

**Minutes of a Regular Meeting of the Board of Directors of the Clarkdale Fire District  
Meeting Held April 15, 2010**

A Regular meeting of the Clarkdale Fire District Board of Directors was scheduled for April 15, 2010 at 4:00 p.m. at the Clarkdale Fire District Station #21, 895 First South Street, Clarkdale, Arizona.

Board of Directors:

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

Staff:

Joe Moore, Fire Chief  
Joyce Driscoll, Admin. Assistant  
Brandon Nargessi, Captain  
Matt Poe, Engineer  
Jeff Richey, Engineer

Others Present: None.

**CALL TO ORDER.** The meeting was called to order at 4:05 p.m. by Board Clerk Murphy.

**ROLL CALL.** Chairman Elmer was absent. A quorum was present.

**MINUTES – Consideration of the minutes of the meeting held March 18, 2010.** Boardmember Snyder noted that the staff members listed as present for the meeting was incorrect. Boardmember Snyder moved to approve the minutes as corrected. Boardmember Ballatore seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

**CALL TO THE PUBLIC.** Engineer Poe stated that he sees his doctor at the burn center tomorrow and hopes to be released for work by the District doctor. He stated that his burn injury has inspired him to get more involved in burn camp. He stated that the injury was very painful and it was just three fingers, he cannot imagine the pain endured by persons with burns over larger areas of their body.

**FINANCIAL REPORT – Discussion and consideration of the Monthly Financial Report.** Chief Moore stated that as of March 31st the District was 75% through the fiscal year and had received 81% of its budgeted income and had expended 64% of the budgeted expenses for the year. Discussion followed regarding capital reserve funding.

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.** Board Clerk Murphy stated that his Dad, who lives in Clarkdale, had to call 911 recently. He stated that the District staff did an excellent job.

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

- The Lifepack 15 monitor has been received. This was partially funded by a grant.
- Discussions by the Verde Valley Fire Chiefs Association Communications Subcommittee regarding dispatching fees. He noted that the District is not tied to an agreement; it has the option to find another provider.
- Costs of fire engines built for demonstration purposes.
- Personnel changes.
- Dr. Seuss Day at the Clarkdale-Jerome School.

**SHIFT REPORTS – Written monthly reports by personnel regarding day-to-day operations.** Acting Captain Richey reported that the cleaners he sent turn-outs to did an excellent job. He reported that with the personnel changes he has taken back the responsibility for scheduling the Reserves.

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

**MISCELLANEOUS REPORTS AND CORRESPONDENCE – Letters, news articles and other items of interest.** It was noted that the District received a very nice note from a former District volunteer.

## OLD BUSINESS

**PEHP/SICK LEAVE – Discussion of the sick leave policy and possible Post Employment Health Policy as requested by the Board last year.** Chief Moore stated that the accumulation of sick leave is insufficient. He stated that the two firefighters who were injured recently did not have enough sick leave to cover their time off work. He requested that the sick leave accrual of hours be increased from 55.9 hours per year to 96 hours per year.

Chief Moore explained Post Employment Health Plans.

Board Clerk Murphy stated that he agrees the sick leave accrual needs to increase. He explained the PEHP was being discussed as an incentive for employees to build their sick leave and not abuse it. Upon retirement an employee's sick leave hours accrued can be rolled into a PEHP at a certain pay rate or percentage.

Boardmember Snyder stated that there is nothing wrong with rewarding personnel for not abusing sick leave.

Boardmember Brown stated that the private sector is going to a PTO program only, where sick leave is included. Chief Moore stated that a possible drawback would be the payout, i.e.

vacation pay currently is paid out at 100% when an employee leaves, however sick leave currently is only paid out at \$1.00 per hour after five years of service.

Discussion followed as to why the staff recommendation is 96 hours sick leave. Boardmember Snyder asked that the number of hours be left blank in a proposed resolution so it can be considered at the next meeting. Chief Moore clarified that the resolution may or may not include the PEHP depending on what information staff is able to obtain by the next meeting.

