tour the fire area, as many community members have questions; she commented our SFD personnel did everything they could to mitigate the fire. Chairman Montgomery also recognized SFD’s work and the preparation SFD has done over the last 10 years to be ready for such a large fire. He said the national Incident Commander complimented Chief Coil and our district on its preparation to stop this fire.

**4. Discussion/Possible Action: P.O. #9128 to SHI International Corp. in the amount of \$19,232.16 for second year renewal of three year Microsoft Enterprise Agreement.**

Chief Schwisow stated this is the second year of an enterprise agreement for licensing with Microsoft. *Mrs. Schoen then moved to approve P.O. #9128 in the amount of \$19,232.16; Mr. Jablow seconded, and the motion was unanimously approved.*

**5. Discussion/Possible Action: Cooperative Greater Flagstaff Area Fire Agencies All Risk Emergency Intergovernmental Agreement. (Tabled on 4/23/14)**

Chief Kazian said he attended the Flagstaff City Council meeting when this was approved, and that Mr. Whittington had made a few changes which the City Council approved; he said this will be an improvement to an existing IGA. *Mrs. Cooperman then moved to approve the IGA as presented; Mr. Hazime seconded, and the motion unanimously passed.*

**6. Discussion/Possible Action: Election Services Agreement with Yavapai County.**

Chief Kazian commented this is a standard agreement with Yavapai County, which is required each election year and will be for \$4.60 per registered voter for election services. Mr. Whittington commented he had called the County regarding this agreement as there are additional items needed and recommended tabling this until next month.

#### **7. Discussion/Possible Action: Station 4 – Communication Tower Replacement.**

Division Chief Schwisow stated Telecommunications Supervisor Motz has been working with our tower vendor, Verizon, on the tower structure at Station 4; years ago, SFD entered into a lease with Verizon, who built the tower, but SFD owns it and since then, the wind load rating has increased to a higher capacity, and Verizon wants to rebuild the tower for safety and additional function issues. Verizon is doing studies on the foundation and the tower itself to see what would be needed in a new tower to replace the current one; Chief Schwisow said the tower has been modified over the years trying to make it stronger, but is now at a point where it needs to be replaced. Verizon must secure approval from the City for this project, as well, and the tower may be slightly taller, if necessary. In order to accomplish this replacement, they will have to erect a temporary tower to house all the equipment, construct the new tower, then move the equipment back. Verizon is paying rent to locate equipment on this tower, and will fund all the work. Chief Schwisow said staff is not asking for formal approval from the Board today, but rather consensus to move forward with the research with Verizon. Mr. Jablow asked who would make a presentation to the City of Sedona; Chief Schwisow replied Verizon. Chief Kazian said this is a safety issue with the wind strength for tower support. Mr. Jablow said it is necessary, but the aesthetics could be an issue; Mr. Hazime commented that the tower is already there. Mrs. Schoen said we should caution Verizon to not use the SFD Board as an “endorser” of this project to the City because we are waiting to see what the project will entail. Chief Kazian stated there could be a potential for increased revenue as a result of this. Mrs. Schoen asked that a staff member attend the City Council meeting when this is discussed. The Board gave its consensus to move forward in researching this issue.

#### **8. Discussion/Possible Action: 1st Amendment to the SFD Lease with Sedona-Oak Creek Airport Authority.**

Division Chief Schwisow said this is an amendment to a 10-year lease agreement with the airport from 2010 and was necessitated to add two microwave dishes on the current tower located there to provide service for Station 6. The amendment includes an updated map showing the addition; the provision is to pay \$1 per year for this lease; Mr. Whittington reviewed the previously approved lease agreement, which is not being modified at this time. Chief Kazian commented SFD has a good relationship with the airport staff, and said this amendment will go to the county, as it is their property. Chief Schwisow pointed out this did not require an additional antenna, but is just the addition of two microwave disks. *Mrs. Cooperman then moved to approve the 1<sup>st</sup> Amendment to the lease agreement, as presented, Mr. Jablow seconded, and the motion was unanimously approved.*

#### **F. Item from Board Chairman Ty Montgomery.**

##### **1. Monthly Update: Fees for Legal Services Provided to SFD.**

Mr. Montgomery noted we remain under budget in legal fees for this fiscal year.

#### **IV. FIRE MARSHAL’S SAFETY MESSAGE**

As Fire Marshal Gary Johnson had to leave the meeting early, Chief Kazian asked everyone to note the wildland fire awareness program of “One Less Spark, One Less Wildfire” and the brochure available to remind motorists to reduce the risks of causing a fire. He said it is extremely dry and that everyone must use caution.

#### **V. ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting adjourned at 5:20 PM.

*Original signed by Corrie Cooperman*

---

Corrie Cooperman, Clerk of the Board

:tg