



NORTHWEST FIRE/RESCUE DISTRICT

SERVING RESIDENTS OF THE NORTHWEST FIRE DISTRICT, THE FLOWING WELLS
COMMUNITY AND THE TOWN OF MARANA
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MINUTES OF THE NORTHWEST FIRE DISTRICT SPECIAL GOVERNING BOARD MEETING November 30, 2009

Call to Order/Roll Call/Affirmation of Quorum

Chairman Nassi called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m. The meeting was held in the Northwest Fire District Training Facility Conference Room, 8165 N. Wade Road, Marana, Arizona.

Present: Richard Nassi, Chairman
Lee C. Mellor, Vice Chairman
David Talas
George Carter

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Absent: Anka Mischel, Clerk (excused)

It was determined a quorum existed with four of five members present.

Salute to the Flag of the United States of America

Richard Nassi led the Pledge of Allegiance.

Presentation of Service Awards

No awards were presented at this time.

Public Forum

Mary Schuh, 1660 W. Roller Coaster Road, Tucson, AZ remarked she was not in favor of a merger/consolidation between Northwest Fire District (NWFD) and Golder Ranch Fire District (GRFD) or the proposed joint meeting to be scheduled for December 4. Some of her additional questions and concerns were:

- Total costs for researching the proposed Picture Rocks Fire District merger/consolidation has not been disclosed
- GRFD's CON would control the boundaries, and they would have all the control
- She questioned if direction had been given to the Board for any employee to contact GRFD about this item



- Who and how many NWFD Board members talked with GRFD's Board members?
- Who were the employees involved with contacting GRFD, and when did they receive direction?
- When and how was the entire NWFD Board informed of this item which was not on record and was not an agenda item for either fire district?
- She did not feel this was an economic benefit to the District because of having a high salary and equipment-based group
- She was opposed to this meeting's agenda being posted the day before Thanksgiving Day and stated this item could have been discussed at the upcoming December meeting
- She questioned when everyone met to arrange the time and venue for the upcoming joint meeting

Kyle Canty, President of Local Union 3572, remarked that the Union members were open to looking at options regarding a possible merger or consolidation with GRFD, and they would like to be involved in the process and were open to answering any questions throughout the meeting.

NEW BUSINESS

Richard Nassi commented that he requested a special meeting be held after being invited to meet with two members of the GRFD Board prior to Thanksgiving Day. He said that before any action was taken, he wanted the NWFD board members informed about the offer from GRFD to combine both fire districts. He requested the executive session be placed on the agenda to discuss the legal issues involved.

Executive session, pursuant to A.R.S. section 38-431.03 (A) (3) & (4), for discussion and consultation with the Board's attorney and to instruct the attorney on the Board's position with respect to items (B) and (C), below

George Carter made the following motion, seconded by David Talas and approved unanimously with four ayes:

Move to go into executive session.

Invited to attend the executive session were Chief Piechura, Georgeann Hackenbracht, and Dottie Sollars; Ms. Sollars did not attend.

The meeting recessed at 6:10 p.m. to go into executive session and reconvened at 6:47 p.m.

DRAFT

Discussion and possible action regarding the possibilities for and ramifications of consolidation, merger, joint operations, and / or administrative and operational consolidation with the Golder Ranch Fire District. This discussion may include: the available statutory authorizations [A.R.S. sections: 48-820 and 48-821 (pertaining to fire district mergers and disposition of assets and liabilities); 48-822 (pertaining to fire district consolidations) and 48-805 (B) (17) (pertaining to intergovernmental agreements for technical and administrative services)]; the territorial boundaries of the two Districts; the assessed valuations of the two Districts; the property tax rates of the two Districts and the potential impact on the tax rates if the two Districts consolidate or merge; the potential benefits and harms that could result from consolidation, merger and joint operations, as well as the impacts on the Districts' administrative and operational personnel. Golder Ranch's Certificate of Necessity to provide ambulance services to the public may also be discussed

Richard Nassi read the following agenda item: discussion and possible action regarding the possibilities for and ramifications of consolidation, merger, joint operations, and/or administrative and operational consolidation with the Golder Ranch Fire District. George Carter said he would second this item for discussion; no votes were taken; discussion pursued.

Mr. Mellor asked how this item came about and remarked that about a week ago, GRFD held a meeting to discuss this item. Chief Piechura commented that he and Chief Fink have been discussing the possibility of a merger/consolidation for about 15 years. Chief Piechura said that because Chief Fink announced he would be retiring in August, 2010, discussion began again about the option for a merger/consolidation. Shortly after their discussion, Chief Fink added this item to their previously scheduled meeting agenda. Following GRFD's board meeting, NWFD's Board Chairman was called by GRFD to schedule a meeting with their chairman.

Mr. Nassi said that after attending the meeting with the GRFD Chairman, he scheduled tonight's meeting to discuss the issues. He remarked that he understands that the training, operations and quality of care of each fire district are basically the same and asked if there were any differences. Chief Piechura said the differences are with scheduling, pay schedules, policies and programmatic things but nothing far beyond the confines of talking about what those could be for operational or political consolidated efforts.

Mr. Nassi noted he appreciated the presence of the Union at the meeting and their desire to further discussions. Mr. Mellor felt a joint meeting would be beneficial and requested a future meeting be scheduled to learn about the differences between both fire districts and also what we have in common; Mr. Carter and Mr. Talas concurred.

Richard Nassi made the following motion, seconded by George Carter and approved unanimously with four ayes:

Move to ask staff to continue researching and developing a joint meeting for this particular Friday to meet with the board to discuss these possible consolidations.

In response to Ms. Sollars asking for clarification of this motion, Mr. Nassi restated the motion as follows; the motion was approved unanimously with four ayes:

I believe it's worthwhile to continue discussions and talk more about the issues with Golder Ranch Board and ask staff to continue making the necessary arrangements for a meeting at the end of this week, this Friday.

During discussion of the motion(s), Chief Piechura remarked that the reason for expediting the joint meeting was because of GRFD's benchmarks to fill Chief Fink's pending vacancy and to discuss whether the item will or will not be pursued for possible consolidation.

Discussion and possible action to schedule a joint public meeting of the governing boards of Northwest and Golder Ranch Fire Districts to discuss, jointly, all of the matters in item (B), above. The venue and agenda for this joint meeting will also be discussed

Mr. Nassi commented that the venue for the joint meeting still needs to be determined and restated that arrangements will continue to be made to hold a Friday meeting.

George Carter made the following motion, seconded by David Talas and approved unanimously with four ayes:

Move to continue the arrangements for the meeting on Friday.

During discussion of the motion, Mr. Benavidez asked if we know where the venue might be since the meeting cannot be held in NWFD's training facility room because of lack of space. He stated a place would be found that can accommodate the public at a reasonably convenient location.

FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS

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Future Agenda Items [A Governing Board Member may bring forth general topics for a future meeting agenda. The Governing Board may not discuss, deliberate or take any action on the topics presented, pursuant to A.R.S. § 38-431.02 (H).]

No items were planned at this time.

ADJOURNMENT

George Carter made the following motion, seconded by Lee C. Mellor, and approved unanimously with five ayes:

Move to adjourn.

The meeting adjourned at 6:58 p.m.

Minutes approved by the Northwest Fire District Board at its December 15, 2009, Regular Governing Board Meeting.

Anka Mischel, Clerk of the Board