

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

**Tuesday, August 18, 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, August 18, 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 Grissom, Assistant Chief Perry, Fire Marshal Akins, Deputy Chief Rutherford, Deputy Chief Wilson, Deputy Chief Hilderbrand, 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

- PROMOTION
 - DARRELL NEWBURN, ENGINEER
- YEARS OF SERVICE
 - JUSTIN JANSEN, PARAMEDIC- 20 YEARS
 - SHANE VAN DEREN, ENGINEER- 20 YEARS
 - DEREK GROTKIER, FIREFIGHTER- 10 YEARS



Captain Burtle presented Darrell Newburn for his promotion to Engineer.

Captain Davidson presented Paramedic Jansen and recognized him for his twenty years of service.

Captain Boone and Paramedic Sather presented Engineer Van Deren and recognized him for his twenty years of service.

Captain Waldorf presented Firefighter Grotkier and recognized him for his ten years of service.

The Governing Board took a brief recess at 9:19 a.m.

The meeting resumed at 9:22 a.m.

6. CONSENT AGENDA

- A. APPROVE MINUTES- JULY 21, 2026, REGULAR SESSION
- B. APPROVE RESOLUTION NUMBER 2026-0010 DECLARING AUGUST 2026 DROWNING IMPACT AWARENESS MONTH AT GOLDER RANCH FIRE DISTRICT
- C. APPROVE THE CANCELLATION OF THE GENERAL ELECTION FOR THE UNCONTESTED GOVERNING BOARD RACE FOR THE GOLDER RANCH FIRE DISTRICT, SCHEDULED FOR NOVEMBER 3, 2026

MOTION by Vice-Chairperson Vette to approve the August 18, 2026, Consent Agenda.

MOTION SECONDED by Board Member Shellenberger.

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 Assistant Chief Perry, Acting Finance Director Sargent, and the Finance team for all of their hard work on the changes they are making in finance.

Chairperson Cox Golder recognized Records Specialist Wong for her recent Arizona Municipal Clerks Association's (AMCA) elections certification.

Chairperson Cox Golder inquired about the Artificial Intelligence (AI) records request.

Board Services Supervisor Ortiz replied a recent records request was submitted by AI. It was a generated email and generated follow-up phone calls. Golder Ranch Fire



District (GRFD) requires a notarized signature on the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA) compliant request form and the request was initially denied because they did not provide the required documentation. The generated phone calls did not recognize the additional requirements stated and it took a week to fulfill the request. She mentioned this to the Board because this seems to be the way records requests will be trending and this is what is on the horizon.

Board Member Shellenberger asked what the reason behind changing the Board Services metrics was.

Board Services Supervisor Ortiz replied the changes in the metrics were due to additional metrics the department will be reporting the upcoming fiscal year. Board Services reviewed its metrics for the last year and a lot of them were 100%. She didn't see that it was efficient to continue to report the same thing every month, so some of the previous metrics were archived and additional metrics have been added that will be of more interest to the Board.

Board Clerk Outlaw congratulated Chief Brandhuber for starting the new program, Tailboard Talks. She appreciated how he made himself available to answer questions from personnel. She asked him to give a brief overview of the first session.

Chief Brandhuber thanked her and said it was a team effort. He stated he thought the first session was successful. He said he was looking forward to building it and it was a team effort with support from IT, Community and Media Relations Supervisor Camarillo, and Media Specialist Henson. He believed it would continue to grow, and staff were committed to continuing the program.

President Jones said the Union sent a couple of personnel to the International Association of Firefighters (IAFF) annual conference in Dallas, TX. A few of the Union members were also members of a committee that related to the Board and to the District regarding the fire truck crisis. The Attorney General was taking on a case to investigate the timeframes taken for trucks to be built as well as the price hikes since 2020. Proposition 143 was an important prop for labor groups. It was eventually turned down in the courts so it will most likely not be on the ballot. Lastly, the Union was preparing meals for crews that will be working on Labor Day.

