

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

**Tuesday, November 18, 2025, 9:00 a.m.  
1600 East Hanley Boulevard, Oro Valley, Arizona 85737**

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

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

Members Absent: Chairperson Cox Golder (excused absence)

Staff Present: Fire Chief Tom Brandhuber, Assistant Chief Grissom, Assistant Chief Perry, Assistant Chief Cesarek, Deputy Chief Hilderbrand, Deputy Chief Jarrold, Fire Marshal Akins, Deputy Chief Wilson, Finance Director Christian, Acting Technology Director Martinez, HR Director Delong, Division Chief Leslie, Division Chief Charnoki, Division Chief North, Battalion Chief Hastings, Project Manager Holland, Board Services Supervisor Ortiz, Fleet Maintenance Supervisor Raney, and HR Supervisor Noland

**2. SALUTE AND PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

Those in attendance said the pledge of allegiance.

**3. FIRE BOARD REPORTS**

Board Member Brady said he attended the grand opening for Station 378. He commented on what a great event it was and how well attended it was.

Board Member Shellenberger seconded Board Member Brady's comments on the Station 378 grand opening. He also mentioned he was able to do a ride-along with Ben Jones and visited Fleet Maintenance to see what was going to be done at that facility.

Board Clerk Outlaw thanked Assistant Chief Cesarek and his team for their work with Station 378. She remarked on how amazing the facility is. Board Clerk Outlaw also commented on how impressed she was with the size of the crowd and said how phenomenal the turnout was. She also mentioned Rockin' 4 Heroes was a wonderful event. She expressed how great it was they honored vets and first responders and also noted they recognized Oro Valley Police Chief Kara Riley. She was proud to be partnered with the Oro Valley Police Department.



#### **4. CALL TO THE PUBLIC**

There were no public issues presented.

#### **5. PRESENTATIONS**

##### **A. PRESENTATION OF A CERTIFICATE OF COMMENDATION TO PATRIK VLADYKA FOR HIS LIFE SAVING ACTIONS**

Fire Chief Tom Brandhuber introduced Division Chief of EMS, Jason Taylor.

Division Chief Jason Taylor presented community member Patrik Vladyka. He explained the District received a call for cardiac arrest. When the crew arrived Patrik was providing high quality chest compressions. When the crew was dispatched, Pulsepoint sent out a notification CPR was needed and specified the area. Patrik received the notification and responded to the call. DV Taylor presented Patrik with a certificate of recognition. He also mentioned when crews are recognized for a code save they are given a code save coin. DV Taylor awarded Patrik with a code save coin. He noted it had a picture of a five point star representing the five points of a code save. Patrik was the second point of the save with high quality chest compressions.

Chief Brandhuber thanked Patrik for his actions and presented him with a Fire Chief's coin of recognition.

##### **B. PRESENTATION OF PERSONNEL**

- YEARS OF SERVICE
  - GRANT CESAREK, ASSISTANT CHIEF OF SUPPORT SERVICES- 10 YEARS
- PROMOTION
  - DANIEL FILENER, FIRE INSPECTOR II
- NEW HIRE
  - MICHELLE CHAVEZ, ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT  
Loyalty and behavioral oaths will be administered.

Fire Chief Brandhuber presented Assistant Chief Ceseark to the Governing Board and recognized him for his ten years of service.

Deputy Fire Marshal Druke presented Daniel Filener to the Governing Board for his promotion to Fire Inspector II.

Board Services Supervisor Ortiz presented new employee Michelle Chavez as the new Administrative Assistant for Fire Headquarters' front desk.



Vice Chairperson Vette administered the loyalty and behavioral oaths to Administrative Assistant Chavez.

The Governing Board took a brief recess at 9:25 a.m.

The Governing Board reconvened at 9:30 a.m.

