

**Minutes**  
**Regular Session**  
**FIRE BOARD MEETING**  
**Thursday APRIL 30th, 2015**

**I. CALL TO ORDER**

Board Chair J . Coslett-Muirhead called the Fire Board Meeting to order on Thursday, April 30, 2014, at 6:01 p.m. at the Fire District Administration Office, 35050 S. Old Black Canyon Highway, Black Canyon City, Arizona.

**II. ROLL CALL OF BOARD MEMBERS / AFFIRMATION OF QUORUM**

Members Present: Board Chairman, Jeri Coslett-Muirhead, Board Clerk Diana Kenson, Board Member Dan Brett, Board Member William (Bill) Davis, Board Member Jim Speer

Members Absent: none

*Board Chair affirms quorum is present.*

Administrative Staff Present: Chief Birch and Elaine Caldwell.

**III. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE TO THE FLAG OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA:** Led by Nancy Artrip

**IV. CALL TO THE PUBLIC**

There was no response to the Call to the Public

**V. MINUTES**

- A. Discussion & Possible Action - Regular Board Meeting – March 26th, 2015 & April 10th Special Board Meeting Minutes: Board Member D. Kenson motions to approve the minutes of the March 26th, Regular Board meeting, and April 10th Special Board Meeting; W. Davis seconds the motion.**

J. Spear questioned how everyone received notification of the Special Board Meeting on April 10th. [Email] Chief Birch and E. Caldwell confirmed that his email address is correct. Chief will use phone text messages as well. Vote conducted to Approve. **MOTIONED CARRIED.**

AYES: Coslett-Muirhead, Kenson, Brett, and Davis

NAYS: None

ABSTAIN: Speer

**VI. CONSENT AGENDA**

- A. Approval of the March 2015 Monthly Financial Report:**

The Board reviewed the March 2015 Monthly Financial Report.

- B. Approval of the March 2015 Ambulance Bookkeeping and Insurance Billing Report**

The Board reviewed the March 2015 Ambulance Bookkeeping and Insurance Billing report.

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**W. Davis motions to approve Consent Agenda A. & B; D. Brett second the motion.**

E. Caldwell identified that we are nearly cleared up on Wildland outstanding revenue; we only have one left, and Ambulance revenue will exceed budgeted amount by a minimum of \$50,000.

Jeri: Noticed B.O.W. Pooled Collateral Item? Elaine clarified that this is something we will now see every month based on new Federal Requirement for the Bank of the West account.

*Public Comment: None*

Vote conducted. **MOTIONED CARRIED.**

AYES:	Coslett-Muirhead, Kenson, Brett, Speer and Davis
NAYS:	None
ABSTAIN:	None

**VII. CURRENT EVENTS SUMMARIES, REPORTS, AND/OR CORRESPONDENCE**

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

**A. Fire Chief Report and Current Events Summary for March 2015**

Chief discussed Current Events as outlined in Chief's report within Board Packet. Added comments include:

- **Anniversaries: Chief Birch 19 Years!** The Board gave hardy congratulations to Chief for his service;
  - The online training for newly elected Board members will not be done in time to meet to new state law requirements and Board members elected during the last election WILL need to attend the AFDA Conference in June to meet these requirements. Failure to obtain the training within 1 year of election is a Class 2 Misdemeanor. The Fire District does pay for the classes, hotel and travel expense.
  - There was a question why all 4 tires would have to be replaced on the large truck if tires are not wearing properly and whether tires get "rotated" on these trucks. They are not rotated as they are on passenger cars and must be replaced to keep the integrity of the full set intact. [they are not front-wheel alignment]
- *Public Comment: None*

