

Sonoita-Elgin Fire District
Board of Directors Meeting Minutes
August 28, 2023

Acting Chair Ruth Ann LeFebvre calls the meeting to order at 9:15

1. Roll call and confirmation of Quorum

Russ Kolsrud, RuthAnn LeFebvre and Eddie McArthur are present and the Board has a Quorum. Chris Johnson and Robert Garber are absent.

2. Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag.

3. Call to the public.

4. Approval of the Minutes from past meetings.

- May 22, 2023 Minutes have a couple edits: changing "I" to "Aye" on vote, changing Board member name to Eddie McArthur from Ruth Ann LeFebvre in section #12. Adding in "be" under #3 first paragraph.
- Ruth Ann LeFebvre requests that the minutes are emailed a week prior to the Board meeting for adequate time to review.
- Russ Kolsrud expresses that he did not have a chance to thoroughly read through the minutes. Discussion on review of May minutes takes place. Administrative Assistant Tricia interjects that she spent a lengthy amount of time on the transcription of the May minutes for accuracy.

Russ Kolsrud makes a motion to approve May minutes with edits, Eddie McArthur seconds the motion and motion is approved unanimously by Board members.

Russ Kolsrud makes a motion to approve the June & July minutes, Eddie McArthur seconds the motion and is approved unanimously by Board members.

5. Reports from the Fire Chief.

- Administration and Budget: Tricia Flaherty started her role as our Administrative Assistant on August 7th. Former Administrative Assistant Kristen Dineley will not be able to assist with the upcoming Audit so we will look for other support for our upcoming audit.
- Local PSPRS board has not scheduled a meeting yet but should meet before the end of 2023.

- No new members started in July; one new recruit started the process in July.
- Member Accomplishments: Wildland coordinator Evan Weaver had his Engine Boss task book opened by the AZ Red Card committee.
- Apparatus: Engine #822 should be back in service by late September, all other apparatus in service.
- As a department we are continuing to work with First Due to make the system as effective as possible. We are now using it to track time.

6. Presentation and Approval of Monthly Financial Reconciliation and Reports pursuant to ARS Sec. 48-807 including: reconciled balance sheets accounts, month-end statements, month-end balances at all institutions and county accounts, revenues and expenditures and the cash flow projection report.

- June & July's financials being presented for review.
- Chief discusses that department ended the year with a surplus, and will make sure we clean up accounting for the end of year FY2023.
- Chief reviews that the numbers line up with what we said the department would spend and in which department.
- Ruth Ann LeFebvre comments on quantity of detail of the reports.
- Russ Kolsrud comments on the Boards decision to not increase the tax rate on the current fiscal year and asks about how we will get the community on board with an increase in the future.
- Chief comments on the importance of an updated website, and social media posts to educate the public to help make the case for an increase in the tax rate.

Eddie McArthur makes a motion to accept the June financials as presented, and Russ Kolsrud seconds the motion and the Board approves unanimously.

- Chief presents the July financials and reminds the Board that for FY23/24, from July 1 until November we will not draw in tax revenue so when we look at the fall financials the cash will draw down temporarily until the next tax deposits.
- Chief discusses the effort to go electronic with all the departments accounts payable for accuracy and timely payments.
- July financial review, we made the last payment on engine #822. One thing that is not represented is that we are one of the fire districts that will be receiving a department payout due to Covid-19

that should be coming our way this coming month and we will find a way to represent that on the balance sheet. The amount is \$?

Russ Kolsrud makes a motion to approve the July 2023 financials and Eddie McArthur seconds the motion and it gets approved unanimously.

7. Information Item-review of updated SEFD website with go live date.

- Aspects of the updated SEFD website, the goal is to make the website and all our information more accessible to the public
- Ruth Ann LeFebvre discusses updated photos of Board members in matching shirts on the website. The shirts are currently on order. Coloring of the home page, should consider a different color for the top band other than red? Russ Kolsrud suggests using a gold color.
- Website cost is less than \$500 per year, \$2400 to build the initial website.

