



# Copper Canyon Fire & Medical District

26B Salt Mine Road, Camp Verde, AZ 86322  
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**REGULAR BOARD MEETING**  
**Station 82 – 3240 East Beaver Creek Road, Rimrock**  
**Wednesday, January 18, 2023 / 2:00 pm**  
**~ MINUTES ~**

1. **Call to Order:** Pursuant to notice, a Special Meeting of the Copper Canyon Fire & Medical District was called to order by Chairperson Linda Welsch at 9:00 am on Wednesday, January 18, 2023. Payroll/Benefits Assistant Kerrie Tarver recorded the minutes. A quorum was present, and the meeting, having been duly convened, was ready to proceed with business.
2. **Roll Call of Board Members:** Linda Welsch – Chairperson; Joshua Maxwell – Clerk; Danna Quinn and Carol Keeton – Members. **Not Present:** Jenny Sabato - Member

**Staff Present:** Fire Chief Terry Keller; Administrative Manager Robyn Cook; Administrative Accounts Assistant Misty Weatherford; Fire Marshal Nate Bailey; Battalion Chief Daniel Elliott; Captains Charles Miller, Adam Senger, Jon Gable, Jake Cecil; Engineers Jake Fitzgerald, Clint Gillespie, Rob Young and Kyle Mathews; Firefighters Shane Gage, Taylor Hammond, Randy Justus, Jenny Cuevas, Lane Moxon, Sal Unale, and Brian Burke; Fleet Manager Rob Jennings; Payroll/Benefits Assistant Kerrie Tarver – Recorder.

**Others Present:** approximately 7 citizens.

3. **Salute to the flag of the United States of America and Moment of Silence to Honor all military, firefighters, and police officers.**  
Chairperson Welsch led the pledge of allegiance followed by a moment of silence.
4. **Call to the Public**  
There were no requests to speak.
5. **Sworn In:**
  - A. **Nate Bailey**  
Chief Keller administered the oath of office to Fire Marshal Nate Bailey. Nate's wife Julie, members of the public, the board and staff witnessed.
  - B. **Cody Aldridge**  
Tabled
6. **Badge Pinning:**
  - A. **Nate Bailey**  
Fire Marshal Nate's wife Julie pinned his badge.
  - B. **Cody Aldridge**  
Tabled.
7. **Update, discussion, and possible action on the Stardust Tower Project. – Chief Keller**  
Paul Giovanni from Taurus Technologies provided an update regarding the project. Due to the county providing broadband to the area the tower and plan have been reconfigured. The plans for the foundation

are finalized but he will not pull a permit until a cell phone carrier partner has been identified. Mr. Giovanni stated he was confident a partnership would be formed. He did not have a timeline but was hopeful for this fiscal year.

The Board expressed a desire to receive more communication regarding the project status and Mr. Giovanni stated he would provide a monthly update to Chief Keller and Administrative Manager Robyn Cook.

Chief Keller stated the contract is somewhat breached and suggested the Board may consider addressing it. Chief Keller explained the effort was to obtain better radio connectivity in the Lake Montezuma Area and along Cornville Road. He had discussed another opportunity with another vendor but had not received a proposal.

Chairperson Welsch stated she was tired of waiting and understood that some of the reasons were outside of Taurus's control, but the district's needs are not being met and the Board will need to revisit the agreement at some point if progress is not made.

There was a discussion regarding the difference between Taurus's and Triad's projects and the potential to collaborate. Mr. Giovanni stated he would reach out to Triad and discussed the funding potential from different cell carriers and the likelihood of entering into an agreement.

8. **Approval of Minutes**

A. **Regular Meeting Minutes December 22, 2022**

*Board Member Keeton made a motion to approve the Regular Meeting Minutes from December 22, 2022. Board Member Quinn seconded. There was no further discussion and the motion passed unanimously.*

9. **Reports:**

A. **Fire Chief**

- a. **New Hires**
- b. **Financial Review with James Vincent Group**
- c. **Grant Updates**
- d. **Legislative ARPA Funds Distribution**

Chief Keller delivered the Fire Chief's report as written. Chairperson Welsch praised Chief Keller for his diligence in applying for and obtaining grant funding.

Ms. Cook clarified the district will not receive \$85,000 through ARPA funds for the COVID assessment since it has not been paid and the district will not be spending that money. The district should get COVID premiums back, but it is unknown how much and the district can request wage reimbursement for COVID sick leave and transports. Ms. Cook stated she anticipates a lower worker's compensation insurance quote than last year because there will not be a COVID assessment, but the cancer portion will remain.

