

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

Tuesday, June 18, 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 June 18, 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 Grissom, Assistant Chief Perry, Deputy Chief Rutherford, Deputy Chief Jarrold, Deputy Chief Wilson, Fire Marshall Akins, Local 3832 President Jones, Human Resources Director Delong, Finance Director Christian, Information Technology Director Rascon, Division Chief North, Division Chief Hastings, Battalion Chief Seely, Community Relations Supervisor Camarillo, Billing Supervisor Massie, Operations Support Supervisor Bravo, Program Manager Holland, District Attorney Aversa, and Records Specialist Wong

2. SALUTE AND PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

All in attendance recited the Pledge of Allegiance.

3. FIRE BOARD REPORTS

Board Clerk Outlaw wanted to personally thank the crews that helped her last month. She thanked "C Shift" at Station 377 for her first call, as well as, the ambulance crew at Station 370 along with Engine 380 for her second call. She stated she had the best care and added that she has not been in an ambulance since she was an EMT 40 years ago. She did not have that experience, but she knows she was taken care of by the best. Board Clerk Outlaw expressed her desire to give the crews her fondest and most grateful thanks.

Board Member Shellenberger said he had a meeting with Chief Brandhuber and Assistant Chief Perry on May 10th to discuss community risk reduction because it was something that he was not familiar with. He has more knowledge on it now and they discussed ways to quantify the results to ensure that what we are doing is making a



difference. Board Member Shellenberger stated that it is great program and gives his full support.

Vice-Chairperson Vette also added that he had a meeting with Assistant Chief Perry on the same topic.

4. CALL TO THE PUBLIC

There were no public issues presented at this time.

5. CONSENT AGENDA

A. APPROVE MINUTES- MAY 21, 2024, REGULAR SESSION

B. APPROVE MINUTES- JUNE 4, 2024, SPECIAL SESSION

MOTION by Vice-Chairperson Vette to approve the June 18, 2024, Consent Agenda.

MOTION SECONDED by Board Member Tom Shellenberger.

MOTION CARRIED 5/0

6. REPORTS AND CORRESPONDENCE

A. FIRE CHIEF'S REPORT – Chief Brandhuber presented the Fire Chief's report to the Governing Board. Chief Brandhuber wanted to publicly thank the Governing Board for their support and recommendations on the pending budget. He appreciates the ability to take care of the staff at Golder Ranch Fire District. Chief Brandhuber thanked the Governing Board for the recommendations that were brought forward pending the Resolution for the budget.

Chairperson Cox-Golder made a comment on the wildland tablets for suppression. She said this was a great idea and asked if Information Technology Director Rascon can provide some more information on it.

Information Technology Director Rascon explained the tablets are a great idea since they can use multiple applications and complete wildland reports using cloud-based applications that will get them to our billing system immediately. They can also use the mobile responder app when the wildland application is not in use. The devices serve multiple purposes and is a great addition to the wildland equipment. Chairperson Cox-Golder thanked IT Director Rascon for the information.

Vice-Chairperson Vette asked if the low utilization numbers for Employee Assistance Program (EAP) calls and between EAP and GRFD's internal processes of a Peer Support Team, that we are providing everything we possibly can to GRFD's staff and their families.

Human Resources Director Delong answered that in addition to EAP, if staff members have a behavioral health concern, there are additional resources. EAP is a



confidential way to reach out and receive behavioral health support for themselves and their family as well as NICE Healthcare at no cost. Our medical insurance, Blue Cross Blue Shield, with the responsibility of co-pays, also has behavioral health support. Under Assistant Chief Cesarek, the Health & Safety division provide an internal Peer Support Team. Furthermore, we began operating the Struggle Well classes, which teaches coping skills and skills to embrace where someone is at, but to move forward happy and healthy. There are several resources for employees. The EAP numbers may seem low possibly due to employees not being comfortable but employers are mandated to offer it. Sometimes people do not feel confident in it or feel it is as secure as it is, therefore, there are these additional programs that are offered for staff to have access to.

Vice-Chairperson Vette added that the peer support is a vital process and thanked HR Director Delong.

Local 3832 President Jones wanted to include that over the years, GRFD has improved behavioral health services. Although, it has been changing and improving, it is important to stay current and look for best practices that are available. The new Struggle Well program that the Governing Board and Chief Brandhuber have committed to is a step in the right direction. There is a class that is occurring this week and the feedback has been overwhelmingly positive from employees who have participated.

