

Regular Meeting of Pinetop Fire Board

April 21, 2025

Pinetop Fire District Station 12

Video & Conference Available

1845 S. Pine Lake Rd, Pinetop AZ 85935

Call the meeting to Order: John Rowlinson called the meeting to order at 5:07pm

Roll Call of Board Members, Present John Rowlinson, Edie Webber, Ben Borrego, Marcus Harding is excused and Note: Carla Bowen resigned at the March 17 meeting.

Administration Attending: Chief Jim Morgan, Asst Chief Richard Wallace, Karen Robbins, and Attorney Bill Whittington, Gabe Buldra (JVG) Nick Dodd from Rick James, and Louis Mirabelli representative for the MOU and White Mountain Firefighters Assoc.

1. Call the Public

None

II. Consent Agenda Board Business

The items on the consent agenda are considered routine and will be adopted in one motion unless a board member, staff, or member of the public in the audience requests, before the vote on the motion, to have the item considered separately. If any item is removed from the Consent Agenda, the Board Chairman will indicate when it will be discussed in the regular agenda.

Approval of meeting minutes for March 2025

Approval of Warrants paid March 2025

Edith Webber made the motion to approve the consent agenda as presented. Seconded by Ben Borrego. Motion passed unanimously 3-0.

III. Board Business

1. Discussion/Consideration/Possible Approval re; Accepting Carla Bowen's Board Member Resignation

Carla Bowen submitted her resignation at the March 17, 2025, Board Meeting. Chairman Rowlinson expressed his gratitude for her twelve ½ years of service to the district, she will be missed, her council, her knowledge, and her eagerness to serve as a taxpayer and businesswoman in Pinetop Fire District, we will reluctantly accept her resignation.

Mrs. Webber made the motion to accept Mrs. Bowen's resignation from the fire board in good standing as submitted. Seconded by Ben Borrego. Motion passed unanimously 3-0.

2. Discussion/Consideration/Possible Approval re; Appointment Mr. Steven Voldal to fill vacant board member position.

Mr. Steven Voldal was the other applicant for a board position, still on file, from last board appointment. Mr. Voldal's letter and resume were available in the board packet. Chief Morgan explained that the board has 90 days to fill the position- if they chose to explore other options. Mrs. Bowen's term is good until November 2028- Mr. Voldal is present for questions.

Mrs. Webber made the motion to appoint Mr. Steven Voldal to fill Mrs. Bowen's position as presented. Seconded by Chairman Rowlinson. Motion passed unanimously 3-0.

3. **Discussion/Consideration/Possible Approval re; Swearing in Mr. Steven Voldal to fill Vacant Board Member Position**

Mrs. Webber officially swore in Mr. Steven Voldal. He will need to take the online class before the next meeting. Welcome to the District Mr. Voldal

4. **Discussion/Consideration/Possible Approval re; Presentation and approval of March 2025 Financial Reports.**

All reports are included in the April Board Packet for reference. Some highlights were. Navajo County and non-levy revenue were both over budget along with Ambulance Revenue and grant revenue.

Total Expenses for March were over budget, as well as personnel (physicals and wages overall)

Vehicle and Equipment was under budget, driven by lower than anticipated fuel and maintenance expenses for the month.

Travel, Meetings and training was over, driven by higher-than-expected employee training.

Year to date Revenue was over budget.

Wildland and Ambulance Revenue were over budget.

Year to date Expenses were over budget driven by additional wildland deployments.

Total Cash was less than last year.

Please refer to the board reports and any questions should be directed to Gabe Buldra or Sara Simonton.

Mrs. Webber made the motion to accept the March 2025 Consent agenda as presented. Second by Mr. Borrego. Motion passed unanimously 3-0.

5. **Discussion/Consideration/Possible Approval re; Bond Sale Process**

Mr. Nick Dodd was present to review the bond sale. He provided documentation in the board packets, he went over the timeline, the interest rate, the vendors, and private pay who purchased bonds and the overall success of the process. He explained how critical the timing of the sales was with the current events.

This is informational only – no board action.

6. **Discussion/Consideration/Possible Approval re; Wildfire Conditions**

Chief Morgan provided documentation in the packet –even with the last snowfall we should only get an extra week or so where conditions remain stable. We are trending upward as far as conditions – we will need to be careful as a community. We are still in Stage1 restrictions, probably will remain so for a while. WMAT is in Stage 2 and the reservation remains closed. This is informational only – no board action.