## **6. CONSENT AGENDA**

### **A. APPROVE MINUTES- OCTOBER 21, 2025, REGULAR SESSION**

**MOTION** by Board Member Shellenberger to approve the November 18, 2025, Consent Agenda

**MOTION SECONDED** by Board Member Brady

**MOTION CARRIED** 4/0

## **7. REPORTS AND CORRESPONDENCE**

- A. FIRE CHIEF'S REPORT – Chief Brandhuber presented the Fire Chief's report to the Governing Board. He thanked everyone that helped with the grand opening for Station 378. Chief Brandhuber commended Assistant Chief Cesarek and his team for their work on station 378 and facilitating the construction of the incredible building. He also thanked the Governing Board for their support of building the new facility. He commented it was funded by bond funds and thanked the district residents who supported the bond.

Vice-Chairperson Vette asked what Station 370 331 lock-in and Station 375 331 lock-out was.

Assistant Chief Grissom replied he was not sure but would research it and let Vice-Chairperson Vette know.

Union President Ben Jones wished the Governing Board a happy Thanksgiving. He mentioned the Union was preparing for the Players Pub fundraising event on December 6<sup>th</sup>. He explained the event raises money to fund the Shop With A Firefighter event which will be held December 11<sup>th</sup>. The Union usually sponsor 50-100 kids for Christmas.

Vice-Chairperson Vette asked HR Director Delong why the employee retention goal rate was 80%.

HR Director Delong replied this is the first year departments are reporting certain metrics. She said there was some historical data. HR used 80% as an initial metric and they can increase the number if it is too low.



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

Vice Chairperson Vette asked what other agencies the tax-rate reduction in 2027 impacts, aside from fire.

Finance Director Christian clarified if he was referring to the personal property that is being reduced out of the tax base.

Vice Chairperson Vette verified he was.

Finance Director Christian explained personal property within the tax base that had the tax levied against it, is going to receive that credit. The credit will be applicable at the assessed value. So any entity that taxes personal property will experience the reduction in the levy.

Board Member Brady asked if the commercial properties would be reduced by ½%.

Finance Director Christian replied yes. He clarified what will happen is there will be one more year of reductions in the assessed values, assessed ratio for business property. Their goal is to bring it down from 18% down to 15%. For the past few years the tax has been reduced by ½%. The last year it will be reduced will be in 2027.

Board Member Brady asked if the impact to Golder Ranch Fire District (GRFD) would be over a million dollars.

Finance Director Christian confirmed that was correct. It was a loss over time, it was not a single year impact. It was a five year impact. It was a 3% reduction. What it meant was that the tax burden was shifted to residential property and less on business property. The District still had to levy and maintain its operations. It had to change who was paying for the service, the ratios affected where the burden was.

Vice Chairperson Vette asked what the District's plan was to correct the 29% of businesses who were out of compliance with inspections.

Fire Marshal Akins thanked Vice Chairperson Vette for the question. She clarified even though it stated it was 29%, this was a very good number. That meant 71% were in compliance. There were about 2,500 businesses in the fire district. Approximately 208 inspections are conducted each month and the re-inspections are conducted the following month. At any given moment, Fire Prevention is working on inspections for about 516 businesses at any given time. This ends up being around 17-18% of the businesses. So, if there were 71% in compliance and Fire Prevention was working on getting 18% in compliance, this makes the number closer to 90% in compliance. So this was a good number.



- C. SUPPORT SERVICES DIVISION'S REPORT - Assistant Chief Cesarek presented the Support Services' division report to the Governing Board. He thanked everyone for their help with the Station 378 grand opening. Assistant Chief Cesarek also highlighted Captain Marquez who was recently selected to serve as the Health and Safety Captain. He commented Captain Marquez has distributed some great messages on health and safety for personnel.

Board Member Shellenberger stated he saw that Chief Brandhuber and Assistant Chief Cesarek met with Robson on an access road from Station 372 down to the community. He asked if there was any progress made on this.

Assistant Chief Cesarek replied what was presented to Robson was a route that is currently a golf cart access road that would connect the communities pretty well. It would reduce response time in some specific areas. It had been proposed to the HOA because they technically own the access way. Robson no longer has control over it anymore. Now staff are having discussions with the HOA. They are also discussing changing the tower at Station 373 with the HOA. Staff will continue these conversations with them.