President Jones stated there were eight people that attended the annual Professional Fire Fighters of Arizona convention. Different fire departments and districts attend across Arizona. It was held locally at Starr Pass. The eight people that attended the training said it was an excellent conference. President Jones added that conferences are important for networking and this event was a success. President Jones said that on today's agenda, there is an item for extending the memorandum of understanding. He hopes that it will be completed by next month to present to the Governing Board. If it is not, it will be done by August.

Board Member Shellenberger asked Chief Brandhuber if the strategic plan questionnaire/survey has been completed.

Chief Brandhuber responded today is the last day for internal personnel to participate. In a couple of days, the public comment period will be closed. The deadline for GRFD's government partners to respond is also approaching. All the information will be combined next week into a single report. Once that report has been received, it will be shared with everyone.

- B. COMMUNITY RISK REDUCTION DIVISION'S REPORT – Assistant Chief Perry presented the Community Risk Reduction Division's report to the Governing Board.

Chairperson Cox-Golder asked about the therapy dog visitation program.



Assistant Chief Perry answered that Chief Brandhuber asked him to pursue that project. He explained the goal is to have volunteer handlers with therapy dogs rotate through the different fire stations and facilities. Staff members are welcome to interact with the dogs if they would like, but they do not have to. This would be on a regular schedule.

Chairperson Cox-Golder asked if this program would include the public or just open to GRFD employees.

Assistant Chief Perry answered that the program will be for just the employees.

Chairperson Cox-Golder also asked about the application for a Tohono O'odham gaming proceeds grant for \$25,000 and if there has been a response back.

Assistant Chief Perry responded it was submitted a couple of weeks ago and there is confirmation of the submission to be in the running, but there have not been any results yet. Chief Perry will report back to the Governing Board once there is an update.

Chief Brandhuber asked Assistant Chief Perry to discuss what the grant is for.

Assistant Chief Perry explained that the goal is to purchase 10-year smoke detectors. When looking at GRFD's distribution of smoke detectors, battery changes, and installations, it was noted that there is a gap in Catalina; particularly in the lower income areas. The money and smoke detectors will be for an installation program in the lower income areas in Catalina.

Chairperson Cox-Golder added that many people may not recognize that smoke detectors are important to have and this will be great to do.

C. SUPPORT SERVICES DIVISION'S REPORT – Deputy Chief Jarrold attended the board meeting in Assistant Chief Cesarek's absence.

Chairperson Cox-Golder asked Jarrold about electric vehicles (eEV), the electric vehicle policy in responses to vehicle accidents and fires involving EVs, and if there has been many of them.

Deputy Chief Jarrold answered fortunately, there has not been many EV fires in the area. This is a regional approach and there is a committee at the Operations level, Health and Safety, Tucson Fire Department, and Northwest Fire District. Tow companies are also included as they will play a vital part in this. Currently, there are different means of controlling and extinguishing vehicle fires. The goal is to identify what is the best region wide approach and how GRFD is going to work with tow companies to ensure that all responders are safe throughout the duration of these types of fires.



Board Member Shellenberger asked whose responsibility it is to inspect the fire hydrants.

Deputy Chief Jarrold answered that the fire hydrants would generally be under Fire and Life Safety and the firefighters from Operations are the ones that go out to do the annual inspections on them.

Board Member Shellenberger asked who maintains the fire hydrants to ensure that they are functioning and accessible to the fire district.

- Assistant Chief Perry responded that it is the responsibility of the water districts to maintain the hydrants. GRFD firefighters do the inspections and file reports on an application. The water districts follow up with making repairs and ensuring that they are functioning.

- 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. Assistant Chief Grissom highlighted it is week eight of GRFD's Academy and there are 28 strong individuals that he hopes will be graduating on August 9th. He will be sending the Governing Board members an invitation once they are available and stated he would love to see the Governing Board at the graduation. Assistant Chief Grissom also added there are three medic students in their second week of medic school and are all doing very well. There are three different wildland crews out on assignment. There are two in Arizona and one in New Mexico. The ImageTrend training is completed by those who worked hard on getting ImageTrend up and running. Assistant Chief Grissom thanked and appreciates the support of the Governing Board for approving the new ImageTrend system that will begin on July 1st.

Chairperson Cox-Golder asked about the GRFD Wildland Team instructors that hosted a UTV class for Northwest Fire District and what is an "UTV" class.

Assistant Chief Grissom answered that an UTV is a utility vehicle and the instructors trained on the proper techniques and safety components of an UTV. They were placed in an operating course with cones to ensure they are driving safely.

Chairperson Cox-Golder asked if the UTVs are for GRFD's firefighters.

Assistant Chief Grissom responded they are for our Wildland and Special Operations teams that respond to various areas in the desert where an ambulance or fire engine is unable to reach.

