



BEAVER DAM/LITTLEFIELD FIRE DISTRICT  
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**Minutes A.R.S. §38-403.01**

The Fire Board of the Beaver Dam/Littlefield Fire District Governing Board held a meeting, open to the public on **April 2, 2015 at 6:00 P.M.** at the Beaver Dam/Littlefield Fire District, Fire Station No 1 located at 630 North Highway 91 in Beaver Dam, Arizona for discussion of Public Business.

**MINUTES OF APRIL 2, 2015**

**1. Call to order:**

By Board Chairman Reber at 6:02 P.M. on April 2, 2015

**2. Roll call of Board Members/Affirmation of Quorum:**

Board Chairman: Dan Reber Present  
Board Clerk: Doug Adriance Present  
Board Member: Gene Maughan Present  
Board Member: Bill Burch Present  
Board Member: Tom Oliver Absent – Arrived at 6:05 P.M.  
Administrative Assistant: George Burnett Present  
Also present were:  
Fire Chief Hunt and Captain Jackson

**3. Pledge of Allegiance:**

Given by Board Chairman Reber

**4. Call to the Public for comment on non-agenda items:**

No Comments made

**Public Comment:** Public comment/input is welcomed after each agenda item of Old and New Business. Individual comments are limited to three minutes per individual and must pertain to the specific agenda item.

**5. Old Business:**

A. Discussion and possible action regarding hiring another full-time employee

Board Clerk Adriance mentioned that we can't make a decision on this until we know what the budget looks like. We don't know yet if we have the money to be able to move it some \$65,000 for a new employee.

Board Chairman Reber mentioned that he had the administrative assistant put it on the agenda. Board Chairman Reber asked if we should table both items. The board members felt that they should be tabled.

Board Chairman Reber made a motion to table items A and B with Board Member Maughan seconding the motion. Motion Passed 5-0-0.

- B. Discussion and possible action regarding retirement benefits  
Refer to the remarks on item A above. Tabled

**6. New Business:**

This will be a budget workshop session only. Discussion and possible action on any individual line item may occur.

Captain Jackson said that the budget is a work in progress and is not a complete budget yet because the decision was made to have a workshop. This is mainly for you if you guys want to add a new employee, benefits, equipment or a fire station.

It can help me in completing the process knowing what your vision is. This way it'll save time in completing the process then having to go back and trying to juggle things around.

A couple of things is the replacement chart for equipment that we'll eventually have to replace. The sheet you have in front of you is what the chief has prepared, but could possibly be juggled a bit, but will be part of the budgeting every year. The goal is to assure money is put aside for a replacement program. Captain Jackson has set-up a savings account with the county treasury to put any monies into for the replacement program.

Captain Jackson mentioned that the financial gurus have said once you set up a replacement program to stick with it because if you don't it won't be long before you find yourselves in trouble, the district would be in trouble. Right now most of the equipment is in pretty good shape, but we will need to set-up a program that works for us and keep to it.

The other thing is whether you're going to give the employees some sort of retirement, both career and volunteer. If you don't there is a matter of having to return money back to the state in the amount of \$3,500-\$3,800 for the volunteer retirement that is given to us each year to help the district with those costs. I also need to know if you're going to consider a retirement for the career personnel. An audit would be required to find out what the costs would be and the audit would be around \$2,000. With that we would know how much it would be per month/year.

Discussion continued how the audit would work with the understanding it would cost more in the beginning, because they would go back to the hire date. After paying the back years, then the costs would reduce to a regular contribution.

It was the understanding of Captain Jackson that he had the OK to go ahead and write that check for the audit.

Board Chairman Reber asked the board members if any of them remembers that. None of the board members were aware of it and Administrative Assistant Burnett said that he would have to go back over the previous minutes.

Captain Jackson mentioned that if the board was going to consider giving a retirement he would need a motion to do the audit and write the check for it. He would not be able to complete the budget without an audit.

Discussion continued on regarding the volunteer system and Captain Jackson mentioned that the board is the administrator of that, they would be responsible of how much that the employee's would contribute and how much the district would contribute and how much they would get in return.

Captain Jackson mentioned that if you decide to not go with a retirement for the career personnel that they could jump onto the volunteer retirement system. However you can't give the volunteers a retirement without giving the career personnel a retirement. The state doesn't like the idea of having the career personnel on the volunteer retirement system.

Captain Jackson said that the department does not need to make any large purchases this year. You're not going to see anything from us that will be way out of whack, it is what it is.

Chief Hunt mentioned that in reality the purpose of a workshop is to take into consideration any large item expenditures like adding a new employee, retirement, or other expenditures, but the budget is pretty well set as it is.

Captain Jackson, the purpose of the workshop is to find out where you guys (the board) want to go or to fix. Then we need to try and get together and figure things out.

Board Clerk Adriance, he understands the need to put out \$2,000.00 for the audit and see how much it's going to cost us and whether we want a retirement system for full-time employees. Then the state has a retirement system for the volunteers (now the reservists).

