



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

Tuesday, August 16, 2022 / 4:30 PM

~ MINUTES ~

I. CALL TO ORDER/ROLL CALL

Pursuant to notice, a regular meeting of the Sedona Fire District (SFD) was called to order by Chairman Dave Soto at 4:30 PM on Tuesday, August 16, 2022. Executive Assistant, Kim Smathers recorded the minutes. A quorum was present, and the meeting, having been duly convened, was ready to proceed with business.

Board Present: Dave Soto – Chairman; Gene McCarthy – Clerk; Al Comello, Helen McNeal, Janet Jablow – Members Others Present: Fire Chief Jon Trautwein; Director of Administrative Services Heidi Robinson; Gabe Buldra, JVG; Attorney William Whittington; Assistant Chief Jayson Coil; Division Chief Ed Mezulis; Division Chief Dori Booth; Executive Assistant Kim Smathers – Recorder.

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.

Chairman Dave Soto led the Pledge of Allegiance and Chief Jon Trautwein requested a Moment of Silence for the 14 Police Officers and 6 firefighters who passed away since the previous Board Meeting.

II. PRESENTATION OF AWARDS/STAFF RECOGNITION

A. Acknowledgment of Years of Service:

Chief Jon Trautwein recognized Captain Jeff Wassell (25 years), Firefighter Paul Chabot (20 years), Engineer Cooper Carr (15 years), and Firefighters Mark Essary, Tyson Harding, and Jeremy Vargas (5 years) for their service to Sedona Fire District. Captain Wassell was present with his family and was given an opportunity to speak, which he declined. Board member Comello remarked that he was impressed with the lengths of service and commended the dedication to the SFD. Board Chairman Soto acknowledged the families, stating that they are essential and thanking everyone for their service.

III. EXECUTIVE SESSION

A. Possible vote to go into Executive Session on Personnel Matters re: Fire Chief's Self Evaluation pursuant to ARS §38-431.03(A)(1), and legal advice pursuant to ARS §38-431.03(A)(3) regarding the same.

Chairman Soto made a motion to go into executive session, Board Clerk Gene McCarthy seconded it, there was no discussion and the motion passed unanimously.

IV. RECONVENE TO REGULAR BUSINESS MEETING

The public session reconvened at 7:13 p.m.

A. Discussion/Possible Action: Vote to approve and add to personnel file Fire Chief Trautwein's evaluation as Result of Executive Session.

Chairman Soto made a motion to approve and add to personnel file Fire Chief Trautwein's evaluation. Board member Helen McNeal seconded. There was no further discussion and the motion passed unanimously.

Chair Soto thanked Chief Trautwein for 3 years of service and said that he feels there is much more to be said, but that would come another time. He closed with “job well done” and Chief Trautwein thanked the Chairman and the Board.

B. Discussion/Possible Action: 2023 Fee Schedule for review, possible adoption.

Due to scheduling conflicts and information dissemination, the fee schedule is not ready to review. Chairman Soto tabled the discussion until September Board meeting.

V. REGULAR BUSINESS MEETING

A. Public Forum:

Speakers are limited to three-minute oral presentations, but may submit written comments of any length for Board files. Board Members may not discuss items not specifically identified on the Agenda. Therefore, pursuant to ARS 38-431.01(H), Board action taken as a result of public comment is limited to directing staff to study the matter, responding to any criticism, or scheduling the matter for further consideration and decision at a later date.

1. Public Comments

2. Executive Staff Response to Public Comments

There were no requests to speak.

B. Consent Agenda – Discussion/Possible Actions:

All matters under Consent Agenda are considered by the Board to be routine (i.e. Minutes and/or signatory authority for bank accounts), and will be enacted by a single motion approving the Consent Agenda. If discussion is desired on any particular consent item, a Board Member may ask that item be removed from the Consent Agenda to be considered separately.

1. July 19, 2022 Regular Meeting Minutes

Board Chair Soto made a motion to approve the Consent Agenda, Board Clerk McCarthy seconded, there was no further discussion and the motion passed unanimously.

C. Financial Report and Updates – Gabe Buldra, Finance Director

1. Discussion/Possible Action: Review and Approval of July 2022 Finance Report

This is the first report for FY 2023. Wildland and ambulance billing revenues are exceeding expectations. At this point, expenditures are under budget, while there was an uptick in IT costs due to annual renewals of software subscriptions. There has been 11% expenditure for the first month of the year. Heading into audit preparations.

Chairman Soto asked Mr. Buldra if the new apparatus that are “in progress” was included. Mr. Buldra stated that they were included in the total assets.

Chairman Soto made a motion to approve the July 2022 finance report as presented, Clerk McCarthy seconded, there was no further discussion and the motion passed unanimously.

