

**Minutes of a Regular Meeting of the Board of Directors of the Clarkdale Fire District
Meeting Held November 17, 2011**

A Regular meeting of the Clarkdale Fire District Board of Directors was held on November 17, 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

Staff:

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

Others Present: Shift Qualified Reserve, Tim Bishop.

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

ROLL CALL. All members were present. A quorum was present.

MINUTES – Consideration of the minutes of the meeting scheduled October 20, 2011. Boardmember Ballatore moved to approve the minutes. Boardmember Snyder seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

CALL TO THE PUBLIC. Chief Moore introduced new Reserve Firefighter Tim Bishop.

Boardmember Snyder asked to move the FY2010-11 Audit to next on the agenda. Without the objection, the order of the agenda was changed.

NEW BUSINESS - FY 2010-11 AUDIT– Discussion and consideration of the independent financial audit for fiscal year 2010-11 prepared by Assurance Professionals. Kay Green, representative for Assurance Professionals, stated that there are no “findings”. She stated that it is good in this economy that the district was able to have funds remaining to move to capital reserve. She stated that the district has good internal control. She stated that their audit this year is in compliance with new governmental standards. Ms. Green stated that it is evident by the financial records that Chief Moore and Administrative Assistant Driscoll are very frugal. She stated that she is also impressed with their mindset in looking towards the future. She stated that the only suggestion they have is that the payroll liabilities bank account be included in the general fund accounting; it does not need to be a separate financial account.

Chairman Elmer clarified that the payroll liabilities funds can be held in a separate bank account, but can be accounted for in the general fund account. Chairman Elmer stated that a drawback to accounting for this in the general fund accounting is that people misinterpret the financials and then feel that the District has too much money.

Boardmember Snyder clarified that the financing of a fire truck or a building is considered 'secured debt' and therefore is not limited to certain legal guidelines.

Ms. Green stated that Chief Moore and Administrative Driscoll are following good stewardship principles with the assets of the District. She noted that they have moved the asset tracking from Excel to Firehouse software, which has more detailed information. Ms. Green stated that the staff is doing a good job and is meeting new challenges well.

Boardmember Brown stated that he appreciated the good work the staff is doing.

Boardmember Snyder moved to approve the Fiscal Year 2010-2011 financial audit. Boardmember Ballatore seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

FINANCIAL REPORT – Discussion and consideration of the Monthly Financial Report. Chief Moore reported that as of October 31st, the district was 33.33% into its fiscal year and had received 39.1% of its budgeted tax income and 39.1% of its total income. He added that the District expended 36.82% of the budgeted expenses for the year, this is inclusive of the funds expended to pay-off land the District financed. These figures exclude grant income and expenses.

Boardmember Snyder noted that the percentage of tax income received year-to-date is lower than it was for the same time frame last year.

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 reported the following:

- He attended a monthly staff meeting to present the Chief with his five-years of service pin. Board Clerk Murphy also attended. He stated that the presentation included a run-down of the District's milestones over the last five years.
- He noticed in a staff report that the District is using new glucometers. He inquired about using non-invasive glucometers. Chief Moore stated that the District cannot use the non-invasive glucometers, per medical control guidelines, however the new glucometers require less blood and give quicker results.
- He noticed that new hydrants have been installed.
- He noted that all the company inspections have been completed by the staff and that he is glad that the staff is staying on top of this.
- He noted that staff taught a CPR class to the employees of Clarkdale Metals.
- He was appreciative of a nice donation made by Rick Cerny of General Supply.
- He mentioned to one of the shifts that he had solar installed on his home. That shift came over and did some training on the system.

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

- Mountain Gate – He attended a community block party. Approximately 35 residents were in attendance.
- New Permit – A new home building permit was issued in October.

- Spirit of Joy Church – They are making progress with their building.
- Verde Valley Christian Church – They may be purchasing an existing building rather than constructing a new building on Broadway.
- ISO – Effective January 1, 2012 the District will have a rating of 4/8b. This should make a significant difference in what property owners pay for property insurance. He stated that he is still working on scheduling a water tender shuttle exercise for ISO, which should hopefully reduce the 8b to an 8a or 7. He stated that Clarkdale Fire District is now in the top 29.37% of all Arizona fire departments rated by ISO.

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. Chairman Elmer stated that this is a re-occurring agenda item for the Board to educate itself on fire mergers and authorities.

Chief Moore noted that the difference in mil rates between Clarkdale Fire District and Verde Valley Fire District is 41¢. He stated that if either District's tax rate had to go up in order for any merger to occur, then it negates the reason to merge. Chief Moore discussed the process used by Verde Rural Fire District and Cornville Fire District. He pointed-out that the tax rates for both entities saw a drop in their mil rates. He stated that in any future merger involving Clarkdale Fire District, each entity would have to have a tax decrease.

The Board previously stated that the district needs to develop a list of visions, goals and objectives that would have to be clearly communicated in any future merger discussions. In response, Chief Moore created the following list:

- Budget based on needs, not wants, to maintain a reasonable tax rate.
- Competitive, not excessive wages and benefits.
- Capital improvement objectives:
 - 1-2 years
 - Replace primary response engine.
 - 3-5 years
 - Replace SCBA's.
 - Replace water tender.
 - Replace command vehicle.
 - 5-7 years
 - Design, engineer and build new station

Board Clerk Murphy added "Covering increased costs due to SAFER grant ending" to the 1-2 year timeframe.

Discussion followed regarding some of the reasons that Verde Rural Fire District and Cornville Fire District merged to make Verde Valley Fire District and the immediate benefit to the communities by them doing so. Discussion followed that during the Verde Rural/Cornville merger citizens of Cornville were concerned about losing their identity.

Chief Moore stated that next month he will bring the Board information on fire authorities.

Chairman Elmer stated that mergers get talked about sometimes and nothing happens. Discussion followed regarding some of the pitfalls of mergers.

Boardmember Brown stated that it is also important to look into how hard it is to “undo” a fire authority. Chief Moore stated that this could be very difficult.

NEW BUSINESS

SICK LEAVE – Discussion regarding the sick leave policy of the Clarkdale Fire District.

Board Clerk Murphy stated that he was comparing the sick leave policies of the District with other entities. He asked Boardmembers to especially look at the accrual rate. Board Clerk Murphy pointed-out that some other entities give employees an option of being able to “bank” a limited number of overtime hours for payment later. Discussion followed of sample policies from other entities.

Chairman Elmer that he has seen people who take sick time as soon as they accumulate some and others who save it up and get some benefit for doing so at the end of their career. He stated that it costs less to give someone a benefit for the sick time accrual at the end of their career than to payout the sick leave as they use it and have to pay someone to cover their shift.

It was noted that the District allows employees to donate sick and vacation hours to others in the event of a serious illness/injury.

Boardmember Snyder stated that the Board discussed sick leave accrual at length previously and the staff was satisfied with the traditional accrual method.

FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS – A listing of items to be place on a future agenda.

- Boardmember Brown requested an agenda item regarding a possible one-time stipend for staff.
- Chief Moore noted that the election of the Chairman and Board Clerk will be on the next agenda.
- Boardmember Brown also requested an agenda item regarding property taxes over the last three years (assessed, mil and tax levy).

ADJOURNMENT. With no further business before the Board, the meeting adjourned at 5:56 p.m.

Jim Elmer, Chairman

Date

Seth Murphy, Clerk

Date