

**MINUTES OF SPECIAL MEETING AND PUBLIC HEARING OF THE
MESCAL-J6 FIRE DISTRICT GOVERNING BOARD
HELD WEDNESDAY, JUNE 29th, 2022 AT 7:30 PM**

The meeting was called to order at 1953 hours by Board Chair Mark Lee. Present at roll call were Board Members: Mary Bowen, Mark Lee, Phyllis Ellis, and Robert Murray. Brian Hughes was absent.

Item 1: Review of the FY2023 Five-Year Plan: Review and discussion regarding the Draft FY2022/2023 Five-Year Plan.

Mr. Mark Lee stated, the Five-year plan can certainly serve as a strategic plan, it outlines what the fire district intends to do, where they intend to go and things that they are going to try to accomplish. It may not be in a format other fire districts find their plans are in, but it still serves that purpose. Mr. Lee added, he knows Chief Moran is seeking a way to have full-time firefighters staffed, it's a complicated process but we need to implement this as soon as possible. Fire Chief Moran and Mr. Lee both agreed this should be a high priority for the district. Chief Moran stated, he thinks the plan presented is a joint effort, it's not a perfect plan but it's an agreeable plan and it's doable. Mrs. Ellis stated, she agrees that it was a joint effort and reiterated the suggestion of trying to get together more often as a work session to build on this for when we get ready to start this again next year.

Item 2: Review of the FY2022/2023 Budget Package: Review and discussion regarding the Draft 2022/2023 Operations & Maintenance Budget and the Draft 2022/2023 Reserve Budget.

Chief Moran stated, he was able to secure three sets of turnouts and stayed within the amount the board approved three months ago, which was a heck of an endeavor. On average the turnouts have gone up 21% in the last 4-5 months. Everything is going up across the board, as we all know. Chief Moran explained, he wants to put people on full-time and we need to start doing that, but he has run the numbers from here to Sunday and it is not feasible to hire somebody knowing that financial position we are in as a district and a country, he thinks it would be reckless. Regarding insurance, costs change considerably when you go from Volunteers to Full-time because the risk is higher. What we currently have budgeted for salaries and wages is insufficient to be able to hire anyone full-time. Chief Moran added, we need to cap shifts at 10 shifts a month, prioritizing mental well-being and minimizing physical risk to firefighters, increase stipends we are paying existing members but specifically for evening hours, where there is the most lacking in personnel. Chief Moran concluded with, staffing, in district coverage and the manning needed to aid stations out of district, continues to be an issue.

Item 3: Public Hearing: The Board Chair will open the public hearing and accept comments regarding the FY2022/2023 Operations and Maintenance Budget, the FY2022/2023 Reserve Budget, and the FY2022/2023 Five-Year Plan.

Mr. Mark Lee stated, this is the time giving an opportunity to the public to give input and make suggestions regarding the budget. The budget has been posted for a minimum of 20 days, as required by law, posted in three place and on the website, Chief Moran set up an email system for those unable to attend tonight to submit questions, concerns and/or suggestions. Mr. Lee added that there is no one in the audience this evening so there will be no public input that he is aware of, other than an email he received, which he will read.

Email received from Cody Evans, concerning next year's budget, and read by Mr. Lee. "My name is Cody Evans, a resident of Red Hawk, within the MJFD service area. I am writing to express my views and opinions regarding the upcoming budget. First of all, Mary McCool and her fake, self-serving CDO are a joke. Every month she comes in with some criticizing remarks and no solutions. It's sad and unfortunate she doesn't support our rural fire district. Secondly, this department has had a surplus of funding year after year, yet the fire trucks look like a thrown together fleet from pick a-part or the junk yard. The volunteers deserve to be compensated and its time this department starts to move forward and progress, having a new station, clean new and well running trucks, equipment, and full-time competent firefighters and EMTs to serve our rural community. This district also has not kept up with the times by requesting tax increases regularly, to fund critical services. Fry Fire district, Whetstone and Sunsites Pearce have increased taxes yearly and as such have sustainable departments to fully serve the community with plenty of trucks, equipment, and employees. Brian, it's a shame you don't bring more ideas to the table here being on one of those departments! I support the department and I'd like to see this podunk department progress and start making forward progress to be a real department. This isn't a two-horse town anymore and we deserve a department that is able to meet our needs! You'll never appreciate the fire department until you need them."

With no other questions or comments from the public or the board, Mr. Mark Lee adjourned the Public Hearing portion of the meeting at 1959 hours.

Item 4: Adoption of the FY2022/2023 Budget Package: Review, discussion and possible action to adopt the FY 2022/2023 Operations & Maintenance Budget, the FY2022/2023 Reserve Budget and the FY2022/2023 Five-Year Plan.

Mary Bowen made a motion to adopt the FY2022/2023 Budget Package. Phyllis Ellis seconded the motion. Motion carries 4 – 0 with Mary Bowen – yes, Mark Lee – yes, Phyllis Ellis – yes, Robert Murray – yes

Item 5: Adjourn: Mary Bowen made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Phyllis Ellis seconded the motion. Motion carries 4 – 0 with Mary Bowen – yes, Mark Lee – yes, Phyllis Ellis – yes, Robert Murray – yes.

Mark Lee adjourned the meeting at 2021 hours.

Minutes compiled and submitted by:

Denise Serna

Administrative Assistant