



# TUBAC FIRE DISTRICT

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TUBAC FIRE DISTRICT BOARD MEETING MINUTES  
REGULAR MEETING OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS  
March 27, 2024

1. Call to order and Pledge of Allegiance: The meeting was called to order at 1:30 p.m. by Sandy Johnson. The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.
2. Roll call of Board Members: Sandy Johnson, Rich Bohman and Mary Dahl were present at Tubac Community Center. Peter Benequista, attended by Zoom. Also, in attendance, Fire Chief Ben Guerrero, Deputy Chief Hesly Guerrero, John Conger, Esai Tapia, and Bianca Hamric. Gabe Buldra attended on behalf of James Vincent Group. Members of the public in attendance were Ron Campana, Kathi Campana, John Combo, Mindy Maddock, Mary Vanis, and Captain Charlie Alvarez.
3. Reading of public comments submitted via email: None.
4. Call to the public: Mary Vanis from the Santa Cruz Valley Citizens Council expressed her gratitude to the Fire Chief and to the Deputy Fire Chief for attending the council meeting last month. Tubac Fire District suppression staff also attended the meeting and gave a presentation on fire extinguisher instruction. Captain Charlie Alvarez, a Tubac Fire District employee wanted to share with the Board and public his perspective working for Fire Chief Guerrero. Captain Alvarez stated that Chief Guerrero has been doing an exceptional job with staff and represents the District admirably.
5. Correspondence: None.
6. Report from Board Members: Rich Bohman reported that March 12, 2024, he was sworn into the position as the Public Safety Personal Retirement System Board Chairman. Adriana Olea was sworn into the position as the PSPRS Secretary. The next PSPRS meeting is tentatively scheduled for November 2024. Sandy Johnson stated that the agenda items for today's meeting will not be in consecutive order due to Item #16 being in executive session. Item #15 and #17 will be discussed prior to Item #16 for the interest of the attendees.
7. Chief and Staff Report: Chief Guerrero, Deputy Chief Hesly Guerrero and John Conger provided the following to the Board:
  - a. Operations Update.
  - b. Training.
  - c. Administration Update.
8. Monthly Financial Report for February 2024: Gabe Buldra presented the financial reports for the month of February 2024. Gabe reported that total revenue for the month of February was \$205,343. Total Revenue is over budget by \$51,767 for the month. Tax-Levy Revenue came in at \$97,152 and Non-Tax Levy Revenue came in at \$108,190. Total Expenses were \$315,846 which was over budget by \$11,307. Personnel Expenses and was at

\$237,133 and was over budget by \$4,762. Vehicle and Equipment was at \$48,482 and was over budget by \$24,032. This is mostly due to the purchasing of turnout gear for suppression personnel that was Board-approved in January 2024.

The remaining categories all came in under budget for the month. Fiscal Year-to-date, total revenue was at \$3,452,479 and Total Expenses were at \$2,813,666 at month's end.

9. Budget update for fiscal year 2025: Gabe Buldra reported to the Board the assessed value for the District increased 9.8%. The initial budget projections were based on a 4.3% growth rate. This increase in the assessed value will help secure revenue for the District in the new fiscal year of 2025. Gabe reported to the Board he will provide an update of the projected budget for the new fiscal year at the April Board meeting. He also stated that he would be requesting a tentative adoption of the budget in May and a request for final adoption in June.
10. Consent Agenda: Mary Dahl made a motion to approve the consent agenda. Rich Bohman seconded the motion; all were in favor; the motion passed.
  - a. Approval of minutes from February 28, 2024.
  - b. Approval of monthly financial reports.
11. Discussion and possible action to provide a letter of endorsement for Dark Sky's designation to the Tubac Dark Sky Committee.

Mr. Benequista stated that the Board can agree on the good aspects of dark skies for Tubac, but the Board should not project authority on the science of this endorsement. Rich Bohman concurred with Mr. Benequista but is still in favor of the endorsement. Mary Dahl stated although the Board members are not astronomers or scientists, this letter of endorsement is for a good cause, and she sees no harm in approving it. Mary Dahl made a motion to approve the letter of endorsement for Dark Skies designation to the Tubac Dark Sky Committee; Rich Bohman seconded the motion; Peter Benequista voted nay. The motion passed.
12. Discussion and possible action to approve the purchase of two Type I ambulances at cost not to exceed \$477,650,41.

