



# TUBAC FIRE DISTRICT

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**REVISED/EDITED 2/28/2024.**

TUBAC FIRE DISTRICT BOARD MEETING MINUTES  
REGULAR MEETING OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS  
January 31, 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, Pete Benequista, Herb Wisdom, Rich Bohman and Mary Dahl were present at Tubac Community Center. Also, in attendance at Tubac Community Center, Fire Chief Ben Guerrero, Deputy Chief Hesly Guerrero, Captain John Conger and Bianca Hamric. Gabe Buldra attended on behalf of James Vincent Group. Jay Parke attended on behalf of Walker & Armstrong. Members of the public in attendance were Ron Campana, Kathi Campana, Mary Vanis, Mike Pettypool, John Combo, Robert Clancy, Jennifer Tougas, Genaro Rivera.
3. Years of Service Recognition:
  - a) Captain Carlos Alvarez, 15 Years of Service.
  - b) Captain Martin Lujan, 15 Years of Service.
  - c) Firefighter/Paramedic Uriel Gonzales, 5 Years of Service.
4. Reading of public comments submitted via email: none.
5. Call to the Public: Mary Vanis introduced herself as the recently-elected president of the Santa Cruz County Citizens Council. Ms. Vanis extended an invitation to the upcoming February 12<sup>th</sup> Citizens Council Meeting.

Kathi Campana congratulated newly elected Board Chair Sandy Johnson. Kathy also thanked Mary Dahl for her years of service and hard work as she served as the Board Chair.

John Combo commented on the County landfill tower project and that he has not seen progress on the tower construction. He would like to know if the Fire Board has updates on its tower project to share with the District residents.
6. Correspondence: A thank you note from district resident, Adriana Pelayo, was presented.
7. Report from Board Members: Peter Benequista wanted to highlight an article in the Green Valley newspaper regarding the issuing of 13 million dollars in bonds for the construction of Green Valley Fire Station #152. The construction costs for the Green Valley Fire District were about \$525.00 dollars a square foot and some of the equipment was purchased at least one year in advance due to supply issues. Mr. Benequista also mentioned that he had an interview with Omar Gutierrez from Walker & Armstrong regarding the District's audit. Rich Bohman wanted to recognize Tubac resident, Donna McCullough, who passed away this month. He stated that she was an amazing person and worked hard to start the EMT program at Tubac Fire District.

8. Chief and Staff Report: Chief Ben Guerrero, Deputy Chief Hesly Guerrero and Captain Conger provided the following to the board:
  - a. Operations Update.
  - b. Training.
  - c. Wildland Update.
  - d. Administration Update.
  
9. Monthly Financial Report for December 2023: Gabe Buldra presented the financial reports for the month of December 2023. Gabe reported to the board that total revenue for the month of December was \$664,923. Total revenue between Tax Levy and Non-Tax Levy was \$18,788.00. Total expenses were \$322,008 which was under budget by \$24,652. Personnel Expenses were \$211,451. Buildings and Land expenses were under budget by \$495.00. Vehicles and Equipment expenses were under budget by \$690.00. Travel and Training was under budget at \$2,536. Managerial expenses were under budget at \$1,501 and Communication and IT expenses were over budget by \$1,964. Gabe informed the board that the District received the first installment of funds from Proposition 207 and the second installment is due in June. Fiscal Year to Date, total revenue was at \$2,987,024 and total expenses were at \$2,168,080 at month's end.
  
10. Consent Agenda: Mary Dahl made a motion to approve the consent agenda. Herb Wisdom seconded the motion; all were in favor; the motion passed.
  - a. Approval of minutes from December 20, 2023.
  - b. Approval of monthly financial reports.
  
11. Presentation of FYE June 30, 2023, audit by Walker & Armstrong:

Jay Parke presented the board with the audit conducted for the Tubac Fire District for the fiscal year ending June 30, 2023. Mr. Parke discussed the aspects of accounting practices, management responsibilities and accounting policies and presented to the board a summary of the Audit Results:

  - 1) Unmodified "clean" opinion on the financial statements.
  - 2) Financial Reporting and other Changes.
  - 3) Key Financial Performance Measures.
  - 4) Internal Control Matters.
  
12. Discussion and possible action to approve the construction of a porch at Tubac Station #2.

Captain John Conger requested that the board approve a porch to be built on the west side of the Tubac Fire Station #2 building. The porch would serve the purpose of shielding the outdoor area from the sun and adverse weather conditions. This would improve the functionality of the outdoor living space and would benefit the building occupants. The fiscal impact would be to use \$7,300 of American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funds available to the district. The proposal is to approve Earth Builders Construction to build the porch at station #2 at a cost not to exceed \$7,300.00. Rich Bohman asked if this is a roof only structure that is added to a concrete slab. Captain John Conger said that it is this type of structure and that the porch would also cover the door area on the west side of the building. Herb Wisdom mad a motion to approve the porch construction at a cost of \$7,300. Peter Benequista seconded the motion; all were in favor; the motion passed.
  
13. Discussion and possible action to approve the purchase of six sets of Personal Protective Equipment in an amount not to exceed \$29,244.33.

