



TUBAC FIRE DISTRICT

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TUBAC FIRE DISTRICT BOARD MEETING MINUTES
REGULAR MEETING OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS
February 24, 2021

1. Call to order and Pledge of Allegiance: The meeting was called to order at 1:30 p.m., by Mary Dahl. The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.
2. Roll call of Board Members: Mary Dahl and Peter Benequista were present at Station #2 with Mike Connelly and Bill Kirkpatrick attending remotely. Herb Wisdom was absent. Also, in attendance at Station #2 were Chief Horvath, Deputy Chief Rivera, Deputy Chief Guerrero, Gabe Buldra, Ben Archer Clowes and Nancy Lindsey. Sara Simonton attended telephonically.
3. Report from Board Members: Mary Dahl asked for a moment of silence for the Wisdom family for the loss of their son. Peter Benequista explained that he met with Charlie Alvarez and Rudy Romero at Station #1 to discuss updating the District's "Mission Statement."
4. Reading of public comments submitted via email: Nancy Lindsey read an email from Tubac Firefighters representative Charlie Alvarez in which he stated the support from the firefighters for changes to the District's leave policies.
5. Correspondence: None
6. Chair's Report : None
7. Chief and Staff Report: Chief Horvath presented the staff report.
8. Monthly Financial Report for January 2021: Gabe Buldra presented the financial reports for the month of January 2021.
Key points for the month:
 - A. Santa Cruz County revenue for January is \$213,106 which is \$2,766 under budget.
 - B. Non-Levy revenue is \$49,321 which is under budget by \$24,354.
 - C. Ordinary expenses for the month totaled \$288,839 which is over budget by \$29,669.
 - D. Year-to-date Santa Cruz revenue is \$1,968,367 which is \$55,924 under budget.
 - E. Year-to-date Non-levy revenue is \$4,600,665 which is \$3,882,440 over budget.
 - F. Year-to-date ordinary expense is \$2,346,294 which is \$174,268 over budget

9. Consent Agenda

- A. Approval of minutes from January 27, 2021 regular meeting
- B. Approval of monthly financial reports

Bill Kirkpatrick made a motion to approve the consent agenda and Peter Benequista seconded the motion; all were in favor, the motion passed.

10. Discussion and possible action to approve changes to the sick and vacation personnel policies: Chief Horvath explained to the Board that this item was originally presented in December 2020 for board review and approval, was discussed at the January meeting and included this month for further review and approval. As requested by the Board in January, sick leave payouts from Rio Rico and Green Valley Fire Districts are included. Both Districts have a full retirement payout of 25% of unused sick time. Mike Connelly asked if we discontinue the minimum of 1500 hours and went with the 25% payout of sick hours at regular retirement we would be in line with Rio Rico and Green Valley to which Chief Horvath replied we would. Pete Benequista commented that the sick leave policy and payouts seem unnecessarily complicated. Mary Dahl commented that the current sick leave policy is meaningless, unattainable, and embarrassing to have on the books and she asked the Board to consider approving the requested changes to the sick leave policy regarding sick leave pay out and sick leave buy back to be implemented in this fiscal year and changes to vacation leave accrual be implemented next fiscal year. Mike Connelly commented that the Board has a fiduciary responsibility and that as he sees it, the sick policy change requested has the potential to be costly to the District. Mike Connelly made a motion to not approve the proposed changes to the TFD Sick Leave Policy and Peter Benequista seconded the motion; Mary Dahl and Bill Kirkpatrick opposed the motion; the motion did not pass 2:2. Pete Benequista made a motion that all full-time employees shall be allotted a to-be-determined fixed number of sick leave hours per year and at the end of each fiscal year any unused sick hours would be cashed out. Mike Connelly stated that he could not agree with that sick leave policy without further information and discussion. Bill Kirkpatrick made a motion to approve the recommendation by staff for the changes to the sick leave policy for implementation this fiscal year and Mary Dahl seconded the motion; Mike Connelly and Peter Benequista opposed the motion; the motion did not pass 2:2. Mary Dahl made a motion to modify the sick leave policy to provide for all accrued sick time be paid out at 25% at normal retirement to also include minor language changes to the policy and Bill Kirkpatrick seconded the motion; Mike Connelly supported the payout of 25% with no minimum hours and Peter Benequista opposed it stating that it still sounded like an end-time pension; the motion passed 3:1.

11. Discussion and information only regarding the Tubac Fire District FY 21/22 budget: Gabe Buldra presented the preliminary budget schedule and explained that staff would be meeting to discuss budget priorities as well as meeting with vendors to determine the actual costs of benefits and insurances. Gabe presented an overview of the fire district funding as well as the 2021/2022 expenditures.

12. Discussion and possible action on debt schedule of bonds: Mike Connelly recommended that the Board consider paying down some of the District's callable bonds. Mike Connelly made a motion to pay down \$1 million dollars of callable bonds from the District's cash account that contains revenue received from sale of the tower. Mary Dahl asked for a second to the motion; none being heard, the motion dies for lack of a second. Mary Dahl commented that the funds received from the sale of the tower are an important part in planning for the future of the District's capital purchases programs and addressing the inadequacies at Station #1. Mike stated that the Board needs to be reminded that it is taxpayer money, and the Board should be fiducially responsible to the taxpayers.

13. Future Agenda Items:

- A. Benefits report
- B. Changes to mission statement

14. Next Meeting: March 31, 2021 at 1:30 pm

15. Adjourn Meeting: Bill Kirkpatrick made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 3:10 p.m. and Mike Connelly seconded the motion; all were in favor, the motion passed.

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