D. Staff Items:

1. Fire Chief – Fire Chief Trautwein

State of the District presentation. Chief Trautwein detailed “what makes a great fire agency” and stated that SFD has a lot of really good things going on. He listed 1) People, 2) Budget, 3) Operations, 4) Administration, 5) Community Risk Reduction, 6) Operational Support, and 7) Infrastructure. Chief then outlined the positive details relating to SFD under each bullet point. Chief Trautwein finished his presentation by charging the Board to keep focused and grounded, keep momentum going forward, and strive to deliver a higher level of service.

Board member Comello stated that his 3 ½ years on the Board were better for Chief Trautwein “showing them the way” and “showing us our role on the Board.”

Board Clerk McCarthy began by stating that this was difficult for him and that he had served under and

known a lot of Fire Chiefs and he felt that Chief Trautwein has always been the “firefighters Chief.” He continued telling Chief Trautwein that he respected him and his history, his amazing career and offering his best wished for an amazing future.

Board Member Jablow thanked Chief Trautwein for helping the Department run smoothly and stated that he will be missed.

Board Member McNeal re-iterated the thank you, especially for onboarding herself. She joked that she did not believe that Chief Trautwein is “going into retirement” but going on to new things and she believes that he will have great success in the new avenues he pursues. She again thanked him for his service and offered best wishes.

Board Chair Soto stated that the 3 Leaders of SFD, Trautwein, Coil and Mezulis would stack up against any leadership in the country as Fire Chiefs. He stated that Chief Trautwein shined every second of every day of his tenure at SFD. Soto stated that SFD is on a good path to establish infrastructure and that Chief Trautwein has cleaned house in areas where no one sees. HE concluded saying that Chief Trautwein had a passion for ensuring that SFD runs at it’s optimum potential and ensured that that is what happened. Thank you for a job well done.

E. Discussion/Possible Action: Possible review of new Chief selection process; possible selection of new Fire Chief. Possible instructions to staff and legal counsel regarding a possible contract for new Fire Chief.

Chairman Soto began the discussion of the selection process by outlining the steps taken and stated that he appreciated that the Board did not have to reinvent the wheel due to the process that brought Chief Trautwein to SFD. The situation was adjusted, with 2 viable internal candidates. Soto discussed the residency requirement and how it had been amended to a suitable boundary. The 2 candidates participated in 8 assessment and the Board interviews in Executive Session. Chairman Soto said that the data collected was incredible and the scores for the assessment were very evenly matched and the decision was more difficult, and closer, than Chief Trautwein’s selection. While there can only be one person appointed Chief, both candidates are needed and complement each other and he feels that they will work together seamlessly to the benefit of the community and SFD.

There were comments about the process made by the board to each candidate, thanking the candidates for pursuing the process.

Chairman Soto at this time called for paper ballots to be distributed and a secret vote held. Ballots were collected and tallied by the Recorder and the results given to Chairman Soto. At this time, it was announced that Division Chief Ed Mezulis had been selected by vote of the Board, as the new Fire Chief for Sedona Fire District, effective 9/4/2022.

Chairman Soto at that time requested that Chief Trautwein assist in negotiating the contract with Mr. Whittington.

Chairman Soto motion was made to appoint and approve Ed Mezulis as Fire Chief. Board Clerk McCarthy seconded the motion. No further discussion was held and the motion passed unanimously.

Mr. Whittington recommended that Chairman Soto make a motion to authorize staff and legal counsel to prepare a form of contract for use in conjunction with the new Fire Chief appointment and to submit same to Chief and Fire Board chairman for consideration. Chair Soto moved as stated. Board Member McNeal seconded. There was no further discussion and the motion passed unanimously.

Chairman Soto asked Chief Mezulis for a statement, to which he responded that he appreciated the confidence of the Board and the staff. Chief Mezulis stated that he will continue to look for ways to improve SFD and that he looks forward to tackling new projects, as well. He stated, “I’ll give it my all and I won’t let you down.” Chairman Soto then asked Chief Coil if he had any comments and Chief Coil replied that he would support Chief Mezulis for as long as he is here.

F. Board Member Items:

1. Discussion: Due to the length of the meeting, Chairman Soto stated that there was nothing to report from the Board for the month of July and recommended that the meeting be dismissed with no further discussion.

III. ADJOURNMENT

Chairman Soto adjourned the meeting at 7:51 p.m.

Gene McCarthy, Clerk of the Board

SFD Multipurpose Room is accessible to the handicapped. In compliance with Americans with Disabilities Act, those with special needs, such as large print or other reasonable accommodations, may request them by calling 928-282-6800.

Posted by:

Date:

Time: