



REGULAR MEETING and BUDGET HEARING
OF THE MESCAL-J6 FIRE DISTRICT BOARD

Wednesday, May 27, 2026, 6:30 PM

98 N. Oak Drive Benson, AZ 85602

Minutes

Call to Order 6:31 pm

Roll Call:

Chairman Dana Law Present
Clerk Debi Wise Present
Board Member Sonja Salcido Present
Board Member Wade Temple Present
Board Member William Clowers Present
Chief Nied Present
A quorum is present.

Other notables present:

Cochise County Treasurer Cathy Traywick
Elizabeth Riopel, Municipal Accounts and Consulting
Natalie Galgano, Municipal Accounts and Consulting

Clerk Wise noted that the posted notice contained a typographical error in the title (referring to a 'Special Meeting'). This is a Regular Meeting as correctly described in the body of the notice. This error does not invalidate the meeting, and the meeting proceeded as proper notice was provided pursuant to the agenda. The correction is noted in the minutes.

Item 1: PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Item 2: BOARD COMMENTS / CALL TO THE PUBLIC

Board member comments:

Chairman Law stated that the District has an open-door policy. The Chief is available usually Monday, Wednesday, and Thursday for any questions, comments, or concerns. Questions may also be emailed, or the Chief's and Board members' phone numbers are available online. Due to misinformation circulating in the community, the District encourages anyone with questions to reach out directly for clarification.



Clerk Wise read a board statement on District procedures for the record:

"The Mescal J6 Fire District Board operates under the advice and consent of the District's professional support team. This team includes the District's legal counsel, CPA accounting firm, Cochise County, the State of Arizona, and our financial institutions, where applicable.

These professionals are retained for their expertise in the laws, regulations, processes, and procedures that govern fire district operations, and they share in the liability associated with the District's decisions. Members of the public, including those who have formerly held positions within the District, do not hold this professional responsibility or liability.

It would be a dereliction of the Board and staff's fiduciary duties to prioritize informal advice from any member of the public on legal, financial, budgetary, operational, or procedural matters over the guidance provided by the District's qualified professionals and partners.

Therefore, the Mescal J6 Fire District Board and staff reaffirm that the District will continue to operate exclusively under the advice and consent of its professional support team. This ensures full compliance with Arizona law and best protects the interests of the District and the community we serve.

The District's legal counsel has reviewed, approved, and affirmed that this statement is a restatement of established principles under Arizona law.

This statement is presented for the record and does not require Board action, as this statement is a clarification of current District practices. This full statement will be entered verbatim into the official minutes of this meeting."

Call to the Public:

No speakers signed up on the sign-up sheet.

No action taken.

Item 3:

APPROVED MINUTES:

Motion to approve the minutes made by William Clowers; seconded by Sonja Salcido.

Discussion:

Correct the spelling of "Kathy" to "Cathy".

Vote:

Wade Temple Yes

Sonja Salcido Yes

William Clowers Yes

Debi Wise Yes

Dana Law Yes



Approved the minutes of the Regular Meeting for April 29, 2026.

Item 4: APPROVED FINANCIAL REPORT

Motion to approve the financial report as presented by Elizabeth Riopel of Municipal Accounts and Consulting made by Debi Wise; seconded by Wade Temple.

No discussion.

Vote:

Wade Temple Yes

Sonja Salcido Yes

William Clowers Yes

Debi Wise Yes

Dana Law Yes

Approved the April 2026 Financial Report created by Municipal Accounts and Consulting.

Item 5: REVIEW OF THE FY2027 FIVE-YEAR PLAN:

Discussion: Chief Nied clarified that the order of the priorities on the 5-year plan may change, but the priorities themselves remain.

Reviewed the Draft FY2027 Five-Year Plan.

No action taken.

Item 6: REVIEW OF THE FY2027 BUDGET PACKAGE:

Discussion: The budget has not changed since it was proposed last month. The AG form has been filled out. The District's CPA has thoroughly reviewed it.

