

Black Canyon Fire District
Meeting Minutes
Thursday, February 23rd, 2017

CALL TO ORDER Board Chair J. Coslett-Muirhead called the Fire Board Meeting to order on Thursday, February 23rd, 2017 at 6:09 p.m. at the Fire District Administration Office, 35050 S. Old Black Canyon Highway, Black Canyon City, Arizona.

ROLL CALL OF BOARD MEMBERS / AFFIRMATION OF QUORUM

Members Present: Board Chairman Jeri Coslett-Muirhead, Board Clerk Sharon McMahon and Board Member Matt Simon. Board Member William Burrus arrived at 6:11 pm.

Members Absent: None

Board Chair affirms a quorum

Administrative Staff Present: Chief Mark Nichols, Valerie Helms

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE TO THE FLAG OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA: led by Fred James.

CALL TO THE PUBLIC: There were no comments from the public.

MINUTES

Discussion & Possible Action – Approval of the January 19th, 2017 Special Meeting Minutes and January 26th, 2017 Regular Board Meeting Minutes

Board Chair J. Coslett-Muirhead notes one correction to the wording used on page 2 of the special meeting minutes, but it was explained that the wording was due to it being a direct quote of what was said. Board Clerk S. McMahon motions to approve the minutes of the January 19th, 2017 special meeting and the minutes of the regular board meeting held January 26th, 2017; Board Member M. Simon seconds the motion;

Vote conducted to Approve the minutes of the January 19th, 2017 Special Meeting and January 26th, 2017 Regular Board Meeting.

MOTION CARRIED 4-0.

AYES: Coslett-Muirhead, Simon, Burrus, McMahon

NAYS: None

ABSTAIN: None

CONSENT AGENDA

- A. **January 2017 Monthly Financial Report:** Board Member M. Simon motions to approve the Consent agenda item A; Board Member W. Burrus seconds the motion;

- B. **January 2017 Ambulance Bookkeeping and Insurance Billing Report:** Board Clerk S. McMahon motions to approve the Consent agenda item B; Board Member W. Burrus seconds the motion;

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Vote conducted for items A & B on consent agenda. **MOTION CARRIED 4-0.**

AYES: Coslett-Muirhead, McMahon, Burrus, Simon
NAYS: None
ABSTAIN: None

CURRENT EVENTS SUMMARIES, REPORTS, AND/OR CORRESPONDENCE

(Current Event Summaries are regarding activities of the Fire District and the status and progress relating thereto.)

Fire Chief Report and Current Events Summary

A. Chief Nichols discussed Current Events:

- Recognized Matt Hunkin and Steve Jahnke for their 8 years of service on the department.
- Notified the board that Steve Jahnke has accepted a position with the Surprise Fire-Medical Department and his last day was yesterday.
- Reviewed call volume numbers and collections over the past month and compared to previous years.
- Reviewed the ambulance revenue and cost reports for the past five years and answered questions as to how the numbers were determined.
- Reviewed the tax levy report received by the Yavapai County Treasurer's Office showing a 3% increase in tax revenue. This was noted to be less than the 5% projected in the feasibility study and consolidation scenarios. The tax revenue could increase beyond 5% with new building and commercial growth.

VIII. Old Business

A. Discussion and Possible Board Action re: 5 Year Plan and Goals for the Fire District

Board Clerk S. McMahon motions to discuss; Board Member M. Simon seconds the motion; Board Chair J. Coslett-Muirhead tables this item until further decisions have been made regarding the future direction of the department and notes that this will be discussed under new business.

