

**MINUTES OF A REGULAR MEETING OF THE
MESCAL-J6 FIRE DISTRICT GOVERNING BOARD
HELD WEDNESDAY, FEBUARY 22nd, 2023 AT 6:30 PM**

The meeting was called to order at 1832 hours by Board Chair Phyllis Ellis. Present at roll call were Board Members: Phyllis Ellis, Dana Law, Debi Wise, JoAnne Ellsworth and Bob Murray. A quorum existed.

Item 1: **Call to the Public:** This is the time for the public to comment. Members of the Board may not discuss items that are not specifically identified on the agenda. Therefore, pursuant to A.R.S. § 38-431.01(H), action taken as a result of public comment will be limited to directing staff to study the matter, responding to any criticism or scheduling the matter for further consideration and decision at a later date."

Mrs. McCool noted concerns regarding financial documentation and has submitted documentation further detailing those concerns, to be included as an attachment in the District's official minutes.

Item 2: **Minutes:** Review, discuss, and possible action to approve the Draft minutes of the January 30th 2023 Work Session and the January 25th 2023 Regular Board meeting.

JoAnne Ellsworth noted it was stated in a prior work session that prioritization most pressing issues would be the first focus.

JoAnne Ellsworth made a motion to approve the January 30th 2023 Work Session Draft minutes with corrections to line Item 1; adding - board requested a priority given to items that could be a legal issue. Bob Murray seconded. Motion carries 5 – 0 with Phyllis Ellis – yes, Dana Law – yes, Debi Wise – yes, JoAnne Ellsworth – yes and Bob Murray - yes.

Original information provided by JoAnne Ellsworth naming the entity in Item 6 of the Agenda as the University of Arizona was incorrect. Mrs. Ellsworth requested the entity name be updated to the Arizona Department of Health.

Debi Wise made a motion to approve the January 25th 2023 Regular Board meeting Draft minutes, with corrections to line item 6; changing University of Arizona to Arizona Department of Health services, changing the word fee to free and updating the minutes heading date. JoAnne Ellsworth seconded. Motion carries 5 – 0 with Phyllis Ellis – yes, Dana Law – yes, Debi Wise – yes, JoAnne Ellsworth – yes, and Bob Murray - yes.

Item 3: **Financial Report:** Natalie Galgano-Pinkley of Municipal Accounts & Consulting, will provide a brief summary of the District's recent financial activities. Board Members to review, discuss and possible board action to approve the January 2023 Financial Report, as prepared by Natalie Galgano-Pinkley of Municipal Accounts & Consulting.

Mrs. Ellis inquired if donations hit budget pages in the front.

Mrs. Galgano-Pinkley explained they don't hit the budget page, they are being ear tagged as bulk restricted for the Heli pad reinvestment that hits the balance sheet. Expenses are ear tagged as they come through, reviewed and accordingly wipe out the liability for somewhat of a wash.

Bob Murray inquired if the percentage of the budget had been removed from columns.

Mrs. Galgano-Pinkley replied that she would see if QuickBooks updated their format possibly removing that and she would get back to Mr. Murray next month.

Fire Chief John Moran asked Mrs. Galgano-Pinkley, is it my understanding that you will be presenting a newly formatted cash flow projection next month. Mrs. Galgano-Pinkley replied, yes there will be a new format for page 1, giving a more comprehensive depiction of the statutory requirement for cash flow and what will happen in the future. Mrs.

Galgano-Pinkley added we can go back to the original format, if you prefer, after. Chief asked if we could have both versions included with next month's review for comparison. Mrs. Galgano-Pinkley replied yes.

Debi Wise made a motion to accept as given the January 2023 Financial Report. Dana Law seconded. Motion carries 5 – 0 with Phyllis Ellis – yes, Dana Law – yes, Debi Wise – yes, JoAnne Ellsworth – yes and Bob Murray - yes.

Item 4: **Fire Chief Report:** Fire Chief John Moran's report is included as an attachment in the District's official minutes.

No board action taken.

Item 5: **Policies & Procedures:** Review of the types and scope of previous and current policies & procedures in comparison to policies & procedures recommended by Lexipol. Possible action may include scheduling a work session related to District financial procedures

and/or directing staff to conduct additional research, and/or the approval of interim financial policies as recommended by staff.

Chief Moran identified issues and policies to lead off with as paying bills, payroll and video/audio for board meetings, among others. Lexipol will be customizing to us, while using their format and lawyers.

Debi Wise made a motion to accept the timeline of Chief providing for approval; Chapters 1 & 8 for next meeting and Chapters 2 & 3 by June 30th for addition to our Policies and Procedures. Dana Law seconded. Motion carries 5 – 0 with Phyllis Ellis – yes, Dana Law – yes, Debi Wise – yes, JoAnne Ellsworth – yes and Bob Murray - yes.

