



# 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 REGULAR GOVERNING BOARD MEETING January 25, 2011

### Call to Order/Roll Call/Affirmation of Quorum

Chairman Carter 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:** George Carter, Chairman  
Bruce A. Kaplan, Clerk  
Anka Mischel  
Bill Daniell

**Absent:** Richard Nassi, Vice Chairman (excused)

It was determined a quorum existed with three of five members present at 6:00 p.m. and four of five members present at 6:07 p.m. with the arrival of Anka Mischel.

### Salute to the Flag of the United States of America

The Pledge of Allegiance was led by George Carter.

### Presentation of Service Awards

Chief Piechura presented a 10-year service award to Kyle Canty.

### Public Forum

Lee Mellor, former Governing Board member, talked about the professionalism and courage of the employees in their handling of the tragic incident that occurred on January 8, 2011. He also encouraged the Board to approve the renewal of the accreditation agenda item and remarked that NWFD is one of the best fire districts in Arizona.



Mr. Carter granted Mr. Schuh five minutes to speak; there were no objections.

James D. Schuh concurred with Mr. Mellor's remarks regarding NWFD's involvement with the January 8, 2011 incident. He made the following comments and stated concerns regarding the February PGA TOUR:

- He felt the event was a great source for tourism but had concerns because it will be held outside the District's boundaries.
- He was in favor of off-duty personnel participating in the event but was opposed to employees being paid from District funds prior to PGA funds being received.
- He did not feel overhead costs for training employees and other associated costs were included in the fee.
- In a prior year, payment from the PGA was not received until April because the invoice had not been sent in a timely manner.
- The names of off-duty personnel were not provided in the packet, and he has not seen a statement showing total costs.

Kyle Canty, President of Local Union 3572, reported the NWFD and the Flowing Wells Family Resource Center worked jointly last month to help 346 families and 602 children during the holiday season by collecting and distributing \$30,000 in gifts and \$10,000 in food. There were 361 volunteer hours on the project; he thanked Jason Garza for the majority of the volunteer hours.

## **CONSENT AGENDA**

**Approval of Minutes of the January 12, 2011, Special Governing Board Meeting**

**Approval of Amendment to Extend the Fire Protection Agreement with Arizona Portland Cement for One Year**

**Approval of the District Personnel Policy, Section 4.20.1, Driving Under the Influence (DUI), to be Effective March 1, 2011**

**Approval of Issuance and Post-Issuance Compliance Procedures Relating to Tax-Exempt and Build America Bonds (Direct Pay) for the Northwest Fire District**

**Approval of a Construction Access Agreement for Construction of Site Walls at Fire Station No. 30**

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

Move to approve items A through E on the January 25, 2011, Consent Agenda as presented.

## **REPORTS AND CORRESPONDENCE**

**Fire Chief's Report – This is a summary of the activities of the Fire Chief and administrative staff concerning each of the District's Divisions including: Fire Suppression, Emergency Medical Services, Administrative Services, Finance, Human Resources, Special Projects, Logistics, Life Safety Services and Wild Land Fire Fighting; the report might also include Administrative Activities in Annexations, Intergovernmental Relations, Community Assistance Programs, Fleet and Equipment, Labor and Management Relations, District Revenues and Expenditures, Strategic Planning, Information Technology, Status of Construction Projects, Status of Facilities, Public Outreach and Training**

The reports were included in the packet; there was no discussion. Chief Piechura introduced the following individuals from Southwest Ambulance who assisted at the incident on January 8, 2011: EMS Manager Mike Balta, EMS Manager Lisa Dastarian, BC Lee Mayes and BC John Walka from Rural Metro Fire Department. He reported that BC Mayes sat in NWFD's command vehicle with Incident Command Leader BC Lane Spalla and facilitated the arrival of ambulances along with EMS Managers' Balta and Dastarian who initiated the treatment and transport segments. Thirteen patients were transported off the scene in less than 38 minutes.

