

**GOLDER RANCH FIRE DISTRICT  
GOVERNING BOARD MEETING  
REGULAR SESSION MINUTES**

**Tuesday, September 19, 2023, 9:00 a.m.  
3885 East Golder Ranch Drive, Tucson, Arizona**

**1. CALL TO ORDER/ROLL CALL**

Chairperson Vicki Cox-Golder called the meeting to order on September 19, 2023, at 9:00 a.m.

Members Present: Chairperson Vicki Cox-Golder, Vice Chairperson Wally Vette, Board Member Steve Brady, Board Member Tom Shellenberger via Zoom, and Board Clerk Sandra Outlaw

Staff Present: Fire Chief Brandhuber, Assistant Chief Robb, Assistant Chief Cesarek, Assistant Chief Perry, Assistant Chief Grissom, Deputy Chief Rutherford, Deputy Chief Hilderbrand, Deputy Chief Jerrold, Deputy Chief Wilson, Deputy Chief Pearce, Fire Marshal Akins, Human Resources Director Delong, Finance Director Christian, Local 3832 President Jones, Information Technology Director Rascon, and Records Specialist Wong

**2. SALUTE AND PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

All in attendance recited the Pledge of Allegiance.

Chairperson Vicki Cox-Golder asked everyone in attendance to have a moment of silence on behalf of Chief Karrer and his wife, Rhonda.

**3. FIRE BOARD REPORTS**

Board Member Brady stated he attended the Leadership meeting last month and he thanked administration and the Union. He knew how hard it was to agree on certain things. He encouraged personnel to keep up with the good work.

**4. CALL TO THE PUBLIC**

There were no public issues presented.

**5. PRESENTATIONS**

**A. PRESENTATION OF PERSONNEL**

- PROMOTIONS
  - ASSISTANT CHIEF GRANT CESAREK
  - ASSISTANT CHIEF CHRIS GRISSOM



- ASSISTANT CHIEF ERIC PERRY

Chief Brandhuber presented Deputy Chief Cesarek for his promotion to assistant chief. Chief Brandhuber stated he has known Grant for quite a while. He really got to know Grant when he was in medic school. They have been through hard times and good times together. He appreciates Grant's hard work and support and appreciates what Grant has done for Golder Ranch. Assistant Chief Cesarek's family was in attendance and his wife did the pinning of the new badge.

Chief Brandhuber presented Deputy Chief Grissom for his promotion to Assistant Chief. Chief Brandhuber said everyone knows and loves Chris. He thinks Chris is the heartbeat of this organization by the way he cares and takes care of people. The first time Chief Brandhuber got to meet Chris was when Chief Brandhuber was hired as an Assistant Chief at GRFD. Chief Brandhuber has always admired how Chris always defends and looks out for his people. Chris has done great things for the District. Chief Brandhuber said that Chris has done awesome in all the positions he has held. Assistant Chief Grissom's new badge was pinned by his sons with his family in attendance.

Chief Brandhuber presented Deputy Chief Perry for his promotion to Assistant Chief. Chief Brandhuber stated that Eric has been great. Assistant Chief Perry spent the majority of his career at TFD, went to Mountain Vista Fire District (MVFD), then moved to Golder Ranch Fire District with the consolidation. He has held a lot of different positions. Chief Brandhuber wanted to publicly thank him for his work on the accreditation process. All documentation for the accreditation has been submitted. Chief Brandhuber explained the support Assistant Chief Perry has from Assistant Chief Perry's wife. Chief Brandhuber also thanked Assistant Chief Perry's mom for attending the pinning. Assistant Chief Perry was pinned by his mother.

Chief Brandhuber thanked and congratulated the three new assistant chiefs. He thanked the Governing Board for their support to make these promotions happen.

- YEARS OF SERVICE

- PARAMEDIC KYLE DRAKE- 10 YEARS
- ENGINEER ANDREW GARCIA- 10 YEARS
- ENGINEER BRETT HOUSER- 10 YEARS
- CAPTAIN TOBIN JOHNSON- 10 YEARS
- CAPTAIN ANTHONY MARQUEZ- 10 YEARS
- ENGINEER KARL RHEIN- 10 YEARS
- PARAMEDIC RYAN SZACH- 10 YEARS

Paramedic Kyle Drake was recognized by Captain Brandon Daily for his ten years of service. Captain Daily congratulated PM Drake.

Captain Daily presented Engineer Andrew Garcia for his ten years of service. Captain Daily congratulated Engineer Garcia on his ten years of service.



