



HIGHLANDS FIRE DISTRICT

BOARD OF DIRECTORS
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES · 11/21/23

A regular meeting of the Fire Board of Directors was held on **Tuesday, November 21, 2023 at 5:00 PM** at Fire Station 23, Administration Board Room, 3350 Old Munds Hwy, Flagstaff, AZ. The meeting was also available through Zoom Video Conferencing.

1. **Call to Order.** Chairperson Hanecak called the meeting to order at 5:00 PM.
2. **Roll Call.**

Board members present were Chairperson Tom Hanecak, Director Jay Smith, Director Carl Nelson, and Director Dan Stoffel. Board member absent was Clerk Brad Bippus.

Administrative personnel present were Chief Todd Miller, Battalion Chief Josh Pond, Mrs. Robyn Wilson, and Ms. Jayme Jones.

Staff present were Captains Ben Howell and Bryan Monreal, Engineer Clayton Ahrendt, Firefighters Faith Aguirre and Alfredo Villa.

3. **Pledge of Allegiance, Invocation, Mission and Vision Statements, and Board Responsibilities.** The Pledge of Allegiance was recited, and a silent invocation was offered, and the district's mission, vision, and selected Board responsibilities were recited.
4. **Welcome Visitors.** There were no public visitors present.
5. **Call to the Public.** There were no public comments.
6. **Approval of Minutes**

- A. OCTOBER 17, 2023 REGULAR MEETING – The Board reviewed the minutes of the October 17, 2023 Regular Meeting. **A MOTION was made by Director Nelson and was seconded by Director Smith to approve the minutes as presented.** Ms. Jones informed the Board that the approval of Item 9 (D) did not include a proper motion and second; therefore, the item has been included on the Agenda to ratify. The motion was unanimously **APPROVED**.
- B. NOVEMBER 1, 2023 SPECIAL MEETING – The Board reviewed the minutes of the November 1, 2023 Regular Meeting. **A MOTION was made by Director Smith and was seconded by Director Nelson to approve the minutes as presented;** the motion was unanimously **APPROVED**.
- C. NOVEMBER 1, 2023 EXECUTIVE SESSION – The Board reviewed the minutes of the September 19, 2023 Regular Meeting. **A MOTION was made by Director Nelson and was seconded by Director Smith to approve the minutes as presented;** the motion was unanimously **APPROVED**.

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7. Finance

- A. WARRANTS – A **MOTION** was made by Director Smith and was seconded by Director Stoffel to approve the warrants as presented. The Board reviewed the warrants and credit card purchases paid in September. After questions the motion was unanimously **APPROVED**.
- B. FINANCIAL REPORT – Mrs. Wilson presented Financial Report including the District’s General Fund, Capital Fund, and Bear Jaw Fund Financial Reports including the Profit/Loss Budget Overviews, Bank Reconciliation, County’s Fund Balance Summary, and Cash Flow Projection.

8. Summary Reports & Correspondence.

Chairperson Hanecak welcomed Director Stoffel to the Board. Director Stoffel informed the Board of his current employment situation at NAU, and he provided additional background information. Chief Miller welcomed him. Director Stoffel thanked Chief Miller for the District Orientation Tour.

- A. IAFF LOCAL CHAPTER 1505 SUMMARY REPORT – Engineer Ahrendt informed the Board the Halloween event wasn’t as attended as in the past. He thanks the Board and Chiefs for their support for the GO Bond.
- B. BATTALION FIRE CHIEF’S SUMMARY REPORT – Chief Josh Pond presented the Battalion Chief’s Activity Report. There were 54 calls for service in November. See the written report for details.
- C. FIRE CHIEF’S SUMMARY REPORT – Chief Miller presented the Fire Chief’s Report. Chief Miller congratulated Engineer Reed for being selected by his peers as Firefighter of the Year. He also congratulated Battalion Chief Josh Pond, WL Squad Boss Destry Schuman, and WL Lead Firefighter Emille Marroush on their promotions. See the written report for details. The Board was invited to the Holiday Awards Banquet on December 9, 2023 at 6:00 PM at Grand Canyon Brewery. Ms. Jones will post a notice of possible quorum.
- D. FIRE BOARD CHAIRPERSON’S SUMMARY REPORT – Chairperson Hanecak appreciated the invitation to the Halloween event. He asked Chief J. Pond to explain the family history of the Fire Department. Chairperson Hanecak thanked staff for their efforts in passing the General Obligation Bond Election.
- E. CORRESPONDENCE – There was no correspondence presented.