7. **Discussion/Consideration/Possible Approval re; Fire Chief Contract -Consulting agreement and Grant writing and new Chief Onboarding**

Chief Morgan told the board that all documents were in the packet for the board to review and vote on at the next meeting or two. With his retirement date set at Dec 1, 2025, we probably need to think about the extension of his employment contract first. Then we can worry about other things. Mr. Whittington told them that it is the same contract as before but with the addendum to extend his date to whatever is needed up and until December 1, 2025. Chief Morgan provided some additional information for them to start thinking about.

Mr. Borrego made the motion to authorize the board chair to execute the addendum to the fire chief's contract as presented. Second by Mrs. Webber. Motion passed unanimously 3-0.

8. **Discussion/Consideration/Possible Approval re; direction to Staff regarding potential Fire Chief Hiring Process.**

Included in your packet is some information on a tentative timeline and some information to review before the next board meeting. In addition to this information, we will have some consultation groups or (headhunters) for them to consider for fire chief selection. He told them there are several groups out there that provide this service for boards to make the hiring easier. Pinetop Fire District used John Flynn and Simon to hire Chief Morgan, they will be included in the packet along with Prothman and a couple of other groups for consideration. This is informational only to consider later. No board action.

9. **Discussion/Consideration/Possible Approval re; Purchase of a Fleet Support Vehicle not to exceed \$65,000.00.**

With the hiring of our own mechanic, we need to provide tools and a service vehicle, currently he is using his own. We will be saving a lot of money on labor and shop costs as the year progresses; this will help with that process. Captain Esparza did some research and produced a couple of options. The vehicle he is requesting has storage capacity and a boom for vehicle repair. The vehicle has a power train with very low mileage and will be cheaper than purchasing a brand-new vehicle at about \$165,000.00. This purchase should give the district about ten good years of service.

Mrs. Webber made the motion to direct staff to move forward with the purchase of 2006 Ford F-750 mobile fleet support vehicle from Cole Estes not to exceed \$65,000.00 inclusive of taxes and shipping as presented. Second by Mr. Borrego. Motion passed unanimously 3-0.

10. **Discussion/Consideration/Possible Approval re; Purchase of a Skid Steer through Empire Southwest not to exceed \$73,399.52 inclusive of sales tax under an Omnia (City of Tucson) Joint purchase agreement contract.**

Chief Morgan explained that the Fuels Crew currently have a worn-out skid steer that they can only use for light work. We purchased it 11 years ago as a floor model for a discount and have gotten a lot of work out of it. The new one would allow them to complete jobs on a timelier basis, safer for them to use and would last several years. This is a joint purchase agreement, City of Tucson contract. It is from our local vendor- Empire Southwest.

Mr. Borrego made the motion authorizing the fire chief to purchase a 2025 239D3 compact loader from Empire Machinery Show Low not to exceed \$73,399.52 inclusive of taxes and shipping as presented. Seconded by Eddi Webber. Motion passed unanimously 3-0.

11. **Discussion/Consideration/Possible Approval re; Review of the Labor Group Draft MOU.**

This agreement has been in the works for about 2 years. There are some minor edits that we are ironing out and we will have them for you to sign at the next board meeting. Chief Morgan will email the MOU out for review to decide at the next board meeting. Louis Mirabelli was present to give them a quick review. He mentioned the 457-investment account which the vested amount would be 10 years, and the longevity pay for folks here over 10 years. He told them it was an important addition to the district- to help retain and keep good talent. Mr. Mirabelli told them if they have any questions to please call himself or Jimmy Meek. This is informational only – no board action currently.

IV. Summary of Current Events

1. **Fire Chief Report** – Included in the packet. Review of the chief report, chief told them that we are expecting proposals from contractors and the proposal for the 3.3 million that is expecting engagement with the architect, he said we should see something next meeting.
2. Chairman report – He was impressed with the contractors should have good changes over the next couple of weeks.

V. Announcements.

AFDA is going to be July 14-18 in Glendale if anyone wants to attend.

Next Board Meeting is May 19, 2025

Meeting adjourned at 18:25 pm

Respectfully Submitted

Karen Robbins