GOLDER RANCH FIRE DISTRICT
GOVERNING BOARD MEETING
MEETING MINUTES
Tuesday, June 16, 2026, 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 Tuesday, June 16, 2026, at 9 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 Tom Brandhuber, Assistant Chief Perry, Assistant Chief Grissom, Assistant Chief Cesarek, Fire Marshal Akins, Deputy Chief Rutherford, Deputy Chief Jarrold, Deputy Chief Wilson, Technology Director Martinez, Acting Finance Director Sargent, HR Director Delong, and Board Services Supervisor Ortiz

2. **SALUTE AND PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

Those in attendance said the Pledge of Allegiance.

3. **FIRE BOARD REPORTS**

There were no fire board reports presented.

4. **CALL TO THE PUBLIC**

There were no public issues presented.

5. **PRESENTATIONS**

A. PRESENTATION OF PERSONNEL

- PROMOTIONS
  - DARRELL NEWBURN, ENGINEER
  - AUTUMN ZOECHBAUER, FIRE INSPECTOR I

Engineer Newburn was assigned to a wildland fire and was unable to attend the board meeting. He will be presented at a future meeting.

Deputy Fire Marshal Brenda Druke introduced Fire Inspector I, Autumn Zoechbauer.

6. CONSENT AGENDA

A. APPROVE MINUTES- MAY 19, 2026, REGULAR SESSION

B. APPROVE MINUTES- MAY 19, 2026, EXECUTIVE SESSION ITEM 8A PARTS 1 & 2

C. APPROVE MINUTES- MAY 19, 2026, EXECUTIVE SESSION ITEM 8B PARTS 1 & 2

MOTION by Board Member Brady to approve the June 16, 2026, Consent Agenda
MOTION SECONDED by Vice-Chairperson Vette
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 recognized the probationary firefighters in attendance.

Vice-Chairperson Vette thanked Chief Brandhuber and HR Director Delong for all of their hard work on the open enrollment process.

Board Clerk Outlaw also thanked Chief Brandhuber, HR Director Delong, and the Human Resources team for their work on the open enrollment process. She said she heard good things about the meetings and heard they were very informative.

President Jones stated Local 3832 had a member (Captain Ryan Ward) nominated for the Secretary/Treasurer of the State of Arizona Union. Ryan lost by a small margin, but President Jones believed member Ward would have a strong chance at the next election. President Jones mentioned the Union had a meeting with Oro Valley Town Council candidates. Local 3832 will be announcing the candidates they will be supporting.

B. COMMUNITY RISK REDUCTION DIVISION'S REPORT – Assistant Chief Perry presented Community Risk Reduction's report to the Governing Board. He announced there was a fire at a school that the sprinkler system was able to extinguish prior to crews' arrival.

Vice-Chairperson Vette said he was impressed that staff obtain certifications to become CPR) instructors.

C. SUPPORT SERVICES DIVISION'S REPORT - Assistant Chief Cesarek presented Support Services' report to the Governing Board. He reported the Quasar project was in progress and staff were working on inventory tracking in the software, OPIQ. AC Cesarek thanked staff in all divisions that were working on the OPIQ project.

Vice-Chairperson Vette asked if the District was going to charge SaddleBrooke Ranch to use the District's cell tower.

AC Cesarek met with representatives from the HOA and they were considering building a tower of their own. However, if they did not, the District would charge a fee.

Board Member Brady asked what the status of the construction was at the north campus.

AC Cesarek replied demolition was in progress. He thanked the Fleet staff for their flexibility during the construction process.

Chairperson Cox Golder read the report of district vehicles. She was impressed that there were no motor vehicle collisions for 100,000 miles driven. She also stated she loved the picture of the firefighters that stopped at a lemonade stand.

Board Member Shellenberger asked about the status of the bypass in SaddleBrooke.

AC Cesarek replied he needed to reamp the conversation and get input from the HOA.

D. EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICES & FIRE RESPONSE DIVISON'S REPORT – Assistant Chief Grissom presented the EMS and Fire Response report to the Governing Board. He thanked the probationary firefighters for attending the board meeting.