**New Business:**

- A. Open Discussion regarding differences between mergers, JPA, JMA.** Chief Don Howard from Summit Fire extensively shared his experiences with merging three Fire Districts into one. Chief Howard shared the challenges and limitations based on the new Prop 117 limiting the Assessed Property Evaluations to 5%. He talked about the emotions and frustrations in the merger process as well. FDAT funding limits the possibility of some mergers because of how this is structured in the state. There is a \$\$ cap on FDAT which would restrict how some areas could or could not join/merge. The Joint Powers Agreements (JPA) and Joint Management Agreements (JMA) have taken the place of some mergers. J. Coslett-Muirhead addressed that this community is very unlikely to lose their input to the Fire Department as they have built it up from "scratch". Chief Howard stated that with JMAs you would retain the control because you have one Fire Chief managing two or more fire districts. He went on to say the first question and the Last question should always be: ***"What is in the best interest of the community?"***

When asked if he would even consider a merger today? Chief Howard identified he probably would not - he was glad that he had the initial opportunity, but it is doubtful that he would merge today. Instead, he would consider a

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JMA or JPA with the Fire Departments/Districts that he has merged with. Chief Howard complimented our Fire Department on how clean and up kept the station is -- Our pride shows as he walks around the station and grounds! The Board thanked Chief Howard for his valuable input.

**B. Discussion: Renewal of Chief Birch's Contract.** Pursuant to A.R.S 38-431-03-A.1 Chief Birch reserves the right to discuss his employment contract in open or executive session.

Chief opted to discuss his contract information in OPEN SESSION.

**C. Discussion and possible action: Renewal of Chief Birch's Contract: D. Kenson motions to discuss Agenda C.; W. Davis seconds the motion.**

W. Davis confirms that this is only a one year contract. J. Spear questioned if there is a formal/annual performance review conducted by the Board on the Chief. Jeri stated that the contract allows for a Board review annually and that if Jim was looking for a performance review prior to approval of this contract we could arrange that. Jim declined, however was interested in ensuring that we have something in place for a future Fire Chief. J. Spear identified he is not disputing Chief's contract, just the way we are reviewing performance.

**D. Kenson motions to approve the current contract for Chief Birch effective 7/1/15 - 6/30/16; D. Brett seconds.** Vote conducted. **MOTIONED CARRIED.**

AYES:	Coslett-Muirhead, Kenson, Brett, Davis,
NAYS:	Speer
ABSTAIN:	None

*Public Comment: None*

**Unfinished Business**

**A. Discussion and possible action re: Update Talks with Daisy Mountain FD regarding possible JPA/JMA or Merger; W. Davis motions to discuss Agenda A.; J. Spear seconds the motion.**

Chief passed out a spreadsheet [BCC SCENARIOS] that was given to the Chief, when he, Elaine and Capt. Tilson attended a meeting at DMFD. All but one of the proposals would cost DMFD between \$100,000.00 and \$800,000.00+ annually. None of these proposals appeared advantageous to BCFD as they leave the District without the Ambulance in Black Canyon City or our CON [Certificate of Necessity], although an engine company would be staffed with 2 to 4 firefighters, depending on which proposal DMFD and BCFD agreed upon. Our full time people would NOT be hired by Daisy as Firefighters; they would be hired as ambulance personnel only. The projected annual out of pocket costs for DMFD did not appear beneficial for DMFD.

Chief countered with a management proposal. Manage the BCFD, Board stays in charge and DMFD receives the revenue budgeted for Ambulance Billing services, since they do ambulance billing. Chief met with their Financial Dept. They are waiting for additional information from Daisy.

BCFD pay would remain as it is currently and so would their status as a Firefighter. Chief told Daisy that neither the Ambulance nor the CON are a bargaining chip; the Board and the Community will not tolerate them removed from BCC.

Jeri polled the Board:

B. Davis - Agree with Chief;  
D. Brett - Agree with the Chief and does not want the crew to lose their status as firefighters;  
J. Speer - Questions why Daisy would even want to move the ambulance? Agreed

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D. Kenson - Absolutely agreed - plus what they suggest doing to the crew would be wrong, the crews have dedicated themselves to BCC, why lose their knowledge and experience?

Chief Birch identified that he was not content with the proposals, but is still in working/communicating with Chief Nichols. There have been some developments with Williamson Valley [possible JMA]. Looking at keeping our guys here! Chief Birch stated that he has a meeting set up with the Chief of Peoria Fire Department next month. Chief identified that he has removed "merger" from his line of thinking at this time.