Chief Brandhuber added he has a meeting scheduled with other fire chiefs and the Arizona State Attorney General regarding fire trucks and what districts can do. He will make a report after the meeting.

- B. COMMUNITY RISK REDUCTION DIVISION'S REPORT – Assistant Chief Perry presented the Community Risk Reduction's report to the Governing Board. He mentioned the Community Risk Reduction Division compiled statistics for the Fire Chief to meet with the Town of Oro Valley's Mayor. Chief Perry reported last fiscal year, the District attended 592 events in the Town of Oro Valley, through public education, crews attending events, etc. That was an approximate total of 41,952 public



contacts. He commented this made the presence in the community prolific. His division was doing a good job of getting out there and talking to the public. He thought it was pretty neat and wanted to highlight it. Assistant Chief Perry also congratulated Deputy Fire Marshal Brenda Druke. She has been the class coordinator for the Arizona State Fire School Fire Alarm and Detection class for many years. It was recently recognized by the International Code Council as a class that will give preferred continuing education credits for International Code Council certifications. This was a huge accomplishment and pretty cool that the District has personnel functioning at that level. The Fire Prevention Division does a great job being involved in the State, so he was very proud of them and Deputy Fire Marshal Druke.

Deputy Chief Wilson gave a presentation on the Community Resource Technicians (CRTs). His division pulled data to answer questions received from the Board at the last meeting. One data point he researched was the unit availability of CRTs in the service area over a six-month span versus six months without them in service. There was a 2% increase in availability District-wide with the CRTs in service. Some stations, such as 372, saw an 8% increase in availability for emergency calls. Station 377 almost had a 10% availability increase for emergency calls. For the month of July, the CRTs ran 203 calls. This was less than in the past due to a couple of factors including six new CRTs that were hired in July. They were not trained yet, so there were five or six days where there was not a unit in-service. It is likely this has been mitigated since their hiring. Since the conclusion of the last academy, there has been an opportunity to place some utility trucks in-service that have ran public assist calls in conjunction with the CRTs. They have taken some of the workload, twenty-four hours a day, for the entire month of July. CRTs responded to 33% of the calls, despite the fact that they were only in-service from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. The utility trucks ran 40% of the calls and suppression units ran 27%. For the service hours from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m., the CRTs ran 52% of the public assist calls, utility trucks ran 29%, and suppression ran 19%. So, over 80% of the public assist calls were handled by pickup trucks with two personnel versus a fire truck.

Vice-Chairperson Vette inquired about the home safety assessments, fall injuries, and other safety issues programs. He asked if the programs had seen success or if the program had been developed yet.

Deputy Chief Wilson reported that was a plan that has not yet been placed in-service. His division has been working with IT to create a booking program on an application where residents have the option to schedule an appointment online, in addition to calling to schedule an appointment. The applicant will be able to visit the District's website and select a day. The goal is to have the service available one day a month and the person can select a time on the designated day. The applicant will be notified via email and text message on what to expect. On those days, the CRTs will do an inspection at their home. As demand increases, service days can also be increased.



Chairperson Cox Golder asked about the training offered to 26 staff members.

Deputy Chief Wilson replied 26 Tohono Chul Park staff members were given fire training, including fire extinguishers, etc.

- C. SUPPORT SERVICES DIVISION'S REPORT – Deputy Chief Rutherford presented Support Services' report to the Governing Board. He highlighted the Fleet and Facility teams. The Facilities team was busy over the summer with Heating, Ventilation, and Air Conditioning (HVAC) issues and Fleet was busy with keeping apparatus safe and on the street. Both divisions have been working diligently to keep everyone comfortable and safe on the road.

Chairperson Cox Golder read in the report that Fleet will be recycling the 2021 leased vehicles, as well as adding 4 to 6 new leased vehicles. She asked how many of the District vehicles were leased as opposed to owned. She asked why the District opted to lease rather than own the vehicles.