B. **Operations**

Captain Charles Miller provided the operations report for December and Chief Keller reviewed the call volume from the last five years.

C. **Fire Marshal**

Fire Marshal Nate Bailey presented the Fire Marshal report. He stated that Tractor Supply's grand opening will be delayed. There were no fires in the month of December.

D. **Financial/Administrative**

- a. **Reconciliations**
- b. **Financials**

Administrative Manager Robyn Cook noted the error on the budget to actual summary for ambulance revenue. The ambulance revenue was \$85,000k under budget, and Ms. Cook anticipates it to be under budget for the year. There was a discussion about the basis for budgeting ambulance revenue which included a combination of the prior year's budget, balance billing, and the rate increase.

Interest accrued in the capital reserve fund for the unfunded pension liability and Ms. Cook stated she would investigate the ability to utilize the interest or if it needs to remain in the account. The smart and safe money came early and was \$5,000 over budget.

Year to date 53% of the revenue has been collected and 52% has been expended. The district is not saving money anywhere. The overtime budget typically drops this time of year, but it will continue to be over budget. Verde Valley Fire District hired two of the three reserves. Due to the inability to retain reserves the budget should be moved to the overtime budget.

The Board chose to have a year-to-date budget to actual and eliminate the monthly budget review.

The automatic rate increase for the ambulance billing was explained, the physicals expenses will be over budget due to not being billed by Phoenix Fire last year, and there will be a fleet manager report at future meetings.

10. **Discussion and possible action on the approval of the financials for December 2022. – Robyn Cook**  
*Board Member Keeton made a motion to approve the financials for December 2022. Chairperson Welsch seconded. There was no further discussion and the motion passed unanimously.*

11. **Budget Workshop – Kick Off – Robyn Cook & Chief Keller**  
Chief Keller provided an overview and outlined the budget process. There was a discussion regarding the revenue, economic outlook, and limited cash value formula. Town Council Member Wendy Escoffier stated the assessor would discuss valuations, projections, and the formula for determining limited cash value.

There was a discussion regarding the timeline for filling vacancies for the Safer Grant and it was noted that the only positions that could be cut were administrative positions.

12. **Discussion and possible action on reaffirming the focus for the workshop on January 26, 2023. – Chairperson Welsch**  
Chairperson Welsch stated she would like to clearly define what will be discussed at the workshop. She felt it should focus on trying to determine a path forward for the deficit.

The following items were identified:

- Finalize the legislative request.
- Labor's ideas to take into consideration for reducing the deficit.
- Update on the financial evaluation from James Vincent Group
- Alternate revenue sources and list of planned grant applications

13. **Discussion and possible action on how to proceed for the Fire Chief's annual evaluation process. – Chairperson Welsch**  
The Board Members were previously provided copies of the Fire Chief's job description and had a discussion to determine if they wanted to do the evaluation next month. The Board and Chief Keller determined there was no pressing need to complete the evaluation.

The chief's goals and past evaluation are to be provided to the Board. Chief Keller is to complete a self-evaluation and provide it to the Board by the end of February. The evaluation will be placed on the March agenda.

14. **Discussion and possible action on options, opportunities, and ideas for the Administrative/BC Station on Salt Mine Road. – Chief Keller**

There was a discussion regarding relocating administration and the associated costs. Chief Keller made calls regarding available lease options but has not heard back and does not have a definitive answer of the best course of action.

The item will be discussed again next month.

15. **Discussion and update from the Chief's committee on the request to Representative Quang Nguyen to assist the District financially through the state budget; discussion and possible action on having Chief Keller contact Representative Quang Nguyen's office to set up a meeting and present the District's request. – Board Member Quinn**

There was a discussion regarding other options for approaching legislation and the benefit of a collective effort. The Chief's committee will continue to draft the request and refine the draft document. The item will be discussed at the workshop and placed on the February agenda.

16. **Future Agenda Items**

New employee oath of office: Cody Aldridge and Jesus Malanche  
Budget Workshop  
Fire Chief Evaluation – March  
Salt Mine Property  
Legislative request

17. **Adjournment**

*Clerk Maxwell made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 4:26pm. Chairperson Welsch seconded. There was no further discussion and the motion passed unanimously.*

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Joshua Maxwell, Clerk of the Board