

**GOLDER RANCH FIRE DISTRICT
GOVERNING BOARD MEETING
STRATEGIC PLANNING STUDY SESSION
MEETING MINUTES**

Monday, September 9, 2024, 9:00 a.m.
1600 East Hanley Boulevard, Oro Valley, Arizona 85737

1. CALL TO ORDER/ROLL CALL

Chairperson Cox Golder called the meeting to order on September 9, 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, Local 3832 President Jones, Information Technology Director Rascon, and Board Services Supervisor Ortiz

2. SALUTE AND PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

All in attendance recited the Pledge of Allegiance.

3. CALL TO THE PUBLIC

4. REGULAR BUSINESS

A. STRATEGIC PLANNING STUDY SESSION

Chief Brandhuber welcomed everyone to the meeting and thanked the Board for their time. He gave the floor to Assistant Chief Perry.

Assistant Chief Perry introduced two gentlemen from Managing for Results (MFR), Jeremy Stephens and Marv Weidner.

Mr. Stephens stated he titled the session, "Planning for Results", because the idea behind a strategic plan is to deliver results for the community. This meeting is about setting the stage for meetings with staff later.

Mr. Weidner stated their goal is to help local governments do more to have impact on the community they serve.



Mr. Stephens said he would review the comments from the individual interviews he conducted with the Board members. They, as a group, could then discuss ways GRFD could influence results related to each issue or challenge.

Mr. Stephens reviewed the MFR Integrated Management System. In his review he commented that he noticed culture is a big deal at Golder Ranch.

Mr. Weidner said the focus should be on: Who the customer is, and what services are necessary for desired results. He recommended looking at demand and talking about costs. He advised to never start with money, but to always start with the customer. His diagram listed the following in order: customer, results, services/outputs, demand and cost. Mr. Weidner explained the level of performance is tied to a level of funding.

Mr. Weidner stated, in his experience, he has learned three things:

1. If government focuses on the right results, those results are achievable.
2. If government focuses on the right results, those will be the results you achieve.
3. If government focuses everything it does on results, the chances of success increase significantly.

Mr. Weidner explained having information helps in the allocation of resources. This process helps agencies use information for budgeting and reporting. As a result, the agency can tell their customers what they are receiving for their money.

MFR helps agencies decide:

What results are they trying to obtain?

What is the best way to deliver the services?

What level of service do they want to provide?

What is it going to cost?

Mr. Weidner said by answering these questions, there is more alignment and less confusion.

Mr. Stephens explained the public's perception regarding Mr. Weidner's comment on communicating to the public what they receive for their money. He said if the District isn't telling their story, someone else is. The keys to success are sponsored by leadership, leadership that stays visible, is customer focused, includes employee involvement in development and implementation, communicates clarity of purpose, specifies results, focuses on results that matter, maintains a shared understanding throughout the organization and explains what the District is doing and why.

Mr. Stephens read challenges that were shared with him. They were as follows:



Community Growth, Expansion of GRFD, Calls for Services, Specialized Services, Recruitment, Training and Retention, Health, Safety and Wellness, Equipment and Training, Increasing Cost of Doing Business, Leadership, Partnerships, Telling Our Story of Impact, and Maintaining Culture.

The Governing Board took a brief recess at 9:56 a.m.

The Governing Board resumed the meeting at 10:08 a.m.

Mr. Weidner re-emphasized how important it is for the District to tell their story, to make the connection to the taxpayers between the taxes they pay and the services they receive. With this plan, the District will be able to do that. Mr. Weidner commented that GRFD responds to more than fire and EMS calls. The District responds to a variety of issues the public faces. He expressed how impressive this was and how it was extraordinary customer service.

Mr. Stephens asked the Board if they had to choose their biggest concern, what would it be?

Vice Chairperson Vette responded, “community growth”.

Mr. Stephens said community growth is important because it affects everything. He explained how it is connected to all of the other concerns listed, including culture. He asked the Board how the District meets growth and sustains culture.

Vice Chairperson Vette said that is a constant question.

Mr. Weidner asked a parallel question, “How would the Board describe the District’s culture?”

Board Clerk Outlaw responded by saying the Board takes the best care of its firefighters and medics and employees so they can provide the best care to the community. She said this would best describe the culture of the district. That everyone is family, and they take care of each other and the community.

President Jones said maintaining culture in the face of growth is just doing business as usual. The District has a good culture. As the District grows, there is some excitement with that. If people just keep doing what they are doing, the culture will naturally continue to be positive.

