

MINUTES, ARIVACA FIRE DISTRICT

March 3, 2016

The Arivaca Fire District Governing Board met in Special session Thursday, March 3, 2016 at the Sonoita-Elgin Fire District Office, Sonoita, Arizona for a special meeting.

1. CALL TO ORDER/ROLL CALL

Kathleen called the meeting to order at 11:58 AM

ROLL CALL OF BOARD MEMBERS

Present: Kathleen Wishnick
Bill Clauss
Terry Tompkins
Absent: Gene Gibson
Omar Rood

2. REGULAR BUSINESS MEETING

A. Pledge of Allegiance/Moment of Silence
All present joined in.

3. BUSINESS

A. Public Discussion for joint partnership agreement

Chief De Wolfe said this could go in any direction, Management, personnel, equipment, etc. It is an agreement for the agencies involved with that particular item. For example you could use management for 120 days. It could be for the chief, admin, training or whatever you want.

Kathleen commented about training. She is not familiar with specific training our people should be doing.

Chief De Wolfe showed a 2015-2016 training schedule and explained it. It is all described out for the year. They have mandatory training. That training is offered 3 different times. His volunteers have to show up for those. Also night drills which the volunteers have to show up for. He tries to make it user friendly for the volunteers so they can schedule around the training.

Kathleen commented that the joint partnership agreement could be for coming over to do training at our facility?

Chief De Wolfe responded yes.

Kathleen asked if this could also be for consultation.

Chief De Wolfe said yes. He said you could set it up for example where he comes over twice a month to set up retention and recruitment program and that is all he would work on. Or come over once a week to set up a training program.

Kathleen asked if this was something we draw up between both districts. If we share these ideas with the board and the board decides they would like you to come over once a month for training.

Chief De Wolfe responded yes.

Kathleen asked about working on/assessing vehicles.

Chief De Wolfe responded that one thing he has found with volunteers is the more consistent you can be the better off you will be; don't waste the volunteer time. For example if training supposed to start at 9 but does not start until 11 you are wasting my time. He will work with the volunteers. He will accommodate the volunteers that cannot make the training if they let him know they cannot make it. He will set up a date and time that will work for that person.

Bill asked what kind of excuses.

Chief De Wolfe said if they have a job and they work that time; they cannot get there. He will help if he can for example another volunteer lives in the area, they can ride with them. He will help as long as the volunteer is willing to give his time. He will even help with them write resumes. He will do mock interviews if the volunteer wants help with that. We are a training facility; we are a stepping stone. If you help the

volunteers then when they get another job that person tells others how we have helped and we get more volunteers.

Bill commented that the key is the fact that he realizes he is a revolving door.

Kathleen commented that we are not bringing in volunteers. We are bringing in people that are already trained.

Chief De Wolfe commented that he still responds to calls but as Incident Commander. He is there to help. But if he is involved he is not managing.

Terry commented that what the Fire District needs is someone to come up with a program that accepts volunteers and can still get the job done.

Chief De Wolfe commented that AFD has to realize we are not a career district. He does an appreciation ceremony every year where every volunteer is recognized and presented with a certificate. That little bit of recognition met so much to his volunteers. He compliments the volunteers for a job well done daily.

Kathleen said she had a question from Noah. She said Noah asked how can we help new volunteers get their fire certs?

Chief De Wolfe asked if it was structure or wildland.

Kathleen said they were required to have Structure I and II. And then we do wildland also.

Chief De Wolfe said wildland is done on the internet and he teaches the practical skills. He is certified by the state so he is allowed to do that. With structure he sends them to Pima or he puts on a class about every two or three years. And the cost per person if he puts it on is about \$1,200 per student.

Kathleen asked about the charge for practicals for wildland and Chief De Wolfe said that he does not charge for that.

Kathleen asked if he would take on our people.

Chief De Wolfe said he would need a letter from the board stating that if the person got hurt it would be on our workman's comp and not his.

