



MESCAL-J6 FIRE DISTRICT

448 N. Warren Rd. Benson, AZ 85602

Phone (520)586-4690 Fax (520)586-8598

Fire Chief Report

February 2025

Presented at March 2025 Board Meeting

Incidents: 45 total; fire (3); EMS (25); other (17). Mutual aid received -1; given -1.

Total for 2025 – 45 ; 2024-37– up 8 calls. **This represents a 17% increase.**

Hazard Mitigation Collections: \$1300 collected in and deposited since the last Board meeting. Fourteen calls still in cue with over \$14K still working on. \$15K collected since back on track with data entry. Three more calls uploaded.

Apparatus:

Awaiting final costs for the frontline pumper rebuilt engine. Estimates are approx. 12K.

Chief's car did not have brights on headlights, so added. Spotlight, other small in-house repairs done.

Estimated **savings** were \$2000.

We have been working with board member Nervik to donate old airpicks to Caborca, Mexico. A donation spreadsheet was created, necessary paperwork done and Mr. Nervik will be taking donated packs to his contact. All appropriate paperwork, hold-harmless documentation, etc will be done. Also, we will be looking to donate our useable old WL clothing.

Project: Helipad and Repeater: The repeater issue is on hold for a bit until we can see more clearly what Bluespan will be able to do. Thank you to board member Nervik for his work on the helipad. Last steps were electrical, required lighting and signage. Project nearing completion.

Strategic plan draft done and out to internal committee and board for review. Then vote to accept. Following that, will be external stakeholders' meetings to roll out and answer questions.

We have a new Mission Statement, again taking the external and internal stakeholders' thoughts into high consideration it now reads:

"Our mission is to protect life and property while enhancing the well-being of those we serve through strength, integrity and relentless commitment."



MESCAL-J6 FIRE DISTRICT

448 N. Warren Rd. Benson, AZ 85602

Phone (520)586-4690 Fax (520)586-8598

Activities:

Initial meeting to begin generating ideas about the upcoming new External Customer Communication Program. Good ideas shared and there will be a well-developed plan for this. While it will also be within the strategic plan, it would have been done regardless.

Attended CCEMS/CCFCA meetings. Chief Buonacorsi from Palominas is retiring. New officers elected. We are hosting the next meetings 3/26.

I will be attending AASD/CC training on budgeting, cash flow management, etc in April. I am hoping to raise my level of knowledge in this area as we begin to create what will be the first budget this board and Fire Chief have created.

Capt Olander and I met online for the first 'onboarding' of the new ESO reporting platform. This move should have occurred last year but was not completed. ESO bought out ER, which is our current EMS/FIRE/Other calls documentation software. It also houses all of our history on each apparatus, training records, etc. A contract was originally signed for in '23, with that year being \$0 cost, this year moving to 50% or approx. \$3100, and now we are due to pay the regular subscription rate of \$6100. We have reviewed what the system does for us and must recommend that we continue at this time. We have a lot of data in the system to assist us with making decisions, we must have the ability to upload into NFIRS (soon to convert to NERIS), as well as NEMSIS, and this does it automatically for us. We keep track of ALL dept training that is done (not just Lexipol). Lexipol only keeps track of what is taught in Lexipol, and we do so much more as well as training that is relevant to our district and our mutual aid partners. If the board votes to move to ERInsurance, then this module in Lexipol becomes free and we are not losing by having two systems. However, we will need to do our best to get up to speed on policies/procedures we wish to glean out of Lexipol before June 25, when it would be due to renew that part of their platform, to the tune of about \$4000. If we can get it done, we can save that money also.

I had a lengthy meeting with Elizabeth from MAC and we went over budget concerns. It appears all is tracking well and concerns raised do not appear to be a factor. The influx of tax dollars as compared with expenses coming due, do not always line up directly. We are meeting weekly now until end of fiscal to ensure we are on top of subject. We rely on our professionals that have lots of letters after their names to be up to speed and date of current, best practices. They are continuously receiving education and training in their respective fields the same as our FF do.

I attended a webinar about website accessibility. It was hosted by AASD, which you will remember we were a founding member of. The subject matter was the Federal Mandate within the ADA laws, set to take effect April 27. It was STRONGLY suggested that no one sit on their hands with this one. It is about



MESCAL-J6 FIRE DISTRICT

making sure that those who are having trouble seeing our online documents are able to access them. Documents will need to be "remediated" by types of software to ensure this is done, 448 N. Warren Rd. Benson, AZ 85602

Phone (520)586-4690 Fax (520)586-8598

done correctly and within the new laws. We will begin looking into this and it will become part of our strategic plan moving forward. Currently there are no grants fitting this work, but it's possible there will be some moving forward. It can be pricey to hire a company to do it, with figures such as \$1K/mo plus \$6-7/per pg remediated. Much more to come on this. We will be watching CO as they are the 'guinea pig' state for roll out in next month or so.