B. Discussion and Possible Board Action re: Adopting the 2012 International Fire Code.

Board Member M. Simon motions to discuss; Board Member W. Burrus seconds the motion;
Chief Nichols requested to table this item as decisions made by the board regarding consolidation may impact this moving forward. Board Member M. Simon asked if the state already adopted it, does department have a choice in adopting it? Chief Nichols explained that a board can adopt the code but make amendments to meet the needs of the community. Board Member W. Burrus asked about the consolidation and if Daisy Mountain has adopted it, can we make more amendments? Chief Nichols responded yes. Board Clerk S. McMahon motions to table this item, Board Member W. Burrus seconds the motion;

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Vote conducted. **MOTION CARRIED 4-0.**

AYES: Coslett-Muirhead, McMahon, Burrus, Simon

NAYS: None

ABSTAIN: None

New Business

A. Discussion and Possible Board Action re: Accepting the resignation of Board Member Jack Artrip.

Board Chair J. Coslett-Muirhead read the resignation letter from Board Member J. Artrip and thanked him for his service to the board and community. Board Clerk S. McMahon echoed those sentiments and motions to accept the resignation; Board Member M. Simon seconds the motion:

Vote conducted. **MOTION CARRIED 4-0.**

AYES: Coslett-Muirhead, McMahon, Burrus, Simon

NAYS: None

ABSTAIN: None

B. Discussion and Possible Board Action re: Appointment of a new board member to the vacant position pursuant to A.R.S. 38-431.01.A1 The Black Canyon Fire District Board reserves the right to go into Executive Session for discussion or consideration of appointment of a public officer.

Board Member W. Burrus motions to discuss; Board Member M. Simon seconds the motion. Board Clerk S. McMahon would like to put it on the website and in town that we're accepting letters of interest. Board Chair J. Coslett-Muirhead noted that it would be a good idea to have a fifth person tie breaker if need be. Chief Nichols asked for the board's approval of the public notice and noted that it will be posted at all official posting locations: Ron's Market, Harmil Plaza, the US Post Office, the BCFD Fire station, and the BCFD website. Public Member Kim Cook asked if there were any conflicts of interest that would prohibit someone from applying. Board Chair J. Coslett-Muirhead noted that married people can't be on the same board but you do have to be a resident and a qualified voter, and you can't have a family member on the department. Public Member Bob Cothorn asked if there is a time restriction on how long you have been a resident of Black Canyon City and the board responded that they were not aware of any time restriction. Board Clerk S. McMahon motioned to post the public notice regarding a new member on the website and around town, Board Member M. Simon seconded the motion.

Vote conducted. **MOTION CARRIED 4-0.**

AYES: Coslett-Muirhead, McMahon, Burrus, Simon

NAYS: None

ABSTAIN: None

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C. Discussion and Possible Board Action re: Adoption of a Resolution Calling for Consolidation into the Daisy Mountain Fire District.

Board Member M. Simon motions to discuss; Board Member W. Burrus seconds the motion. Chief Nichols clarified that if both the Black Canyon and Daisy Mountain boards are unanimous in their decision to consolidate, there does not need to be a public election. If it is not unanimous, an election would be held so the voters would decide whether to consolidate the two districts. Board Chair J. Coslett-Muirhead noted that there was no information regarding a fire authority because the Daisy Mountain board directed the Chief not to pursue it. She requested to know the reasons the Daisy Mountain Fire Board didn't think a fire authority was a good idea and why it won't work. Chief Nichols noted that three options were discussed: a fire authority, a merger, and a consolidation but that each would require extensive research. The Daisy Mountain Fire Board felt that the consolidation would be in the best interests of both districts and were not interested in pursuing a fire authority or merger. In those arrangements, the governance of the two districts would be shared equally between a \$18 Million budget with 100 employees vs. a \$1M budget with 4 employees. The large gap between budgets and personnel was the main reason in making the decision to consider only a consolidation between the two districts.

Chief Nichols noted that we also looked at Mayer, Peoria, Rural/Metro, Sedona, and Copper Canyon and that Daisy Mountain was the only one that was interested in pursuing any option. Board Chair J. Coslett-Muirhead reiterated that we have looked at quite a few different options including Baghdad, Daisy, Rural Metro, and others to make sure we looked at all options. She also noted that there was an agreement when the Black Canyon Fire District first began and took over the Canyon Volunteer District that if the district was dissolved, the assets would go back to the Canyon Volunteer District. Chief Nichols will investigate further with legal counsel regarding this and will provide more information at the next board meeting.