Bill asked if he pays for the classes at Pima.

Chief De Wolfe said that his budget allows for 4 structure fire per year to attend Pima. However they pay him back with volunteer time. If he sends someone to paramedic school they have to pay him back with volunteer time. He does 2 a year. They have to pay back 48 hours a month for two years. One year as they are going through class and one year as a medic.

Terry commented that they do not get paid by Chief De Wolfe. They have already been paid by the cost of the school.

Chief De Wolfe commented that if they default at any time over the 2 years then they owe him 100% of the cost.

Kathleen asked if everyone knows about wildland on line

Chief De Wolfe said yes.

Kathleen said they could do internet for free and then send them to Sonoita-Elgin and Chief De Wolfe would do the practicals.

Chief De Wolfe said on line they are given a certificate and he has to see the certificate. He also said he has been working with the colleges. So he has offered the experience to people that have already paid for their class room training.

Chief De Wolfe said he has been working with the colleges. He has offered the colleges the experience because the people are already paying for their education.

The key is now building the district into what want and then finding people that will do that.

Kathleen commented that they need to figure out what they would like to see. This information will be shared in the minutes and at the next meeting.

Kathleen asked questions about Chief De Wolfe's training and what the different classes were.

B. AFD Goals

Terry commented that the AFD is very limited in income and will always be a stepping stone. As soon as the board realizes that we will be better off. Right now we are spending most monies on salaries for the CON. We will have to do some wildland to support the CON. We need to develop a wildland program.

Kathleen commented that involves training and staff.

Bill commented that a whole overall altitude around the community that we are training people for larger departments. We are not at the point where we can afford to keep them after we train them.

Kathleen said a goal would be to revisit the CON. If we do not transport it could be anywhere from 45 minutes to an hour before someone gets here.

Chief De Wolfe said if you look at your staffing models you will be able to cover for less money. What you are staffing right now is for a regular fire department. Your needs are not that. When you are running less than 200 calls a year and your chief is a medic and covering Monday-Friday 8 hours a day you have a medic model. So that \$30,000 a year is saving you money and then all you have to worry about is paying a medic on weekends. You can catch some of the labor down by using a medic and by building your volunteer system you and then you may not have to pay the EMT. The question is how do I get from where I am today to this model with the least amount of damage.

Bill commented that if we continue on the same path we are on, our total budget will be about \$26,000 in the hole.

Kathleen commented that regarding the staffing model we only cover our peak time with a paid person and then get volunteers to cover the rest of the time?

Bill asked – Do we want a chief who would be a medic?

Chief De Wolfe responded that you have to look ahead. If you pay a chief \$30,000 for the district.

Bill said \$24,000 a year. His idea along the lines on the same level until the end of June and if they can get the volunteers in then we would go up to \$30,000.

Chief De Wolfe said yes, That will lure them in. Set some goals. This gives you some medic coverage for the peak hours. Then how much will you pay for weekend coverage. He went over some of the other small districts and what they pay a chief and what the requirements were when they hired a chief.

Kathleen asked if they could do two shifts in a row or do they have to have some downtime.

Chief De Wolfe says he does 48/96. That saves his volunteers gas money and their time driving back and forth. You can go more than 48 hours because you do not run that many calls.

Kathleen commented that one of the goals is Review Staffing models.

Chief De Wolfe suggested looking into the SAFFA grant for staffing which has a 5% match. If you get \$160,000 a year for 4 years and it only cost you \$8,000 a year, then that will help get your finances back in order. That way payroll is covered and you can afford to pay a chief. That grant is open right now. It has to be submitted by the end of the month. The announcement/award is November 2016. The only kicker is that you have to fund it. But if it comes in at tax time you have it. The key is that if you are awarded the grant you have to get right on billing. Use these monies to offset chief salary and stipends.

Chief De Wolfe commented that Globe Gear Wear has been giving out turnouts for the last two years. And you will fall within their guidelines.