8. REGULAR BUSINESS

A. DISCUSSION AND/OR POSSIBLE ACTION REGARDING THE AUTHORIZATION OF THE GRFD FINANCE DIRECTOR, ASSISTANT CHIEF OF COMMUNITY RISK REDUCTION, AND FIRE CHIEF, TO ESTABLISH AND IMPLEMENT A CHASE BANK NIGHTLY MONEY MARKET SWEEP PROGRAM AND TO ACTIVATE, SUSPEND, OR DISCONTINUE THE SWEEP FUNCTION AS NECESSARY

Chase Bank Government Representative for Arizona and Colorado, Amy Smith, explained the sweep fund she recommended to the District. It was an overnight investment sweep. The District would have access to cash during the day and available funds would be swept at night. The sweep fund helped monetize the account to take advantage of the available funds.

Chairperson Cox Golder commented she wished the District had done it sooner.

Mrs. Smith replied sweep accounts have come and gone out of favor in the past. However, this was a great opportunity to move forward with a new opportunity. She explained the account would be swept at night and, the money would be returned and available for use each morning. At the end of each month, the District would receive the money it earned in transactions for the month.

Assistant Chief Perry added staff could turn it on and off as needed, depending on rates. The District would pay a fee for the service so the District would need to make sure the fee was worth what it was going to receive.

Chief Brandhuber explained the motion would allow the Finance Director, Assistant Chief of Community Risk Reduction, and the Fire Chief to authorize sweeps as they deemed necessary. He added waiting each month for the Board to approve the sweeps would not make the most sense for the District.

MOTION by Vice-Chairperson Vette to authorize the Finance Director, in conjunction with the Assistant Chief of Community Risk Reduction, and the Fire Chief, to establish and implement a Chase Bank nightly money market sweep program; and to activate, suspend, or discontinue the sweep function as necessary to maximize earnings while maintaining appropriate liquidity and cash flow for District operations.
MOTION SECONDED by Board Clerk Outlaw.
MOTION CARRIED 5/0

B. DISCUSSION AND/OR POSSIBLE ACTION REGARDING THE ADOPTION OF RESOLUTION #2026-0007 REVISED GRFD PRINCIPLES OF SOUND FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT

Chief Brandhuber stated the old version of the Principles of Sound Financial Management, as well as the updated version, were provided to the Board. Lydia Hunter from the auditor firm, BeachFleischman, reviewed and made recommendations for the document.

MOTION by Board Member Shellenberger to approve Resolution 2026-0007, adopting the revised GRFD Principles of Sound Financial Management.
MOTION SECONDED by Vice-Chairperson Vette.
MOTION CARRIED 5/0

C. PUBLIC HEARING ON THE GOLDER RANCH FIRE DISTRICT FISCAL YEAR 2026/2027-BUDGET

OPEN THE PUBLIC HEARING – Chairperson Cox-Golder opened the public hearing for any comments from the public at 9:30 a.m.

There were no public comments made.

CLOSE THE PUBLIC HEARING – Chairperson Cox-Golder closed the public hearing at 9:30 a.m.

D. DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE ACTION REGARDING THE ADOPTION OF RESOLUTION #2026-0008 APPROVING AND FORMALLY ADOPTING THE GOLDER RANCH FIRE DISTRICT FISCAL YEARS 2026/2027 & 2027/2028 BUDGETS

Vice-Chairperson Vette said he thought everyone involved in the budget preparation did a fantastic job. He couldn't believe the budget was $69 million. He conveyed the fact that he knew everyone on the Board did their homework and made sure the budget was not only the right thing to do for the District, but for the community as well. Vice-Chairperson Vette said the Board had a tremendous commitment and with that, he stated the motion.

MOTION by Vice-Chairperson Vette to approve Resolution #2026-0008 formally adopting the Golder Ranch Fire District budget in the amount of $69,471,463 with a recommended mil rate of $2.67 and a bond debt service mil rate of $.09 for fiscal year 2026/2027.
MOTION SECONDED by Board Member Shellenberger.
MOTION CARRIED 5/0

E. DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE ACTION REGARDING THE ADOPTION OF RESOLUTION #2026-0009 APPROVING THE APPROPRIATION OF THE GOLDER RANCH FIRE DISTRICT END OF FISCAL YEAR 2025/2026 GENERAL FUND BALANCE

Chief Brandhuber thanked the Board for passing the budget and clarified the budget increase was due to an increase in healthcare costs and salaries.

