

**ORACLE FIRE DISTRICT BOARD MEETING
MONDAY • FEBRUARY 4, 2013**

The following are the minutes of the Oracle Fire District Board meeting held on Monday, February 4, 2013.

Present: Clerk Charlotte Poole, board members, Ellie Brown, John Doran and Manny Navarro, Interim Fire Chief Larry Southard, members of the Oracle Fire Department and various members of the public. Chairman Bud Bristow was not present, Clerk Charlotte Poole was interim Chairman for this meeting.

#1. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Meeting was officially called to order at 6:01 p.m.

#2. APPROVAL OF PREVIOUS MINUTES

Motion made by OFDBM Doran to approve December 17, 2012 board meeting minutes. Motion seconded by OFDBM Brown, all in favor, motion passed.

Motion to approve January 7, 2013 Board Meeting minutes. OFDBM Doran made motion to approve, OFDBM Navarro seconded, all in favor, motion passed.

#3. Call to Public

No calls to the public were made.

#4 Chief's Report

Annual Financial report from Lisa Hill. Scheduled to come and give presentation but was not able to attend after all.

ICchief Southard would like to hold a Financial Workshop at 9:00 a.m., Saturday. OFDB members Navarro, Brown, Poole are able to attend. ICchief Southard will hold multiple meetings in order for all members to attend. OFDBM Doran is not able to attend any Friday, Saturday or Sunday events.

Grant Report: Working on WFHF 2011 Grant. Crew is present on a weekly basis and has made good progress working at the Oracle State Park.

Storage Building: OFDBM Navarro had asked for a timeline of events and costs at the last meeting. Kaiser Engineering called Friday. Plans and grading report are ready to pick up in Tucson. These will be hand carried over to Pinal County along with payment (check has already been cut and signed). The second plan review normally takes about twenty (20) working days. If all goes well, this can be presented to the Pinal County Board of Supervisors, then a building permit can then be applied for.

Old Fire Station: Both parties moved out, left building in good shape. OFD switched electricity over and changed door locks. OFD spare vehicles are being stored in the old station now. Up until then, all were kept in ICchief Southard's personal storage area at home.

OFDBM Doran asked how much money was recovered from the tenants for past due rent and if anything had been done or planned on collecting the monies due. IChief Southard indicated that none was to date and that it was up to the board to pursue legal action. It was mentioned that both tenants are in very poor health due to cancer. OFDBM Doran asked on the total amount due. IChief Southard indicated that Tina had the exact amount due.

Clerk Poole asked if this needed to be added to next month's board meeting agenda. Doran indicated that yes it should.

Financial Audit Quote from CPA Auditor Jennifer Phillips will run approximately \$9K. Board approved last meeting to have the audit done by Ms. Phillips. IChief Southard quoted a cost of \$7,500; however the cost was \$8,500. The increase in cost was for extra incidentals such as mileage which brought the cost up to \$9K. OFDBM Brown asked if Ms. Phillips had done this before for the OFD. IChief indicated that she had not; however she had for other fire districts and was experienced with doing so for these types of agencies. IChief indicated that the OFD had never had an official audit done before but rather several financial reviews by Lisa Hill who is not a CPA.

Since the OFD budget is under \$1 million, the law does not require that an audit be done every year, but rather financial reviews. The audit should take at least one month to be completed. IChief Southard asked if the board was still in agreement to have this done. OFDBM Poole asked for clarity on who the management responsibilities were referring to. IChief Southard indicated that it would be he and Tina. OFDBM Navarro asked if this was the only CPA sought. IChief Southard indicated that he was not aware of any others but that Jennifer Phillips was in close affiliation with the Arizona Fire District Association and fire department regulations. OFDBM Doran asked if the State recommended any CPA's to use? IChief Southard stated that the CPA used must be knowledgeable in the requirements for tax based agencies and that Ms. Phillips was qualified. Ms. Phillips was not recommended by the AFDA but by two other fire officials.

OFDBM Brown asked if there were any procurement guidelines in place where these types of services could be bid out. Clerk Poole stated that there were not but that was one of the areas of policy that the board needed to develop. OFDBM Brown agreed that the audit needed to be done right away due to time constraints; however, any future audits should fall under a bidding process once established by a policy.

Board agreed that the audit was approved on the month's previous agenda. IChief Southard will proceed in getting audit scheduled.