Deputy Chief Rutherford answered 75% of the District vehicles were leased. The District leases its vehicles to maintain good quality apparatus and vehicles on the roads and for the community. The vehicles the District owns will be sold and vehicles will be leased to replace those. This has been found to be a good program for the District due to the warranties and maintenance.

Chairperson Cox Golder commented she was glad personnel were wearing the red, white, and blue GRFD shirts in honor of the country's 250th anniversary. She thought it was a great idea.

Vice-Chairperson Vette noted the station inspections were done on a monthly basis. He asked why they were not done on a quarterly basis.

Deputy Chief Rutherford replied inspections were done on a monthly basis to remain apprised of any repairs or maintenance that might need to be done. Sometimes it takes longer, depending on staff hours and the needs.

Vice-Chairperson Vette said he read in the report physicals were 98%. He asked why personnel were working if they had not done their physicals.

Deputy Chief Rutherford responded personnel are given ninety days to complete a physical. There are special instances that arise, such as wildland personnel that are placed on assignment, other injured personnel that are on light duty, etc. However, once personnel get off light duty and when personnel get off assignment, they are contacted to complete their physicals.

Chief Brandhuber wanted to credit President Jones and Local 3832 for purchasing the 250th celebration shirts. He also commented on the physicals. He stated there are personnel that go on military leave or are out on Family and Medical Leave Act



(FMLA). This contributes to the lagging 2% of people who are not available for physicals.

- D. EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICES & FIRE RESPONSE DIVISION'S REPORT – Assistant Chief Grissom presented the EMS and Fire Response report to the Governing Board. He recognized three probationary firefighters that were in attendance, McHughes, Reynolds, and De La Garza. He said they were all doing a very good job, along with the rest of their class. He highlighted the Professional Development Division who facilitated a leadership series for firefighters and administrative staff. It was tailored around leadership in general for all employees. He also noted Professional Development was preparing for the battalion chief testing.

Vice-Chairperson Vette congratulated the EMS team on the good statistics. He also said Professional Development did a great job on their board report. He was impressed with the amount of detail. Lastly, he asked if the District could improve warnings to hikers at the Catalina State Park.

Assistant Chief Grissom responded to Vice-Chairperson Vette's comments about the EMS scores. He said the quarterly trainings Paramedic Muscarella and staff do with their crews was incredible. The hard work the men and women do in the field make their jobs easy. They work very hard and leadership was very proud of them and the work they do. The same went for the Professional Development staff. As far as the hikers, signs are posted at the Catalina State Park with warnings to hikers. Unfortunately, there is not much the District can do because it is open to the public. They can go as they please. The District will respond whenever needed, but the park does have warnings and education is provided on hiker safety.

Vice-Chairperson Vette commented there were 17 hazmat calls in July, he thought that was a lot.

Assistant Chief Grissom confirmed the previous month was busy for the Special Operations team. Not all of the calls were emergencies, but there were quite a few calls ranging from low to high severity.

Vice-Chairperson Vette noticed a grant application was submitted for hazmat monitors. He thought monitors were recently purchased.

Assistant Chief Grissom replied monitors were purchased, however, the District could not have too many. They were not cheap and the sensors wear out frequently, especially in the Arizona heat. They get dry, so it was nice to have the latest and greatest monitors, especially if they can be obtained for no cost.

8. REGULAR BUSINESS



A. DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE ACTION REGARDING POLICIES: 713- ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE (AI), AND 1030- OCCUPATIONAL EXPOSURE AND WORK-RELATED INJURY REPORTING

Chief Brandhuber commented HR Generalist/Policy Coordinator Smith did a great job compiling the policies.