- D. EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICES & FIRE RESPONSE DIVISION'S REPORT – Assistant Chief Grissom presented the EMS & Fire Response division report to the Governing Board. He announced five personnel were promoted to the rank of captain and one was promoted to engineer. Additionally, four personnel were placed on the waiting list for captain. These personnel will be recognized at the next board meeting. Assistant Chief Grissom referred to the question that Vice Chairperson Vette inquired about earlier regarding lock-in and lock-out codes, he explained those are the two codes for people that are locked out of or locked in their vehicle.

## **8. REGULAR BUSINESS**

- A. REVIEW, DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE ACTION REGARDING THE AUDIT RESULTS PRESENTED BY BEACH FLEISCHMAN AND THE DRAFT ANNUAL COMPREHENSIVE FINANCIAL REPORT (ACFR) FOR FISCAL YEAR ENDING JUNE 30, 2025

Chief Brandhuber stated he would let Finance Director Christian and Lydia Hunter from Beach Fleischman present. He commented it was always a pleasure to work with Beach Fleischman.

Finance Director Christian introduced Lydia Hunter who was promoted to an audit partner with Beach Fleischman. She had been overseeing the District's audits for a number of years now. He pointed out Beach Fleischman also does Northwest Fire District's audit. One of the responsibilities of the auditor was to make a presentation directly to the Board. This was a prescribed report.

Lydia reiterated the auditor was required by state statute to present directly to the Board. She said she appreciated their time. Lydia explained she would review



required communications, give a summary of financial information, and go over internal controls as well as review the annual financial report. The firm issued an unmodified opinion, this was the highest level of opinion they could provide, so for the Finance team, this was a clean opinion.

Lydia stated management was responsible for the selection and use of the accounting policies. There was a new accounting standard implemented, GASB 101, this related to compensated absences. This increased the District's liability by over a million dollars but this was out of the District's hands. There were two significant estimates in the financial statements: one was the collectability of the ambulance accounts receivables, the other was the pension liability. The auditor determined the estimates were neutral, consistent, and clear. There were no sensitive disclosures that needed to be reported. There were no significant disagreements with management (this is the required language, there were no disagreements with management). The auditors found the District was in compliance with ARS 48-805.02 subsection G. Lydia explained the audit adjustments in the report referencing the pre-audit balance and audited balances. There were a lot of adjustments because the District's internal financial statements were predominantly on a cash basis and the auditors were required to report on two methods of accounting: the modified accrual method, which was the current financial resources method, which was more than just a cash basis, they record all current assets and liabilities; and they also reported on the full accrual, which was a modified resource method. So that was why there were so many adjustments because the method of accounting was prescribed to report on according to the GASB. Lydia explained the Statements of Financial Position which was a report based on the economic resources method. It listed the assets and liabilities of the District. It had a longer term focus than just the current budget approach. She explained the current assets and deferred outflows were pretty comparable to prior years. There was an increase of about \$7.3 million of new capital assets but it was offset by reductions in the restricted cash which was used to purchase these assets. She was pleased to announce the OPEB pension liability went down from the prior year. It was a complete estimate, the District had no control over what this was going to be. But the auditors were pleased to see this remained consistent with prior years. The District had positive net position and unrestricted net position, the auditors wanted to see this trend in that direction. She commented next year there will be another pronouncement: In the current report there was a Management Discussion and Analysis (MDA), more analysis will be required on specific items. Next year the District will also be required to explain any significant changes from budget to actual, which it was required to do in the past. Lydia emphasized internal controls were very important to the District. Sometimes segregation of duties may not be possible due to the limited size of the organization. She wanted to make sure the Board was aware their role of oversight and fiduciary role were very important. Lydia highlighted the Annual Comprehensive Financial Report (ACFR). She explained her firm only audits the financial section of the report, they do not audit the numbers in the introductory section. She applauded the District, because the only portion that was required was the financial section. Completing the entire report was going above and beyond and increased the



transparency for the District. Lydia thanked the District. She said everyone was great to work with. When her staff visit the office, GRFD staff made them a priority and they appreciated it.

**MOTION** by Board Member Shellenberger to accept the Beach Fleishman audit report and draft FY2025 Annual Comprehensive Financial Report as presented.

