

GOLDER RANCH FIRE DISTRICT
BOND COMMITTEE MEETING
REGULAR SESSION MINUTES
3885 E. GOLDER RANCH DRIVE, TUCSON AZ 85739
APRIL 25, 2019 – 9:00 AM

I. CALL TO ORDER

Chief Karrer called the meeting to order Thursday April 25, 2019 at 9:00 a.m.

II. ROLL CALL AND INTRODUCTIONS

For the first bond committee meeting, each member introduced themselves and gave a brief description of their jobs and/or involvement in the community.

Members Present: Bruce Baca, Tim Fudge, Lisa Lehmann, Bill Eineker
Erinn Oller, Lee Mayes, Barbara McClure

Member Absent: John Klippstein

Staff Present: Fire Chief Randy Karrer, Assistant Chief Pat Abel, Assistant Chief Tom Brandhuber, Community Relations Manager Anne-Marie Braswell, Finance Manager Dave Christian, Records Specialist Shannon Ortiz, Legal Counsel Donna Aversa

III. CALL TO THE PUBLIC

There were no public comments presented.

IV. BUSINESS

a. Introduction

Chief Karrer welcomed everyone and thanked the members of the bond committee for attending and agreeing to partake in the process.

b. Discussion, purpose and expectations of a bond committee, historical bonded projects, reason and purpose for bonds, bond process, overview of potential bond projects/district needs

Chief Karrer began by saying he and the staff would give an overview of Golder Ranch Fire District's (GRFD) capital needs that could potentially be financed with bond funding. Fire districts are costly to run because of the cost of trucks, ambulances, equipment, etc. As a full service fire district (fire and medical



services), it is GRFD's mission to serve the public in a timely, knowledgeable and polite manner.

Chief Karrer stated that the Bond Committee is appointed by the District's Governing Board, as a result, the committee is subject to the open meeting law. He explained that the purpose of the committee is to give input for projects that could be financed by a 20 to 25 year general obligation bond. A bond is taxpayer money and the District wants to utilize that money in the best possible way. The committee will last approximately six weeks and at the end of that time, the members will make recommendations of which projects they believe should be financed, by a bond, to GRFD's Governing Board.

Chief Karrer gave a brief description of the District, explaining that GRFD has ten stations that serve SaddleBrooke & SaddleBrooke Ranch in Pinal County, all of Oro Valley, Catalina and part of Marana. It is a full service fire district with the lowest tax rate in the region and the State.

Chief Karrer explained that the District serves a diverse population, this is kept in mind, in terms of its taxing structure. In 2017, GRFD consolidated with Mountain Vista Fire District (MVFD). As a result of the consolidation, all of MVFD's assets became Golder Ranch Fire District's. However, MVFD had two lease purchasing agreements with high interest rates, these liabilities also transferred to GRFD.

Manager Christian explained that O&M pays for the District's daily operations. However, O&M is statutorily limited. MVFD paid for two stations using conventional financing, therefore, it has to be paid out of the O&M. This places a burden on the O&M, using money that is needed for daily operations. The current mil rate is \$2.35 and bond is .09 cents. Once the budget is established, the mil rate is determined. Manager Christian would like to move these two lease purchasing agreements to the bond to free up the O&M money.

Committee member Baca asked what mil stands for.

Manager Christian responded that mil stands for one thousand. It means one thousand per assessed value.

Chief Karrer added that it is essentially the tax rate.

Once Chief Karrer explained the purpose and expectations of a bond committee, historical bonded projects, reason and purpose for bonds and the bond process he had staff describe potential bond projects and the District's needs.

Chief Brandhuber stated station 375 is an older facility that is lacking safety components for the firefighters. When the stations were built they did not do



anything wrong, but as time has passed, standards such as the NFPA's (National Fire Protection Association) have changed. He would like to use bond funding to address safety issues and meet the changing safety standards.

Chief Abel touched upon the improvements needed at 375. He would like to add about 2,000 square feet of additional living space and storage for turnouts. He explained that bricks and mortar projects, such as these, are perfect for bonds.

Committee member Fudge asked if they will be able to see the facilities.

Chief Karrer replied that the committee will be taken on a tour of all of the stations and GRFD facilities.

Chief Brandhuber added that new technology is needed for improved safety of the firefighters and the general public. One example are tail pipe capture filters which minimize the exposure of firefighters and the public to diesel particulates.

