

**MINUTES OF REGULAR MEETING OF THE
RINCON VALLEY FIRE DISTRICT GOVERNING BOARD MEETING
VIRTUAL AND IN-PERSON MEETING
HELD OCTOBER 19, 2023**

A public meeting of the Rincon Valley Fire District Governing Board was convened on **October 19, 2023, at 6:00 P.M.** Present at the meeting were the following members of the Rincon Valley Fire District Governing Board: Chairperson Jennifer Spears, Clerk Kevin McKinley, and Member Lora Gruner. Member Matthew Messmer and Member Chris Klasen attended virtually.

The following matters were discussed, considered, and decided at the meeting:

1. Call to Order at 6:00 P.M. by Chairperson Jennifer Spears

A. Roll Call – Chairperson Jennifer Spears	Present
Member Chris Klasen	Present – Virtually at 6:26 p.m.
Member Kevin McKinley	Present
Member Matt Messmer	Present - Virtually
Member Lora Gruner	Present

- Also attending – Fire Chief James Tucker, Battalion Chief Allen Yalen, On-Duty crew, and Administrative Manager Laura Bucklin.

2. Pledge of Allegiance – Fire Chief James Tucker led the pledge of allegiance.

3. Date of the next meeting is scheduled for November 16, 2023, at 6:00 P.M.

- Confirmed by all board members present.

4. Call to the Public

- Thank You Card from Breanna Yalen. Ms. Yalen participated in a ride along with Station 292's B-Shift.

5. Employee Recognition – Badge Pinning for three new firefighters and promoted Captain.

- We hired three firefighters who will get their badge and take their oath.
 - Skylar McKinney
 - Justin Farrell
 - Marcos Lopez
- Travis Mooney was promoted to Captain. He is assigned to A-Shift, Station 292.
- Kenny Quinn and Laura Bucklin also received Service Pins.

6. Consent Agenda

Approval of Consent Agenda – Motion by Member Gruner, second by Clerk McKinley, to approve all items on the Consent Agenda. Motion passed 4 to 0.

- A. Approval of September 21, 2023, Regular Board Meeting Minutes.
- B. Approval of Resolution #24-008 Pauls Annexation – 3901 E Sheldon Pl.

- Member Chris Klasen joined in the meeting virtually at 6:26 p.m.

7. Reports and Correspondence

A. Board Member Report

- No comments

B. Fire Chief's Report – Reviewed by the Board. Report on file.

- For September, 288 incidents, 104 transports, and 35 new housing permits were issued.
- The new engine has arrived, and we are working on getting it in service.
- The new ambulance will be in service in about a week.
- The Squad went into the shop for engine repairs.
- The Ford ambulance is OOS due to broken body mounts.

C. September's Financial Reports – Review, discussion, and possible action of the district's financial status, including monthly summary reports for September 2023. Gabe Buldra with JVG presented September's financial report.

Key points:

- Revenues for September were \$889,039, which was \$338,691 over budget.
 - Pima County revenue for September is \$494,040, which is \$34,569 over budget.
 - Non-tax levy revenue for September is \$394,999, which is \$304,122 over budget.
 - The district received \$267,605 in ARPA funding in September.
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- Expenses for September were \$472,255, which was \$81,319 under budget.
 - Personnel expenses were under budget due to the timing of PSRPS and the health insurance bill payments.
 - Repairs and maintenance were \$35,081 over budget, driven by an insurance claim on shop #2102.
- Fiscal year revenue is \$1,178,769, over budget by \$429,479 and 16.91% of total annual budget.
- Fiscal year expense is \$1,489,833, under budget by \$168,039 and 21.38% of total annual budget.

– Motion by Clerk McKinley, second by Member Messmer, to approve the monthly financial reports. Motion passed 5 to 0.

