



SONOITA-ELGIN FIRE DISTRICT



“PROUD PAST STRONG FUTURE”

August 24, 2020 Board meeting Minutes **DRAFT**

AGENDA:

A. Call to Order. At 0905

B. Roll Call of Board Members

Chris Johnson, Reba Webber, Kurt Bahti (he left about 0940), Annette Dorney, and Sue Archibald (left about 1100) all present. Brenda Tranchina, Staff and members of the public also present.

C. Pledge of Allegiance.

Prior to call to the Public, Chris Johnson gave the following notice:

1. Privacy: One of the districts highest priorities as an organization is to respect the privacy of it's members, employees and volunteers. This means that we will not comment on private information on its members, especially when it's related to their job or function in the district.
2. Speculation: The district will not act on speculation or rumor, especially in personnel matters, except to research for confirmation if we have reason to believe it's relevant, confirmable, actionable, and related to job performance. The district will only act on data that can be confirmed. Actions taken will be subject to the Privacy restrictions.
3. Open meetings – Call to the public: An individual public officer may respond to criticism, ask staff to review an item or ask that an item be placed on a future agenda, but he or she may not dialogue with the presenter or collectively discuss, consider, or decide an item that is not listed on the agenda. A.R.S. § 38-431.01(H); Ariz. Att'y Gen. Op. I99-006.

Call to the Public. Limited to 3 minutes

1. Chaplin Mike Wright – spoke a prayer over the board, department and public present.
2. Gary Soliere – revisited the past history of SEFD and how Chief DeWolf accepted the Chief position when no one else would. How SEFD had membership dues that more than half the community didn't pay, so decision was made to form a district. Chief has brought in a large number of grants and funding to keep the district taxes down. He wanted to thank Chief DeWolf for all of his hard work.
3. Nancy Belt – Her comments relate to #6. Her daughter filed a complaint 2 years ago and has heard nothing. As elected officials, the Board has a responsibility to respond to complaints.
 - She is an employer and she would investigate any complaint made against her employee. Also, she recognizes doesn't get first hand information about complaints, but she feels that since the Chief is a high profile person, complaints need to be investigated.
 - What is the basis for Chief's review? Do you talk to personnel and ask what they think of the Chief and how he is doing?
 - What are you going to do about these allegations?
4. Jordan Cox – Discussed how SEFD used to have a lot of volunteers and now SEFD doesn't seem to have them and the staff seems thin.

What is the Board doing about the succession plan, replacement of personnel ie BC leaving, captains leaving and poor moral? Why is it so bad?

Address: 3173 Highway 83. P.O. Box 322 Sonoita, AZ 85637 **Phone:** (520) 455-5854 **Fax:** (520) 455-5361

Website: www.sefd911.org

Fire Chief Joseph M. DeWolf



SONOITA-ELGIN FIRE DISTRICT



“PROUD PAST STRONG FUTURE”

Why can't a volunteer be on the Board? He has been asked several times to be on the Board, but he would have to quit volunteering. He feels this needs to be revisited. Chris Johnson will check with the attorney, but he feels that it maybe a conflict of interest.

******Add this to the Sept agenda**

Because Kurt Bahti had to leave early, Chris decided to go to #6 first and then go back to the rest of the agenda after they were done with #6.

6) Discussion and possible action on the review and handling of letters received from members of the public expressing concern related to various District issues. Johnson

Chris Johnson stated that he is speaking with the district attorney and the HR person. It has been suggested that the Board go into an executive session to discuss how they can handle the letters appropriately while maintaining privacy. It is complicated because of the chain of command. Sue Archibald thanked the public for coming forward and expressing their thoughts and opinions and participating in the meeting. Reba Webber agreed with Sue, but also stated that maybe the Board needs to communicate better. The Board wants to be transparent. Chris Johnson mentioned the open public meeting laws are very specific and does tie the Boards hands when dealing with personnel issues. He referenced that people can look up the Open Meeting Laws themselves and read them. The Board has been working with the Chief since Jan 2020 on solutions. Kurt Bahti has spoken with people and the Board is operating according to the law, but the Board will address this.

In order to move forward, they will schedule an executive session to discuss this. Agreed date and time is **August 27th, 2020 at 0930**. All board members are available. Annette Dorney will reschedule her appointment on that day. Chris Johnson will work with Laura on the agenda and postings.

1). Review and approval of the governing board meeting minutes of June 22, 2020 with review and approval of the governing board meeting minutes of July 27, 2020. (Corrections to June 22, 2020 noted within July 27, 2020 meeting minutes.)

Sue Archibald motioned this be tabled until Katie is back. It is confusing and missing things. She wants to make sure Reba sees them at least a week before they are sent out.

Reba Webber 2nd – she will take the current set of minutes home to review and get with Katie later.

2) Report from the Acting Chief or Medical Chief regarding the provision of fire and EMS to the SEFD; management and supervision of the SEFD; and any related items concerning community safety including, but not limited to, the following items.