The question that I have is he sees the projected tax revenue is down considerably from last year and 3 years ago we were worried about having to shut down a building or 2 because we weren't going to have enough revenue to keep the department running. His concern is how are we justifying that when the revenues are down and the only thing that we're sure of coming in is tax revenue, we can't really count on the other revenues (Ex: wildland revenue and ambulance)

The only thing he sees in helping to bring in more revenue in the annexation of the properties not in the district.

Discussion continued on how he has not seen any efforts by the department is assisting the residents of those involved except the one meeting that we had in Scenic to try and answer questions and concerns about the annexation. Yet we need to show them that this district is financially responsible and you would like to get another full-time employee, or purchase new equipment, and a retirement system when our revenues are down. The only way this district is going to survive is to bring those people into the district.

Discussion then continued with Captain Jackson saying most people don't want to be the district for one reason or another, but we could offer insurance to those who wanted it, another thing is to charge for out of district fires, we already have a fee schedule, we just need to implement it.

Chief Hunt said that they've had 2 out of district fires that were billed to the tune of approximately \$8,000.00 apiece. Chief Hunt continued on about how they already have a sheet made out showing the costs of the equipment and personnel. Our ambulance billing company said that they might be willing to take on the responsibility of the billing and if necessary send it to collections that would show the home owners already in the district that we are financially responsible.

Chief Hunt went on to say that we do have responsibilities to take care of our citizens and our own personnel. I'm concerned about myself, Chief Ojeda and Captain Jackson as well as our volunteers. It's our responsibility to ensure we have the personnel available to respond to anything. We've tried to do recruiting, but it just isn't happening. Most of our residents are usually snow birds. We have very limited personnel on the North Side of I-15 and he stated that he can't go anywhere, morally he feels an obligation to be here to respond.

Board Member Maughan – what have you done to try and scheduled people to ensure someone is available?

Chief Hunt – I can't do that, I don't have the personnel to be able to do that. My last job I had around 20 EMT's and was able to schedule for 24-7 coverage. The chief continues on with a lot of EMT's having full time employment/business we just don't have them available all the time. You came here to make this department successful. The reality is in a cardiac arrest you have a 6-8 minute window to start treatment. If someone has to come from the other side you talking 15-20 minutes and you've defeated your purpose.

Board Member Maughan – 2 or 3 years ago we were looking a bankruptcy. What has changed that you think we can hire another employee.

Response was uncomprehensive due to the fact too many people were talking

Board Chairman – The biggest difference he can see is the volume of calls that is happening now compared to 3-4 years ago.

Chief Hunt – We're handling over 500 EMS calls now and have gone from under 100 fire calls to almost 200 fire calls per year.

There were a number of discussions going on about manning, costs, the ability to respond in a timely manner and training. There was discussions going on about why we were having a workshop

that the board shouldn't have even gotten the budget worksheet and he doesn't even understand why we're having a workshop.

Board Clerk Adriance – you mentioned that at the beginning of this meeting that you couldn't finish it without input from us. Maybe there are some things that we might want to change in the budget, like adding \$5,000 to training and reducing it somewhere else.

Captain Jackson went over the budget and how he came to the projected revenue income's and trying to be as realistic as possible. He did mention that there is approximately a \$70,000 shortfall in the projected revenue and the projected operating expenses.

Board Clerk Adriance – Commented to Captain Jackson on how he's putting the budget together and making it easy for the board to understand

Captain Jackson then went on to explain the expenditures and making a note of increases in the operating expenditures. One of the most notable increase will be that of a full audit that now is required by the state with all districts with budgets over \$500,000/year.

Board Clerk Adriance – When we do choose an auditor we need to make sure that they know Arizona's regulations and laws because if they don't do it right then we get stuck having it redone, and increased costs to us.

Captain Jackson – Another item that we know that will go up is for our costs for dispatching from the Mesquite Police Department. They've upgraded their dispatch system and the costs will go up for everyone. The original intent was to save money, but other reasons were because of their priority dispatching and pre arrival instructions prior to EMS arrival, which helps tremendously.

There was discussion on the call back wages for the reservists and the OT wages for the full-time employees.

Board Clerk Adriance – You've got some \$42,000 for wildland wages, doesn't that balance out with the reimbursement from the BLM.

Response was uncomprehensive due to the fact too many people were talking

Captain Jackson – Anyway the reality is that we're going to have nearly a million dollar budget and we're not going to go crazy with it. It's not going to happen and this is a good base to start on. There was discussion on how the bills are paid and at the end of this month I'll have a better idea on where we will be with everything.

Chief Hunt – May I ask the Captain a real quick question? So if the projected ambulance revenue is \$120,000, and if out of district fires include structure fire, wildland fires and nuisance fires and we start billing for those, how much would you project for that?

Captain Jackson – I would use \$50,000

Board Clerk Adriance – So if we use that figure it would help close that gap.

Captain Jackson – But you have to be careful, last year we didn't get that kind of revenue. So you have to be careful.