Board Member Shellenberger commented, in his opinion, culture is about being a family and it has to do with taking pride in being a part of the District, that maybe other places don’t have. He said culture has to not only be stressed but demonstrated.



Board Member Brady made a comment; however his microphone was not on and the comments were not able to be recorded via Zoom.

Assistant Chief Cesarek said the District had not done the best of jobs allowing the culture to change with the merger of other organizations. The District is doing a much better job now. There were positives that could be gained from the other organizations. The District does a good job of hiring people. Personnel do a good job of taking care of their own and they will do that for the community.

Assistant Chief Grissom agreed. He believed that, as the District grows, it has a history of hiring the right people and training them the right way, the Golder way. The District does have a set of core values, so no matter how much the District grows, it is always going to sustain the culture. He acknowledged the District can improve. However, GRFD is the type of fire district that will adapt to and overcome growth while maintaining a positive culture.

Assistant Chief Perry said the District has a phenomenal base. He loves the customer service and internal customer service the District provides. He also believes the District has a unique opportunity, right now, as the District receives transfers from other organizations. The District is looking at possibly growing, and as it does this, it has a unique opportunity to foster the tenants of the culture that are positive. There are pieces of the culture that are not wanted. Maybe there is an opportunity to take the good and get rid of the old.

Board Member Shellenberger commented on the incredible culture of NYFD. He said if such a large department can foster that type of culture there, GRFD should be able to do it as a smaller fire district.

Mr. Weidner said it is obvious staff are conscious of the culture. He added that it is important to be committed to it. It is important to maintain culture while managing growth. The decisions leadership make either reinforce or erode the culture.

Mr. Stephens asked the Board what some strategies are to keep in mind as the District grows and tries to maintain culture.

Vice Chairperson Vette said one strategy is to tell the District's story better, either through social media or public service announcements.

Mr. Stephens agreed people do go to social media. He said they get a sense of what the organization is like through their social media. He noted GRFD does a good job telling their story via social media. The question is: How can the District build upon that while growing and maintaining culture?

Board Member Shellenberger said the one good thing about the District is, it has a good public information officer (Community/Media Relations Supervisor). He



suggested it might be a good idea to stress culture to her and have her display this in her posts.

Mr. Weidner commented that it sounds like the District hires people from other Districts. He advised that the story of culture could also be a recruitment strategy.

Board Member Outlaw said she was thinking that as well. She thinks everyone understands and has participated in building and refining the mission, vision, and values. She didn't know if the District gathers data and has performance-based data to reflect the connection between the values, the goals and what actually gets accomplished. She thought the District needs to gather that information and communicate it to the public and internally as well. Numbers paint a clear picture and case settings and personal stories paint a clear picture. She thought the District could be better about looking at: What are the District expectations? Are personnel living up to those? Can they do better, and can the District gather data to support that?

Mr. Weidner commented the District is located in an interesting area. He asked if the area is going to change.

Chairperson Cox Golder responded there will be growth towards Florence.

Chief Brandhuber said this goes to his point to not just grow to grow, and to make sure that when the District grows, it is the right time and it is sustainable. There are a lot of pressures the District faces internally and externally. He believed it is important to address internal growth organically and to address external growth strategically. He commented it is challenging to meet the needs of the different communities.

Mr. Stephens explained the next steps as part of the Strategic Business Planning process. He mentioned he interviewed the Board individually as well as the Chief. From these interviews, he identified the District's challenges. From those challenges, issue statements will be written. The meeting with the Command Staff in the afternoon will begin with the challenges submitted by the Board. The Command Staff will then do an assessment of the future. The process was listed in a flowchart: Board and Chief's interviews, the assessment of the future, issue statements, strategic results, mission statement (don't need to do), inventory of services, program structure, purpose statement, performance measures, line of business and key results.

Chairperson Cox Golder asked when the process will be complete.

Mr. Stephens answered the last retreat will be at the end of October. After that they will compile the report. From there it will be a matter of living the plan.



Mr. Stephens said they are excited to work with GRFD. He thanked the Board and staff for their participation.

5. **ADJOURNMENT**

MOTION by Vice Chairperson Vette to adjourn the meeting at 11:20 a.m.

MOTION SECONDED by Board Member Shellenberger

MOTION CARRIED 5/0



Sandra Outlaw, Clerk of the Board
Golder Ranch Fire District
s/o