Response Time and Guidelines: There are currently no guidelines for "courtesy" calls that the OFD responds to outside of our district. These calls include, but not are limited to, fire, snakes, emergency services. OFD bills the insurance companies but rarely is the money collected as many people do not have the insurance to do so. OFDBM Navarro asked how many calls are received on average a year? Approximately twelve (12) calls. How does Tri-city handle these types of calls? Their services are under the Department of Health Services and they are required to respond. They are paid directly by the insurance department or the person is directly billed.

ICchief Southard has tried in the past to bring in Campo Bonito into our fire district. These areas (YMCA, Sycamore Boys Camp) are tax exempt leaving few homes within the fire district. Last annexation gave us a gain of \$100K tax revenue, out there it is \$7K but we would still have to offer them the same services. Doran: Yellow area outside of the black line on the chart provided. Subscriptions? Yes, but someone would have to go out there and sell them. They are still in a classification of 10 which is a very high fire area.

OFD is compensated for Wildland calls mostly done under State contract. Important to take a look at strategic planning and needs assessment what income is made vs. what is spent on our part to participate in these types of calls. Equipment is not covered by Wildlife calls and any crew called out is there for 14 days if need be. Engine boss and crew would be sent first. As the OFD does not currently have an engine boss, one is borrowed from another district. Albert Logan Ortiz is near in his certification as an engine boss. The crew sent received good training, networking, agency drills, etc. Decision will need to be made as the season for wildfires is closely approaching. Clerk Poole questioned if the in-state and out-of-state revenue was part of paying for equipment. ICchief Southard stated that it was partially; however, it is not income that we can count on.

ICchief Southard and chief officers questioned if they should continue to have the authority to make a decision on behalf of the OFD when these types of calls come in. OFDBM Navarro is in agreement for this to be scheduled as long as Oracle comes first. Tax payers will want their monies to go toward Oracle. OFD Board agreed that Oracle comes first. When calls come in, respond first by determining if the resources are available. If the decision to respond to Wildland fires leave Oracle unattended, then a crew should not be sent.

OFDBM Brown asked if OFD is under any liability when we respond to calls outside of our district. OFD is insured and personnel is covered, no matter what.

AFDA Conference was well attended, good classes on HR, payroll, budget and medical.

Engine 693 is back from Oracle Ford and up and running. The cost was \$2,320.00.

February 22, 2013 at 6:00 p.m. Friday. Appreciation and awards pot luck dinner will be held. All firefighters, board members, Oracle Firewise, Certs, will be invited. Current and past recognition for services will be noted.

Pinal County Treasurers Office will be holding a special district meeting on Tuesday, March 19, 2013. The board is invited to attend.

#5 Hiring a part-time assistant bookkeeper

OFD recommends the Board approval to fill this part-time position as follows:

- 1. Eight hours a week*
- 2. \$20.00 per hour*
- 3. Paid with allocated salary left over from former Chief's salary - \$7,538.00*
- 3. Recommends Carol Mahoney from Oracle who has worked as a CPA*

OFDBM Brown stated that this is a very important position that will be going through our monies, budget. The need is there, but a better procedure is necessary for protection.

OFDBM Navarro: IChief is our employee and we need to protect you and the transparency of the OFD.

IChief Southard: Can hire Carol at any time but wants OFD Board to support him.

Board is asking that IChief Southard go through applications that are received and pick the best candidate. Considerations: Certified CPA, last place of employment, normal background check, resume, criteria in being responsible for finances. OFD does have a standard hiring form that is currently being used. Goal is solid protection of the OFD and IChief.

Motion made by OFDBM Doran to allow IFire Chief Southard to hire a part-time bookkeeper to assist Chief Administrator Tina Acosta. This is to be done through the good hiring practices suggested by the board: Announcement of position, application, interview, background check and selection of best candidate. Clerk Poole seconded, all in favor, motion passed.

Call to Public

William Chopak P.O. Box 5440, Oracle, AZ.

Why do we not have the OFD water tanks assist in calls outside of our district? Perhaps subscriptions could be sold to those outside the district using this service.

IChief Southard answered that the tankers are used. One tanker carries 1,500 gallons and the other 3K.

Motion to adjourn meeting by OFDBM Doran, seconded by Clerk Poole. All in favor. Meeting was adjourned at 7:01 p.m.

Reminder made by Clerk Poole that board members need to submit their agenda items to her.