J. Coslett-Muirhead questioned if the Chief has looked into the possibility of using a Management Company if that is what we are looking for is Management only? [YES] There are management companies out there but there are those that are more responsible and/ or reliable to our reports and statutes/rules outside of a Management company [i.e., other Fire Dept. familiar with all those statutes, rules, etc. so JMA may be the option to go?]

Bill Davis asked about \$\$\$. What type of money is being looked at to offer these organizations? Chief shared that the \$25K from Ambulance Billing if the company does their own. Then, there is the payroll costs for those who may be retiring and no longer in the mix. (Chief/Elaine)

**Jeri polled the Board on their opinion of continuing with mergers at this time:**

- B. Davis - Against it
- D. Brett - Against it
- J. Speer - Against it
- D. Kenson - Against it - especially with the respect of possibly losing FDAT

*Public Comment:*

**Jack Artrip:** MP 244 Accident, we timed it/ car upside down/ it took 20 minutes for Daisy Mountain to arrive because BCFD already up the hill on another call.

**Richard Carter:** Questioning why there is no enforcement of the laws to prevent these accidents.

D. Brett [DPS] explained that in 2003 when a prestigious person got caught on this Hwy, there were so many officers assigned to the I-17 and it got better until the budget cuts and now it is great if one officer gets assigned.

**J Speer commented on J Artrip comment:** 20 minutes is the very best time we would get from Daisy, anywhere else we would be looking at over 40+ minutes.

**B. Discussion re: Preliminary Draft Budget Fiscal Year 2015/2016; D. Kenson motions to discuss Agenda; B. W. Davis seconds the motion.**

**Chief Birch** shared the highlights of the Draft Budget 2015/2016:

- Will need to decide if the taxpayers **will / will not** carry the Bond Payment next year
- **J Speer** questioned if the Online Testing is effective? **Capt. Tilson** shared it is very effective for OSHA , Medical and Internal Testing - allowing us to keep within State guidelines and standards as well as have the ability to send out reminders/Certification about to expire to FF when a required test is due (30, 60, 60, days etc.)
- Questions rose regarding the Brush Truck: If the Truck goes out, 1) how does that affect the Budget? [Answer: Money goes back into Carryover- Operations] 2) How does that affect staffing? [Answer: State compensates for those who go out and if we need to, those who are working overtime to cover those who have gone out.] **We are currently 2nd on the list.**

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**Chief Birch** shared the highlights District Financial Survival Page:

- Fire Chief and Office Manager retire June 30, 2016 // Minimum cost savings just from wages and benefits = **\$136,508**
- the data showed, an average of **\$74,483** has been, or is forecast to be, transferred from the Capital Reserve Fund each year in order to balance the budget
- The savings from the Chief and Office Manager retiring will stop the "financial bleeding" and gives the District a better chance to survive. As the Five Year Budget Forecast shows, potentially beginning in FY 17/18 it would not be necessary to transfer any additional funds from the Capital Reserve Fund to the General Fund. In addition the District would have a potential **\$478,727** remaining in the Capital Reserve Fund.
- The District would still need to make some type of arrangement to have administrative responsibilities taken care of.

Next meeting we will need to decide on the budget. Chief identified we can present Board with a Budget with the taxpayer retaining Bond payment and one without it in the Budget. Chief will send that out a week or so before the next meeting.

*Public Comment: None*


## ADJOURNMENT


The meeting adjourned at 8:07 P.M. (W. Davis / D. Brett)

NEXT SCHEDULED BOARD MEETING

**Thursday May 28th, 2015**

Regular Board Meeting

  
Authorized Signature

  
Date

The complete packet of information from the Board meetings or portions thereof is available from the Administrative Office upon completion of a Public Records Request.

*The Fire District Administrative Office is accessible to the handicapped. In compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), those with special needs, such as large-type face point or other reasonable accommodations may request these through the Fire District of Black Canyon City Administrative Offices (623-374-5512) at least twenty-four hours before the meeting.*

*"Black Canyon Fire Department is an Equal opportunity employer and provider."*