8. Unfinished Business

A. None.

9. New Business

A. 2024-018 – Review, discussion, and possible action to donate or surplus the 2003 Pierce Pumper.

- Once the new engine is in service, we must surplus or donate our 2003 Pierce Pumper (Shop 0201). The District purchased 0201 with a FEMA Grant with a 10% matching funds commitment. Chief Tucker spoke to Sandy Trip, the FEMA grant coordinator, to receive direction on removing the unit from our fleet. Since the purchase was made from federal funds and has a monetary value over \$5,000, we have two options:
 - Surplus the unit and refund FEMA 90% of the proceeds.
 - Donate the unit to another agency.
 - Chief Beckham is here to explain why Arivaca needs our pumper.
 - The District will not receive 10% of the sale price of the pumper.
- Motion by Chairperson Spears, second by Member Gruner, to donate the 2003 Pierce Pumper purchased with a FEMA grant to Arivaca Fire District when the new engine is placed in service. Motion passed 5 to 0.

B. 2024-019 – Review, discussion, and possible action to renew the IGA with NWFD for Prevention Services.

- Due to the amount of time NWFD inspectors have been spending in our District, NWFD would like to amend the IGA for prevention services.

Under the current agreement, RVFD pays NWFD \$66,646.32 per year. The agreement has a 5% escalator annually, but the District retains all permit fees.

The proposed new agreement has an annual rate of \$55,000.08 per year with no escalator. However, NWFD would invoice RVFD for all permit fees.

To summarize the IGA changes:

- A contracted flat rate of 55,000.08/year (4,583.34/month) for fire investigations and annual fire safety inspections for commercial businesses. Down from the roughly \$66,600.00 for fiscal 23/24 and removal of the 5% yearly escalator.)
- Permitting and plans review, which include construction inspections, will be billed at the out-of-district NWFD fee schedule. This fee is applied during NWFDs' intake of plans and charged to the contractor. The contractor pays RVFD the fee, and NWFD collects those checks before releasing the contractors' reviewed permits and plans. NWFD finance will aggregate the monthly permitting and plans revenue and send the checks with the monthly invoice for contracted and fee services to RVFD. Regarding fee services, RVFD will have checks in the total amount for the incurred NWFD charges, resulting in a net zero budget impact to RVFD regarding permitting and plans review.

- NWFD will invoice RVFD monthly, and RVFD will have 30 days from receipt of the invoice to remit payment to NWFD for the prevention contract and fee services.
- NWFD would like the amended IGA to take effect this November 1st and run through June 2027.

The District has been able to offset the annual prevention costs with the permit fees, something we will no longer be able to do under the new agreement.

Permit & Plans Review Revenue

FY 2021-2022 **\$45,235.06**

FY 2022-2023 **\$156,808.25**

FY 2023-2024 (July thru September) **\$14,700**

Two Potential Immediate Options

1. Renew the IGA with the amendments.
 - a. Annual District cost reduced by \$11,600
 - b. Plans review & permit fees relinquished back to NWFD.
2. Hire our own Fire Marshal.
 - a. District retains plans review & permit fees.
 - b. District saves \$55,000 per year to NWFD.
 - c. District has IGA with NWFD for on-call investigation services.

One Potential Future Option

The District does not have anyone qualified to meet the initial job requirements of a fire marshal. We could see if someone internally was interested in this position and supported them in their education. This would take approximately 3 years.

Investigations

NWFD's adopted fee schedule specifies the cost for fire Investigations as Actual hourly (time and a half if after hours) + ERE + supplies (cost + 10%) + \$100/hour vehicle. RVFD has averaged three fire investigations per year. These investigations have included a team of two investigators for safety and critical tasks. Fire investigations are calculated based on the median Fire Inspector 1&2 pay and Deputy Fire Marshal pay. This would be \$271 per hour—Investigations average 4 hours.

RVFD Fire Marshal Salary

The base salary would be approximately \$94,000 per year

Workers Compensation- \$8,500

Medicare- \$1,400

PSPRS (assumes Tier 1)- \$23,300

Health Ins.- \$11,770

Total annual salary with employee-related expenses- \$138,970

Assumptions

\$55,000 per year to NWFD

Approximately \$50,000 in plans/permit revenue to NWFD

\$105,000 annual cost

\$138,970 for Fire Marshal with ERE

\$33,970 Actual District Cost for Fire Marshal

Required inspection software would be \$600 per year.