Captain Martin Lujan requested the board approve purchasing six sets of firefighter turnout ensembles for new hire employees. Currently six staff members are using older sets of turnouts that have exceeded the 10-year service life of a turnout. Captain Lujan requested approval of the purchase from United Fire for a total of \$29,244.33. Herb Wisdom asked if turnout are one size fits all. Captain Lujan informed the board that turnouts

are measured to fit the individual and that they are not one size fits all. Mary Dahl moved to approve the purchase of six sets of turnouts from United Fire for a not to exceed cost of \$29,244.33. Rich Bohman seconded the motion all were in favor; the motion passed.

14. Discussion and possible action to purchase a staff vehicle in an amount not to exceed \$23,500.

Captain John Conger requested the board approve the purchase of a staff vehicle in an amount not to exceed \$23,500. Captain Conger informed the board that the new vehicle would be used for staff to attend conferences, training, and for other official uses. He also stated that the staff currently drive trucks used for wildland, but due to the high mileage of the vehicles and the rise in fuel expenses, these wildland vehicles have become costly to be used for these purposes. Rich Bohman stated that he is not in favor of the request because there are other options that can be used such as renting a vehicle or mileage reimbursement. Peter Benequista said that in his experience it is common for employees to use their own personal vehicles for business and to be reimbursed and that this can apply to the Fire District. Board Chair Sandy Johnson asked that this action be tabled for the next board meeting in February. Mary Dahl made a motion to table the item until the next board meeting; Peter Benequista seconded the motion; all were in favor; the motion passed.

15. Fire Station #1 Items:

a. Discussion and possible action to approve Board Resolution 2024-1, "Approval of Tubac Fire Station #1 Project.

Fire Chief Ben Guerrero asked the board to approve Resolution 2024-1. Fire Chief Guerrero explained to the board that this resolution is to secure the funds from the USDA Rural Development Program and is a required action for the grant process. The Resolution states that the Board of Directors grants formal approval to the Tubac Fire Station #1 project, in accordance with the conceptual drawing approved June 2023. Mary Dahl made a motion to approve Resolution 2024-1 to secure funding for the Station #1 project from the USDA; Rich Bohman seconded the motion; all were in favor; the motion passed.

b. Discussion and possible action to approve a construction manager as recommended by the Fire Chief's selection committee.

Fire Chief Guerrero requested that the board approve D.L. Norton as the Construction Manager at Risk for the Station #1 project. Fire Chief Guerrero and the selection committee conducted a comprehensive evaluation process of two reputable companies, D.L. Norton and CORE. The committee voted unanimously to recommend D.L. Norton for the project. Peter Benequista informed the board that he participated in the selection committee, and the selection process was straightforward. Board Chair Sandy Johnson stated that he also participated in the selection committee, and he was pleased with the outcome and the process. Rich Bohman made a motion to approve D.L. Norton as the Construction Manager at Risk, as recommended by the selection committee; Mary Dahl seconded the motion; all were in favor; the motion passed.

c. Discussion only of Station #1 tower.

Fire Chief Guerrero reported to the board that he spoke with county representatives regarding the tower. Chief Guerrero stated that he does not have a date for the intergovernmental agreement but is continuing to make progress. Chief Guerrero also said that the reasoning for the county delay on the tower is due to Tubac Fire Districts timeline and interest for a mutual aid agreement with the tower.

16. Discussion and possible action to accept Board Chair Sandy Johnson's Resignation from the local PSPRS Board and to appoint a local PSPRS Board Chair.

Board Chair Sandy Johnson said that he has resigned from the local PSPRS Board and would like for a board member to take on the responsibility of attending and chairing the PSPRS meetings. Mary Dahl made a motion to accept the resignation of Sandy Johnson and to appoint Rich Bohman to the local PSPRS board. Sandy Johnson seconded the motion; all were in favor; the motion passed.

17. Discussion and possible action on the Fire Chief's performance evaluation process. The Board might convene into Executive Session regarding this item as allowed by A.R.S § 38-431.03 (A)(1) (allowing an executive session for the purpose of "discussion or consideration of employment, assignment, appointment, promotion, demotion, dismissal, salaries, disciplining or resignation of a ...employee").

Board Chair Sandy Johnson discussed the purpose of the action request is due to the upcoming expiration of Fire Chief Guerrero's initial contract on 6/30/2024, and his evaluation. Peter Benequista explained to the board action request for the board to approve an outline of items for the Fire Chief's evaluation. Mr. Benequista said that this action would simplify his review, and also stated that he would also like to simplify the employment contract of the Fire Chief. Mary Dahl pointed out that the Fire Chief's current evaluation should be based on the current contract and its guidelines and if the board wishes to implement new parameters the for the evaluation and contract this action could take place in the future. Board Chair Sandy Johnson agreed that the Fire Chief's evaluation and contract does not have to be complicated. Mary Dahl made a motion to propose items 1-6 to be pursued as future documentation for performance guidelines and performance evaluation for future use by the fire district. Peter Benequista seconded the motion; all were in favor; the motion passed.

18. Future agenda items: Station #1 project

19. Next meeting: February 28, 2024, at 1:30 p.m. to be held at Tubac Fire Station #2 due to a conflict in the scheduling at the Tubac Community Center.

20. Adjourn meeting: Mary Dahl moved to adjourn the meeting at 2:40 p.m. and Peter Benequista seconded the motion, all were in favor; the motion passed.