**Finance Director's Reports – This report is a summary of the District's Financial Status including: Monthly Board Financial Report, Monthly Disbursements Report, Revenue and Expenditure Reports, Real Estate Tax Revenue Spreadsheets, Lease-Purchase Escrow Account Status, Monthly Bond Report and Arizona State Land Billing and Payment Reports. The Board will be asked to approve the District's Monthly Disbursements Report**

The November and December, 2010, monthly financial statements were included in the packet. David Gephart reported that expenditures were ahead of last year because of staffing Fire Station No. 39 and the Separation Incentive Program. He anticipates a deficit in this year's budget but stated there is a fund balance to cover the deficit which will be discussed at a future meeting along with budget restructure.

In response to Bill Daniell asking if the shortage could be recovered, Mr. Gephart remarked that a lot of changes could not be made to the budget unless changes were made to the level of services provided in the District. He explained that NWFD has not had a deficit in the past five years and did not foresee it as a significant problem.

George Carter made the following motion, seconded by Bruce A. Kaplan and approved unanimously with four ayes:

Move to approve the District's monthly disbursements report as presented.

## **BUSINESS**

### **Discussion, Update and Possible Action to Consider Approving an Offer from Habitat for Humanity for the Purchase of District-Owned Property Located at 2811 W. Curtis Road**

David Gephart explained that this item was discussed about three months ago regarding donating the property, but staff had concerns if it would fall under the "Gift Clause". In response to Mr. Carter asking if there would be a problem if we donated the property or does it need to be sold, Attorney Benavidez explained that the law states you have to receive market value. Mr. Gephart discussed the following:

- Construction of 7 to 9 housing units have been proposed with an approximate assessed value of about \$1 million.
- Tax revenue is anticipated to be about \$2,200 and could increase in future years after property improvements were made.
- A formal appraisal has not been done on the property because of costs.
- The property is zoned for residential use; the only exception is for use as a fire department.
- The property has been vacant for two years; one interest was received to build a recycling company, but the county was unwilling to change the zoning to commercial use.
- Habitat will incur all costs involved to demolish the current building and site work.

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

Move to direct staff to accept the offer as proposed, and take whatever actions necessary to finalize the sale of the property located at 2811 W. Curtis to Habitat for Humanity, with the condition that the property must be used for the purpose of providing affordable housing to low-income families in conformance with the mission of Habitat for Humanity, or such property will be reverted back to District ownership.

## **Discussion and Possible Action to Approve the Proposed Budget Calendar for Fiscal Year Ending June 30, 2012**

A copy of the proposed budget calendar was provided in the packet. Mr. Gephart remarked that changes could be made to the scheduled meetings. There was discussion that agendas are usually posted 4 or 5 days prior to a meeting.

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

Move to approve the Northwest Fire District proposed budget calendar for the Fiscal Year ended June 30, 2012, as presented.

## **Discussion and Update about the Budget Adoption Process and the Economic Realities of Fiscal Year 2011-2012 including, but not limited to, Current Residential and Commercial Market Impact, Property Valuation Adjustments for Tax Years 2011-2012, Proposed Voter Initiatives and Legislative Property Tax Reform Measures, Projected Payroll and Benefits Expenses, Cash Reserves, and Bond Debt Service; the District's Tax Rate and Budget Priorities may also be Addressed, as well as all Projected Revenues and Expenditures**

David Gephart reported that the District's budget will be impacted this year because of a decline in property value assessments and foreclosures. A report will be provided after it has been received from the County. He explained that over the last three years, the Board has taken steps to prepare for the impact of the declined economy and recession. The Separation Incentive Program that was taken by some of the former employees will provide a savings of \$665,000, and there will be about \$200,000 savings in dispatch fees next fiscal year. Mr. Gephart gave a PowerPoint presentation regarding the following:

