

# ORACLE FIRE DISTRICT BOARD MEETING MINUTES

Tuesday September 2, 2014 / Approved October 6, 2014

Meeting was officially called to order at 6:00pm, Tuesday September 2, 2014 at 1475 W. American Ave., Oracle, AZ.

## CALL TO ORDER / ROLL CALL:

Members Present: Clerk Brown, OFDBMs Bristow, Doran and McMurry.

Members Absent:, Chairman Navarro

Staff Present: Chief Larry Southard, Asst. Chief Jennings, (Capt) Paul Farrell

### 1. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE.

### 2. ACCEPTANCE OF PREVIOUS MINUTES

OFDBM Doran asked the Board members if there were any changes to the Tuesday, August 5, 2014 minutes. There were none. OFDBM Brown made a motion to accept these minutes as provided. The motion was seconded. All were in favor. Motion passed.

### 3. CALL TO PUBLIC.

Bob Skiba, long-time Oracle resident, wanted to talk about July 15, 2014 demonstration regarding immigration and the safety of the children arriving from Central America at the Sycamore Canyon Academy (SCA). Skiba asked the board to consider that OFD provide no services to SCA. Skiba wanted it recorded that he is very angry and would like a workshop or meeting set up to discuss what we are going to do about SCA.

Ron Thompson, three-year resident of Oracle, 26 years of experience working with youth, voiced his concern about SCA youth escaping. There is no fence around SCA and that has made him feel his neighborhood is not safe. Thompson gave information about Neighborhood Watch Program and Black Box app that could help in reporting crimes, fires and escaped SCA kids. Thompson invited Certs, Firewise and general public to join these efforts. These groups' future meetings will be posted in post office.

Chief Southard assured group that his office is always open for discussing any citizens' concerns. Chief Southard said he was not notified that youth had arrived at SCA. Southard did not know until Skiba informed him. Southard expressed dissatisfaction at being left out of loop when SCA clearly expects OFD services. However, Southard said OFD rarely goes to SCA – not once in the past year. However, OFD will always respond for a life or death traumatic event and assist those responding ambulances that OFD works with every day.

Chief Southard wanted it made clear that OFD does NOT give services outside our district for free. We go only after our station is covered. That often takes too much time for us to help. Additionally, 20% of our budget, about \$100,000, comes from the state in the form of an Assistance Tax designed to cover any help OFD gives outside of our fire district. Southard explained that we can

charge for out-of-district calls, but feels we risk losing that 20% of our budget. Southard stated that Oracle receives more benefit from the tax than the small amount of coverage actually given outside of our district.

#### **4. CHIEF'S REPORT** – See text at end of these minutes

Pinning Ceremony: new Captain Paul Farrell

Chief Southard and Asst. Chief Robert Jennings expressed pride in Farrell's strong work ethic and remarkable ability to always address people in a calm, professional manner. Farrell's wife, Martha, and children performed the pinning! OFDBM Bristow expressed his gratitude for Farrell's work and asked Farrell to introduce his many family and friends in attendance.

#### **5. DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE ACTION**

Chief Southard explained that new state legislation requires OFD to have an annual audit rather than a review.

Chief Southard recommended the board approve an additional \$3000 for CPA Jennifer Phillips to perform the required 2013/2014 audit. OFDBM Brown made a motion to approve \$3000 for audit. Motion was seconded and all were in favor. Motion passed.

**Next Board Meeting: Tuesday, October 7, 2014 at 6 pm.**

#### **6. ADJOURNMENT**

OFDBM Brown made a motion for the meeting to adjourn. OFDBM McMurry seconded the motion. All were in favor. Motion passed.  
Meeting adjourned 7:05 pm.

Minutes respectfully submitted,  
Tina Acosta – Administrative Chief  
Reviewed by OFD Board Clerk Ellie Brown

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#### ***Chiefs Report – October 6th, 2014***

**Financial, Budget & Account Balances Report:** Documents will be presented by Chief Acosta.

**Staff Report:** Hiring & staffing of reserve firefighters has been going well. We have five newly hired, part time firefighter/EMT personnel to help cover the open shifts from two full time firefighters that have recently resigned.

**Vehicle Report:** All vehicles are in service. Engine 691 had some electrical work done during September.

**Fire Station & Equip Report:** All equipment is currently in service.

**Fire District:** Presentation by Chief Southard regarding several areas located near existing OFD boundaries that we have identified as areas that should be considered for annexation into the fire district.

On September 20th OFD Chief Officers met with the newly forming Pinal Rural Fire Rescue Fire District for a Meet and Greet and to discuss common issues such as communication, mutual aid, response areas etc. The meeting went very well.

**Events:** The annual OFD Family Picnic will be held at Mountain Vista School on October 11th at 2:00. Donations from firefighters and the Oracle Firewise Board will provide the funding for food, soft drinks, games and door prizes. Chief Southard attended the Grand Opening ceremony on September 24th for the new Golder Ranch Fire Station at Saddlebrooke Ranch. A three person Paramedic/engine crew is located closer now to Oracle for mutual aid assistance.

**Current Fire Conditions:** Fire conditions are currently at Moderate and are not expected to change much until spring of 2015.

**Wildland Fire Report:** We are near the top of the rotation list for sending out a Type 3 engine under our state contract.

The Pinal/Pima Wildland Team has requested that the 2015 statewide wildfire training exercise be held again in Oracle. They have requested the use of CERT volunteers to assist with the exercise.

**Grant Report:** The WFHF 2013 Grant is nearing the end of the available funding. Pinal County recently awarded us with a \$63,000 Firewise Grant to pay for creating defensible space around 40 to 45 residential structures. A Grant Committee met on September 30th to discuss the criteria for the upcoming Firewise Grant fuel thinning projects.

**Donations:** None to report.

**CERT/Firewise Report:** The Oracle Firewise Board received a Ten Year Firewise Community Recognition Award. Carrie Dennett from the Arizona Division of Forestry presented the award on September 23rd. Ms. Dennett had wonderful things to say about Oracle Firewise. The Miner News covered the event and the story, including pictures, has been featured on the OFD website home page. The next CERT meeting will be held on October 14th at 4:00. A training exercise will follow the meeting.

**Training Report:** An OFD training exercise was held on September 20<sup>th</sup>. The exercise was Water Tender Operations and shuttling water. Three firefighters attended Arizona State Fire School in Mesa during the first week of September.

**Brush Dump Report:** The brush that was accumulated over the spring and summer was burned on September 13th and September 21st. These recent brush burns have become too physically demanding for firefighter safety and for our on duty crew being able to respond to the next call. Future burns will have to be scheduled around the availability of mechanical equipment such as a backhoe rather than scheduling around school occupancy. To lessen neighborhood complaints we will adjust the burn schedule to burn more during the morning hours and to begin extinguishment earlier. Brush dump fees pay the costs of permits and equipment.

**Call Load Report:** Statement to be provided.