Discussion continued on the various other revenue remedies. It was noted that the BLM had cut the severity watch last year but from all indications it'll be back this year. The chief is anticipating the revenue's from the wildland division could approach \$100,000.00 depending on a few factors which can't be foreseen yet.

Board Member Adriance – So we have a projected base budget, if we were to hire an EMT in the face of a \$100,000.00 deficit, or with the projected revenues about making it even, how are we going to come up with the extra \$45,000-\$65,000 for the new employee?

Chief Hunt – we could massage it a little bit more in certain places and just like we've shown you in the past with all these other budgets. We know we could hire short term, maybe 1-2 years because of the carryovers in the past budgets, but maybe we have to buy a new ambulance also.

Board Member Maughan – What I would like to see is the entire budget filled out before I can make any decisions on anything. You say these are the 2013-2014 figures? I would like to see the actual proposed budget.

Unknown – we could do that now. The rest of the response was uncomprehensive due to the fact too many people were talking.

Board Chairman Reber – you recently had to put in a serpentine belt in one of the ambulances. How much did that cost us?

Chief Hunt – We were able to save thousands – Chief Ojeda and I had to take everything from the front of the ambulance to the engine and replaced both serpentine belts and also replace both of the tensioners because one went out and knocked out the other one. Then we had to take it in for the codes, the only other thing that needed replaced was a cable for the fuel injectors and throttle. There were also a couple of instances involving tires separating while on transports.

We're getting more and more and more of the transports, which brings up a female on the department. We're getting more transports where we need a female. You have to have a female when you have a female psychiatric patient.

Board Member Maughan – you can use any female for that, you don't need an EMT.

Chief Hunt – we've used a couple of females before, but then you have to worry about the insurance, which could cost thousands if anything were to happen. So the answer Gene is yes you should have a female EMT.

Board Clerk Adriance – since this is a budget workshop and we're massaging numbers, is it possible to massage those numbers to include the costs of an employee. We need to see those numbers before we can even go into a hiring stage.

Chief Hunt – we certainly can do that

Board Clerk Adriance – what do you need chief, a FF/EMT or an EMT.

Chief Hunt – An EMT

Board Clerk Adriance – then budget for an EMT, the budget doesn't look right and it looks like it won't work for another employee. Maybe a part-time employee will work. That's what you need to bring to us before we make any decisions.

There was a discussion on why we're having a workshop at this point instead of seeing the proposed budget. There was also discussion that the board need to give the department some guidance on whether they should include another employee and on retirement.

Captain Jackson – Are you going to allow us to spend \$2,000 for an audit for seeing about retirement.

Board Member Maughan – Not at this time

Captain Jackson – so the retirement is going to be struck off the budget then.

Board Chairman Reber – So are we going to have to return the money to the state then.

Captain Jackson – Well, there's two of them, the public Safety Employees and the volunteers.

Chief Hunt – So are you striking it all as a motion?

Board Clerk Adriance – Well, we'll have to.

Chief Hunt – For me retirement says whether you want to keep me or not. Do you want me for the long haul and if you don't want to retire me, we'll use you until were done with you, then you're out of here. You want to retire me out of here someday, no, we'll just keep you here until we're done with you, then you're out of here. Plain and simple.

Board Clerk Adriance – Again, what I'm worried about is the long haul, a couple of grand to find out how much it's going to cost us is one question.

Board Chairman Reber – On the audit, I think it's something we need to look at. I think that we're shooting ourselves in the foot. When you start short changing your employees there are too many

other people that will start offering them. When do we bite the bullet, we'll never know unless we have the audit to know how much it's going to cost us.

Board Member Maughan – You can do the audit, but everything I've read, pension plans are almost a thing of the past, because they're not able to fund them. They're putting that responsibility on the employee's.

Captain Jackson – Even public employee's?

Board Member Maughan – I don't know about that.

Board Chairman Reber – I make a motion to have the audit to see where we stand, with Board Member Burch seconding the motion. Board Member Maughan abstained from the vote. Motion passed to allow the audit. 4-0-1

**7. Future Agenda Items:**

- A. Discussion on selection of an Auditor for the Fire District (Full Audit now required)
- B. Discussion and possible action regarding going to electronic meetings
- C. Discussion and possible action regarding in formulating a Board Policy Manual
- D. Discussion and possible action on the water use agreement with the Littlefield Unified School District.
- E. Budget Review
- F. Discussion and possible action regarding hiring another full-time employee
- G. Discussion and possible action regarding retirement benefits

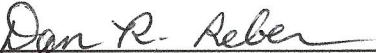
**8. Next Regular Board Meeting:**


- A. Next regular scheduled board meeting is on April 16, 2015 at 6:00 P.M.

**9. Adjournment:**

Board Member Burch made a motion to adjourn with Board Chairman Reber seconding the motion. Motion passed to adjourn at 7:48 P.M. on April 2, 2015. 5-0-0

**Reviewed and approved by:**

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Dan Reber  
Beaver Dam/Littlefield Fire District  
Governing Board Chairman

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Date