- Best budget practices
- How a budget is built & developed
- Description of funds & why are they necessary
- Current year budget by funds
- Budgeted resources by type
- Beginning fund balance
- Historical analysis
- Revenue sources
- Moving resources from one fund to another
- Requirements for expenditures
- Requirements by category that included and excluded transfers
- Operational expenditures by category
- Commonly used expenditures
- Salaries, wages, fringe benefits & payroll taxes
- Expenditures for delivery of daily services
- Capital outlay & depreciation
- Contingency reallocation needing pre-approval by the Governing Board
- State requirement of having a balanced budget
- Process, preparation, base & supplemental budgets & monitoring

The meeting recessed at 7:47 p.m. and reconvened at 7:54 p.m.

George Carter requested that agenda items VIII F and I (Tabs 9 and 12) be discussed as the next items; there were no objections.

**Discussion and Possible Action to Declare the 1991 Emergency One "Cyclone" Model Pumper Apparatus (Shop 916) as Surplus Property and Consider its Direct Sale to Picture Rocks Fire District**

Division Chief Emans explained that this vehicle was initially intended for sale through the online surplus website, and Picture Rocks Fire District (PRFD) made an offer to directly purchase it for \$7,500 which is the truck's yearly maintenance costs. He stated we have had equipment in the past that did not sell for three years and remained with a broker during this time. NWFD has sold and also donated equipment to Whetstone Fire Department after it has not sold for two years. Chief Piechura commented that we have an Automatic Aid Agreement with PRFD, and if one of their engines was inoperable, this apparatus would serve as a backup unit.

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

Move to declare one 1991 Emergency One "Cyclone" model pumper apparatus (shop 916) as surplus property and authorize staff to complete the sales transaction of this unit to the Picture Rocks Fire District in the amount of \$7500.

**Discussion Concerning County-Wide Emergency Dispatch Services; Direction to Staff Concerning Possible Modifications to the District's Inter-Governmental Agreement (IGA) with the City of Tucson for Dispatch Services; Possible Action to Provide the City of Tucson with Notice of the District's Intent to Proceed with Modifications to the Dispatch Services IGA**

Jim Long reported that that the City offered NWFD a reduction in costs and remarked that NWFD has been with City dispatch for about 18 years; he gave a PowerPoint presentation regarding the following:

- Three areas of concern: performance to meet NFPA requirements, needing modern technology and increased costs
- 40 dispatchers rotating around the room; least calls between 10 p.m. and 7 a.m.
- Chart showing variable response patterns
- Cost comparisons and costs compared to demand
- Equipment upgrades and replacement of 34 units each costing \$5,000

- County Fire/PCWIN-IGA is anticipated to be approved sometime in May by the City Council
- NWFD would be the primary contracting agency for the consortium
- The addition of the Pima County Emergency Communication and Operations Center (PECOC) in 2008
- All County departments located at PECOC

Isaiah Twombly, City of Tucson's Communication's Manager, spoke about the Tucson Fire Department's vision to become a regional dispatch center and the benefits it would bring to the communities and implementing a service-level type agreement.

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

Move to direct staff to facilitate the modification to the City of Tucson contract amendment and provide the City of Tucson with a statement of intent to continue to seek dispatch services from our existing provider.

**Discussion and Possible Action to Approve a Standby Agreement between Northwest Fire District and the Professional Golf Association (PGA) Tour from February 21, 2011, through February 27, 2011, for the District to Provide Standby Emergency Medical Services for the 2011 Accenture Match Play Golf Championships at Dove Mountain in Marana**

Battalion Chief Hughes reported that the PGA requested a reduction in hours because they did not feel there would be a need for extra hours of service. If additional employees and hours are requested, the PGA will be billed accordingly. In response to Mr. Carter asking if full recovery costs would be received, BC Hughes remarked they would be. He explained that off-duty personnel would be paid after hours have been worked, and those funds would be replenished after payment has been received from the PGA. Chief Piechura commented that State contracts do not allow for administrative costs to be factored into the PGA billing costs.