Deputy Chief Pearce presented Engineer Brett Houser for his ten years of service.

Captain Tobin Johnson was presented by Deputy Chief Rutherford. Deputy Chief Rutherford congratulated Captain Johnson.

Deputy Chief Wilson presented Paramedic Ryan Szach for his ten years of service and congratulated him for a job well done.

At 9:24 a.m. the Governing Board took a five-minute break.

Members of the meeting reconvened at 9:29 a.m.

## **6. CONSENT AGENDA**

*The consent portion of the agenda is a means of expediting routine matters, such as minutes or previously discussed or budgeted items that must be acted upon by the Board. Any item may be moved to Regular Business for discussion and possible action by any member of the Board.*

A. APPROVE MINUTES- AUGUST 15, 2023, REGULAR SESSION

B. APPROVE THE CONTRACTUAL AGREEMENT WITH LLOYD CONSTRUCTION COMPANY AS THE CONTRACTOR FOR THE COMPLETION OF FIRE STATION 378

Chief Brandhuber stated the contract with Lloyd Construction, which was approved over a year ago, had some changes in the final number. Chief Brandhuber said the overprice for the project is not going to exceed what was authorized, he apologized to the Board.

Assistant Chief Cesarek stated during the board meeting back in February, the number presented was about \$6 million five hundred and forty-seven thousand dollars. That was based on not knowing exactly how much the civil engineering cost would be. The drawings are complete and the civil engineering comments have been received from the county. That determines the amount of the civil work that will be required. That raises the price to \$6.87 million dollars for the parcel of land. In the board meeting where \$7.3 million was requested some of the items that were calculated into the \$7.3 million into the cost of construction. Assistant Chief Cesarek stated that he was still very confident he would be able to complete the project well within that dollar amount that was previously approved.

Vice Chairperson Vette stated that in the text, some of the site work may not be included, yet the site work is \$352 thousand dollars. Vice Chairperson Vette asked what was not included.

Chief Cesarek responded the curb cut on the island in the roadway was not included. The reason why was there was a lot of infrastructure inside of the island and cutting into the island will be changing that infrastructure such as the irrigation lines and any electrical lines since some of that will have to be cut off, terminated, and then



re-constructed so they can continue having irrigation and power through the island all the way to the highway.

**MOTION** by Chairperson Cox-Golder to approve both Consent Agenda items A and B  
**MOTION SECONDED** by Board Clerk Outlaw.  
**MOTION CARRIED 5/0**

## **7. REPORTS AND CORRESPONDENCE**

- A. FIRE CHIEF'S REPORT – Chief Brandhuber presented the Fire Chief's report to the Governing Board. He would add that in the next board meeting, the reports will reflect what is in the new organizational chart. He thanked Assistant Chief Perry again for completing the accreditation. He was glad it was done. He knew there were a lot of other people who helped.

Chairperson Cox-Golder asked Chief Brandhuber how the meeting went with Jan.

Chief Brandhuber stated that the meeting went very well. Chief Brandhuber asked her about the possibility of doing a public service announcement (PSA) for hiking in the heat. She contacted Sheriff Nanos and within a week, with Community Relations Supervisor Camarillo's help, he was able to do a PSA with Sheriff Nanos. In the PSA they talked about the dangers of hiking in the heat. Jan was very supportive and friendly and made herself available to the District.

Chairperson Cox-Golder stated that there have been a lot of presentations for the month of August to the children out in the community. Chairperson Cox-Golder wanted to thank everyone that does the outreach with the community. She believes community outreach is important.

Board Clerk Outlaw mentioned that she noticed that Chief Brandhuber had given challenge coins to the dispatchers that helped with an accident for a GRFD employee. Board Clerk Outlaw wanted to commend Chief Brandhuber for this. She said they were the unsung heroes and thanked Chief Brandhuber for recognizing them. Chief Brandhuber thanked Board Clerk Outlaw and stated that they did an incredible job both in Pinal County and here locally. Anytime it includes a member of the service, it is more difficult. Deputy Chief Wilson and Deputy Chief Pearce also helped award the coins with Chief Brandhuber.

Chairperson Cox-Golder wanted to make a comment about Human Resources (HR) and how far that department has come under Chief Brandhuber's leadership. They are doing so much in Human Resources. It is a new energy in the department. She thanked HR for their hard work.

HR Director Delong expressed her thanks to the board members for the recognition. She said it meant a lot.



