

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

Tuesday, January 16, 2024, 9:00 a.m.

1600 East Hanley Boulevard, Oro Valley, Arizona 85737

1. CALL TO ORDER/ROLL CALL

Chairperson Vicki Cox Golder called the meeting to order on January 16, 2024, at 9:00 a.m.

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

Staff Present: Fire Chief Brandhuber, Assistant Chief Cesarek, Assistant Chief Perry, Assistant Chief Grissom, Deputy Chief Rutherford, Deputy Chief Hilderbrand, Deputy Chief Jarrold, Deputy Chief Wilson, Deputy Fire Marshal Akins, Local 3832 President Jones, Human Resources Director Delong, Finance Director Christian, Information Technology Director Rascon, Division Chief Price, Division Chief Charnoki, Division Chief Hastings, Division Chief North, Battalion Chief Spanarella, Community Relations Supervisor Camarillo, and Board Services Supervisor Ortiz

2. SALUTE AND PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

All in attendance recited the Pledge of Allegiance.

3. FIRE BOARD REPORTS

There were no reports made by any of the Governing Board members.

4. CALL TO THE PUBLIC

Chris Ackerly, the Deputy Chief of the Pima County Treasurer's Office introduced himself. He shared that Beth Ford, the Pima County Treasurer, has announced that she will not be running for re-election. He said he would be happy to answer any questions from the board.

5. PRESENTATIONS

A. PRESENTATION OF PERSONNEL

- RETIREMENT
 - SCOTT ROBB, ASSISTANT CHIEF



Assistant Chief Robb was not in attendance. This presentation will be tabled for a future board meeting.

- PROMOTIONS
 - CHRIS CHARNOKI, DIVISION CHIEF OF EMS
 - ADAM HASTINGS, DIVISION CHIEF OF PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT
 - JEREMY NORTH, DIVISION CHIEF OF HEALTH AND SAFETY
 - JOHN SPANARELLA, BATTALION CHIEF

Deputy Chief Rutherford introduced Division Chief Charnoki. His son Wyatt pinned him.

Deputy Chief Hilderbrand introduced Division Chief Hastings. His wife Kelly pinned him.

Deputy Chief Jarrold introduced Division Chief North. His wife Jenn pinned him.

Deputy Chief Rutherford introduced Battalion Chief Spanarella. His wife Kari pinned him.

- NEW HIRE
 - JUSTIN MINK, PROCUREMENT & SUPPLY SPECIALIST

Division Chief Price introduced the new Procurement & Supply Specialist, Justin Mink.

Chairperson Cox Golder administered both the behavioral and loyalty oaths to Justin.

At 9:25 a.m. the Governing Board took a brief recess. The meeting was reconvened at 9:28 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- DECEMBER 19, 2023, REGULAR SESSION

MOTION by Vice-Chairperson Vette to approve the January 16, 2024, Consent Agenda

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.

- Director Delong presented the Human Resources report to the Governing Board. Board Member Shellenberger asked how GRFD compares in terms of salaries and benefits to other districts. Director Delong said Human Resources looks at salaries and benefits comprehensively. The focus is salaries and where they are



but, when salaries are reviewed, they also look at benefits. A study was done two years ago, and another will be done this year. Once the report is complete, it will be presented to the Board. HR works with a third-party, HR Know, to conduct compensation studies. The Union determines to whom the District compares salaries.

Chairperson Cox Golder asked about the exposure protocol that was mentioned in the HR board report. Director Delong responded that the exposure protocol is an OSHA requirement. When an employee gets exposed on duty, this is the protocol that is followed. Health and Safety oversees it, Human Resources helps coordinate workers compensation, OSHA, etc. Tucson ER and Hospital has been assisting GRFD for about four years. Six months ago, they began helping with exposure protocol. They also assist Northwest Fire District (NWFD) and Tucson Fire Department (TFD).

Chairperson Cox Golder asked about utilization of benefits. Director Delong replied there is a benefits committee comprised of personnel, including Union representation. The benefits broker attends these meetings as well to explain the utilization reports.

- Director Rascon presented IT's report to the Governing Board.
 - Supervisor Camarillo presented the Community/Media Relations report to the Governing Board.
 - LEADERSHIP TEAM REPORT – President Jones presented the Leadership team report to the Board. The Union has been meeting with members of the Pima County Board of Supervisors about health and safety and emergency services in Pima County.
- B. COMMUNITY RISK REDUCTION DIVISION'S REPORT - Assistant Chief Perry presented the Community Risk Reduction report to the Governing Board. He highlighted two items: 1. Community Services was able to interact with 10 of the 12 schools in the District. They were able to positively impact 650 children. 2. The level of code compliance has increased by a little over 400 inspections over the past year. This is due to the Governing Board approving a new inspector position.

Chairperson Cox Golder asked about the section of his report mentioning therapy dogs. Assistant Chief Perry replied Chief Brandhuber has asked he research therapy dogs in the workplace. There is some research that shows therapy dogs lower stress, lower blood pressure, and overall soothe people. He is looking into a volunteer agency that would provide certified therapy dogs.

Chairperson Cox Golder thanked Assistant Chief Perry for all his hard work on the accreditation process.



Chairperson Cox Golder asked what "Ride to School in a Fire Engine" is. Assistant Chief Perry responded that it is an award-based program where the children are rewarded with a ride to school in a fire truck.

Board Clerk Outlaw asked Assistant Chief Perry what the Narcan Leave Behind program is. He answered it is a program overseen by Deputy Chief Wilson. The State Department of Health Services (DHS) is making Narcan available to agencies to leave behind for patients they suspect may need it.