Boardmember Snyder moved to table this item to the next Regular meeting. Boardmember Ballatore seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

**LETTER OF SUPPORT – Discussion and consideration of writing a letter of support for the Town of Clarkdale’s proposed Clarkdale Sustainability Park.** Board Clerk Murphy stated that he likes the idea of the Town looking for alternative funding methods. He stated that Board Chairman Elmer drafted a letter for the Board to consider. Board Clerk Murphy stated that he asked for this agenda item after he attended an informational meeting on the Clarkdale Sustainability Park. Boardmember Brown stated that the board tabled this from the last meeting so Board Clerk Murphy could be present.

Boardmember Brown stated that the Town really doesn’t know what the project will be. He stated, that at a meeting he attended, they discussed the funding for a feasibility study for about \$200,000. He stated that he, and a few others in attendance, felt it was not enough of a concrete idea for the Town to use town funding to pursue it. He prefer they use grants, and that now they are looking at grants, however the grant they are currently looking at would require a \$75,000 cash and in-kind match. The grant is hoped to be the first of three grants. He stated that additional grants would most likely also have matches that impact town resources.

Boardmember Brown stated that the project cost mentioned was \$450 million dollars. Anyone who invests would probably want 10% of a return on their investments. He stated that in order to do this they would need to have \$60,000,000 in net revenues a year, which is approximately 200 million dollars a year gross. He stated he is concerned about what letters of support will be used for. He stated that he does not want to prevent writing a letter, but feels the proposed letter goes too far.

Boardmember Snyder stated that this sounds like a pie-in-the-sky concept. Boardmember Snyder stated that he also feels the location is wrong; it is a pristine area. Once it is zoned industrial, people will do whatever they want. He stated that he would like to see the area be converted to a recreational area. He stated that not many communities in Arizona have a river and lake, and so this area should not be made into an industrial area. He stated that he is not in favor of it at all and he does not see it as a future source of revenue.

Boardmember Brown stated that as they seek and use town funds to supply this, it puts pressure on them to ask the taxpayer for more and more dollars, and this bothers him.

Boardmember Ballatore stated that from the standpoint of a boardmember who is responsible to this district, he feels a letter of support could be damaging to the District’s reputation. He stated that he does not feel that the District should support someone else’s pipe dream.

Boardmember Brown stated that controversy will happen, and he feels people are not being candid right now about how they feel about it. He stated that he feels it is important for the District to maintain a good relationship with the Town. He stated that Town owes it to the citizens to have a separate budget for the project so the public knows what is being spent on the idea.

Board Clerk Murphy stated that the Town's idea to create a fire district was an unusual idea, but it was a good one. Discussion followed.

Discussion followed as to whether or not the District should write a letter. Boardmember Brown shared some wording he developed, should a letter be sent.

Board Clerk Murphy moved to submit the proposed letter of support for the Clarkdale Sustainability Park. Boardmember Brown seconded. The vote failed with Board Clerk Murphy voting in favor and Boardmembers Brown, Ballatore and Snyder opposing.

## **NEW BUSINESS**

### **RESIDENCY REQUIREMENTS – Discussion and consideration of a resolution making changes to the Personnel Policy and Procedures Manual regarding residency requirements.**

Board Clerk Murphy stated that residency requirements come from a time when departments were all volunteer. He stated that residency requirements limit the hiring pool and most fire departments are getting away from residency requirements. Board Clerk Murphy stated that he feels it could be challenged to have existing employees exempt. Boardmember Ballatore stated that he understands why residency requirements exist; without a residency requirement, the Jerome Fire Department would not have anyone to respond to incidents. However, he stated, he also understands how it limits the hiring pool and he agrees that departments are getting away from having residency requirements.

Chief Moore stated that the proposed residency requirement did limit who applied for the vacant Captain position.

Discussion followed regarding other occupations that require employees to live within their community.

Board Clerk Murphy stated that in the past personnel needed to be close enough to respond back to the station, and this would still make sense for reserve personnel. However, he stated, that with mutual aid agreements, he does not feel that departments have instances when there is not enough personnel.