Reviewed the Draft FY2027 Operations & Maintenance Budget and the Draft 2027 Reserve Budget.

No action taken.

Item 7: PUBLIC HEARING:

Chairman Law opened the public hearing for comment on the FY2027 Operations and Maintenance Budget, the FY2027 Reserve Budget, and the FY2027 Five-Year Plan. The meeting was broadcast live via Zoom.



No written questions, comments, or concerns were submitted in advance.
No questions, comments, or concerns were submitted during the 20-day proposed budget posting period.

Mary McCool addressed the Board concerning the District's budget, process, financials, and various other topics. She stated that her numbers did not match the District's accountant's numbers and asked questions. Mary McCool argued with Chairman Law and Ms. Traywick about the standard three-minute limit for public comment. She stated she would "contest" the time constraint and began to yell. Ms. Traywick reminded Ms. McCool that three minutes is the standard, does not require placement on the agenda, and asked her not to use her time yelling but to state her comments. Mary McCool threw her written comments onto the Board's table in a scattered manner and began to speak. After speaking for approximately five minutes, Chairman Law called time and reminded Ms. McCool to keep her statements relevant to the budget. Ms. McCool continued to argue with Chairman Law regarding the relevancy of the various topics she was raising. Two members of the public, Bruce Andrews and an unknown woman, shouted that they would yield their speaking time to Ms. McCool. Chairman Law noted that this is not the way it is done, (as there was no indication they were going to speak). Chairman Law allowed Ms. McCool additional time; her total speaking time was approximately 23 minutes.

Clerk Wise noted that any questions, comments, or concerns could have easily been addressed, had they been submitted in advance.

Chairman Law closed the Public Hearing.

Item 8: ADOPTION OF THE FY2027 OPERATIONS AND MAINTENANCE BUDGET PACKAGE:

Motion to approve the adoption of the FY2027 Operations and Maintenance Budget made by Debi Wise; seconded by William Clowers.

Discussion:

Natalie Galgano clarified the budget process, the AG form, the hours invested, and the conservative yet realistic nature of the solid budget.

Vote:

Wade Temple Yes
Sonja Salcido Yes
William Clowers Yes
Debi Wise Yes
Dana Law Yes

Approved adoption of the FY2027 Operations & Maintenance Budget.



Item 9: ADOPTION OF FY2027 RESERVE BUDGET

Motion to approve the adoption of the FY2027 Reserve Budget made by Wade Temple; Seconded by William Clowers.

Discussion:

Clerk Wise read the reserve figures for 2025–2027. Ms. Traywick explained reserve funds and how past reserves prevented the District from going into the red despite past significant unexpected expenditures.

Vote:

Wade Temple Yes

Sonja Salcido Yes

William Clowers Yes

Debi Wise Yes

Dana Law Yes

Approved adoption of the FY2027 Reserve Budget.

Item 10: ADOPTION OF THE FY2027 5-YEAR PLAN.

Motion to approve the adoption of the FY2027 5-Year plan made by Wade Temple; Seconded by Sonja Salcido.

Discussion:

Clerk Wise noted the significant and exciting items on the 5-year plan and commended Chief Nied.

Vote:

Wade Temple Yes

Sonja Salcido Yes

William Clowers Yes

Debi Wise Yes

Dana Law Yes

Approved adoption of the FY2027 5-Year Plan.

Item 11: CHIEF'S REPORT

Update on District operations.

No action taken

Item 12: FUTURE MEETING SCHEDULE



Next regular meeting of the Board of Directors will be June 24, 2026.

Item 13: **FUTURE AGENDA ITEM(S):**
None brought forth.

Item 14: **ADJOURN**
Motion to approve adjournment made by Wade Temple; seconded by Sonja Salcido.

Vote:
Wade Temple Yes
Sonja Salcido Yes
William Clowers Yes
Debi Wise Yes
Dana Law Yes

Meeting adjourned at 7:43 PM

Minutes compiled and submitted by:
Deborah Wise
Mescal J6 Fire District Board Clerk