Bruce A. Kaplan made the following motion, seconded by George Carter and approved unanimously with four ayes:

Move to approve a Standby Agreement between Northwest Fire District and the PGA Tour from February 21, 2011 through February 27, 2011, for the District to provide standby emergency medical services for the 2011 Accenture Match Play Golf Championships.

## **Discussion and Possible Action to Seek Governing Board Direction on the Renewal Application with the Commission on Fire Accreditation International for Northwest Fire District**

Division Chief West explained that NWFD is currently in year 4 of 5 of the accreditation program and gave a PowerPoint presented regarding the following:

- An explanation of what the Commission of Fire Accreditation International program provides
- Ten major categories involved in accreditation
- Accreditation process requirements
- Organizations supporting accreditation
- The 9 additional fire districts within AZ that are accredited and 143 fire districts accredited in the United States
- Renewal costs of \$16,000 include a \$7,000 application/administrative fee and a 5-day on-site visit by a 4-person peer assessment team who will evaluate and audit the process; travel expenses are included
- Preparing for renewal – 12 months to complete
- Provides the public with assurance they will receive excellent and professional services
- District's outcome as a result of the 2007 initial accreditation
- Self-assessment process that insures NWFD will continually strive for improvement and professional growth

Chief Piechura pointed out that NWFD's rapid responses provided at the January 8, 2011, incident was because of an accumulation of training that employees undergo and the professionalism that is maintained and required by the accreditation program's standards.

DC West explained that accreditation is valid for five years as long as annual reports are submitted that provide measures and progress towards maintaining or improving systems and services that have been reviewed by the Commission; decertification will occur if these are not met. He noted that after the peer assessment team gives their recommendation, the Commission determines if accreditation will be granted. He commented that we assess ourselves first, and the peer assessors verify if we are meeting our self-assessment.

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

Move to direct staff and the membership of the fire district to prepare for renewal of the Fire Accreditation Designation of the Northwest Fire District with the Commission on Fire Accreditation.

### **Adoption of Resolution No. 2011-001 to Approve a Mutual Aid Agreement for Emergency Fire, Rescue, and Medical Services between Northwest Fire District and Avra Valley Fire District**

Division Chief Horvath reported that staff met with Avra Valley Fire District last week to discuss their future involvement about entering into an Auto Aid Agreement. No changes were made from last year's agreement to the proposed Mutual Aid Agreement.

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

Move to adopt Resolution No. 2011-001 approving the Mutual Aid Agreement.

### **Discussion and Update regarding Kord's-Southwest Ambulance Transportation Services in Northwest Fire District**

Prior to discussion of this item, Anka Mischel recused herself from the dais at 9:26 p.m. because of a conflict of interest.

Battalion Chief Bradley reported that a meeting was held between NWFD and SWA on January 20, and another meeting is scheduled for January 28 to discuss the ongoing issues pertaining to the lack of interoperable communications. In response to Mr. Daniell asking how often SWA meets their goals, BC Bradley remarked that it was difficult to determine because they are no longer on NWFD's dispatch channels, and SWA would need to provide that information.

BC Bradley reported that, within the past 90 days, NWFD developed a reporting system that crews could input any issues in Firehouse. He noted it is a requirement to report any response times that are outside of CON compliance. NWFD transported nine patients last year because it would have been detrimental to patient care to wait for SWA to arrive on scene. There was discussion that NWFD is actively engaged in considering all options for patient transports that are in the best interests of the District.

### **FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS**

Anka Mischel rejoined the dais at 9:38 p.m.

**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).]**

Discussion and update regarding Northwest Fire District's website and internal SharePoint site

## **ADJOURNMENT**

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

Move to adjourn the meeting at 9:40 p.m.

Minutes approved by the Northwest Fire District Board at its February 8, 2011, Special Governing Board Meeting.

  
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Bruce A. Kaplan, Board Clerk