SEDONA FIRE DISTRICT

2860 Southwest Drive, Sedona, Arizona 86336
Telephone: (928) 282-6800 • FAX: (928) 282-6857
www.sedonafire.org

REGULAR BOARD MEETING

Station #1 • 2860 Southwest Drive • Sedona, AZ • Multi-purpose Room
Tuesday, June 16, 2026 • 3:00 PM

MINUTES

I. CALL TO ORDER/ROLL CALL

A. Salute to the flag of the United States of America and a moment of silence to honor American men and women in service to our country, firefighters, and police officers.

Pursuant to notice, a Regular Meeting of the Sedona Fire District (SFD) was called to order by Board Chair, Helen McNeal, at 3:00 PM on Tuesday, June 16, 2026. A quorum of the Board was present and the meeting, having been duly convened, proceeded with business. Ms. McNeal led the Pledge of Allegiance. A moment of silence was held for the seven firefighters and five law enforcement officers that died nationwide since the last Board meeting.

B. Roll Call of Board Members

Board Present: Helen McNeal, Chair; Scott Springett, Lance Waldrop, Members. Corrie Cooperman, Board Clerk; Diana Christensen, Member, were absent.

Others Present: Jayson Coil, Assistant Fire Chief; Jordan Baker, Division Chief; Kirk Riddell, Fire Marshal; Gabe Buldra, JVG Director of Finance; Bill Whittington, Board Attorney, BPCWS, PLLC.; Jeff Wassell, Battalion Chief; Scott Schwisow, Project Manager; Christi Weigand, Executive Assistant to the Fire Chief; Josh Clounch, User Support Technician. Ed Mezulis, Fire Chief, was absent.

II. PUBLIC BUDGET HEARING – *Pursuant to A.R.S. § 48-805.02(A)*

A. Open Public Hearing for the Proposed Fiscal Year 2027 Budget.

The Public Budget Hearing officially began at 3:00 PM.

B. Public input regarding the Proposed Fiscal Year 2027 Budget and staff response.

Helen McNeal, Board Chair, asked if any members of the public wished to comment on the Fiscal Year 2027 Proposed Budget. There were no members of the public present.

C. Close of Public Hearing.

The public hearing officially closed at 3:01 PM.

III. DISCUSSION/POSSIBLE ACTION

A. Possible approval of Resolution #2026-02, Adoption of the Fiscal Year 2027 Budget, including pension funding and the pay schedule.

Ms. McNeal read the preamble of Resolution #2026-02.

Helen McNeal, Board Chair, moved to approve the Proposed Fiscal Year 2027 Budget, pension funding, and the pay schedule. Lance Waldrop, Board Member, seconded. The motion was passed unanimously by the Board with no further discussion.

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IV. REGULAR BUSINESS

A. Public Forum/Call to the Public

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 A.R.S. § 38-431.01(I), 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) Possible Executive Staff Response to Public Comments

Members of the public were not present at the meeting.

B. Consent Agenda: Discussion/Possible Action

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) Regular Board Meeting Minutes – May 19, 2026

Lance Waldrop, Board Member, moved to approve the Consent Agenda, to include the May 19, 2026, Regular Board Meeting minutes. Scott Springett, Board Member, seconded. The motion was passed unanimously by the Board with no further discussion.

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

1) Discussion/Possible Action: Review and possible approval of the May 2026 Monthly Financial Report.

Mr. Bulda reviewed the May 2026 Monthly Financial Report (see the Board packet and presentation). May total revenue was $1.468M, $389K under budget, driven by a property tax collection variance, notably more in April than historically. Non-levy revenue totaled $664K, over budget by $350K, most attributed to wildland and ambulance revenue. Expenses totaled $1.6M under budget by $315K. Year-to-date revenues totaled $26.7M, over budget by $1.586M, tax collection is on target and non-levy revenue is over by $1.5M, largely due to wildland, ambulance, and investment income. Expenses totaled $21.75M, under budget by $300K. Personnel costs totaled $18.7 million, exceeding the budget primarily due to overtime and wildland deployment wages. Notably, wildland deployment costs are reimbursed by the state, while district overtime has been absorbed within the existing budget. The District has expended 91% year to date, with 9% remaining. Personnel is the highest percentage of expenses at 86% of total costs, followed by Operations at 7%, IT and Communications at 4%, and Managerial at 3%. The cash position totaled $23.8M, an increase of $3.76M over the previous year. Other assets increased from $26.5M to $27.2M. Liabilities increased from $33.3M to $34.8M, from accrual adjustments and pensions.

