

**FRY FIRE DISTRICT
MINUTES OF REGULAR BOARD MEETING
April 15, 2020**

CALL TO ORDER

Mr. Huish called the Regular Meeting of the Fry Fire District Board to order at 7:00 p.m.

ATTENDANCE

Board Members in Attendance: Joseph Huish, Board Chairman
Eric Andersen, Board Clerk
Robert McMurtrie, Board Member (by video conference call)
Thomas Tucker, Board Member (by video conference call)

Board Members Absent: Norman Sturm, Board Member

Staff in Attendance: Mark Savage, Fire Chief
Diana Jones, Billing Supervisor
Ben Archer Clowes, JVG (by video conference call)
Steven Rodriguez, JVG (by video conference call)

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE AND INVOCATION

Mr. Huish led the Pledge of Allegiance and Mr. Andersen gave the invocation.

CONFLICT OF INTEREST

Mr. Huish reminded board members that they shall declare any conflict of interest. No board member declared a conflict at this time.

CALL TO THE PUBLIC

Mr. Huish opened the call to the public at 7:01 p.m.

Chief Savage advised that he shared his email address with this month's agenda in the event that any members of the public wished to share public comments with the board while respecting the need for social distancing. There were no comments from the public in the meeting and Chief Savage advised that he had not received any by email.

Call to the public closed at 7:01 p.m.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

A. Regular Board Meeting on March 18, 2020.

Mr. Andersen made a motion to accept the Regular Board Meeting minutes of March 18, 2020. Mr. Tucker seconded the motion.

Vote: 4-0.

Motion Carried.

FINANCIAL REPORT

A. Review, discussion and possible action on the monthly financial report for March 2020.

Steven Rodriguez from James Vincent Group (JVG) gave a PowerPoint presentation reflecting the financial reports for March 2020. A discussion followed. The board reviewed the warrants for the month with no questions.

Mr. Andersen made a motion to accept the March 2020 financial reports. Mr. McMurtrie seconded the motion.

Vote: 4-0.

Motion Carried.

COMMAND STAFF'S REPORT

Chief Savage reported legislature has been in recess due to COVID-19 and there has been no further activity on S1160. We are working to complete the Arizona Fire District Worker's Compensation Pool application and anticipate forwarding that next week for their review. We have received no firm quotes back yet for FY21 worker's compensation coverage.

The County Treasurer's Association was pushing to postpone property tax deadlines. This would have adversely impacted fire districts, counties, school districts and many other entities dependent on property taxes for revenue. Chief Savage believes the move has stalled. Pima, Santa Cruz, and Cochise County Chiefs reached out to legislators and the Governor to strongly oppose the measure.

Engineer Matthew Brown tendered his resignation and will be going to work with Sierra Vista Fire and Medical Department towards the end of this month. We will begin the Engineer promotion process within the next few months and we will

also fill the Full-Time vacancy in line with our current SAFER staffing requirements.

We recently hired two more Part-Time EMS personnel (an EMT and a Paramedic) and we are working to get them trained and online. We tested another two today and anticipate hiring them (a Paramedic and an EMT) over the next few weeks as well.

We are working closely with the Cochise County Health Department and Office of Emergency Management (EOC) to support the county-wide COVID-19 response. We have been supporting the EOC Operations during their Monday, Wednesday, and Friday schedule for the past few weeks. Based on this morning's FEMA report that pushes our COVID-19 peak out to May and June, we're anticipating scaling that schedule back to two days a week.

Our personnel have been provided guidance regarding infectious control from patient contact and we issued appropriate Personal Protective Equipment (PPE). We are screen our personnel daily and have appropriate inventory both in stock and on order. Our fire stations have been temporarily closed to the public and although we had some near misses on calls, we are continuing to take aggressive steps to minimize our employees' exposures both on and off duty.

We have had a few employees out with fevers and flu-like symptoms. Two have been tested and both had positive test results. They'll be allowed to return to work after 72 hours without symptoms and will be required to wear a mask until they've been symptom free for 14 days.

Arizona Department of Health Services (AZDHS) has significantly relaxed their rules governing everything from Treat and Refer to Ambulance Licensing requirements. At this point, we are confident that we are prepared for whatever our surge looks like and have plans in place to augment response staffing and patient transport capacity.