HR Director Delong commented Artificial Intelligence (AI) has become a hot topic. The initial policy was to prepare the District and was a broad overview. It will be improved as work is done with the IT department to determine the District's needs and ensure that they are addressed correctly. She thought HR Policy Coordinator Smith did a fabulous job researching and compiling the policy for the District. In reference to occupational exposure and work-related injury reporting, a workers' compensation policy was also proposed. It needed to be reviewed and updated. The occupational work-related entry reporting replaced the workers' comp policy. The procedure for it was removed from the policy and was documented separately for administrative staff to follow..

MOTION by Vice-Chairperson Vette to approve policies: 713- Artificial Intelligence (AI), and 1030- Occupational Exposure and Work-Related Injury Reporting.

MOTION SECONDED by Board Member Shellenberger.

MOTION CARRIED 5/0

B. DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE ACTION REGARDING RESOLUTION NUMBER 2026-0011, A MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING BETWEEN GOLDER RANCH FIRE DISTRICT AND NORTH TUCSON FIREFIGHTERS' ASSOCIATION OF LOCAL 3832

Vice-Chairperson Vette commended President Jones and staff for their work on the memorandum of understanding.

MOTION by Vice-Chairperson Vette to approve and adopt Resolution 2026-0011, a memorandum of understanding between Golder Ranch Fire District and North Tucson Firefighters' Association Local 3832.

MOTION SECONDED Board Member Brady.

MOTION CARRIED 5/0

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

Chief Brandhuber stated under the recently adopted Principles of Sound Financial Management section 10, it states a monthly report on the status of the journal fund budget and key financial trends shall be prepared and presented to the Governing Board in accordance with Arizona Revised Statute § 48-807, within 30 days at the end of the calendar month. He communicated to the Board of the Finance software issues. The District's commitment to the Board and to the public, as previously stated, was that all reports would come from the accounting software. The July bank



statements have been provided to the Board.. Acting Finance Director Sargent would provide an overview, however Chief Brandhuber publicly acknowledged that Finance was not going to meet the 30-day requirement. He stated the last thing he wanted to do was create reports that were not from the finance software, MIP. As soon as the software work is done, the reports will be provided to the Board. He asked the Board to consider to approve of both financial reports in September. He wanted to point out that, due to software issues, Finance would not be able to meet the 30-day window from the end of July. If the Board decided to wait until September, he would draft a memo with the attorney's assistance. They will also have it on file explaining why Finance did not meet the 30-day requirement.

Acting Finance Director Sargent addressed the Board. He commented he understood the position the Board was in where they were ultimately accountable. He added he appreciated everyone's patience as Finance went through a transitional process.

Acting Finance Director Sargent mentioned consultants had been working with Finance on the software, MIP, and Paycom. He said he would give an update on some of the projects and accounts that were closed. There were several bank statements provided to the Board of closed accounts. He explained those accounts. In order to explain the changes, the presentation would be longer than normal. He explained Finance is working on automating MIP imports. He said he previously mentioned Finance was creating a new organization in MIP. One of the consultants was working on building import tools for it. Each tool required work to ensure the coding was correct. He showed an example of the credit card software. He used this as an example of the programming that needed to be changed in automation and import. Finance made the decision to take the time and do several iterations of the credit cards instead of making one large import. The next will be the payroll upload. The District used a combination of Telestaff and Paycom. UKG and Telestaff were used together under Kronos and did not work as well as he liked so Finance is in the process of moving administrative personnels' payroll to Paycom. Afterwards, operations personnel will be moved solely to Telestaff.

Vice-Chairperson Vette asked why it could not all be done in Paycom.

Acting Finance Director Sargent replied there were too many scheduling options, so Telestaff was determined to be the best product. Moving operations personnel solely to Telestaff will be quicker. He also explained he expanded from 6 codes in WFM to 90 codes in Telestaff. He commented the District spends approximately \$27 million dollars in Payroll, so this will enable staff to properly track expenses. Staff were working with the consultants to determine appropriate codes and generate the proper reports to do consistent reporting.