7. REGULAR BUSINESS

- A. PUBLIC HEARING ON THE GOLDER RANCH FIRE DISTRICT FISCAL YEAR 2024/25 BUDGET



- OPEN THE PUBLIC HEARING – Chairperson Cox-Golder opened the public hearing for any comments from the public at 9:18 a.m.

There were no public comments made.

- CLOSE THE PUBLIC HEARING – Chairperson Cox-Golder closed the public hearing at 9:18 a.m.

NO MOTION NEEDED FOR THIS AGENDA ITEM.

B. DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE ACTION REGARDING THE ADOPTION OF RESOLUTION #2024-0005 APPROVING AND FORMALLY ADOPTING THE GOLDER RANCH FIRE DISTRICT FISCAL YEAR 2024-2025 & 2025-2026 BUDGETS

MOTION by Vice-Chairperson Vette to approve Resolution #2024-0005 formally adopting the Golder Ranch Fire District budget in the amount of \$52,557,067 with a recommended mil rate of \$2.54 and a bond debt service mil rate of \$0.12 for fiscal year 2024-2025.

MOTION SECONDED by Board Member Shellenberger.

MOTION CARRIED 5/0

C. DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE ACTION REGARDING THE ADOPTION OF RESOLUTION #2024-0006 APPROVING THE APPROPRIATION OF THE GOLDER RANCH FIRE DISTRICT END OF FISCAL YEAR 2023-2024 GENERAL FUND BALANCE

Finance Director Christian explained that this is done every year pursuant to GRFD's Financial Policy. It takes the reserve funds balance and commits it to the various functions that are identified in the Resolution under consideration. Title 48 allows the treasurer to appropriate any uncommitted money and apply it towards the upcoming levy. GRFD is attempting to preserve the principal amount/core of the reserve dollars for specific purposes pursuant to Gatsby and Title 48. These specific purposes are based on GRFD's average of the last three years of the general fund revenues, which is around \$40 million. Ten percent would be reserved for emergency purposes, twenty percent for operating reserves, and ten percent for budget stabilization. There is a \$4 million dollar contingency reserve fund. In policy, its purpose is to address any unfunded liabilities with GRFD's public safety obligations. \$20,107,930 is what is under consideration to reserve by resolution.

Vice-Chairperson Vette asked Finance Director Christian if the funds are held at the county.

Finance Director Christian answered the money is held with the investment pool at the county, which is in the state investment pool. The exception is the \$4 million dollars, which are held with a third-party administrator that invests the money in various index funds and bonds.



MOTION by Board Member Shellenberger to approve Resolution #2024-0006 appropriating the end of fiscal year General Fund balance in accordance with GRFD Principles of Sound Financial Policy.

SECOND by Board Clerk Outlaw.

MOTION CARRIED 5/0

D. DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE ACTION REGARDING THE ADOPTION OF RESOLUTION #2024-0007 DECLARING DISTRICT ITEMS AS SURPLUS AND DIRECTING STAFF TO ADD DECLARED SURPLUS ITEMS TO A PUBLIC AUCTION SITE OR SELL TO A NEIGHBORING OR MUTUAL AID FIRE DISTRICT/DEPARTMENT

Deputy Chief Jarrold stated there are several surplus items from different divisions. There is a golf cart and parts washer from Fleet, computer components from IT that are no longer needed, and items from the Wildland Division. Captain Port expressed there are two or three different models of handheld radios that are not supported by the manufacturer, Bendix King. It can be an issue if someone has to learn a different styled radio. All the radios currently issued are the newest and latest models that should be supported by Bendix King for some time. It would be great to help the smaller neighboring fire districts with radios for wildland fires.

Board Member Brady asked if GRFD notifies the local fire departments or mutual aide partners before the items are placed for public auction.

Deputy Chief Jarrold answered that GRFD does inform them prior to listing on public auctions. Previously, the fire truck that was sold to Corona de Tucson, before it was placed on a public site, GRFD reached out to the neighboring districts. GRFD wants to keep the items in the region and with fire districts that will maintain them.

MOTION by Board Clerk Outlaw to adopt Resolution #2024-0007 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.

SECOND by Board Member Brady.