- LEADERSHIP TEAM REPORT – President Jones talked about charity items. Member, Tobin Johnson, is the head of the charities for Local 3832. On the weekend of October 6, 2023, the Southern Arizona Home Builders Association (SAHBA) Home Show will be at the Tucson Convention Center. The District/Union will have a booth at the event to start advertising for the annual archery event. The charity event is a flagship event to raise money for local charities. The District might have an engine on display. He invited the board members to attend the show.

President Jones stated, with the help of Firefighter Molly Kolt, the Union will be bringing back the firefighter calendar to raise money for the charities account in the next month.

Board Member Brady made a comment and President Jones stated that they will be in SaddleBrooke with the calendars.

Chairperson Cox-Golder thanked President Jones.

- B. SUPPORT SERVICES' REPORT- Assistant Chief Cesarek presented the Support Services' report to the Governing Board. He reported on the status of the approval process and inspections of Hanley. Fire Marshal Akins conducted inspections at Hanley and held the District accountable to the same standards as everyone else in the District. There is substantial completion of the Hanley building. Some of the chief officers have the ability to move-in. Getting the wireless connected is a priority right now. There is currently no internet connection at the building. There are two things that need to be completed before the Certificate of Occupancy can be issued. They are the handicap ramp, that was not in the original plan, however it is a good idea. So, it will be added and RFID locks. Those will be installed in the next couple of days. Personnel are able to move-in to Hanley however, the District is not currently able to do business in the building yet. Assistant Chief Cesarek stated the building looks great and that it has been almost two years to the day since the initial building inspections.

Assistant Chief Cesarek stated he is working on Station 378 with Pinal County to get through the permitting process. There was a small issue with the naming convention. He is working to get the plans approved.

Chairperson Cox-Golder asked for clarification if the full occupancy will take place in November or October.

Chief Brandhuber asked Assistant Chief Cesarek to explain the pieces of furniture he was waiting for, the other reason staff have not moved to the building. Assistant Chief Cesarek explained he was waiting on ordered brackets, which has taken approximately eight months. The brackets should be delivered October 4<sup>th</sup> for install on October 9<sup>th</sup>. He stated once the cabinets have been installed, the rest of the team can move to the new location.



Chairperson Cox-Golder mentioned that the first board meeting in the new building will probably be in November if staff have moved in by then.

Assistant Chief Cesarek stated that he thought November was a good date and timeline.

EMS & FIRE RESPONSE AND PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT REPORT – Assistant Chief Grissom presented the EMS & Fire Response and Professional Development report to the Governing Board. Assistant Chief Grissom wanted to highlight the incredible group of individuals that have been newly promoted to deputy chief positions and will be presented at the next Board meeting. Assistant Chief Grissom and the board members congratulated the newly promoted staff members.

Chief Brandhuber asked Assistant Chief Grissom to explain the captains' process his team implemented. Assistant Chief Grissom stated there was currently a captains' promotional process taking place. He explained the new two-week process. He stated his division was trying something new, innovative, and something he believed was going to work and be the future of promotional testing. Assistant Chief Grissom thanked Deputy Chief Hilderbrand and Captain Hastings for doing an incredible job.

Vice Chairperson Vette asked when the next recruitment would take place.

Chief Brandhuber answered, the thought process was to make sure leadership positions were filled before new firefighters are recruited. Professional Development is working through the captains' process right now, the next process will be the engineers' process, and then the deputy chiefs' process in December. February or late January might be the next academy. He wanted to make sure he had leadership and supervision in place before new people were recruited.

Vice Chairperson Vette said he was not sure how long it would take to recruit a new class.

Chief Brandhuber asked for HR Director DeLong's input. Chief Brandhuber mentioned that it is a challenging dynamic now in a new work environment. Historically, it has been easy to recruit firefighters. The District was successful last year when a lateral recruitment was done. However, they do not plan on this doing process again for the next recruitment. Chief Brandhuber said it may take a few months to get the people the District is seeking to represent it and be part of the family. He added recruitment should start in the December so the academy can start in February.

Chairperson Cox-Golder asked Assistant Chief Robb about the hoods that are being mandated by 2024. She said that they look awful hot for an Arizona summer and asked what they were for.



Captain North answered Chairperson Cox-Golder's question. He stated the recent standards have changed with regards to the hood and the hood exchange program. In collaboration with Northwest Fire District (NWFD), Health and Safety did some trials on different styles and determined a selection, in a joint effort. They are a little thicker and are a different barrier and different protection, however, overall, everyone was happy.

Chairperson Cox-Golder asked what it does and what it protects them from.

Captain North answered that it is a particulate barrier for the carcinogens.