**MOTION SECONDED** by Board Clerk Outlaw

**MOTION CARRIED** 4/0

**B. DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE ACTION REGARDING THE APPROVAL OF BOTH THE MASTER AGREEMENT AND SERVICES AGREEMENT FOR THE STANDARD FAMILY AND MEDICAL LEAVE ACT (FMLA) ABSENCE MANAGEMENT SERVICE**

HR Director Delong explained she provided the memo to explain what it was. She was happy to answer any questions the Board had. She explained FMLA (Family and Medical Leave Act) was a federal law, and offered to all employees that potentially qualify for it. But because it was a federal law, it came with a lot of regulations and a lot of deadlines that have to be met to honor the rights of employees. HR needed help administering it. The Standard created a master services agreement to offer the ability to use their services of administrative support to administer FMLA to employees. They also offered a dashboard for every employee to see their own case. It also offered 24/7 customer service. So, when HR is not available to offer immediate services, they will have the Standard to offer immediate care to employees. So allowing the District to enter into the Master Services agreement and have this backup support for the HR department ensures employees are given every right they have under FMLA.

**MOTION** by Board Clerk Outlaw to approve both the Standard Absence Management Master Agreement and Services Agreement as presented.

**MOTION SECONDED** by Board Member Brady

**MOTION CARRIED** 4/0

**C. DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE ACTION REGARDING THE 2025 PROGRAM APPRAISAL SUMMARY FINDINGS**

Chief Brandhuber explained each director/supervisor would explain their appraisals to the Board. He commented the Board may notice program owners highlighting a potential future need for FTE's (full time employees). These are initial proposals that will be reviewed further by staff. He thought it was important for the manager to explain what they felt their need was.

Assistant Chief Perry mentioned this was part of the strategic business plan and the associated performance measure budgeting cycle. This was geared to update the Board on the division's performance for the past fiscal year. They would explain items the divisions were working on for the current budget year and possible requests for next fiscal year.



Supervisor Ortiz explained Board Services had three distinct areas: Governing Board support, Records, and the fire headquarters front desk. The division ensured the Governing Board remained in full compliance with Arizona Revised Statutes, Open Meeting Law, while also providing essential administrative and public-facing services. During fiscal year 24/25, the Records Specialist Unit, aka Records Specialist Jenny Wong, fulfilled 255 records requests and continued to streamline processes to maintain rapid response times. To put this into perspective, when the position was created ten years ago, the District received 49 records requests. In May, Board Services hosted a regional training for administrative assistants in Pima and Pinal Counties after a recognized need for it. Unlike the suppression side of the fire service, there is very limited training for administrative professionals in the fire service. Out of this identified need, GRFD hosted a training that included sessions regarding; Open Meeting Law & Public Records Requests, Medical Records Requests, First Amendment Auditors, Communications Center, American with Disabilities, Governing Board Elections, and the Public Safety Personnel Retirement System (PSPRS). Key actions moving forward include transitioning records sorting responsibilities to individual divisions to help balance the workload for Records Specialist Wong, continuing regional training initiatives, and maintaining the timely production of board packets.

Vice Chairperson Vette commented she had done a great job.

Board Member Shellenberger thanked her for getting the board packets out in enough time for the Board to review them.

Deputy Chief Wilson presented the appraisal for Community Education. The highlights included the division attending 92 educational events reaching 5,786 residents. This consisted of pre-k through 12<sup>th</sup> grade curriculum with lesson plans. This past year the division added a Community Educator position. The key action items included aligning programs with monthly prevention themes, such as car seat safety, pool safety, etc; refining scheduling; and expanding partnerships with agencies such as Splendido. The current staffing level for the division is adequate and no additional resources were requested.

Deputy Chief Wilson presented Community Engagement's appraisal. The highlights included creating a dedicated program to improve event intake and coordinated Community Engagement with Community Relations to reduce duplication. There were no needs requested.

