

**Minutes of a Regular Meeting of the Board of Directors of the Clarkdale Fire District
Meeting Held October 20, 2011**

A Regular meeting of the Clarkdale Fire District Board of Directors was held on October 20, 2011 at 4:00 p.m. at the Clarkdale Fire District Station #21, 895 First South Street, Clarkdale, Arizona.

Board of Directors:

Jim Elmer, Chairman
Seth Murphy, Clerk
Ron Ballatore
Bill Snyder
Jerry Brown (absent)

Staff:

Joe Moore, Fire Chief
Joyce Driscoll, Admin. Assistant/Finance Manager

Others Present: None.

CALL TO ORDER. The meeting was called to order at 4:00 p.m. by Chairman Elmer.

ROLL CALL. Boardmember Brown was absent. All other Boardmembers were present. A quorum was present.

CALL TO THE PUBLIC. None.

MINUTES – Consideration of the minutes of the meeting scheduled September 15, 2011. Boardmember Ballatore moved to approve the minutes. Boardmember Snyder commented on the portion of the minutes regarding proposed legislation on ambulance Certificates of Necessity. Boardmember Snyder seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

FINANCIAL REPORT – Discussion and consideration of the Monthly Financial Report. Administrative Assistant Driscoll reported that as of September 30th, the district was 25% into its fiscal year and had received 1.34% of its budgeted tax income and 2.33% of its total income. She added that the District expended 11.15% of the budgeted expenses for the year. These figures exclude grant income and expenses. Chief Moore noted that property tax income starts being deposited into the District's account in October.

Boardmember Snyder moved to approve the financial report. Boardmember Ballatore seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

INFORMATIONAL AND OTHER REPORTS

CHAIRPERSON'S REPORT – A report from the Chairperson on current events.

Chairman Elmer commented on a proposed resolution submitted to the League of Arizona Cities and Towns regarding a desire for cities and towns to be able to take over private ambulance companies. He stated that he has been discussing with local public officials how this proposed legislation would impact customer service locally.

Chairman Elmer thanked Chief Moore and Reserve Firefighter Burroughs for helping with the Cottonwood air show.

He stated that he likes the new uniforms and that the copper lettering is a nice touch.

He stated that the Target Safety training software looks like a good benefit to the District and he encouraged the Chief to be diligent about using this tool after the newness wears off.

Chairman Elmer stated that the new electronic EMS reporting sounds like it is going well, and he noted that it is being provided for free by the State.

He appreciated the memos on the trainings recently attended by the personnel.

He commented that the Special Assessment tax created by the state (HB 2619) is outrageous.

He appreciated the newspaper coverage on Reserve Firefighter Patrick Wiatrolik regarding his goal to earn national recognition in mountain biking.

FIRE CHIEF'S REPORT – A report from the Fire Chief on current events. Chief Moore reported on the following:

- Mountain Gate – The chip seal of the roads in the subdivision is complete. The fire district will be assisting the police department with a block party being held in Mountain Gate on November 5th. The fire district just completed a final sprinkler inspection on eight of the empty homes that will go up for sale soon.
- Vetraplex at Sustainable Clarkdale project – A grant in the amount of \$10,000 was received from Bank of America for the Housing for Heroes project (a self-help program for veterans).
- Spirit of Joy Church – The project is moving forward. They plan to have an Open House in February.
- Fire District Financing – State statutes regarding the authority of fire districts to finance debt.

SHIFT REPORTS – Written monthly reports by personnel regarding day-to-day operations. No discussion.

ACTIVITY REPORTS – Written monthly reports regarding calls for service. No discussion.

MISCELLANEOUS REPORTS AND CORRESPONDENCE – Letters, news articles and other items of interest. No discussion.

OLD BUSINESS

FIRE MERGERS/AUTHORITIES– A worksession to discuss fire agency mergers and authorities as provided by Arizona State Statutes. Board Clerk Murphy stated that there is a “road map” as to how to accomplish fire agency mergers. He suggested that the district review the process that Verde Valley Fire District used when it merged with Cornville Fire District. Chief Moore stated that he feels it would be good for the Board to identify goals, and their vision for the district, so if a merger is proposed in the future it can be determined if the other

agencies vision align. Chief Moore also suggested that a feasibility study be completed. This would consist of Clarkdale Fire District and Verde Valley Fire District personnel with like positions meeting and discussing how a merger would work, costs, and identifying pros and cons. He stated that he had met with Chief Hazime and they agree that it is their job to shoot as many holes into the concept as possible to make sure that it is the right move. They also agreed that they need to also take into consideration the visions of the boards individually and if they are compatible.