Acting Chief Buonaccorsi :

- a) Response and service report. – Calls 59 with 1 helo transport: Zone 1-23, Zone 2 – 6, Zone 3-11, Zone 4- 3, Zone 5 – 15
A shift 12, B shift 24 and C shift 23
- b) Status of grants. – no new news
- c) Fire code and inspection items - nothing
- d) Current community events. – see below
- e) Rosemont mine. No news

Address: 3173 Highway 83. P.O. Box 322 Sonoita, AZ 85637 **Phone:** (520) 455-5854 **Fax:** (520) 455-5361

Website: www.sefd911.org

Fire Chief Joseph M. DeWolf



SONOITA-ELGIN FIRE DISTRICT



“PROUD PAST STRONG FUTURE”

f) Palominos still trying to figure out IGA while Chief is out

g) Wildland Billing – no changes

h) Current Events –

- Rodeo update – doing a first responder day on Sat and going to show off the trucks.
- Cancellation of Quilters/SAR meeting through Dec 2020

Sue Archibald expressed concern about South 32 mine adding a road to by-pass Patagonia and sending all the traffic through Sonoita. She expressed concerns about the increased traffic and the effect on SEFD.

Cpt Meredith states that he is aware of this and knows a contact with South 32 mine and will pass that information onto Acting Chief Buonaccorsi.

*Kurt Bahti left just prior to the end of the Chief’s report about 0940.

3) Monthly financial reports and consideration of district financial matters pursuant to A.R.S. §48-807: Vicki Rutter

- Financials were presented by Vicki Rutter. Financials are preliminary and would remain so until the Annual Audit was completed.

Sue Archibald motioned to accept the financial report. Reba Webber 2nd.

4) Update -SEFD Board Questionnaire – Admin - Due to recent events and Admin’s schedule, the distribution of the questionnaire has been postponed.

5) Update - Elections – cancellation of elections – Chief/Admin(We should receive the official notice of the ability to cancel the elections before the end of the month. This is a technicality and may or may not arrive prior to the August Board meeting. Not an issue to discuss or approve, just a point of fact. Admin)

No update

7) Discussion and possible action on the appointment of Jon Buonaccorsi as Acting Chief for the duration of Chief DeWolf's medical leave; discussion and possible action on the associated compensation in the position of Acting Chief.

- **Confirmation that Jon Buonaccorsi was presented with the 24-hour notice...**
- *All persons present at an Executive Session are hereby reminded that A.R.S. §38-431.03 imposes strict confidentiality requirements on discussions that occur in Executive Session. Generally, such discussions cannot be revealed to non-board members, unless necessary to carry out the purpose of the statutory provision that specifically permits an Executive Session. The Open Meeting Law provides for a fine of up to \$500.00 for violating this confidentiality requirement and requires that this admonition be given.*

Chris Johnson – Chief appointed Jon Buonaccorsi as Acting Chief in his absence. The Board is here to confirm that it is acceptable to the Board. They will go into an executive session to discuss salary for taking on the extra duties.

Sue Archibald motioned to appoint Jon Buonaccorsi as Acting Chief effective immediately. Annette Dorney 2nd.

Address: 3173 Highway 83. P.O. Box 322 Sonoita, AZ 85637 **Phone:** (520) 455-5854 **Fax:** (520) 455-5361

Website: www.sefd911.org

Fire Chief Joseph M. DeWolf



SONOITA-ELGIN FIRE DISTRICT

“PROUD PAST STRONG FUTURE”



Chris Johnson stated that in the Executive session, the Board discussed Jon Buonaccorsi's salary. Reba Webber made the motion to retroactively from the first day of his appointment by Chief, to pay him \$1000 each of the 3 pay periods. They will renegotiate this in Sept. Annette Dorney 2nd.

8) Discussion and possible Action on Chief DeWolf's Annual Review and salary: Johnson/Archibald Confirmation that Chief DeWolf was presented with the 24-hour notice...

Chris Johnson stated this can be discussed in the executive session and that it was left over from last month.

Sue Archibald requested that this be tabled until the Chief is back even though that may be Oct. Sue motioned that the Board table the discussion and possible action the Chief DeWolf's annual review and salary until Chief is back to work. Kurt Bahti 2nd.

Sue Archibald motioned that Board go Executive Session. Reba Webber 2nd. at 0959.

Chris Johnson stated as a reminder: *All persons present at an Executive Session are hereby reminded that A.R.S. §38-431.03 imposes strict confidentiality requirements on discussions that occur in Executive Session. Generally, such discussions cannot be revealed to non-board members, unless necessary to carry out the purpose of the statutory provision that specifically permits an Executive Session. The Open Meeting Law provides for a fine of up to \$500.00 for violating this confidentiality requirement and requires that this admonition be given.*

Per Chris Johnson, Sue Archibald left at 1100 during the executive session.

Executive session adjourned at 1115.

7) Adjournment: Motion to adjourn by Annette Dorney. Reba Webber 2nd at 1115.

Address: 3173 Highway 83. P.O. Box 322 Sonoita, AZ 85637 **Phone:** (520) 455-5854 **Fax:** (520) 455-5361

Website: www.sefd911.org

Fire Chief Joseph M. DeWolf