

**Minutes of January 31, 2013
Regular Fire Board Meeting
Black Canyon Fire District**

- ITEM I:** *Call to Order:* The monthly Board Meeting was called to order on Thursday, January 31st, 2013 at 6:02PM.
- ITEM II:** *Roll Call of Board Members:* Present - Chairperson Marilyn Forsythe, S. McMahon and D. Kenson; Absent - P. Chartier and J. Coslett-Muirhead. Also present: Chief Birch and E. Caldwell.
- ITEM III:** **Pledge of Allegiance:** J. Alanis led the Pledge of Allegiance.
- ITEM IV:** *Minutes from the November 2012 Regular Fire Board Meeting and Special Fire Board Meetings of December 10th and December 17th, 2012:* <S. McMahon> Motions to discuss and/or vote to accept the Minutes from the November 2012 Regular Fire Board Meeting. <D. Kenson> seconds the motion. **Motion carries unanimous 3 – 0.**
- Minutes of the Special Fire Board Meetings of December 10th and December 17th, 2012:* <D. Kenson> Motions to discuss and/or vote to accept the Minutes of the Special Fire Board Meetings of December 10th and December 17th, 2012 with corrections, changing the heading to “Special Fire Board Meeting”; <S. McMahon> seconds the motion. **Motion carries unanimous 3 – 0.**
- ITEM V:** *Bookkeeping report from November and December 2012:* <S. McMahon> Motions to discuss and/or vote to approve the Bookkeeping Report for November and December 2012: <D. Kenson > seconds the motion. **Motion carries unanimously 3 – 0.**
- ITEM VI:** *Ambulance bookkeeping and Insurance Billing Report for November and December 2012:* < D. Kenson > Motions to accept the November and December 2012 Ambulance and Insurance Bookkeeping Report. < S. McMahon > seconds the motion. **Motion carries unanimous 3 – 0.**
- ITEM VII:** *Chief's Report:* <Chief> There were no member anniversaries the month of November 2012.
- Incidents for the month of November 2012 = 70 vs. 66 in November 2011.
- Total transports by BCFD, including transport from scene to helicopter:
November 2012 = 35 vs. 30 in November 2011.
January 1, 2012 to November 30, 2012 = 383 vs. 421 for the same period in 2011.
- Combined training hours for the month of November 2012 – 756.
- The annual pump testing was completed on Eng. 331 and Eng. 332 with both units successfully completing the testing process.
- In the month of December 2012, Jeff Pavlik celebrated 5 years with BCFD. Congratulations and thank you for your hard work and contribution to the department and community!
- Incidents for the month of December 2012 = 66 vs. December 2011 = 70.
January 1, 2012 to December 31, 2012 = 935 vs. 972 for the same period in 2011.
- Total transports by BCFD including transport from scene to helicopter for December 2012 = 28 vs. 30 for 2011.
January 1, 2012 to December 31, 2012 = 411 with 451 for the same period in 2011.
- Combined training hours for the month of December 2012 = 481.

Combined training hours from January 1, 2012 to December 31, 2012 = 7,490.

Thanks to Reserve Firefighter Tom Abraham and the City of Tempe for donating two used Thermal Image Cameras (TICs) to the Department. Tom was instrumental in making this donation happen.

Received word on January 8th that the State signed the paperwork for the grant allowing us to order new radios. We will order the radios and submit the invoices to the State for reimbursement. The order consists of the following:

- 18- portable (walkie-talkie) radios with chargers
- 5- portable radio vehicle chargers
- 1- 100 watt mobile (vehicle mounted) radio
- 2- 45 watt mobile radios

On January 11th, we received word that we have been awarded an \$8,400 Volunteer Fire Assistance (VFA) grant that is managed through Arizona State Land Department. This is a 50/50 grant which means our contribution to the grant will be \$4,200 which has already been budgeted.