Assistant Chief Perry said this was an item that was normally on the agenda. It was a typical motion with a small change with a commitment to appropriate the funds by the end of the next fiscal year.

Chairperson Cox Golder asked if the funds had not been appropriated in the past.

Assistant Chief Perry clarified, in the past the funds were pooled in one account. Finance planned on moving the funds to a State account to keep them separate.

Chief Brandhuber added several Districts were moving their funds to the State account. The new way of appropriation was part of the District's new Principles of Sound Financial Management.

MOTION by Vice-Chairperson Vette to approve Resolution #2026-0009 appropriating the end of fiscal year General Fund balance in accordance with GRFD Principles of Sound Financial Policy.
MOTION SECONDED by Board Member Shellenberger.
MOTION CARRIED 5/0

F. DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE ACTION REGARDING THE APPROVAL/SIGNING OF AN ENGAGEMENT LETTER WITH THE FIRM OF GOERING, ROBERTS, ET AL. FOR INDEPENDENT LEGAL SERVICES FOR THE GOLDER RANCH FIRE DISTRICT PUBLIC SAFETY PERSONNEL RETIREMENT SYSTEM (PSPRS) LOCAL PENSION BOARD

HR Director Delong stated the GRFD Public Safety Personnel Retirement System (PSPRS) had separate legal counsel (from the Governing Board). The Board had attorney Bosse for a while but decided it was time for a change. The attorney Andrew Apodaca was highly recommended.

MOTION by Vice-Chairperson Vette to approve the engagement letter with the law firm Goering Roberts, et al. for independent legal services for the Golder Ranch Fire District's Public Safety Personnel Retirement System Local Pension Board as presented.
MOTION SECONDED by Board Member Shellenberger.
MOTION CARRIED 5/0

G. DISCUSSION AND/OR POSSIBLE ACTION REGARDING THE APPROVAL OF AN ENGAGEMENT LETTER WITH THE ACCOUNTING FIRM, WALKER AND ARMSTRONG

Chief Brandhuber explained the agreement letter allowed the District to hire the other accounting firm in the State that has experience in the fire district sector to assist the District. The other firm serves as the district's auditor. The firm will review the district's financial reports and make any recommendations before the auditor conducts the annual audit.

MOTION by Board Clerk Outlaw to approve the engagement agreement with Walker and Armstrong Accounting Firm for accounting reconciliation and audit support services.
MOTION SECONDED by Vice-Chairperson Vette.
MOTION CARRIED 5/0

H. DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE ACTION REGARDING THE APPROVAL/SIGNING OF AN AGREEMENT WITH IMPAIRMENT SCIENCE, INC. (AKA DRUID APP)

Chief Brandhuber explained this was an existing agreement for what he referred to as the Druid app. The Druid app was used to test for cognitive impairment during the 48/96 schedule trial. It was a successful trial, the app showed there was no cognitive impairment of personnel who were on their second shift working 48 hours straight. Staff have been reviewing the medical marijuana policy adopted by the Board last year. Personnel who have a medical marijuana card will be required to take the Druid test when they go on shift to make sure there is no impairment. The District did reduce the number of licenses with the app down to 100. He did not believe there would be 100 personnel using medical marijuana. There was a reduced cost to the District with the purchase of less licenses.

Vice-Chairperson Vette asked if the app would be used to detect cognitive impairment for staff who worked 72 hours straight.

Chief Brandhuber replied if the District did test for that, 300 licenses would have to be purchased to determine a baseline for each person in the off chance they would work 72 hours straight.