Mr. Temple, Mr Nervik and I have been working on the roll out of the Zoom platform. I took a tutorial, and feel a bit more comfortable. However, if we are going to set up Zoom for our meetings, it will take a bit of work, as it cannot be a board member who runs it at the meeting. It must be someone who has requisite knowledge and is strictly focused on making sure attendees are taken care of. It is our opinion that we create a volunteer job description (which is an area we need to improve upon), do interviews and make sure we are utilizing the right person to do this. Utilization was passed and is in the Dec minutes and it has been purchased (\$160/yr). We just need this final, but important step, and we'll be able to make it happen. It is our goal to have it in place for the April meeting provided we find an individual capable and acceptable.

Capt Olander and I met with Cheryl from GIS concerning properties on our southwest and northwest areas who have not been updated in the Pima County GIS system, causing "pinging" back and forth between SEACOM, Benson Dispatch and Pima County dispatch. This can and has resulted in delayed dispatch times. We have agreed to what we already have had in place and now since all the fire chief's are on the same set of music, it is our hope that PC GIS will update these ESBs in their dispatching criteria, reducing this potential delayed time to emergency assistance.

Grant Activities

No news on our Gary Sinese Foundation grant for 7 AED's and all accompanying equipment. Hopefully soon. Only time will tell how our needs stack up against others.

GOHS grant is in. We are asking for lighter, electrically driven extrication equipment. There are numerous benefits to this including: reduced weight, resulting in one person being able to carry and potentially operate, resulting in decreased chance of back or other injuries. More power in spreaders and cutters, potentially decreasing extrication time, which in turn decreases time to surgical care, which then leads to very impactful results in patient outcomes as it pertains to the "Golden Hour". We are trying for RAMs and air bags, both of which our current ones are not reliable and are heavy, cumbersome and one person cannot move without risk of injury.

NVFC-Nutella Grant written for 6- scene lights. The number one statistical injury on the emergency scene is sprains and strains. In an effort to reduce the potential for these injuries, we have written for the lighter extrication tools, and also these light, but powerful lights, which will illuminate the scene



MESCAL-J6 FIRE DISTRICT

and allow personnel to see better where they are stepping, setting up gear, etc. It is estimated that a single serious FF back injury can now be expected to cost over \$250K. Because our personnel on scene

448 N. Warren Rd. Benson, AZ 85602

Phone (520)586-4690 Fax (520)586-8598

are limited in numbers, having this type of equipment is a good risk reduction addition. These lights will also operate on the same batteries that our extrication tools do, making it more efficient as well.

DFFM (wildland) grant has been received and is being set up in spreadsheet, issued to personnel and a specific file created for any and all items pertaining. This is a matching grant and if awarded, we will match \$2700, sometime in mid-April.

The AFG grant has been submitted, but all grants are on hold due to DOGE activity. We wrote for structural PPE to replace those going out of timed service in 2025. We are hopeful this will be awarded, and our match will be in the \$700 range.

We will then again *consider* writing for the SAFER grant, asking to fund most likely between 3-6 personnel IF it reopens.

We will be looking to write (if opened) a Fire Prevention and Safety grant (FPS) to conduct a CRA-SOC. This stands for Community Risk Assessment-Standards Of Cover. It results in a document that plays hand-in-hand with a Strategic Plan. WE WILL ONLY BE DOING THIS IF WE GET A GRANT. It will cost approximately \$12K. It would be a huge tool to be able to make data-driven decisions. More to come....

We had our initial overview by potential new insurance vendor RT Emergency. It showed numerous savings, increased coverages, coverage now included in items that should have been, but were not included in past VFIS plans. We estimate savings overall, and the addition of numerous services for our employees, such as life insurance, long-term disability, ADD and others. It also includes a basic mental health program, which is absolutely necessary in today's fire/EMS services.

I am working with GTFF on physicals and cancer screening for our FF. At this point I do not have any firm numbers, costs or what would be expected of MJ6FD. It is critical that we move in this direction for our personnel's health and well-being. How often, which portions of a 1582 physical, etc still need discussed. More to come.....

I instructed (gratis) an Incident Safety Officer course on March 18&19. Captain Olander attended.

END