This grant will go towards replacing ten-year old brush firefighting jackets, miscellaneous forestry nozzles, adapters and a hose and a 5,000 gallon self-supporting water tank that helicopters will be able to dip from. The self-supporting water tank will allow us to support helicopters to aid in wildland fires. This grant was completed by Acting Captain Mark Enteman.

I have an update on the fuel tank as well; I have attached a copy of the email from Tom Thurman for you to review. As you can see, the County has a fuel tank available but the cost to repair and inspect it would run around \$17,000.00. I am beginning to wonder if it will be cost effective to do this. We will look at the gravity tanks in the near future and discuss this again at a later date.

ITEM VIII

Discuss and/or vote on designating the following equipment as, "Excess Property:"

<S. McMahon> motions to discuss and/or vote on listing the following radio equipment as "Excess Property;" <D. Kenson> seconds the motion. <Chief> The listed radio equipment cannot meet the federal narrow-banding requirements and therefore can no longer be used. All of this equipment was purchased prior to the year 2000, most of which was purchased in 1997 and 1998:

- 5- Motorola P93 portable radios
- 4- Motorola P93 portable radio chargers
- 3- Motorola Radius 45 watt mobile radios
- 1- Motorola 100 watt mobile radio
- 1- EF Johnson repeater

At this point I am looking for someone who may have the software available that will allow me to clear these radios out; I don't want them out there with our frequency. Once the frequencies are cleared, we will either be able to sell them or send them to Mexico to be used by Department's there. They are perfectly usable radios, but we cannot use them because they are not narrow-banded. **Motion carries 3 – 0.**

ITEM IX

Discuss and/or vote on signing a HIPPA Business Associate Agreement with Attorney Bill Whittington: <D. Kenson> motions to discuss and/or vote on signing a HIPPA Business Associate Agreement with Attorney Bill Whittington; <S. McMahon> seconds the motion. <M. Forsythe> J. Coslett-Muirhead is unable to be here tonight but did have the following statements on this issue:

- a) This has not been a requirement in the past and she doesn't feel it should be now.
- b) She feels a "Blanket" authorization will jeopardize our position concerning PHI.
- c) If the board chooses to sign the Agreement, the \$10.00 charge should be eliminated from the contract.

<Chief> This Agreement involves our discussions with Whittington on a matter concerning a current employee. The Agreement will simply allow us to share information with him regarding this matter and any legal concerns that may arise in the future. <S. McMahon> The \$10.00 Jeri is referring to is standard contractual language. I have no problem asking him to remove it, but it is standard. <M. Forsythe> I would like to have it removed. **Motion carries 3 – 0 with stipulation the \$10.00 fee is removed from the Agreement.**

ITEM X *Discuss and/or vote on approving the annual financial audit for Fiscal Year 2011/2012:* < S. McMahon > motions to discuss and/or vote on approving the annual financial audit for Fiscal Year 2011/2012; < D. Kenson > seconds the motion. **Motion carries 3 – 0 unanimous.**

ITEM XI *Discuss and/or vote on options for filling the Ambulance Billing position:* <D. Kenson> motions to discuss and/or vote on options for filling the Ambulance Billing position; <S. McMahon > seconds the motion. <M. Forsythe> Again, Jeri has submitted comments on this issue. Following are her points:

- a) She is opposed to outsourcing if it can be avoided.
- b) How will using an outside billing service keep us protected under HIPPA requirements?
- c) Will the outside source have the authority to “discount” the bills to the consumer?
- d) If so, what are the guidelines they will use?
- e) Do we pay a percentage on what is actually collected or what we give them to collect?

< Chief> as you can see on the Agenda Item Form, we contacted six (6) entities regarding Ambulance Billing. Lifeline Ambulance only does in-house billing, Verde Valley Ambulance out of Cottonwood was not interested in taking on additional clients, and Medi-Claims Data Services from Phoenix indicated our call volume was not high enough for him. He was, by the way, very informative and helpful, providing information and tips we were not aware of. That left three (3) agencies; Action Ambulance, Management Services Network, and Sedona Fire District. We have provided copies of all the information we received from each of those entities for your review. After meeting with representatives from all three agencies, we feel that Sedona Fire District will provide us with the best service at the lowest cost. Their biller is familiar with our type of customer. She also follows the billing guidelines that Medicare and Medicaid require, which is very important.