Helen McNeal, Board Chair, moved to approve the May 2026 Monthly Financial Report. Lance Waldrop, Board Member, seconded. The motion was passed unanimously by the Board with no further discussion.

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D. Monthly Staff Report

1) Operations Activities – Assistant Fire Chief, Jayson Coil

Administration

- Contract reviews, renewals, and process assessments continue, as the Board directed.
- Staff are finalizing contracts for liability insurance carriers. The District is closely watching potential impacts to the healthcare insurance system and strategizing how to navigate such impacts.
- The District is in the process of changing uniform vendors which may result in a website availability delay of one month (August 1, 2026). Crews are expected to get more for their money.

Human Resources

- The Employee Handbook review and revisions are ongoing. Fire District and employment law legal counsel will review the Handbook upon the conclusion of the internal review.
- Helen McNeal, Board Chair asked if using a headhunter has been considered for the open IT position. Chief Coil stated the District could use a headhunter but suggested improving internal processes first.
- The PFFA healthcare trust is underway and is being evaluated for the future.
- NFPA testing and compliance is being completed. PS Tracks has been rolled out for the maintenance of operational PPE and full SCBA cylinder inventories.

Wildland

- Multiple fires have occurred. SFD is involved in those within the District, but the involvement varies, depending on the value risk.
- The Forest Service advised that they are utilizing heavy helicopters to extinguish fires and flying over people and residential areas.
- Joint chainsaw training continues in Flagstaff to ensure workplace safety.

Chief Coil commented that the District received high remarks regarding a recent complex incident. He noted SFD's overall high performance during complex, significant events, an output of the EMS training invested in the District. An example was provided, where crews recently performed life-saving measures on an individual that was later able to walk out of the hospital. The positive outcome was a result of training, attention to detail, and practice.

2) Community Risk Reduction Activities – Fire Marshal, Kirk Riddell

Activity Report

- Fire Marshal Kirk Riddell reviewed the monthly CRR Activity Report (see Board Presentation). Activity is expected to increase as the inspectors continue to be trained.

Fire Investigation

- A vanity mirror reflection caused a small fire, which burned through a wall. The mirror projected sunlight over time. Pictures were presented to the Board (see Board presentation).

Notable and Upcoming Events

- CRR attended the Verde Valley Fair in May and Fire Marshal Riddell commended Deputy Fire Marshal Wesbrock and Fire Inspector Danny Robinson for their work and positive representation of the District.

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- A Firewise presentation was conducted in Highland Estates in the Village of Oak Creek. The presentation was well received and participants provided much feedback, predominantly regarding evacuation. The residential area is at a dead end. CRR discussed evacuation with attendees.

3) Operational Support – Division Chief, Buzz Lechowski

EMS Activities and Updates

- Two paramedics graduated and two additional individuals are attending orientation at Yavapai College. Ms. McNeal asked the percentage of staff that are paramedics. The budget reflects 51 total paramedics, per Gabe Buldra.
- Heat emergency kits were rolled out to crews and include polar ice sheets.
- Chief Mezulis and DC Lechowski met with Northern Arizona Healthcare (NAH), noting the strongest relationship SFD has had with NAH. The Cancer Center is moving. It is unlikely the building space will be used for an ER expansion.
- The District continues to work on DEA compliance. A policy exception is being worked on to file with the DEA to allow interstate transport of narcotics for wildland firefighting this year and to help modify policy next year.
- SFD is teaching CPR to SPD officers and the SFD/SPD relationship is the best seen in years.
- Ambulance billing is being evaluated to ensure the District is receiving the best value.
- Regional response plans are being drafted in relation to the Copper Canyon JPA to effectively integrate within the Verde Valley area response. AI is being utilized to enhance the modifications.
- The mental health provider's business model is being modified and services will be provided at a different patient clinic. There is no break in mental health care during the transition.

Fleet Activities and Updates

- The bond for the engines was received. The timeline is 28-31 months from the date of the bond. No pre-build will be conducted.
- The Braun remount will be delivered to Washington at the end of July. The chassis was recently received.
- Engine 511 had the engine rebuilt and is back in service.

Other Program Updates

- SFD representatives attended Arizona Children's Burn Camp: Chief Mezulis, Division Chief Lechowski, Deputy Fire Marshal Wesbrock, and firefighters Matt Fisher, Ryan Fisher, and Nick Granada. SFD proudly participates in the Camp on an annual basis.