Deputy Chief Wilson presented the appraisal for the Community Resource Technicians (CRTs). This program was launched in February of 2025, with 18 part time members. The CRTs responded to 876 calls in the first four months. A second truck was added in the south battalion area. As of November 17<sup>th</sup>, 2025, 2,500 public assist calls were received and responded to. The division's goal was to collect long-term data, establish a chain-of-command for the CRTs, and explore fuel efficient





vehicles. Deputy Chief Wilson expressed his hope to continue funding for the program. He also noted there may be a need for future vehicle acquisition.

Board Member Brady asked what the status of the 3-1-1 program in Pinal County was.

Assistant Chief Perry said he spoke to Supervisor Jeff McClure, who shared that because of budgeting issues, the program will not be available in Pinal County. Assistant Chief Perry explained residents in Pinal County can call the District's direct line, press 7 and it will go to 3-1-1 in Pima County to be dispatched. There were a lot of factors to take into consideration such as cell phone providers, landline providers, and hours of operation. It is a long-term issue the County will need to review.

Division Chief Taylor presented the appraisal for EMS response. He highlighted the perfect score the division received on the Commission on Accreditation of Ambulance Services (CAAS). Aspirin administration has improved from 40% to 77%, the ImageTrend platform was launched, and a stretcher agreement was secured to bring all ambulances to the latest generation with power loaders. Last, but not least, the District continues to maintain the premier EMS agency status with the State of Arizona. Key action items included developing clear methodologies for performance measures, implement a patient survey, and refine ImageTrend supply tracking. There were no additional resource needs.

Division Chief North presented the appraisal for Facilities. Highlights for the past fiscal year included: the Station 370 remodel; Station 376 garage door replacement; and cabinet upgrades, two stations had their cabinets refinished; purchased OPIQ facilities module; preventative maintenance tracking in progress including documenting the assets at each station. The key action items for facilities included inputting all assets into OPIQ; manage capital projects; and implement replacement and maintenance plan. Facilities has one facilities maintenance person, they were in the process of backfilling the other opening. In the future, Division Chief North would like to see additional maintenance staff for the fourteen properties and eighteen major buildings. It is a big task. He would also like a facilities manager to oversee the facilities program. Lastly, he would like to see long-term asset replacement funding. Facilities is slowing getting to the point where it can track assets and keep track of replacement dates with the data entered in OPIQ.

Vice Chairperson Vette commented it was exciting to see the progress in this area.

Division Chief North agreed it was exciting. He was excited for the future.

Division Chief North presented the appraisals for Procurement, another aspect of the Logistics division. Highlights included: managing consumables and Personal Protective Equipment (PPE); the division implemented OPIQ and 8-year PPE replacement plan; and they added a procurement position to the division. Key actions for Procurement included: fully implementing OPIQ; developing PPE



education and inspection process; and the new Quasar building will be the new supply warehouse, which will help in organizing and tracking supplies. Potential resources will be funding for the build-out of the new Quasar building and ongoing education/training resources for staff. He said it was a slow process, but he thought the future was bright and he was excited for it.

Finance Director Christian presented the appraisal for Finance. He explained the finance division is divided into two main components: the billing team, lead by Supervisor Massie and the accounting team led by Supervisor Sargent. For fiscal year 24/25 the billing team processed 10,201 invoices, of which 7,372 were for GRFD. Five million three hundred thousand was collected. He said the net cost to the District was only \$11 per transport. He commented these were all very good metrics which beat or exceeded industry standards, not only for cost per transport but also number of invoices processed per biller. For the accounting team, the District received an unqualified opinion from the auditor. This is one of the most important things for accounting is to receive a clean audit. Finance Director Christian continued to explain improved cash management was another highlight for the accounting team. He added Supervisor Sargent has led substantive changes on how the District pays the vendors through ACH payments as opposed to checks for everything. Supervisor Sargent has also been incorporating the OPIQ system into the accounting system. Director Christian mentioned some key actions including: filling a Budget Analyst position, which has already been approved by the Board; sustaining the one-time vendor payments, getting all vendor payments out in two weeks; and getting payroll out with little corrections or retro pays. Director Christian stated Finance is very transactionally driven. The metrics used to determine the resource need is determined based on the volume. The number of invoices processed per biller, the number of invoices paid, and the number of district employees determine the size and number of transactions in the payroll system. Software is used to address this to an extent, which is one of Finance's key action items, to improve efficiency in vendor payments. However, there are some things that require people. When these thresholds are met, the Division will approach the Board for more staff in order to maintain the same level of performance.