Fire Chief Guerrero is recommending the Board approve the purchase of two Type 1 ambulances due to the cost increases expected each year and the production time of the ambulances. The Fire Chief explained to the Board the benefits of ordering multiple units, giving the District a projected savings of \$16,353.35 and expediting the ambulance currently on order. Rich Bohman inquired about when payment would be due. The Fire Chief stated that payment would be due at the time of delivery. Sandy Johnson referenced the Republic EVS Agreement and questioned the statement, "*Any price changes will be invoiced to the purchaser*". Gabe Buldra stated he hasn't seen this vendor make price changes to other Districts for ambulance orders outside of the quote given. Rich Bohman made a motion to approve the purchase of two Type I ambulances at a cost not to exceed \$477,650,41. Mary Dahl seconded the motion; all were in favor. The motion passed.
13. Discussion and possible action to approve the renewal of our IT services with Nextrio.

Deputy Fire Chief Hesly Guerrero recommended the Board approve Nextrio IT service contract for 12 months. The contract duration time would be 4/1/2024 - 3/31/2025. Deputy Chief Guerrero stated that he did receive an estimate from another company but there were no significant savings. Deputy Chief described to the Board the protocol when the District is in need of IT support from Nextrio and said they do a good job with the services they provide. Mary Dahl moved to approve the service contract with Nextrio for the amount of \$4,582.00 per month for the next 12 months and urged staff to explore other options; Rich Bohman seconded the motion; all were in favor. The motion passed.

14. Discussion only on a possible lease for temporary crew quarters between Mariposa Community Health Services and Tubac Fire District.

The Fire Chief discussed with the Board the possibility of moving crew quarters to the Mariposa Clinic in Tubac during the construction of Station #1. The building is owned by the Tubac Healthcare Foundation and the lease would be a sub-lease from Mariposa Community Clinic. The facility would need to be fitted to support crew quarters and the lease with these details is pending. Chief Guerrero stated he expects to be able present the lease to the Board next month.

17. Fire Station #1 items:

a) Discussion only USDA Rural Development grant update.

Chief Guerrero updated the Board on the USDA Rural Development grant. The Chief stated that his persistence with the USDA has paid off and the application is complete. He stated that we should receive a Letter of Approval in April.

b) Station update.

Chief Guerrero reported to the Board his meeting with Breckenridge Group Architects. He stated the discussion of the meeting focused on the footprint of the new building and the areal extent of the property. Chief Guerrero stated he discussed a better floor plan that would help the employee workflow in their daily activities.

c) Tower Update.

Juan Balderas, Chief Information Officer for the County, reported the tower update to the Board. He stated that the new tower has been ordered and in 3 weeks' time excavation for the footing and foundation for the tower will begin. Mr. Balderas projected the tower project should be complete by June.

15. Fire Chief Evaluation Process simplification.

Peter Benequista brought forth to the Board this motion regarding the simplification of the evaluation process. He asks the Board to have an open discussion regarding the by-laws and to discuss the Fire Chief job description. Mr. Benequista would like for the Board to consider two proposed motions:

Motion 1: I move to add the following sentence to By-laws Article II, Section 5, paragraph D, Effective July 1,2024: "This process is to be completed no later than 65 days prior to the end of the current one-year term as defined in the Chief's Employment Agreement." Mr. Johnson seconded the motion for the purposes of discussion. After considerable discussion, Rich Bohman suggested the matter be tabled. Mr. Johnson withdrew his second and asked Mr. Benequista if he could withdraw his motion. Mr. Benequista declined and restated his motion. The motion dies for lack of a second.

Motion 2: I move to adopt the attached two-page, five item Fire Chief Job Description, effective July 1, 2024.

Mr. Johnson seconded the motion for the purposes of discussion.

Mary Dahl stated that she does not support the attached two-paragraph Fire Chief job description because of the absence of standard job description elements such as Knowledge of, Skill in, Ability to. She also stated that there were no minimum qualifications included.

Sandy Johnson suggested to Mr. Benequista that this motion may need to be tabled because it needs more discussion and review. Sandy Johnson also suggested that this needs to be reviewed by Human Resources before it is brought to the Board. Mr. Johnson withdrew his second and asked Mr. Benequista if he might withdraw his motion. Mr. Benequista declined and restated his motion. The motion died for lack of a second.

16. Discussion and possible action on the Fire Chief Guerrero's performance evaluation.  
Mary Dahl made a motion to adjourn into executive session for purposes of discussing the Fire Chiefs performance evaluation pursuant to A.R.S 38-431 03 A1.
  - Discussion only on the Fire Chief's evaluation in Executive Session at 4:04 p.m.
  - Executive Session adjourned at 4:25 p.m.
  
18. Future agenda items: Station #1 project.
  
19. Next meeting: April 24, 2024, at 1:30 p.m. and to be held at the Tubac Community Center in Tubac.
  
20. Adjourn meeting: Mary Dahl moved to adjourn the meeting at 4:30 p.m. and Rich Bohman seconded the motion; all were in favor; the motion passed.