Boardmember Snyder stated that he feels that persons employed by the District need to be a part of the community.

Boardmember Brown stated that the current policy is based on travel time, and the proposed is based on a geographic area, therefore he does not see that there is a big difference. He stated that with employees living in other communities, there is a risk that they will decide to take a position in their own community should an opening occur.

Chief Moore stated that he won't say that he is not getting good employees, however he would have more options if there was a larger area to choose from. Chief Moore shared his concern of the existing requirements.

Boardmember Ballatore moved to adopt 2010-03 making changes to the Personnel Policy and Procedures Manual changing the residency requirements to "All emergency response personnel, paid and reserve, must live within the Verde Valley or Sedona including Cottonwood, Clarkdale, Jerome, Camp Verde, Lake Montezuma, Rimrock, and Oak Creek Canyon as determined by the Fire Chief. Any newly hired emergency response personnel, paid and reserve, who live outside this area at the time of employment shall be required to meet the residency requirement within six months of date of hire. However, the Fire Chief may extend said time frame for special circumstances." And changing the residency policy for existing employees to read: "Emergency response personnel that live outside the residency requirement for their position at the time of adoption of this policy will be required to meet the residency requirement of 60 minutes drive time to the District Boundaries should they move from their present residence". Boardmember Brown seconded.

The motion passed with Boardmembers Ballatore, Brown and Snyder approving and Board Clerk Murphy opposing.

**APPARATUS MAINTENANCE AND REPAIR AGREEMENT – Discussion and consideration of entering into a contract with Central Yavapai Fire District for Fire Apparatus Maintenance and Repairs.** Boardmember Snyder moved to adopt the contract with Central Yavapai Fire District for Fire Apparatus Maintenance and Repairs. Boardmember Ballatore seconded. It was clarified that no fee is charged unless the service is utilized. The motion passed unanimously.

**CHANGE OF MEETING DATE – Discussion and consideration of changing the June regular meeting date to June 24, 2010.** Boardmember Ballatore moved to change the June regular meeting date to June 24, 2010. Boardmember Snyder seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

**BUDGET WORKSESSION – A worksession to discuss the draft budget for fiscal year 2010-2011.** Chief Moore reviewed the discussion that took place by the budget committee. Chief Moore noted that amount for carry-over from the current fiscal year will be less than projected. He reviewed some of the challenges of preparing the budget, which included benefit costs increasing,

Chief Moore stated that the economic downturn felt by everyone else two years ago, will be felt in the 2010-2011 fiscal year by the District. He stated that to move forward, and to be able to afford a new engine, etc., no raises are included in the proposed budget.

He noted that the budget includes \$4,500 for administration salaries so someone can be called-in should the one administrative assistant need sick leave, etc.

Chief Moore stated that he proposes the purchase of radios because the district is required to become narrow band compliant by 2013.

Discussion followed of projected carry over funds from FY2010-2011. Discussion followed of Capital Reserve Transfer and roll-over funds from previous years to offset taxpayer burden. A suggestion was made to sell Station 22 to obtain cash and to rent space for storage instead. It was noted that this should be discussed at the next strategic planning session.

Keeping the District tax income the same was discussed. It was noted that in doing this the mil rate would go from 1.58 to 1.7105. Discussion followed of the ratio of salaries and benefits to income and the Chief’s recommendation that wages not increase until growth occurs.

Discussion of Capital Reserve Funds budgeted and funds allocated for emergencies.

Board Clerk Murphy stated that under this budget, most people will not see any change in the tax amount, however there is no guarantee that this will be the case for everyone because it depends on assessed valuation of their specific property. It was noted that the levy is not increasing, although expenses are increasing.

It was noted that the Capital Reserve funds budgeted to transfer into the general fund for FY2010-2011 is to be used as grant match only. Discussion followed of grant applications included in the budget.

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

**ADJOURNMENT.** With no further business before the Board, the meeting adjourned at 6:30 p.m.

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Jim Elmer, Chairman

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Date

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Seth Murphy, Clerk

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date