Deputy Chief Jarrold presented the appraisal for Fire Response and Wildland. He began his presentation with Fire Response. He reiterated what Deputy Chief Wilson had mentioned earlier, the CRTs have proved invaluable in keeping suppression personnel available for emergency response. Some calls are now routed to Telehealth and do not have to be routed to the first responders, so callers receive the proper care they need rather than going to the hospital. Electric vehicle protocols have also been implemented and this recently came in handy to respond to a significant vehicle collision on Oracle Road. For potential needs, Fire Response is researching a dedicated 40-hour Fire Response Planning position.

Vice Chairperson Vette mentioned some towing companies refuse to take electric vehicles he asked if the District was experiencing this.



Deputy Chief Jarrold said there may be companies that do not transport electric vehicles, however, GRFD has a great relationship with Catalina Towing and they do transport electric vehicles. The District works closely with them and has held traffic incident management courses with them. The District has established great protocols with the owner and his team. The District also works with Eddie's Tow Company and Mammoth Towing company and they also take electric vehicles.

Battalion Chief Spanarella was attending training, so Deputy Chief Jarrold presented the Wildland appraisal for him. He said the highlights included how busy the wildland team was the past year, he commented how it seems they get busier every year. Teams are dispatched to fires on Type 3s, Type 6s, and single resources are also sent. The District is maintaining staffing levels. The District is also working with the Department of Fire and Forestry Management to complete the shaded fuel break burn plan named Spirit Dog. New members are being added to the wildland team. Some people will be rotating out of their team positions, such as Colin Port who has done an amazing job as the incident commander for the team. His replacement will be selected within the next month. The District will also be collaborating with the City of Tucson for the Sweetwater burn project as well as any project with Northwest Fire District. Potential resource needs would be vehicles, specifically for single resources. They would also research making these vehicles available to the fleet and not just dedicating them to wildland.

Fire Marshal Akins presented Fire Prevention's appraisal. In fiscal year 24/25 the division conducted 4,361 inspections and completed 766 plan reviews. Prevention inspections increased by 13%. With the implementation of ImageTrend, Deputy Fire Marshal Brad White has been able to create dozens of reports. One of the reports tracks exposures not only for fire investigators but also firefighters and residents involved in a fire incident. For key action items, one was the fire risk assessment. The plan is to transition the wildfire risk assessments to the wildland program. This was in progress, the division also includes the wildland firefighters in the assessments that are done. The division would also like to prioritize the violation clearances, so the re-inspections are getting prioritized so the violations get cleared. This may make the 71% (of businesses in compliance) increase to 73% or 74%. Fire Prevention also launched a satisfaction survey and added a survey to measure the satisfaction of the contractors and residents. For potential needs there are some minor signage and workspace improvements needed at the 380 administrative building. From the strategic plan the division's name was changed from Fire and Life Safety to Fire Prevention, so there is some signage that needs to be updated. At this time, the division is good, however, next year, she will be submitting a proposal for another position in Fire Prevention.

Supervisor Raney presented the appraisal for Fleet Services. Last year the team maintained 110 vehicles and closed 1,894 work orders. This was approximately a 40% increase from the year before. They are working on improving the work order system in OPIQ. Fleet increased the vehicle availability from 80% to 88%. The goal was 90%. For key actions items the division would like to improve technician



efficiency reporting and ensure the annual NFPA reporting was at 100%. At the time, staff was at 100%, which was typical. Fleet would like to recommend salary grade adjustments to align with the liability the technicians are placed under for working on certain pieces of equipment. Potential resources align with the need. The adjustments would pertain to technicians on staff and would help future recruitments as well.