9. Topics of Discussion and Possible Legal Action.

- A. ELECT FIRE BOARD CHAIRPERSON AND CLERK EFFECTIVE DECEMBER 1, 2023. Chairperson Hanecak informed the Board that members elect officers each year. Director Smith nominated Tom Hanecak to serve as Chairperson in 2024; Director Stoffel seconded the nomination. The Board voted unanimously to elect Tom Hanecak as Chairperson.

Director Nelson nominated Brad Bippus to serve as Clerk in 2024; Director Smith seconded the nomination. The Board voted unanimously to elect Brad Bippus as Clerk.

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- B. RATIFY APPROVAL OF ASSISTANCE TO FIREFIGHTER GRANT PROGRAM IGA BETWEEN THE CITY OF FLAGSTAFF AND HIGHLANDS FD, PINEWOOD FD, PONDEROSA FD, AND SUMMIT FMD. A **MOTION** was made by Director Stoffel and seconded by Director Nelson to ratify the Firefighter Grant Program IGA with the City of Flagstaff; the motion was unanimously **APPROVED**.
- C. DISCUSS GENERAL OBLIGATION BOND ELECTION RESULTS AND NEXT STEPS. Chief Miller informed the Board that the General Obligation Bond Election has passed. The County Board of Supervisors canvassed the final election results today. The next step will be to meet with Stifel to determine whether to use a private or public sale of bonds. It is recommended to do a public sale since interest rates are lower. The Board will be presented with a resolution in January authorizing the sale and issuance of the general obligation bonds. Bonds will be sold in February, which will close in March. If all goes smoothly, funds will be available in March to purchase apparatus. The Board discussed potential purchasing process options. Chief Miller assured the Board that he would keep the Board informed of the process going forward. Chief Miller thanked the Board and staff for their support in getting this Go Bond passed.
- D. (E.) UPDATE REGARDING STRATEGIC PLANNING PROCESS. Chief Miller has spoken with two consultants that may be considered for assisting us with the strategic planning process. He believes using an outside consultant would be beneficial to the District. Chief Miller asked the Board to consider implementing a five-year strategic plan based on a fiscal year instead of a calendar year, which could potentially be in place by July 1, 2024. Director Stoffel asked if there is already a lot of work that goes into preparing for the start of the fiscal year such as the budgeting that might overlap with strategic planning at the same time. Chief Miller believes it has been separated for that reason; it could be a lot of work to try to do both; however, he believes it would be manageable. Chairperson Hanacak does not believe it needs to be tied to a certain time of year but likes the idea of doing annual updates to the citizens. Chief Miller is in favor of the strategic plan aligning with the fiscal year. The Board agreed that Chief Miller should determine the process timeline that works best. Chief Miller appreciates their support.
- E. (D.) DISCUSS CHIEF'S EVALUATION PROCESS TO BE CONDUCTED IN DECEMBER; DISTRIBUTE EVALUATION DOCUMENTS INCLUDING CHIEF'S REPORTS, CHIEF'S GOALS, AND CHIEF'S EVALUATION FORM. Regarding Chief Miller's evaluation, Chairperson Hanacak informed Director Stoffel that he does not need to rate the evaluation criteria; however, he could review the Chief's accomplishments and consider goals moving forward and evaluation process. Chairperson Hanacak suggested going to a five-point rating system instead of three. Chief Miller agreed. The evaluation packet includes the evaluation form, community survey results, monthly reports, goal progress, and safety related information. The Chief's evaluation is customary completed in December, but due to the early meeting in December, Chairperson Hanacak asked the Board to return their evaluation data "within a couple weeks" with the intent of formally approving the evaluation in January. Ms. Jones will update the form to send to members in word format. Chairperson Hanacak suggested he meet with Chief Miller to review the evaluation before Christmas. Director Stoffel asked if Chief Miller intends to incorporate input from the staff; Chief Miller responded that it is up to the Board. Chairperson Hanacak commented that he is an advocate for 360 evaluations, but it must be thoughtfully implemented and not rushed in the current year. The Board agreed that staff input should be considered in next year's evaluation.

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F. REVIEW COMMUNITY SURVEY RESULTS. The Board reviewed the Community Survey Results.

G. REVIEW BOARD TASK CALENDAR. The Board reviewed the Task Calendar.

10. Board Member comments. Director Smith informed the Board that the County submitted Community Wildfire Defense Grant (CWDG) application. Director Stoffel thanked staff for what they do.

11. Adjournment. A **MOTION** was made by Director Nelson and was seconded Director Smith to **adjourn**; the motion was unanimously **APPROVED**. The meeting adjourned at 6:23 PM.

Respectfully submitted,
Jayme Jones