Acting Finance Director Sargent stated Finance had issues with the closing process. He attributed it to the beginning balances in MIP. He referred to a line that listed a negative \$246,000. He cautioned worrying about the line because it was money already spent and accounted for. The accounts listed in the 2000s were liability



accounts where expenses were being allocated before journal entries were done. Some of the processes for the allocations were not specific. He used line item 2065 as an example. The line was listed as negative \$1.4 million. This was all healthcare expenses grouped into one line item, including health spending accounts (HSAs), dental, etc. Finance was creating a process to separate the individual expenses. He also commented there were journal entries his staff needed to enter from the previous audit because the fiscal year before last was not closed. Due to this, the entries that were entered were mistakenly being entered into last fiscal year. For some reason the software was not closed. The contractors were doing journal entries to correct the beginning balances, so trial balances can be sent to the auditors for last fiscal year's audit process.

Acting Finance Director Sargent also commented his division was working on the capital asset inventory. This was another project between Walker & Armstrong, BeachFleischman, and other GRFD personnel, including Deputy Chief Rutherford. There was a group working together to compile a list of capital assets and reconfiguring OPIQ, the procurement software.

Acting Finance Director Sargent reported on the closed accounts. He said the flex spending account would be closed. This was an account the District no longer contributed to. However, his staff needed to wait ninety days for employees to remove their money. There was a process that needed to be followed in reference to the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) rules regarding medical expenses. Once this is done, the account will be closed. He said an account will be added. Assistant Chief Perry was working with the bank to set up short-term certificate of deposit (CDs) for money in sinking funds and the current fiscal year's budget. It also listed \$200,000 for the election. It would sit in the account and would not be spent.. Since the District did not have an election, \$200,000 would be placed in a CD that would sit there until next fiscal year. If the District does ever have to hold an election, it can use the funds for it and then take a little bit out over the two years as opposed to one \$200,000 lump sum every single time the District had to hold an election.

Acting Finance Director Sargent reviewed funds for Fiscal Year 26/27. He disclosed several accounts were closed including an employee fund where the money was not the District's and another that was for suppression personnel that had a zero balance and needed to be closed. The employee funds have been turned over to the person responsible. For the CIP bond funds, the County requested the District discontinue the use of a checkbook. The last check that cleared from the District's account, (money was wired to the county), was approximately \$14,000. The debt services account was not needed. It included non-bond specific debt service expenses but did not have any automatic transfer of funds. There were issues with this account, so it was closed and the transactions will be done through the general fund. There will be a CD for the funds that are held. At the time, there was a balance of \$6,762,000, of this, \$1.8 million is transferred out every two weeks into operations. He plans on transferring \$1.8 million every two weeks as a regular



practice. If the practice is changed, he will inform the Board. The account was higher than regular because of the sweep account. It was not affecting the interest income.

Acting Finance Director Sargent continued his report with the sweep account. It started at the end of July and the change occurred on the month of a weekend. So, the beginning balance was \$6.2 million and the ending balance was \$200,000 because the investment was made in the middle of the night when the District switched to the new sweep process. The account was down to \$200,000. This was just an example of what the transactions look like at night; the bank sweeps funds with the exception of \$200,000 and in the morning before the bank opens, they place the money back in the account. At the end of the month, Finance will have a better idea of the money earned from the sweep account.

Acting Finance Director Sargent discussed the Public Agency Retirement Services (PARS) account. This was a pension stabilization fund. Historically, it had not been presented to the Board in the monthly report. Moving forward, it will be reported to the Board on a monthly basis. It is discussed in the annual report. Last year, the Board made the decision to move approximately \$3.5 million into the Public Safety Personnel Retirement System (PSPRS) from this account, leaving the balance at around \$4 million. It will be reported in an account listed in MIP, traditionally it has not been recorded in MIP.

Acting Finance Director Sargent explained the tax revenue. He said in the past there was a spreadsheet that showed what was received from Pima and Pinal Counties. He decided to show actual screenshots of the software. As a recap, he stated Pinal County collects the tax money, send the previous month's tax money to Pima County, and Pima County holds all of the District's revenue. So, Pinal always has some money in it, but it is only the money that they collected in the current month. It remains in the account until the following month when it is transferred.