MOTION CARRIED 5/0

E. DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE ACTION REGARDING THE ADOPTION OF RESOLUTION #2024-0008 GRANTING AN EXTENSION OF THE CURRENT MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING BETWEEN THE GOLDER RANCH FIRE DIRSTICT AND NORTH TUCSON FIREFIGHTERS' ASSOCIATION, INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF FIREFIGHTERS LOCAL 3832

Chief Brandhuber stated the memorandum of understanding (MOU) has a few more outstanding items that need to be addressed. Chief Brandhuber thanked the Governing Board for approving the budget. The approved budget enhancements for GRFD staff will still occur in July regardless of the MOU. Chief Brandhuber wanted to ensure the language is clear in the MOU and the corresponding policies before presenting the MOU to the Governing Board for review and consideration. Chief



Brandhuber does not foresee any issues or problems and is working with President Jones and Local 3832 through a few small matters.

MOTION by Vice-Chairperson Vette to approve and adopt Resolution #2024-0008 to grant an additional sixty days for a new memorandum of understanding to be presented to the GRFD Governing Board for approval.

SECONDED by Board Member Shellenberger.

MOTION CARRIED 5/0

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

Finance Director Christian presented the Golder Ranch Fire District reconciliation and monthly financial report. He stated May is the second payment on property taxes. It is the month with the second largest increase in revenue for property taxes. As expected, GRFD received close to \$7.7 million, it was exceeded by half a million with a 5% variance. Year-to-date, GRFD is doing well on property tax collections. Interest and budget revenues continue to exceed budget. There was about an \$8,000 shortfall in miscellaneous revenue. There was not as much wildland revenue as anticipated for this time of year. Although GRFD has several resources out for wildland fires, collecting on it has been lackluster. While revenue was 6% favorable, the monthly outflow for May was not what was anticipated. The biggest amount was from labor. When the monthly cash flow is divided into its components, labor is budgeted in terms of the number of payrolls. There are normally two payrolls a month, but three twice a year. Three payrolls were budgeted for the month of June and two for May; however, there were three. Labor was unfavorable in May, but will be very favorable in the month of June and will balance out to about a 1% favorable variance in labor costs. Another excess of outflow that was more than projected was professional services costs. There were some accreditation and strategic planning costs in May. A flashover chamber and a car-fire prop for training was purchased from the capital budget that were not anticipated for May. The financials were 4% unfavorable, but within the 5% target goal. It is adequate that the budget is being utilized and executed on projects, items, and programs. Year-to-date, GRFD has a revenue of about \$2.5 million dollars, which is 5% favorable. This is largely due to the American Rescue Plan (ARP) and radio grants that GRFD has received. That money is included in the grant revenue, which is the biggest component being over 200% favorable. There is a 0% variance in year-to-date labor costs. Finance Director Christian stated he expects there to be a 1% favorable variance in June, the last month of the fiscal year, for labor expenses: the largest item in the budget. Currently, there is \$5 million dollars in net proceeds; a \$3 million dollar variance of what was anticipated. This will play a role in the fund balance at the end of the year. Some of the money will be consumed in June, with more expenditures than revenue. It is very likely that GRFD is going to add close to \$3 million dollars to the fund balance from the beginning of the fiscal year to the end of the fiscal year, largely due to the grants and some due to positive variances from expenditures.



There is about \$1 million dollars in the general fund in Pinal County that will be remitted back to Pima County in June. In Pima County, there is approximately \$17 million dollars in the general fund with some of it consumed in June. The total cash balance is \$37 million dollars at the end of May, but that amount is expected to decrease to \$34-\$35 million dollars by the end of the fiscal year.

There were 641 ambulance transports in May, the busiest month of the year. GRFD is on track to reach 7,000 transports for the fiscal year, which will be a milestone for the organization. There has never been 7,000 transports in a fiscal year and 450 transports are needed to reach this amount. It is expected that GRFD's partners, Avra Valley Fire District and Rincon Valley Fire District will have 3,000 transports in June. This will be another milestone for 10,000 transports billed in a fiscal year. There has been a decline in COVID transports. With population and demographic changes, there is an organic growth in transport numbers not only daily, but monthly and yearly as well. GRFD is doing well on ambulance revenue.

There are ten wildland fires, however, there has been a couple more since the report. Most of the fires are in state. There is a single resource in New Mexico, which may be a federal resource for the report in June. The finance department is seeking the collection of the wildland money as quickly as possible; however, the state is strict on how they are billed.

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

SECONDED by Board Clerk Outlaw.

MOTION CARRIED 5/0

8. FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS

The next regularly scheduled meeting will be on July 16, 2024.

9. CALL TO THE PUBLIC

There were no public issues presented at this time.

10. ADJOURNMENT

MOTION by Board Member Brady to adjourn the meeting at 9:35 a.m.

MOTION SECONDED by Vice-Chairperson Vette.

MOTION CARRIED 5/0



Sandra Outlaw, Clerk of the Board
Golder Ranch Fire District

J/W