4) Training and Preparedness – Division Chief, Jordan Baker

Training Report

- The Engineer Taskbook is scheduled to be completed the first week of July, which the last of the four revisions (Firefighter, Engineer, Captain, and BC Taskbooks). Crews are eagerly waiting for their release to begin working on them.
- Individual company standard skill sheets for the Engineer position are a work in progress and are anticipated to be completed and included with the Taskbook.
- The firefighter new hire orientation and training is also being revamped, including the firefighter individual competency standards and minimum company standards, which have not been reviewed in 15 years.
- The last of phase two Blue card training was completed. The training is scenario based using pre-loaded iPads with pre-existing structure and commercial fire scenarios.
- Arizona State Fire School registration is now open. The program offers five- to six-day training courses in Phoenix across multiple disciplines, including leadership, fire protection and

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prevention, engineering, EMS, and other fire service specialties. Several employees have already expressed interest in attending. Letters of interest will be collected, and attendee selections will be made around July 1st based on district training needs and individual promotional development needs.

- Ladder truck training was conducted in Cottonwood. Chief Mezulis has directed Division Chief Baker to conduct more regionalization training with Copper Canyon, Cottonwood, Verde Valley, our neighboring agencies.
- The last RAM recruit mentorship event was a success. Application submissions totaled 35 to 40 and the District hopes to reach up to 60, with higher numbers next year.

Helen McNeal, Board Chair, asked Division Chief Baker to bring the Taskbooks so the Board may see them to understand what is involved.

Division Chief Baker noted that a Cottonwood Division Chief also commended SFD for its outstanding abilities to work through complex events.

Wellness

- The Wellness Committee started a monthly newsletter. Readers can scan a QR code to view specific exercises and events to prevent injuries.
- A crew-based workout of the month has enhanced teamwork and camaraderie. Division Chief Baker commended the Wellness Committee for creating and promoting it.

E. Fire Chief Report – Assistant Fire Chief, Jayson Coil on behalf of Fire Chief, Ed Mezulis

Capital Project Updates

- The telecom generator project is completed following several delays associated with receiving equipment and coordination with external project partners.
- Station #2 is being used as a storehouse and has not had running water. SFD water well ownership from an agreement made in the 1980s or 1990s was discovered. Running water has been restored to the facility.
- The first equipment, 10 racks, for the Zetron project, recently arrived. Delivery is pending for two big orders of batteries and rectifiers. The airport tower project is also starting and SFD is performing preliminary measures with the propane tank, grading, and drawings for the footing in the tower. Frequency issues continue to be addressed in partnership with a consultant.
- An engineering firm was hired to design water flow mitigation and retention at Station #3. The design is completed and the District is working with the County to meet requirements.
- A meeting with LEA Architects was conducted in which a 150-page document was reviewed for the Station #4 planning. The basic layout and design of the station has not changed much, but the topography, grading, and the water retention added to the Station cost after the final engineering plans were received. The interior finishes were also reviewed and discussed. Another meeting was held with CORE Construction to review the 60% GMP drawings. CORE rebid thereafter and provided a new number which was affected by the drainage. The current estimated cost is approximately $16.2M. Approximately $100K in unnecessary items were identified during the meeting and eliminated from the plans. The plans will continue to the 90% GMP phase which integrates competitive bidding. Costs may be lower. The plans were also sent to a company to evaluate energy efficiency of the structure, resulting in a 28.6% rating. Although the goal is 15%, the SFD building rating is still low and affected by the large size of the station bays.

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The estimated Station #4 timeline is as follows:

- July 17, 2026 – LEA 100% drawings to CORE Construction
- August 14, 2026 – CORE 100% GMP
- End of August/Early September – Demolition
- End of September/Early October – Excavation/Building
- Groundbreaking Ceremony – Estimated date is pending

Chief Mezulis anticipates discussing the 100% GMP at the August 18, 2026, Regular Board Meeting and submitting the contractual guaranteed maximum price to the Board for potential approval at the September meeting. The demolition GMP and long lead items will be proactively discussed with the Board in the interim to keep the project moving forward. The drawings will be submitted to the City and the review may take up to 90 days.

V. BOARD MEMBER UPDATES AND IDEAS FOR FUTURE MEETINGS

Helen McNeal, Board Chair, asked Bill Whittington, Board Attorney to provide a staffing update. Mr. Whittington stated that he is returning to cover SFD Board matters after the departure of Mr. Tomas Montoya, who left the firm for other employment.

VI. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 4:28 PM.

/s/Original signed by Corrie Cooperman **7/21/26**

Corrie Cooperman, Board Clerk Date