Area Fire Marshal Salary Comparison

Golder Ranch \$96,075 - \$128,079

Green Valley (Deputy Fire Marshal) \$76,899 - \$93,099

Drexel Heights* \$85,373 - \$120,683

**Tucson Fire (Inspector, not FM \$90,370 Captain plus 12%)

NWFD Division Chief (Fire Marshal) \$110,177.60 - \$116,937.60

NWFD Deputy Fire Marshal (Captain Salary) \$86,112 - \$96,990

Sierra Vista Fire \$78,043 - \$105,035

*DHFD and GVFD have an IGA the Fire Marshal is shared between the two agencies.

**The city building department does plans review; TFD is inspection only.

The District has 71 commercial occupancies divided up quarterly for annual inspections. The list of occupancies was included in your packet.

Fiscal Impact varies with a decision from zero impact to an increase of approximately \$138,970 to the annual budget offset by \$55,000 annually to NWFD and retention of plans review and permit fees.

General discussion regarding possibly promoting internally to a Fire Marshal position. Chief Tucker stated we do not currently have a qualified person but would like to see if any of our firefighters would like to pursue an opportunity to receive educational assistance to become qualified as a Fire Marshal.

- Motion by Member Messmer, second by Clerk McKinley, to renew the IGA with Northwest Fire District for Prevention Services. Motion passed 5 to 0.

C. 2024-020 – Review, discussion, and possible action to approve the Paid Leave Policy.

- Chief Tucker has been working with VFFA leadership on additional changes to the PTO Policy. Donna Aversa has reviewed the proposed policy. The changes were included in your packet.
- Summary of Changes:
 - Combine PTO, Bereavement, and Military Leave Policies into one “Leave Policy.”
 - Remove earned paid sick time and combine the hour banks. The District provides enough PTO to meet the State requirements.
 - Increase the max accrual to 1,000 hours for suppression and 700 hours for administration employees.
 - Reduced PTO payout % unless the employee retires.
 - No PTO payout for termination or resignation instead of termination.
 - Decrease payout percentage on retirement.
 - Add comp time option instead of overtime.
 - Add flextime (we already do this, but it is not in the policy).

- Add miscarriage to the Bereavement section.
- The PTO payout upon retirement of the average employee will increase by approximately \$400.

-Motion by Member Messmer, second by Member Gruner, to adopt Policy 04-003 Paid Leave to become effective October 28, 2023. Motion passed 5 to 0.

D. 2024-022 – Review and discuss two potential sites for a future fire station.

- We will eventually need a third fire station; suitable property is becoming non-existent. We may not build a new station for a few years, but need the location. Chief Tucker has recently been working on two locations.

1. 13300 E. Colossal Cave Road

- Grace Fellowship Church owns this property. In addition, we would have to purchase an additional 0.51 acres from the west side.
 - Requires two separate transactions.
 - Requires splitting two parcels to create one new parcel.
 - Requires a dedicated easement for the church with a paved road on the south end of parcel A.
 - The church wants to retain as much of its property as possible.
 - Will have added costs for legal, surveying, and utilities.
 - WSM Architects thinks this property should be a last resort.

2. 14099 E Colossal Cave Road

- This property is listed for sale on the commercial market. The lot is 3.26 acres and has already been cleared and graded.
 - Price is \$1,140,000.
 - Property is within an HOA; the fire station must fit within HOA design guidelines. I spoke with the HOA representative; they favor a fire station.
 - Easiest property to develop.
 - Owner willing to carry back with 50% down.

The Board has a few options. The Fire Chief prefers option #3.

1. Motion to defer land purchase to a future date.
2. Motion to pursue the church property.
3. Motion to pursue the property at Del Lago.

The fiscal impact ranges from zero to \$1,140,000 for a land purchase.


-Motion by Clerk McKinley, second by Member Gruner, to pursue the property at Del Lago.

10. ADJOURNMENT - Motion by Clerk McKinley, second by Member Gruner, to adjourn. Motion passed 5 to 0. The meeting adjourned at 6:47 p.m.


Dated this 24th day of October 2023.

Rincon Valley Fire District Governing Board

Chairperson, Jennifer Spears



Clerk, Kevin McKinley



Board Member, Lora Gruner

Board Member, Christopher Klasen



Board Member, Matthew Messmer