There has been some discussion about the Families First Corona Relief Act – the act complements the stimulus payments that many are receiving and provides up to 80 hours of additional sick leave for non-critical employees. As first responders, our sworn personnel are exempt and understandably unable to work from home. We posted the required notice and have credited the leave to our non-sworn administrative and support staff. Chief Savage has placed a temporary moratorium on leave requests from today through May 15. To date we haven't seen any critical staffing shortages and have been able to accommodate sick leave and previously scheduled annual leave.

Chief Savage stated we are still waiting on the mounts for the new TNT extrication tools which should be in next week. The 2020 Wildland Fire

Hazardous Fuels (WFHF) Grant cycle is open until May 15 and we'll be submitting for another round of hazardous fuel reduction funding.

Administrative personnel have been flexing schedules to minimize contact hours while continuing to perform critical financial and payroll services.

The Southeast Arizona Communications Center (SEACOM) director, Allen Smith, is continuing to perform well. The SEACOM budget is in good shape, largely due to the fact that they are still running understaffed. The Joint Powers Authority Board is working on the FY21 budget. Bisbee has some dispatchers out sick and may move their Fire and Police dispatching to SEACOM – logistics have been resolved for shared frequencies between CCSO and Bisbee Police / Fire. Canyon Vista Medical Center installed a building repeater that should improve coverage for personnel within the ER and hospital. SEACOM is still working with Cochise County to reallocate regional dispatch frequencies and we are looking forward to supporting this project and taking advantage of the greater radio coverage it will provide.

The Cochise County IT is still working to finalize moving our servers to their complex and we have ordered a few new workstations to replace older outdated systems.

There is no progress to report with Huachuca City/Whetstone. Chief Savage is looking forward to meeting the new Huachuca City Town Manager.

Chief Savage is continuing to meet regularly with Sierra Vista Fire and Medical Department's Chief Jones regarding possible needs and to collaborate on COVID-19 responses, emergency operations, staffing issues, and the EOC.

The 2020 Arizona Fire Chief's Association / Arizona Fire District Association (AFCA/AFDA) Leadership Conference in July has been canceled.

Mr. Andersen asked Chief Savage how the County is fairing amid the pandemic. Chief Savage replied, law enforcement, Fire/EMS, and air-medical calls are down across the board. Local hospitals are feeling some financial strain from shutting down elective business and haven't seen a significant surge in COVID-19 patients yet. Chief Savage believes the County is prepared, has the capacity to handle whatever response is necessary and has good situational awareness locally and throughout the region.

OLD BUSINESS

A. Review, discussion and possible action on Sta. 365 remodel for qualifications.

Chief Savage provided the Board pricing estimates from Core Construction and would like to schedule a virtual planning and design meeting next Tuesday or Friday with available Board members. A discussion followed.

There was no action taken on this agenda item.

NEW BUSINESS

A. Review, discussion and possible action on FY21 Annual Budget.

Steven Rodriguez and Ben Archer Clowes from James Vincent Group (JVG) provided a PowerPoint presentation overview of the proposed FY2021 budget and a budget timeline. Board members were provided a Budget Detail report. A discussion followed.

There was no action taken on this agenda item.

B. Review, discussion and possible action on Add Paramedic Pay Policy.

Item tabled until next month's meeting.

C. Review, discussion and possible action on Proximity Pay Policy.

Item tabled until next month's meeting.

D. Review, discussion and possible action regarding FEMA Grant Portal Application and Resolution 2020-001.

Chief Savage advised the Board we are registered on the FEMA Grant Portal for reimbursement for COVID-19 related expenses; however, they require documentation of Board approval to submit requests through the program. A discussion followed.

Mr. Andersen made a motion to accept the FEMA Grant Portal Application and Resolution 2020-001. Mr. Tucker seconded the motion.

Vote: 4-0.

Motion Carried.

REQUEST FROM BOARD MEMBERS

There were no requests from the board members.

ADJOURNMENT

Mr. Andersen made a motion to adjourn the Regular Meeting at 8:12 p.m. Motion seconded by Mr. McMurtrie.

Meeting adjourned at 8:12 p.m.

DATED THIS 16th DAY OF APRIL 2020.

Eric Andersen,
Board Clerk
Fry Fire District Board