Minutes to the Board of Directors Meeting

March 24, 2025

**Chair of the board Chris Johnson calls the meeting to order at 9:03 a.m.**

1. **Roll call and confirmation of Quorum.**

Chris Johnson, Ruth Ann LeFebvre, Russ Kolsrud, and Eddie McArthur are present at the meeting, Bob Garber is absent and The Board has a quorum.

1. **Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag.**
2. **Call to the public.**

* Members of the public are invited to address the Board and/or submit written comments for inclusion in the minutes. Members of the Board shall not discuss or take legal action on matters raised during an open call to the public, unless the matters are properly noticed on the agenda for discussion and legal action.
* No members of the public were in attendance.

1. **Approval of the Minutes from past meetings-**

The Board reviewed minutes from the February 24th meeting.

* *Russ Kolsrud moves to approve the Board minutes from the February 24th meeting, Eddie McArthur seconds the motion and it is carried without opposition.*

**5. Reports from the Fire Chief or his designee may include the following topics:**

**• 2024-2026 Strategic Plan Implementation**: an updated tracking document was created and presented to the Board to review. The implementation team met on March 10th and plans to meeting each month. The Cultural Audit was released to all members on March 7th.

**• Administration/Budget:** Initial planning for FY25/26 has begun. Priorities will be driven by the Strategic Plan and the preliminary list has been given to JVG. All SEFD members are being issued department emails and Teams accounts to facilitate more efficient and frequent communication. Chief explains that it will be an easier opportunity to push information out to the members and then get responses. Community Phone system is fully operational and working well for the needs of the district. We are researching security/access/id systems and hope to have one identified in April.

• **PSPRS [Public Safety Retirement] Local Board**: they have not met yet this year but will be meeting in the spring to early summer.

• **Operations:** No new recruits started the process in February. Three new firefighters are expected to start this week: Marvin Anderson FF/EMT will be on A Shift. Estevan Reynosa FF/EMT will also be on A Shift and Michael Terzich FF/PM will be on B Shift. Captain Bowman and Firefighter Jackson both completed a certified ISO class last week. All of our officers and some acting captains have now had formal incident safety training.

* Apparatus: E823 is in Tucson for repairs and all other apparatus are in service. For District Growth & Development, Papago Springs have removed their commercial element and will now just be residential. No new updates on AZ82, proposed dude ranch or proposed winery Brigand.
* Neighboring Agency News & Developments: Town of Patagonia proposal will be will be discussed under number seven today.
* Total incidents for the month of February ended at 49 and here is the breakdown: FIRE-2, RESCUE & EMS-28, SERVICE-13, GOOD INTENT-5, FALSE ALARM & FALSE CALL-1. Incident count by Zone: Zone 1 had 17, Zone 2 had 5, Zone 3 had 8, Zone 4 had 0, and Zone 5 had 19 for a total of 49. Under incident count by day, the busiest days of the week are trending at Friday, Saturday and Sunday with most calls running during the day. There were 35 incidents during the day and 14 incidents during the night hours.
* Certificate of Necessity: M832 was inspected last week and passed its yearly inspection. SEFD received an additional 12-month waiver on GPS requirement under HB2609.

• **Legislative Update**: There are five bills in the House that could affect our industry: HB2197, HB2268, HB2384, HB2457, and HB2942. There are three bills in the Senate: SB1149, SB1285 and SB1345.

1. **Presentation and Approval of Monthly Financial Reconciliation and Reports pursuant to ARS Sec. 48-807 including: • reconciled balance sheet accounts;**

**• month-end statements; • month-end balances at all institutions and county accounts;** **• revenues and expenditures; and • cash flow projection report.**

* Ben Archer Clowes from James Vincent Group presents the financials for February. Ben reports that on page two of the balance sheet that we have seen a decrease in $172,000 for the year over year. We do not want to see a decrease in cash unless we are buying capitol on buildings or equipment that is outside of the operational budget. To that point we are $80,000 under on the Ambulance revenue so this time last year we received significantly more than this year. Then we are also under on our tax revenue by $6,619.00, and those are big reasons why we are under from a cash perspective on the balance sheet. Ben feels confident that we will get caught up on the Ambulance revenue now that Chief and AMB discovered the glitch in the system, with over 90 incidences not getting exported to AMB and now they are, and AMB is now billing for those. SEFD has used some of the cash to pay expenses, Ben reviewed with the Board members the accounts and the cash in each account, explaining that the cash has decreased by $172,000. Russ Kolsrud inquiries about retained earnings in the report. Eddie McArthur asks if the retained earnings is an accounting category, and Ben explains that retained earnings is taking everything that you have on the balance sheet with assets and liabilities and then it reduces your retained earnings because SEFD has used some of its cash. Ben continues that this time last year SEFD had received $210,000.00 in Ambulance revenue and currently this year SEFD has received $119,000.00. When we are looking at a year over year comparison, there is a small variance under tax revenue, but a larger variance is the timing on the Ambulance revenue.
* *Russ Kolsrud made a motion to pass the financials for February 2025, Eddie McArthur seconds the motion and it passes unanimously.*