<Chief> We do not have an Intergovernmental Agreement for Ambulance Billing Services available for you to review as of yet, but should by our next Board meeting, pending your approval of the next item on the Agenda which is signing the consent and waiver to Attorney William R Whittington. Our goal is to have everything in place by March 1st with a one-year agreement. We will continue billing Out-of-District in-house.

<E. Caldwell> Sedona understands Medicare, which have strict invoicing requirements and if you don't follow them, you don't get paid. Additionally, they are very customer service oriented. I see it boiling down to two main issues; how well will they recoup funds and how will they treat our customers? Sedona Fire seems to understand the importance of both issues; getting paid and customer service.

ITEM XII *Discuss and/or vote on signing a consent and waiver related to Attorney William R Whittington representing both Black Canyon and Sedona Fire Districts:* <D. Kenson> motions to discuss and/or vote on signing a consent and waiver related to Attorney William R Whittington representing both Black Canyon and Sedona Fire Districts; <S. McMahon> seconds the motion. **Motion carries 3 – 0 unanimous.**

ITEM XIII *Discuss and/or vote on ways to retain full-time personnel:* <S. McMahon> motions to discuss and/or vote on ways to retain full-time personnel; <D. Kenson> seconds the motion. <M.

Forsythe> J. Cosslett-Muirhead indicated in her letter that she is interested in hearing the round table discussion on this topic. Pete Chartier, also sent in questions on this matter which are:

- a) What is the reason of the recent loss of several high ranking employees; wages, work or just bad luck?
- b) What can the Board do to help?
- c) Was the wage increase that was given to office personnel a factor?

<Chief> Yes, we have had three people leave. Unfortunately, they all left in the same time period. Both Kris Mantey and Josh Johnson are still working for us in a part-time capacity as medics until we fill that position. Kris is here today so you can talk to him directly if you wish. I will be happy to leave the room if you prefer. <M. Forsythe> Kris, would you like to make some comments?

<K. Mantey> Chief and I have discussed this. It was very stressful to me when I needed to talk to him about the possibility of leaving this department. Mayer Fire had lost a medic to another department due to wages; it is kind of a step-ladder and happens all the time. I did not want to leave but financially it is beneficial and I need to think of my family and future. This how the fire service works, Black Canyon Fire stole me from Southwest Fire and now Mayer Fire stole me from BCFD.

<Chief> I spoke with Josh as well. He would have liked to be here but his daughter is ill. What Josh said was that a \$6,000 salary increase plus an addition \$600 more a month for health insurance was too good to pass up. Neither Josh nor Kris would have left if it weren't for the money.

<Chief> Would we like to give everyone a raise? You bet! But even a \$.50 an hour increase would end up costing the department \$16,000 annually. Our assessed evaluations are projected to drop another 5% this year, for a total of 52% decrease over five years. That is 52% less money in our budget. That would mean that in two years, we would have to terminate 2 employees. I don't want to do that.

<M. Forsythe> The bottom line is, we would if we could.

<Chief> I want to answer the question about the increase in wages for office personnel. Office personnel did not get a wage increase. They received temporary compensation for the additional workload they have taken on since Alison's resignation. We have taken the workload of one full-time person and divided it up among Elaine and Karen. This is a temporary situation until we make a decision regarding who will do our Ambulance Billing. We are doing the same with the Temporary Acting Captain. Whoever is filling that position is receiving a temporary wage increase. That will end when we someone permanently fills that position. No one has received a pay increase in at least five years.

ITEM IVX *Public Call:* None

ITEM XV *Adjournment:* <D. Kenson> motions to adjourn; <S. McMahon> seconds the motion.

Meeting adjourns at 7:04PM



4/23/13

Authorized Signature

Date