- Item 6:** **Public Records Policies & Procedures:** Review of the District's current Public Records Policy in comparison to other public agencies with similar demographics, discussion related to records request fulfillment times and appropriate/allowable fees to be charged for request fulfillment and legislation currently in discussion at the State level. Possible action may include the revision of the existing records request policy and procedure and/or directing staff to provide additional information to be reviewed at a later date.
- Mrs. Ellis asked Chief Moran if he still has the directives the Ombudsman gave him. Chief Moran responded, sure, he will find it for follow up.
- Staff is directed by the Board to follow up with additional information for review at a later date.

- Item 7:** **Personnel Records:** Review, discussion and possible action to determine, at the advice of the District's legal counsel and the State of Arizona's Ombudsman's Office, what employee payroll information will be designated a public record and what will remain confidential.

Chief Moran explained he is ready to change this policy, if there is a motion.

JoAnne Ellsworth made a motion to cease redaction of names on financial reports but still redact bank account numbers. Dana Law seconded. Motion carries 5 – 0 with Phyllis Ellis – yes, Dana Law – yes, Debi Wise – yes, JoAnne Ellsworth – yes and Bob Murray - yes.

- Item 8:** **Social Media:** Review, discussion and possible action related to the District's

social media presence, with an emphasis on providing the public a reliable, user-friendly means to view governing board meetings, either in real-time or after the fact, via Facebook and/or other websites/services.

Mrs. Ellis explained, we need to continue looking into options and anything we consider using needs to be tested prior to jumping into it.

Chief Moran responded his plan for next meeting is upload to live YouTube while also doing the backup recording. Mrs. Ellis replied, as long as we post on our Facebook page where the public needs to go to locate the meeting.

No board action taken.

Item 9: **Length of Service Awards**: Chief Moran will present Captain Joshua Olander with an award for 10 years of service to the Mescal-J6 Fire District and the community we serve.

No board action taken.

Item 10: **Used Vehicle Purchase**: Review, discussion and possible action to approve the purchase of a used Utility Task Vehicle (UTV).

Board members questioned the overall quality of the UTV and whether it would serve the Districts needs efficiently. Dana Law added he thinks this vehicle would be a great asset to the District but he would rather see a 4-seater to carry more personnel. JoAnne Ellsworth noted that she would like to see the vision for purchases such as this included in the Five-Year Plan.

Bob Murray made a motion to table the purchase of the UTV awaiting more information. Debi Wise seconded the motion. Motion carries 5 – 0 with Phyllis Ellis – yes, Debi Wise – yes, JoAnne Ellsworth – yes, Dana Law – yes and Bob Murray - yes.

Item 11: **Five-Year Plan Priorities**: Review, discussion and possible action to identify and prioritize specific goals as outlined the District's current Five-Year Plan.

Mrs. Ellis explained that we need to discuss priorities in order to have a clearer vision for the future and path on how we will get there.

Debi Wise made a motion to schedule a Work Session on Wednesday March 8th 2023 at 6:30pm to discuss the Five-Year Plan. Dana Law seconded the motion. Motion carries 5 - 0 with Phyllis Ellis – yes, Debi Wise – yes, JoAnne Ellsworth – yes, Dana Law – yes and Bob Murray - yes.

- Item 12: **Volunteer Appreciation**: Review, discussion and possible action related to the District's participation in the President's Volunteer Service Award Program and other means of managing and recognizing volunteers for their service to the District and the community we serve.

Debi Wise made a motion to discuss the volunteer program further and the possibility of adding it to the Five-Year plan, at the Work Session, Wednesday March 8th 2023, 6:30pm. Bob Murray seconded the motion. Motion carries 4 – 1 with Phyllis Ellis – yes, Debi Wise – yes, JoAnne Ellsworth – yes, Bob Murray – yes and Dana Law - no.

- Item 13: **SAFER Grant Application**: Chief Moran will provide an update on the District's preparation for the Staffing for Adequate Fire and Emergency Response Grant.

Chief Moran explained the SAFER Grant is a staffing grant, providing funds to hire firefighters. It's a 3-year phase, paying out less money each year. Documents have been submitted through Lexipol and it remains to be seen what will happen, it closes in 2 weeks or so. If we are approved, we will present resolution for the Board to accept. Lexipol may also require adjustments.

Bob Murray asked what exactly is being requested. Chief Moran replied, 3 full-time positions, no benefits, low pay but it's a start. If we have to reduce to 2, per any recommendations of Lexipol, then that is what we will go with. Mr. Murray asked if we have an in-effect date. Chief Moran replied it depends when awards are made as they occur throughout the year. Chief Moran hopes for start of next calendar year. Mr. Murray stated the reason for his inquiry is to know how the new staffing will be affected with the possibility of a new fire house, those expenses, and the loss of the grant in the future. Chief Moran responded; those are two different issues that will take care of themselves. We are after steady help during the day, to be paid out of salary and wages. Reserve funds will assist the building and help us obtain the USDA loan.

No board action taken.

Item 14: **Adjourn:** JoAnne Ellsworth made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Dana Law seconded the motion. Motion carries 5 - 0 with Phyllis Ellis – yes, Dana Law – yes, Debi Wise – yes, JoAnne Ellsworth – yes and Bob Murray - yes.

Phyllis Ellis adjourned the meeting at 2034 hours.

Minutes compiled and submitted by:
Denise Serna
Office Administrator