1. **Information, discussion and possible action- Request for Proposal for Fire and EMS services from the town of Patagonia.**

* Chief sent the Board the RFP for the town of Patagonia. Chief explains that the RFP drafted would provide services for a time frame of one year with $70,000 within that contract. Patagonia is already within our CON and we respond to calls currently with our existing staff. We are still a combination department with volunteers that we can pull to staff the peak hours when an Ambulance is staged in Patagonia, then for red flag days we would have a suppression unit. Chief feels this department is in a really good position to help out the town of Patagonia, we have the resources we need, when you look at the IFP we have the certification of our members, and the formal training of our department and we have a familiarity with the community. PVFR Patagonia Volunteer Fire is a private entity and they own their own building and their own apparatus and if we were awarded the contract those resources would not be available to us. For one thing this is an agreement to provide services to the 1.3 miles of the town of Patagonia, and PVFR has traditionally provided services outside of that 1.3 miles. In reality, and from a contractual stand point this really is just an agreement for the town of Patagonia. Ruth Ann LeFebvre asks about the 5th person on each crew as a volunteer and what happens to the $70,000. Chief explains that the $70,000 would pay the stipend for the volunteers over the course of a year, which currently the rate is $90 for 12-hour time period. The numbers we ran last year for 2024: 85624 zip code which is Zone 5 constituted 27% of all our total incidences, Zone 1 constituted 46%, Zone 2 10%, Zone 3 15%, and Zone 4 at 3%. Zone 5. In conclusion, Patagonia was our second largest number of calls for an entire year and thus the Patagonia community is important to us. Russ Kolsrud points out that in the contract and clarifies some points that it states that Patagonia will provide a place to park and will have facilities available. Chief concludes that just by going through the process of doing this that there are many homes in the area that are not covered by a fire district and it points out future needs of the community. Chris Johnson asks if Chief feels that this is a revenue neutral agreement and Chief agrees. Both communities would benefit from the agreement with additional staffing and planning for the future including the consideration of additional resources. Chief adds that we continually have to ask who are we serving and how are we going to serve them and what resources can we bring to serve them. Additionally, the county traditionally has not looked very far in the future with planning and just by putting this proposal together we can look closer at the change that needs to be addressed. If we look more broadly, fire districts can ask what are the needs of the entire county and how do we meet those needs. Russ Kolsrud comments that he is really excited about this because it speaks to our values, initiatives and Strategic Plan goals. Ruth Ann LeFebvre asks about the mutual aid agreements that are mentioned in the proposal and the time traveled to Patagonia, which states that we can respond in 15 minutes or less. Chris Johnson highlights particulars in the agreement and announces to the Board that he is in favor of approving the agreement.
* *Russ Kolsrud moves to submit the SEFD proposal for services for the town of Patagonia, Eddie McArthur seconds the motion and it passes without opposition.*

1. **Information, discussion and possible action- authorization to bid on fire equipment put up for auction by Rio Rico Medical & Fire District.**

* Chief is tabling this item due to not having particulars on their auction and they may not have anything that we need.

**9. Information item- recognition of SEFD as a Bronze recipient of the ADEQ Voluntary Environmental Stewardship Program (VESP).**

* Aaron Tews with ADEQ and who is a Community Liaison for Cochise, Santa Cruz, Graham, and Greenlee Counties attended the meeting to present SEFD with a certificate as a bronze level recipient of the ADEQ Voluntary Environmental Stewardship Program.

**10. Consideration of agenda items for future meetings**

* Schedule a Workshop for the Board for the FY25/26 Budget sometime in April.

*Russ Kolsrud moves to adjourn the meeting; Eddie McArthur seconds the motion and the motion is carried without opposition.*

Chris Johnson adjourns the meeting at **10:54 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

**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\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_, Board Clerk, on \_\_\_\_­­­­­\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Ruth Ann LeFebvre Date