Assistant Chief Robb added that one of the benefits with the automatic aid partners was trying to have a hood exchange program on-scene where decontamination can be done and clean all the equipment. If the same hoods, as NWFD, are used the District can swap those hoods out on-scene for like-for-like. Before, there was a challenge with GRFD's where they were not quite up to spec.

## **8. REGULAR BUSINESS**

### **A. DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE ACTION REGARDING THE ADOPTION OF RESOLUTION 2023-0009 TO DECLARE DISTRICT ITEMS AS SURPLUS AND DIRECTION TO STAFF TO ADD DECLARED SURPLUS ITEMS TO A PUBLIC AUCTION SITE OR SELL TO A NEIGHBORING OR MUTUAL AID FIRE DISTRICT/DEPARTMENT**

Chairperson Cox-Golder asked Chief Brandhuber about this. Chief Brandhuber turned it over to Assistant Chief Cesarek.

Assistant Chief Cesarek replied, as the District continues to add vehicles into the system, there are some vehicles that need to go to auction. The vehicle up for surplus is a 2009 and has 152,000 miles. A vehicle has already arrived that is filling the need. With the Board's approval, this vehicle can go on the auction site. Assistant Chief Cesarek is sure it will sell quickly. Fleet Maintenance Supervisor Barraza, will run all the numbers and research the Blue Book, reference the National Automobile Dealers Association (NADA) and inquire with Enterprise to find out what the market value would be.

**MOTION** by Board Member Brady to accept Resolution 2023-009 as presented to declare listed item presented as surplus and direction for staff to place the item on the public surplus auction site or sell to a neighboring or regional fire department or district.

**MOTION SECONDED** by Board Clerk Outlaw.

**MOTION CARRIED 5/0**

### **B. DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE ACTION REGARDING THE UPDATED MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING BETWEEN GOLDER RANCH FIRE DISTRICT AND NORTH TUCSON FIRE FIGHTERS' ASSOCIATION LOCAL 3832**



Chief Brandhuber stated he was happy to bring this item to the Board. President Jones and his leadership team worked hard on this. The biggest change is leadership has identified that in the original Memorandum of Understanding (MOU), the Post Employment Health Plan (PEHP) did not have all the details. Through the Board's approval, with the budget, the District can fund the PEHP not only for the Local 3832, but for every member of the Golder Ranch Fire District organization. The biggest change is listing the particulars of the plan that were already mentioned in the previous MOU. Further, language was clarified on the different positions in the organization that labor can represent. The final changes were grammatical and consistency cleanups throughout the document.

President Jones stated Attorney Aversa also reviewed the document and mentioned adding a placeholder that said the District would implement this year and the plan required there be some additional content in a section.

Vice Chairperson Vette asked if the Fire and Life Safety (FLS) and Fleet folks voted on it.

President Jones replied that there was no vote and FLS was already included. It needed to be stated in the document they were already members. Fleet has the option to opt-in or opt-out. This does not do anything except provide them the option.

Chairperson Cox-Golder asked if everyone has that choice.

President Jones affirmed that everyone had the choice.

Vice Chairperson Vette asked about the general plan comparison and when was the last time that was completed, for the benefits plan.

HR Director Delong answered for benefits, it was done around February of every year. Human Resources starts working with the broker in the fall and they have already had their first kick-off meeting to have those conversations and we will present those numbers to the Governing Board during the budget in February every year.

Vice Chairperson Vette asked if it includes all the pay, vacation, and total benefit package.

HR Director Delong answered that it does not. Benefits are looked at separately from compensation. We use a different consultant for that. That will be up this year so HR Director Delong will start the process in late winter or early spring with the consultant to start looking at compensation and doing comparisons so leadership can see where the District falls within the market.





Vice Chairperson Vette thanked HR Director Delong for the answer.

**MOTION** by Vice Chairperson Vette to approve the amended Memorandum of Understanding as presented.

**MOTION SECONDED** by Board Clerk Outlaw.

**MOTION CARRIED 5/0**

C. DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE ACTION REGARDING THE ZOLL ONE PROGRAM LEASE AGREEMENT

Chief Brandhuber passed this item to Deputy Chief Rutherford.

Deputy Chief Rutherford stated, currently, the Zoll One Program lease agreement is for twenty-five new cardiac monitors for all suppression and transport units. EMS currently has twenty-one. Those twenty-one are about nine years old and have reached their life expectancies. Right now, it costs a lot to send the monitors to get fixed because they are outside of the warranty. The batteries are also an issue because they are so costly. The lease program was considered and he felt that it was the best option. This lease program is for ten years for twenty-five monitors, and within those ten years the District will get a full upgrade. This will provide good monitors for fifteen plus years.