Division Chief Charnoki presented the appraisal for Health and Safety. Highlights for fiscal year 24/25 included annual physicals completed at 99%. The goal was 100%. His division is working closely with the battalion chiefs to make this happen. The coronary calcium testing began in July. He thanked the Board for the support of the project. A lot of positive feedback has been received on it. Key action items include collecting more data on mental health. His division is considering getting clinical oversight for the peer support team. This would be medical direction for the team. They would provide education for the members. DV Charnoki explained candidate physical ability tests were recently conducted for aspiring firefighters. It is a physically demanding test. This was not budgeted in Health and Safety, so it will need to be budgeted next year.

Supervisor Noland presented the appraisal for Human Resources. She reported there were twenty-two recruitment efforts, which included new budgeted positions, backfills, and internal promotion processes. The electronic performance evaluations in Paycom allowed the District to move away from paper into a more efficient and seamless process. The District also changed from Blue Cross Blue Shield to Cigna this past year for medical insurance. They provide the same great service and care with associated cost savings. A new policy coordinator was hired, Michele, who has made significant progress in ensuring policies are compliant and up-to-date. Key action items include two software implementations: Document Locator and FMLA software were almost complete. Job descriptions will be reviewed annually and will be reformatted. HR was working to refine its metrics so that any future requests are directly tied to improving efficiencies and match the current demand of the department.

Division Chief Leslie presented the appraisal for Professional Development. He said he became the Division Chief of Professional Development at the end of 2024. He commented Division Chief Hastings did a great job with the academy where 23 people graduated from the academy, those individuals are off probation and are in the field. Professional Development completed the fire officer academy, where 14 people participated. The division also conducted the driver-operator program and roughly 30 people went through this program. Professional Development was also part of the Swiftwater Rope Rescue Technician courses. The Special Operations team does this training as part of the recruit academy. The division also conducted an active shooter training with Oro Valley Police Department (OVPD). They also provided high rise training with Tucson Fire Department (TPD). Professional Development is considering proposing a joint academy with our mutual aid partners. Division Chief Leslie mentioned when academies are conducted staff are not



available to do regular training. He foresaw a need for staffing while the Professional Development team was doing an academy to allow for continuous training for suppression personnel.

Project Manager Holland presented the appraisal for Project Management. For the past year, the focus was on how to manage projects and standardize them across the District. He has also been managing the grant writing and grant management program. There were two grants he began managing. Key action items include addressing unfinished projects and strengthening stakeholder engagement. Supervisor Holland highlighted he completed the report for the CFAI accreditation. No potential resources were identified.

Battalion Chief Hastings presented the appraisal for Special Operations. He highlighted the individuals at Station 377. He said there are 21 members on the Special Operations team for optimal staffing. Minimal staffing is 18 members. The team oversees seven different competencies above fire and EMS and other rescue services. They do a fantastic job. They have done a great job of maintaining four special operations technicians a day, every day, for the past year. The team was able to put in place a special operations trailer used predominantly for trench and emergency rescue shoring. A decentralized leadership work chart was implemented to empower more members of the team. Key action items included the addition of an engineer position to squad 377s minimum staffing. Squad 377 responds to hazardous material calls. They would like to increase the engineer on the squad to be included in minimum staffing, this will be a request in the future. The team is formalizing recruitment and rotation for the unit. They would like to improve off-duty training attendance. The team was also working on developing equipment accountability and storage. Potential resources included funding for squad 377 staffing, apparatus bay expansion, and long-term squad truck replacement plan.

Board Member Brady asked how many squad members Battalion Chief Hastings estimated he would need in the future.

Battalion Chief Hastings answered the minimum staffing was four technicians. For the District it was a rope rescue technician, swift water rescue technician, hazardous materials technician, and confined space technician. He did not see any changes to that. They also rely on regional response. The mutual aid partners come together when there is a greater need. Four technicians is not enough to mitigate an emergency however, when the agencies come together they can respond properly.

Strategic Communications was presented by Assistant Chief Cesarek. He commented how Supervisor Camarillo has done an excellent job having an impact and changing the way the District's platforms look. The Media Specialist position was added this past year. The goal was to strengthen the District's media relations and to allow this person to focus on strategic communications to make sure the message and branding was consistent. One of the action items for the division is to distribute a survey to see if people are receiving messages from GRFD and determine the best



methods to communicate with the public. Supervisor Camarillo is working on internal and external branding. There were no requests for the division. Something that helped the division was splitting the workload and re-assigning some of it to Community Relations.