- C. SUPPORT SERVICES DIVISION'S REPORT - Assistant Chief Cesarek presented the Support Services' report to the Governing Board. He received feedback from Pinal County regarding Station 378's plans. They kicked back the plans for five items that need to be addressed. He believes four of the items have already been done and is working with civil engineers to address the fifth item. The engineering firm is Dowel, they are working on addressing concerns regarding the easement.

Board Member Shellenberger asked what the approximate start date is to begin construction on the site. He wondered if groundwork had begun. Assistant Chief Cesarek stated construction has not begun, he is waiting for the permits from Pinal County to begin breaking ground.

- D. EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICES & FIRE RESPONSE DIVISION'S REPORT – Assistant Chief Grissom presented the EMS & Fire Response and Professional Development report to the Governing Board. One item he would like to add is the fact that operations is in the process of firefighter recruitment. Over 300 people applied, and they have narrowed it down to 200 applicants.

Chairperson Cox Golder asked how many people they plan on hiring. Assistant Chief Grissom said they haven't decided on a number yet but approximately in the mid-twenties.

8. REGULAR BUSINESS

- A. DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE ACTION REGARDING THE APPOINTMENT OF CITIZEN MEMBERS, LEE MAYES AND ALLISON DELONG, TO THE GRFD PUBLIC SAFETY PERSONNEL RETIREMENT SYSTEM'S LOCAL PENSION BOARD

Vice-Chairperson Vette stated the two citizen members of the GRFD Public Safety Personnel Retirement System need to be appointed by the Governing Board.

MOTION by Vice Chairperson Vette to appoint Lee Mayes, resident of GRFD, and Allison Delong, who has experience in personnel administration, as citizen members of the Golder Ranch Fire District's Public Safety Personnel Retirement System's Local Pension Board pursuant to A.R.S. §38-847(A)(3).

MOTION SECONDED by Board Member Shellenberger

MOTION CARRIED 5/0



The Board thanked both Allison Delong and Lee Mayes for serving on the PSPRS Local Pension Board.

- B. DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE ACTION REGARDING THE ADOPTION OF RESOLUTION 2024-0001 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

Chief Brandhuber stated this is a typical resolution declaring certain items as surplus. He mentioned Assistant Chief Cesarek could answer any questions the board may have.

MOTION by Vice-Chairperson Vette to adopt Resolution 2024-0001 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 or department.

MOTION SECONDED by Board Clerk Outlaw

MOTION CARRIED 5/0

- C. DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE ACTION REGARDING THE GOLDER RANCH FIRE DISTRICT RECONCILIATION AND MONTHLY FINANCIAL REPORT

Finance Director Christian presented the Golder Ranch Fire District monthly financials and reconciliation to the Governing Board. He told the Board the District is halfway through the fiscal year. The District is at the mid-point and in about a month, staff will be discussing and preparing the 2025 budget. There was one notable line item for the month of December. Interest revenue did exceptionally well. The rate of return the District has earned from the investment pool monies with Pima County has been phenomenal. The District received the money from the marijuana sales tax. Revenue was in-line with what was budgeted. Expenses were down due to lower labor costs. The labor costs were lower than expected due to lower than projected health insurance costs. Year-to-date the District is \$3.6 million favorable in its revenues.

Chairperson Cox Golder asked what the Pima County Treasurer was investing in to gain such favorable revenue.

Pima County Deputy Treasurer Chris Ackerly responded interest rates have been inverted for a while which means they have been earning favorable returns in the local investment pools and money markets. The situation can't exist forever. The inversion has to correct itself at some point.

Director Christian thanked Deputy Treasurer Ackerly for answering questions and for visiting Golder Ranch Fire District.



Director Christian continued to explain the year-to-date financial report. The District is favorable in property tax revenue, interest revenue, ambulance revenue, and grant revenue. It is favorable in grant revenue due to the COVID funds that were received. There is zero percent variance in labor expenses. Director Christian stated he is very happy with the mid-year financials, \$7.5 million has been added to the cash balance since the beginning of the fiscal year. Ambulance billing continues to outperform the budget. He believes by the end of the fiscal year, there will be seven thousand transports. Director Christian showed a chart of a four-year trend for transports. In 2021 the average for daily transports was 17.2 in 2024 it is 19.1.

Vice-Chairperson Vette asked what caused the spike in write-offs. He wondered why the write-off total is double what it was last year. Director Christian explained that, as the billing department determines the account can no longer be collected, they will write-it off. They are trying to clean up the books, and do not keep accounts on the books that will no longer be collectible. The No Surprises Act limits what billing can and cannot collect.

Chairperson Cox Golder asked how many times a person is billed. Director Christian responded the department does three attempts before the account is sent to collections. Billing Supervisor Massie said she has had turnaround in her department, the personnel in her department are now trained and going thru the books and reviewing them and writing off the uncollectable accounts.

Director Christian said the 2023 Wildland season is now over. There are two fires that have not been collected. He expects to collect \$500,00 for the fire season, this is a typical fire season.

MOTION by Board Member Shellenberger to approve and accept the Golder Ranch Fire District reconciliation and monthly financial report as presented.

MOTION SECONDED by Vice-Chairperson Vette.

MOTION CARRIED 5/0

9. FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS

The next regularly scheduled meeting will be on February 20, 2024

10. CALL TO THE PUBLIC

There were no public issues presented at this time.

11. ADJOURNMENT

MOTION by Chairperson Cox Golder to adjourn the meeting at 9:56 a.m.

MOTION SECONDED by Vice Chairperson Vette

MOTION CARRIED 5/0



Sandra Outlaw, Clerk of the Board
Golder Ranch Fire District
S/O