8. Update on referral to AZ Attorney General's office of investigation regarding department claim with former Chief.

- No current updates on the claim.

9. Information item- Strategic Planning Process 2023-2026 including: timeline of planning process, key milestones expected, and Legacy Foundation of Southern Arizona Responsive Grant status.

- Chief with Ironwood Solutions spent time reviewing a timeline for 2024-2026, a three-year plan. The timeframe gets us operational with the plan before the end of next calendar year.
- We will be hosting a couple external meeting in October, here at the department and will be facilitated by Ironwood Solutions and have invited a large list of community members and local business owners. Present information to the community about who we are and gather input from them. Then we will proceed with internal meetings with folks within the district and Board members, to put forth a series of goals that are measurable and timely.
- Ruth Ann LeFebvre asks about the timeline of the working phase, Chief comments about the working phase starting in December. External part of process is in October, Internal meetings in November and the working phase immediately following that. Goal is to have a document that we can present by May of 2024.
- Chief met with Green Valley fire Chief Lender as they have gone through this process of the Strategic Planning Process with Ironwood Solutions.

- Waiting to hear back from the Legacy Foundation about the grant, anticipate they will reach out this week.

10. Review, discussion, and possible action-approval and associated resolution of IGAs between SEFD and the following agencies: Nogales Fire Department, Rio Rico Medical and Fire District and Tubac Fire District for contract Chief officer services.

- Resolution No. 2023-02, 2023-03, 2023-04 are being presented. They will not go into effect until they are signed by Ruth Ann LeFebvre and Chris Johnson.
- Chief explains that these resolutions will allow a Chief officer to come in when he is absent on an hourly rate of \$35/hour plus whatever the other benefits go with that. It allows these entities: Nogales Fire Department, Rio Rico Medical and Fire District and Tubac Fire District, to provide somebody dedicated to come in and function as Chief Officer if Chief Meredith is absent or incapacitated. Chief explains we do not need to include an IGA between us and Palominas Fire District because Chief Buonaccorsi is still a member of this department, if he was to come in and serve as Chief, we would pay him directly out of our payroll.
- Chief explains that Thomas Benavidez, an attorney acting on Sonoita-Elgin Fire Districts behalf, pointed out we should be doing resolutions for approval and these have been drafted by Mr. Benavidez.
- Chief explains that Chief Buonaccorsi was on call and ready to jump in if needed when he traveled to California as a test run. This is another way to improve relationships between Fire Departments and Districts.
- Ruth Ann LeFebvre inquires if the fire fighters are aware of the IGAs and if they object. Chief ensures that everyone is aware of the cooperative relationships with other departments and they are on board, no objections.
- Russ Kolsrud discusses how the payment system works and how the insurance works with a visiting Fire Chief from another department. If there was a claim on the job from a visiting Fire Chief, their department or district would cover the paperwork and claim. They are not an employee of Sonoita-Elgin Fire District.

Eddie McArthur makes a motion to approve 2023-02, 2023-03 and 2023-04 with changes of names and dates as discussed, Russ Kolsrud seconds the motion and the Board unanimously approves.

11. Consideration of agenda items for future meetings.

- Formal Review of Chief position held by Marc Meredith over the past year, will take place in the October Board meeting.

Russ Kolsrud makes a motion to adjourn the meeting and the Board unanimously approves. The Board meeting is adjourned at 10:49 a.m.

A digital copy of this meeting is available to the public at the Sonoita-Elgin Fire District, located at 3137 AZ Highway 83 Sonoita, AZ 85637 or view the minutes on the website: <https://sefd911.org>.

NOTICE: The Sonoita-Elgin Fire District Board of Directors may go into executive session for the purpose of obtaining legal advice from the fire district's attorney(s) on any of the above agenda items pursuant to A.R.S. 38-431.03(A)(3)

Minutes approved by Ruth Ann LeFebvre Board Clerk, on 10/23/2023
Ruth Ann LeFebvre Date