Chief Moore asked if the Board would be interested in staff starting to work with Verde Valley Fire District staff on an internal feasibility study. He noted that with the Cornville Fire District and Verde Valley Fire District, the study took three months. Board Clerk Murphy stated that he will get a copy of the “road map” that was used for that merger.

Chairman Elmer stated that he already knows some of the big challenges to any sort of merger, i.e. the difference in tax rates. He stated that if this cannot be resolved, further study may not be beneficial. Boardmember Snyder expressed concern about getting too wrapped-up in a study and questioned if spending time on a study right now is warranted.

Chief Moore stated that he wants to get some facts so the Board does know if the district’s are close or not close to being able to merge. Discussion followed regarding the mil rates being only about 30 cents apart and the possibility that Verde Valley Fire District may not feel it would be difficult for them to come down this 30 cents to be at Clarkdale Fire District’s rate. If not, then it may be feasible to develop a plan of working towards having the same rate over a period of time. Board Clerk Murphy stated that he sees a lot of changes taking place at Verde Valley Fire District, therefore they may be able to adjust their tax rate in the future. Board Clerk Murphy stated that it is important to get the facts and develop a long term plan.

Chief Moore stated that Boardmember Brown has said that he does not mind discussing the possibilities; however he is not interested in a fast-tracked or forced process.

Chairman Elmer stated that this is on the agenda as an on-going discussion and the intent is not to fast-track. He felt that it does not hurt to discuss this. He agreed that it would be a good idea to get the “road map” previously discussed. Chairman Elmer stated that he would like this to be a good learning process. Chief suggested that the next step be getting the road map and starting to fill-in items.

LOAN PAYMENT – Discussion and consideration of paying-off the balance owed on land owned by the District. Boardmember Snyder stated that he talked to the lien holder of the land and he was not opposed to taking the Station 22 property as partial payment if a price could be agreed upon. However, Boardmember Snyder stated that in his opinion, the property does not have enough value at this time to trade it in; it has more value to the district as a storage facility. Chairman Elmer stated that if the district did sell it, then it would have to lease it back. The consensus was to not to attempt a trade.

Boardmember Snyder stated that in his opinion, it is in the best interest of the district to pay the note off and save the interest.

Boardmember Ballatore asked if there was anyone who felt it would not be a good idea to pay off this loan at this time. Chairman Elmer stated that he is personally in favor of paying the property off.

Chief Moore stated that Boardmember Brown was not opposed to the pay-off; his only concern was having the additional reserve for unforeseen circumstances. Chief Moore stated that the county assessor is projecting another 20% drop in assessed valuation next fiscal year. Discussion followed regarding the pros and cons of paying the land off early.

Chief Moore pointed out the payoff would be for the total amount and would not include any credit for future access points to the seller’s remaining property.

Boardmember Ballatore moved to pay-off the loan on the land the district owns using capital reserve funds and to not trade Station 22 as part of the payment. Boardmember Snyder seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

NEW BUSINESS

ASSET POLICY – Discussion and consideration of a resolution adopting an Asset Policy, which included tracking, capitalization threshold and disposal of assets. Chairman Elmer noted that the proposed policy basically puts into writing what the current practice is. Chief Moore stated that the auditor and accountant reviewed the draft policy and had no changes. Boardmember Snyder moved to adopt Resolution #2011-04, adopting an Asset Policy for the Clarkdale Fire District. Boardmember Ballatore seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS – A listing of items to be place on a future agenda. Board Clerk Murphy requested a review of the sick time accumulation policy for line staff and administration staff.

ADJOURNMENT. With no further business before the Board, the meeting adjourned at 5:10p.m.

Jim Elmer, Chairman

Date

Seth Murphy, Clerk

Date