MOTION by Board Member Shellenberger to approve the Impairment Science, Inc. agreement as presented.
MOTION SECONDED by Vice-Chairperson Vette.
MOTION CARRIED 5/0

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

Acting Finance Director Sargent presented the GRFD reconciliation and monthly financial report to the Governing Board. He stated the District did not meet the projected property tax revenue for the month and was down $100,000. He noted miscellaneous revenue will not be listed the same way in future reports. Future reports will list each revenue separately. Acting Finance Director Sargent stated ambulance revenue was higher than normal. On the expenses side, the capital fund was over budget; this amount was $844,183.58. This was due to funds that were paid to cover half the cost of the ladder truck on order. The expense of the ladder truck will be included in the following year's budget as well. The reason half of the payment for the truck was paid midway during the construction was in order to receive a $15,000 savings for paying half in advance. The payment for the ladder truck was the reason for the variance in the capital section. For the year-to-date budget, the District was on-target of where it needed to be. In terms of expenses for the year, $800,00 was for the ladder truck and $1.6 million of bond funds was paid for the renovations of the north campus. This was done to prevent having to return interest revenue earned that exceeded the amount the District was allowed to earn.

Acting Finance Director Sargent reported on the General Fund from the Pima County Treasurer's Office. The report reflected $6,728,700 collected for the levy in May and $126,622 collected for the Fire District's Assistance Tax (FDAT). The District regularly transferred $3,750,000 out of the account for expenses, as it did in May. Acting Director Sargent stated he needed to have some meetings with Pinal County representatives, so he had a clearer understanding of the Pinal County funds. He clarified the bond proceeds column did not show the $1.6 expense because the transaction took place at the beginning of June, so, it would show in the following month's report. The bond services fund initially had $650,000. The District had to pay arbitrage because the number was too high. This was why staff opted to lower the bond rate to .09 cents. A significant amount of funds would be used from the bond fund account.

Acting Finance Director Sargent reported $480,712 was collected in the month of May, this was more than the previous month due to a rate increase by the Department of Health Services. He explained a spreadsheet that showed the number of claims that were rejected and re-billed. 68% had been received and some had some form of payment for them. It did not mean 100% of the bill was paid because of balance billing and other similar reasons.

Board Member Shellenberger stated he appreciated the work Acting Director Sargent had done in finance.

Acting Director Sargent thanked Board Member Shellenberger and said the effort was made by the entire Finance team as well as Assistant Chief Perry. He appreciated the Board's understanding and support.

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

J. EXECUTIVE SESSION: THE BOARD MAY VOTE TO GO INTO EXECUTIVE SESSION PURSUANT TO A.R.S. § 38-431.03.A(3) FOR THE PURPOSE OF DISCUSSION AND CONSIDERATION OF LEGAL ADVICE WITH THE ATTORNEY FOR THE DISTRICT REGARDING THE FIRE CHIEF'S EMPLOYMENT AGREEMENT

CHAIRPERSON'S NOTICE: EXECUTIVE SESSIONS ARE CONFIDENTIAL AND THOSE PRESENT DURING EXECUTIVE SESSIONS ARE PROHIBITED BY STATUTE FROM DISCLOSING EXECUTIVE SESSION INFORMATION PURSUANT TO A.R.S. § 38-431.03(C)

MOTION by Board Member Brady to enter Executive Session for Item 8J.
SECONDED by Vice Chairperson Vette.
MOTION CARRIED 5/0

Those who entered Executive Session included the Governing Board, Chief Brandhuber, HR Director Delong, Attorney Aversa (remotely), and Board Services Supervisor Ortiz.

The Governing Board entered Executive Session at 9:53 a.m.

The Governing Board reconvened into regular session at 10:16 a.m.

Chairperson Cox Golder read the Chairperson's notice reminding those in attendance, Executive Sessions are confidential [pursuant to ARS §38-431.03(C)].

K. DISCUSSION AND/OR POSSIBLE ACTION REGARDING A REVISED FIRE CHIEF'S EMPLOYMENT AGREEMENT

MOTION by Vice-Chairperson Vette to approve the revised Fire Chief's contract for 2026-2030 and authorize the Chairperson to sign the contract.
SECONDED by Board Member Shellenberger.
MOTION CARRIED 5/0

9. FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS

The next regularly scheduled meeting will be July 21, 2026.

10. CALL TO THE PUBLIC

There were no public issues presented.

11. ADJOURNMENT

MOTION by Board Member Brady to adjourn the meeting at 10:17 a.m.
MOTION SECONDED by Board Clerk Outlaw
MOTION CARRIED 5/0

Sandra Outlaw, Clerk of the Board
Golder Ranch Fire District