Acting Finance Director Sargent continued to explain Pima County's statement. The County settled a lawsuit and collected .08 cents (per \$1,000.00 valuation) that was listed as a separate line on the spreadsheet. Changes were being made in MIP for the taxes.

He said the goal was to have everything be reported out of the software. There were still reports that were not able to be extracted from the software so some data was pulled until it can be generated from the software. The next goal was to be able to pull reports from Billing Bridge (ambulance billing software).

Billing Supervisor Massie presented her department's financial data. The slides for billing had been changed. In the past, net charges and net collections were reported. This was changed to gross charges and write-offs for each month. In July, Billing collected \$493,224 and 598 transports were billed. That was an average of 19 per day. The month of July had higher transports than average. The line-item listing gross charges was the rate determined by the State (Department of Health Services).



She disclosed Medicare had mandated write-offs. 72% of the transports were Medicare and 9% were Medicaid so this was why the total for mandated write-offs was \$652,000.00. This was up 13% from the previous year. Her division noticed more people were transferring to the Medicare Advantage Plan. This was determined by a federal rate the District was allowed to collect. The District was restricted to what the federal fee schedule allowed. The line-item listing net charges of \$543,000.00 was what the District was allowed to collect. She continued to explain membership enrollments. This was a new reporting metric that had not been reported in the past. The enrollments for July were 151. This was a rollover because the memberships were done by fiscal year. There was a late start because the State disclosed their rates later. This forced the division to release the memberships the first week of July. The goal will be to mail membership enrollments in June. The membership revenue for July was \$17,000.00. Thirty-nine members were transported in July and \$5,857.00 was written-off. She explained a slide that showed the District was allowed to collect \$543,000.00. As the fiscal year continues, the report will reflect how much the division collected each month. A dollar amount and a percentage will be shown. In July, 18% was collected. The average rate of turnaround was 45 days, so the revenue will be reflected in a month or two. She stated she would be reporting the collection agency information, which her department had not done in the past. This was money that after the patient was billed, was sent to a collections' agency. For July, \$24,532 was submitted to the collections' agency. The agency collected \$4,500.00 and charged a fee of \$853.00.

Acting Finance Director Sargent reported Wildland billing. He explained he changed the way the slide was for the division. He provided a printout from the State site. Eventually, all of the expenses will be built into MIP. He explained the section in the report that stated, "reimbursement complete" meant the State sent the District the revenue. The section that showed the submission had been reviewed by the Acting Finance Director meant that it was being reviewed by the State.

He concluded by saying lastly, were the action items. His team was working every day to complete the July data. The consultant, Walker & Armstrong, was working with Finance to determine clean balances. He was working with them to do the journal entries. He told the Board he was always available to answer any questions they had.

Board Clerk Outlaw thanked Acting Finance Director Sargent and his team for all of their hard work. She said she has seen firsthand all of the work that has been going into MIP. She saw all of the work they had been doing to be responsible stewards of the taxpayers money and she wanted to publicly commend him and his staff because she knew the hard work and diligence that went into it. She said as the Board Clerk she saw a lot of the work that the division was doing and she could not express how much appreciation that she had for them.

MOTION by Board Clerk Outlaw to approve the July financials with the August financials in September.



MOTION SECONDED Vice-Chairperson Vette.
MOTION CARRIED 5/0

9. FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS

The next regularly scheduled meeting will be September 15, 2026.

10. CALL TO THE PUBLIC

There were no public issues presented.

11. ADJOURNMENT

MOTION by Board Member Brady to adjourn the meeting at 10:27 a.m.

MOTION SECONDED by Board Member Shellenberger.

MOTION CARRIED 5/0



Sandra Outlaw, Clerk of the Board
Golder Ranch Fire District