Chief De Wolfe commented that he is a member of the National Volunteer Fire Counsel and they send him all the emails.

Chief De Wolfe just got another grant from the Ready Set Go program through the International Fire Chiefs Association for new chain saws. That is a no match grant. If you go on the internet and look up Fire House Subs grants, they will give you up to \$60,000 no match, cannot use it for labor or maintenance. Can use it for SCBA's, turnouts, uniforms, EMS supplies, life packs and other firefighting gear.

C. Interim Chief Contract

Kathleen commented that they went they had already gone over that. They were going to look at what other districts required of a chief and then go over the lists and see what requirements would best suit us.

D. Options

Kathleen commented that we had talked about a lot of options. We have talked about the Volunteer program, mandatory training, alternative revenue stream and the Joint Partnership agreement.

Chief De Wolfe showed the board his task book. It is what the volunteers must complete before they can do any work. Every task has to be signed off. They do not get any gear or anything until this task book is complete. He showed the board his program for giving the incident and allows them to tell the station they are responding so he can start planning. All captains, battalion chiefs, and mine are locked in my office. You cannot have access to the file for anyone above you.

Chief De Wolfe mentioned he uses a program called EMC2. It is an app. It gives the incident location, where to go and what to do on their phone and the person can hit the station button and it tells him who is responding. It costs him \$1,000 a year and he can have up to 60 volunteers on it. That way he knows who is responding and he can start planning. He can call in and tell who is going to take what truck or ambulance. Chief De Wolfe commented that he attends conferences which are more common to his district than big city districts. In May he will be attending a conference in Reno by the Volunteer Combination Officers Section. They are more districts from around the country and districts his size, some larger and some smaller that attend.

Kathleen asked Chief De Wolfe to review his volunteer program.

Chief De Wolfe stated that everyone that comes to him is a volunteer. Even the stipend people are volunteers. He pays the volunteers once a month and pay is \$75.00 for a 12 hour shift for six shifts and I still get 48 hours free labor. To do a stipend volunteer shift you have to volunteer he thinks it is 48 hours a month. You can do 6 stipend shifts a month plus your 48 hour volunteer time. You can do them back to back, day and night. FLSA regulates on how we pay. You can pay the 20% rule to a stipend. The 20% rule is 20% of the fire fighter salary. They are W-9 at the end of the year. They pay taxes; I do not pay their taxes. Another benefit is during wildland they can get the wildland pay. If I pay you I can only bill the hourly rate you make on a wildland fire. For example \$8.07 is what you get paid; \$8.07 is all I can pay you for a wildland fire. So it is better as a volunteer on a stipend throughout the year by being on his stipend program because I can pay you the wildland rate when you do wildland. The volunteer can make more money doing the stipend.

With a stipend program you can pay monthly, bi-annually; quarterly and annually. As an organization you need to build your program and set a line in the sand and say it will begin on this date.

Terry commented about how the board had been told that some districts paid wildland sporadically.

Chief De Wolfe commented about the FLSA. He has a copy of the firefighter's portion regarding volunteer firefighters. He will give us a copy. He commented that there are all kinds of literature you can get from Rehabbing firefighters. There is strategic planning and transforming volunteer fire service. These are all good readings. The chief's goal is to keep the board out of trouble. His career and volunteer can work elsewhere but he has a rule that the person cannot work another job 24 hours before working for him.

Kathleen commented that they would share with the other board members at the March meeting and maybe a working session and would he be able to come our way.

Chief De Wolfe commented yes.

Kathleen stated they had done about everything on the agenda except writing the contract.

Chief De Wolfe suggested looking at what you want before you write the contract. Make it clear it what your goals are and make sure he can follow those goals and work toward those goals.

E. ADJOURNEMENT

Bill made a motion to adjourn and Terry seconded. Kathleen called for a vote. Motion carried 3-0. Kathleen adjourned the meeting.

Approved March 24, 2016

Kathleen Wishnick, Chairperson

Terry Tompkins, Clerk