Supervisor Martinez presented the appraisal for Technology. He explained the Technology department was responsible for managing the technology within the District, evaluating new technologies, and safeguarding the District's data. One of the highlights for the department was the deployment of Cisco Duo, a security application that provides a prompt to make sure it is actually the employee that is logging in to help prevent account takeovers. The division also rolled out the Office 365 application that helps with collaboration within the District using Microsoft Teams and One Drive to allow for real-time collaboration on documents. The ImageTrend deployment was already mentioned. It is one of the district's critical applications. The GIS data collection has been improved and the division is working with other agencies. They are improving the data they are obtaining and using for dashboards and GIS. The division has also enhanced data recovery by doing things such as making sure there are immutable backups, so they take their backups, and they are placed aside and left in a state where it is no longer changeable or deleteable for a certain amount of time, which prevents it from being affected by things like Ransomware. One key action item was to address staffing constraints. The division is always researching and evaluating new technologies and making sure they are doing the best they can for the District. There is always the imminent threat of cybersecurity. The division is always looking to manage the data, making sure they are doing it the most effective way possible. In light of these facts, new things like Stormwinds training is presented to staff to provide continuing education to ensure they are up-to-date on emerging technology. Some of the resource needs were to backfill the open position and other future positions. They will need to hire a systems administrator, which has been approved by the Board for impact on the second half of the year. They were looking to hire the position starting January. Future needs would be a network position. This would be a position that would fill the need for what the District currently relies on vendors for, so the skill set would be available in-house. They are constantly working with vendors to see if it is a full-time employee they need or if they should have vendors do it.

Chief Brandhuber thanked everyone that presented. This was a new approach for staff in efforts of transparency, sticking to metrics, and the strategic business plan. He thanked the Board for their time to hear the presentations and thanked staff for all of their hard work. He explained no action was requested, it was solely intended to present to the Board.

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

Finance Director Christian presented the GRFD reconciliation and monthly financial report. He explained in October the District begins to receive property taxes. It was



difficult to budget for. For the month, the budget estimate was short approximately \$1.5 million or 13%, however this will be made up by December. Director Christian commented the District will not see the interest revenue that it has seen in the past due to Pima County's over distribution they are in the process of recovering. Although, the District did well with wildland revenues. For the month, the District was down about \$1.4 million from what was anticipated. However, the District did meet the mark for its expenditures. Workers compensation is a quarterly payment however, the bill was not received in October as expected so it will be mitigated in November. The District has added \$6 million dollars to its account. All-in-all the District was doing well on its revenues. Despite the \$1 million variance in property taxes, the District was still doing well in terms of money received. Year-to-date the District added \$2.8 million. In the Pinal County Treasurer's account the District had \$1.3 million in Pima County it had \$15.9 million. Total cash balance was \$28 million. There was \$4.4 million in bond proceeds and \$185,000 at Chase Bank for a total of approximately \$4.6 million. This was the remaining bond money. Director Christian described the status of ambulance billing. There was over a million dollars outstanding. There were a total of 610 transports in the month of October and \$18,000 was collected. In reference to wildland, for the most part the District has collected on almost all of the fires, \$700,000 of \$800,000 of invoices had been collected for 36 fires. The government shutdown did affect the District. The State of Arizona stopped paying on some of the federal fires because they were not getting reimbursed in a timely manner by the Federal government.

**MOTION** by Board Clerk Outlaw to approve and accept the Golder Ranch Fire District reconciliation and monthly financial report as presented.

**MOTION SECONDED** by Board Member Brady

**MOTION CARRIED 4/0**

#### **9. FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS**

The next regularly scheduled meeting will be December 16, 2025

#### **10. CALL TO THE PUBLIC**

There were no public issues presented at this time.

#### **11. ADJOURNMENT**

**MOTION** by Board Member Brady to adjourn the meeting at 10:57 a.m.

**MOTION SECONDED** by Board Member Shellenberger

**MOTION CARRIED 4/0**



Sandra Outlaw, Clerk of the Board  
Golder Ranch Fire District