Committee member Mays asked if there were other stations that needed storage for turnouts.

Chief Abel responded that there are, however station 375 is a priority.

Chief Brandhuber continued to explain bond projects. He stated that the current dispatch is an analog system, the District would like to move to a digital system that would eliminate waiting time for callers. He gave an example of a three people calling at the same time.

Committee member Mays asked who does dispatching for GRFD.

Chief Brandhuber answered that Tucson Fire Department (TFD) is contracted for dispatch services. GRFD would purchase the system and TFD would continue to provide dispatch services.

Chief Abel described phase II of the bond which would include enhancements of the stations such as concrete projects for entering and leaving the stations. The weight of the trucks and heat cause wear and tear on the asphalt. For aesthetic, functionality and safety reasons, he would like to replace the asphalt at the stations with concrete. Eight of the ten stations do not have concrete surrounding them. He would like to also place concrete around the training tower. In addition, security is needed to secure stations and apparatus. Security is needed to protect personnel, personnel's vehicles as well as District property and apparatus.



Chief Brandhuber clarified that the District still wants the stations to be open to the public but security is needed for personnel.

Committee member Fudge asked if the public would be educated about the new security.

Anne-Marie explained the stations are open to the public for station tours.

Chief Abel clarified that security would be mostly in the back of the stations, areas the public does not use to access the stations. There would not be any barbed wire fences preventing the public from accessing the stations.

In reference to phase II projects, Chief Brandhuber said there are some communications issues that could be addressed by a tower. Pima and Pinal Counties are discussing a possible collaboration for a tower. If this does not take place, then GRFD would be prepared to install a tower with the use of bond money. If the collaboration does take place, the money would not have to be used.

Chief Karrer added that all of the bond money does not have to be used.

Committee member Mayes asked if the bond money could be re-allocated to another project.

Chief Karrer responded that if the project is specified in the list of projects, then yes, the money could be re-allocated. If the project is not specified, then no, money could not be re-allocated to the project.

Chief Karrer mentioned the Town of Oro Valley has a project in their General Plan called the Oro Valley Grande Project. If this development takes place, GRFD will need another station. This would be another project on the potential list of bond projects.

For phase III Chief Karrer said GRFD is considering partnering with the Town of Oro Valley and their police department to create one central logistics facility. This would make it central for everyone that would utilize it and would have less of a footprint on the community. He said he would like to bring common uses together with the Town of Oro Valley.

c. Discussion about the Core Elements of Arizona's Open Meeting Law

Donna Aversa, GRFD's legal counsel, explained the open meeting law to the committee members. Attorney Aversa stated the open meeting law is referenced in Arizona Revised Statutes Title 38. The open meeting law states



elected officials and committees appointed by councils/boards must conduct public business in an open and transparent manner. Meetings must be open to the public. Because the bond committee was appointed by GRFD's Governing Board they are subject to the open meeting law. There must be an agenda that is posted at least 24 hours prior to the meeting. However, the committee does not need to worry about most of this because staff will handle creating the agenda, posting it, transcribing the minutes, etc. The committee appoints a chairperson, the chair calls the meeting to order and does roll call. Unless the item is on the agenda, the committee cannot discuss it. The committee cannot discuss committee business with each other outside of the meeting. They can discuss it with the public. The first offense of the open meeting law is usually a slap on the hand, the second violation is a \$500 fee, three or more is a \$2,500 fine, plus attorney's fees and the business conducted at the meeting becomes null and void.

d. Roles of Chair and Co-Chair, Request for volunteers or nominations

Attorney Aversa stated the committee needs to elect a chair and a co-chair.

Chief Karrer said there would probably be two or three more meetings.

MOTION by committee member Baca to elect Lisa Lehmann as chairperson and Barbara McClure as the co-chair for the bond committee.

MOTION SECONDED by committee member Fudge

MOTION CARRIED 7/0

V. FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS AND DATES

The next two meetings were scheduled for:
Thursday May 2nd 8:30 a.m.- tour of the stations
Thursday May 16th 8:30 a.m.-regular meeting

VI. CALL TO THE PUBLIC

There were no public comments presented.

VII. ADJOURNMENT

Newly appointed Chairperson Lisa Lehmann adjourned the meeting.