Chief Brandhuber added that it was an item in the capital improvement plan (CIP) that was presented to the Board with the budget that was approved.

Vice Chairperson Vette asked Finance Director Christian if the District could afford it.

Finance Director Christian responded the District could afford it and it was fully budgeted.

Vice Chairperson Vette said it was almost \$20,000 dollars a month.

Finance Director Christian stated he verified it and is the exact amount that was budgeted.

Chief Brandhuber addressed the Governing Board that it is an expense, but the outcomes that personnel are having on saving lives have been phenomenal. Chief Brandhuber stated that with any technology now, every couple of years, that software is enhanced. If the District does not participate in a lease program, it is going to pay for those additional expenses. With this lease program, all the software enhancements are included. They are expensive, but it is one of those things the District has to provide the services it is committed to.

Vice Chairperson Vette stated that he supports the lease program, but that it is just expensive.



**MOTION** by Vice Chairperson Vette to approve the Zoll One Program lease agreement.

**MOTION SECONDED** by Board Member Brady.

**MOTION CARRIED 5/0**

**D. DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE ACTION REGARDING THE GOLDER RANCH FIRE DISTRICT RECONCILIATION AND MONTHLY FINANCIAL REPORT**

Finance Director Christian presented the monthly financials and reconciliation for Golder Ranch Fire District to the Governing Board. He stated August is one of those months where the District runs on savings and fund balance reserves. This is the time of year where the District will start to see those revenues start arriving in September, but October is the big month. This is the reason why the District has reserves. Everything is in-line with labor costs being a little over. Ambulance revenue is doing stellar. Operations is averaging approximately 19 transports a day and has been consistent throughout the year. Grant revenues will continue to be received in the next couple of months. The District was awarded the American Rescue Plan Act Grant (ARPA). The funds will be received in September. The District was also awarded the SAFER Grant. The District is on track for all grant revenues. The audit was completed early, and the auditors were paid a month early.

Chairperson Cox-Golder stated she received a call from the auditors, and they said very good things.

Finance Director Christian stated \$85,000 was paid to the Community Assistance Program team.

Finance Director Christian stated the District used \$2.5 million and budgeted \$3 million. Wildland revenues are short but Finance is working to collect revenue. The District is approximately \$1 million ahead of where it was expected to be in August. About \$68,000 has been collected in Pinal County. There has been an average of nineteen transport calls a day and that has been consistent throughout the year so far.

Chairperson Cox-Golder asked if it is expected to increase in winter since the visitors arrive during those times.

Finance Director Christian responded yes. He projects ambulance revenue to peak around February or March. There have been different call types, such as dizziness, weakness, falling, some COVID, and a few rattlesnake calls.

Finance Director Christian stated Finance billed for about \$200,000 but have not billed everything. Most of this was out-of-state fires. He expects to collect approximately \$300,000 by the end of year for this wildland season.



**MOTION** by Vice Chairperson Vette to approve and accept the Golder Ranch Fire District reconciliation and monthly financial report as presented.

**MOTION SECONDED** by Board Clerk Outlaw.

**MOTION CARRIED 5/0**

**9. FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS**

The next regularly scheduled meeting will be on October 17, 2023.

**10. CALL TO THE PUBLIC**

There were no public issues presented at this time.

However, Chief Brandhuber wanted to make a comment about his appreciation to NWFD for their assistance last Thursday with Chief Karrer's family. He stated that they were phenomenal, they impacted a lot of people, and they were there for Chief Karrer, his family and GRFD. He would also like to recognize Deputy Chief Pearce and Battalion Chief Seeley for their actions that that day. It was a difficult night for everyone. He will pass on to the Board the letter of appreciation he sent to Chief Bradley. It is nice when everyone comes together to help and support each other.

Chairperson Cox-Golder thanked Chief Brandhuber for all his work. She knows Chief Brandhuber spent a couple of days with the family and that had to be difficult. Chairperson Cox-Golder thanked Chief Brandhuber on behalf of the Governing Board for his effort.

**11. ADJOURNMENT**

**MOTION** by Board Member Brady to adjourn the meeting at 10:05 a.m.

**MOTION SECONDED** by Board Clerk Outlaw.

**MOTION CARRIED 5/0**



Sandra Outlaw, Clerk of the Board  
Golder Ranch Fire District  
J/W