Public Member Tillie noted that the word dissolved does not apply to this situation since we would consolidate. She also noted that Dr. Hancock is on the Daisy Mountain Fire Board but is also in the community and his medical practice is right next door to the fire station. Board Clerk S. McMahon noted that it has been said that we'll never get a seat on that board and she doesn't believe that; if we have a good turnout we can have a seat. Chief Nichols agreed. Public Member Lisa Hogg asked to know Board Clerk's S. McMahon's opinion and she stated that personally, she thinks "consolidation is the best avenue to keep the services the community expects. I lived here when this was a volunteer district, you guys heard Helen say the other night that when her house was on fire, they showed up with an empty tanker. I think it's going backwards, I'd rather go forward and I'm in favor of consolidation."

BCFD Fire Captain Jason Tilson noted that the ambulance was dispatched a call and has left the district and the one paramedic that is on duty today just left the district and won't be back for 2 ½ hours. A consolidation would ensure that the paramedic stays in district and would not leave.

Board Chair J. Coslett-Muirhead stated she has not made up her mind on consolidation or not.

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She's doing homework on her own time to check this out. The timeline is that Daisy Mountain's management and administrative contract will end June 30th and they will be pulling out. If we are moving forward with a consolidation, they will stay on to see it through. If we choose not to consolidate, we have between 2-3 years of financial viability. Chief Nichols explained that we have never given the impression that we would renew the contract for management and administrative services past June 30th, 2017. If you want us to help with the consolidation, we'll do that. If you want to hire a chief and admin, we'll help you do that.

Public Member John Dureski noted it was time "fish or cut bait" and that it was time to make a decision. Public Member Daryl Boothe thanked the board for serving on a volunteer basis and taking time away from their families and asked if we don't do consolidation and an issue comes up and that person sues because the board neglected the will of the people, are you personally at risk? If the opportunity passes us, will it open up the board or the city to liability?

Former Board Member Diana Kenson stated she spent 8 years on the board and "the reason I joined was my brother died in a house fire in 2008. I am not willing to go backwards, to where these guys are not able to do their job, not where there's only 2 guys at the station. I want to have them moving forward. I can live with it if it takes a little time. I want to make sure we're not losing all these guys because we can't pay them and they can't do their job. Daisy Mountain is up here every single day, and I want to make sure we continue to do it. Once Daisy Mountain walks out in June, it isn't going to happen. I know those numbers just as well as you do."

Public Member Tony Chavez stated that we have an opportunity to merge and this is the only avenue we have. A few years ago the water district had the opportunity to act and make it better and we lost the water we needed. We have the opportunity right now, don't lose it. Public Member Corey Sleasman stated he was a business owner and has lived in Black Canyon since 1980. He remembers volunteer firefighters and doesn't want to lose "our guys because they mean a lot to us and are here for us. Some calls have been Daisy Mountain. I work for the courts, so I understand the liability for litigation. Sometimes you have to bite the bullet and do what's right. "

Board Chair J. Coslett-Muirhead informally polled the board and all members affirmed yes, each member votes to consolidate. Public Member Tillie Hale asked "is there was any way to pull out of Daisy Mountain if we ever get to the point where we can sustain ourselves? Chief Nichols said that he has contacted John Flynn about the issue and will get back with more information when it is available.

Board Chair J. Coslett-Muirhead noted that if we do consolidate, we can still have our voice heard and go to the Daisy meetings or run for office. Board Member W. Burrus noted that a community association could meet and go in front of the fire board with concerns. Chief Nichols noted that the New River Desert Hills Community Association and Anthem Community Council currently do this and recommended that the Black Canyon Community do the same thing to bring issues to the attention of the board and Chief.

