

**PINEWOOD FIRE DISTRICT  
BOARD MEETING  
March 19, 2013**

**MEMBERS PRESENT:**

Chairman - Richard Drinen	Clerk of the Board - Len Friedlund	Ben Click, Member
Barbara Timberman, Member	Bill DeGroot, Member	

**MEMBERS ABSENT:**

None

**STAFF PRESENT:**

Chief Welsch	Office Manager - Kim Ball	Captain - Rick Maggard
Kris Jordan	Dominic Garcia	Caleb Garcia
Jim Daulton	Carl Nelson	Bryan Monreal

**VOLUNTEERS PRESENT:**

None

**PUBLIC PRESENT:**

Sue Drinen	Bob Timberman	Bunny Click
Shelby Erickson		

Meeting opened at 5:01 p.m. with the Pledge of Allegiance and Roll Call. A quorum was affirmed.

**ADMINISTRATIVE REMARKS:**

Chairman Drinen asked the board members to stay after the board meeting to sign his notary book due to the chairman notarizing their signatures on Wells Fargo paperwork at last meeting. Chairman Drinen gave the board members a copy of Senate Bill 1282, county wide fire districts, to review. On the 22nd of February the senate did a striker; they struck everything from the bill and rewrote it. March 13th this bill went to the House of Representatives and they will have a study committee consisting of 7 people, which will be appointed. This committee will study the idea of having county wide fire districts instead of the current system of individual fire districts under individual management rather than county management. This committee will look at how fire districts have operated in the past and give the Governor a report on their findings by December 31, 2013.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES:**

The minutes for February 19, 2013 were approved as presented.

**CORRESPONDENCE:**

None

**FINANCIAL REPORTS:**

**A. FEBRUARY EXPENDITURES:**

The fire district is 66% thru the fiscal year; we are still waiting on the April installment of tax money to come into our County account.

There were no questions on the February expenditures.

**OFFICE MANAGER'S REPORT – Kim Ball**

**A. Ambulance Billing Report: FEBRUARY**

In February we charged out \$10,109.67 in ambulance billing. We received \$9,398.86 in ambulance payments bring our year to date figure to \$110,682.06. The resident subsidy for the month was \$2,711.00 with a year to date figure of \$23,157.24 in resident subsidies. Aging report is down to \$21,928.26. The bad debt year to date figure is \$1,939.10 and insurance reimbursement is \$1,967.13 year to date. The ambulance billing in collections is \$35,591.30 with an outstanding out of district amount of \$7,026.71 in collections. No payments were received this month for out of district calls this month.

As of February we have received \$50,030.65 from the Bear Jaw group for the wild fires they were on last summer. The Bear Jaw group still has an outstanding balance of 3,395.95. State Land is not paying as promptly as they have in past years; the state has 1 year so pay from the date that they are billed so we are still owed \$105,787.60. We have received \$11,965.59 from State Land so far this fiscal year.

**B. MONTHLY RUN LOG COMPARISON REPORT: FEBRUARY**

There were 27 medical calls, 1 fire call, 7 special duty calls which brought our monthly total to 35. The med-room encounters totaled 7, which bring our total figure for the month to 42. We had 35 toned out calls, transported 8 times with 9 patients being taken to FMC. Inside district calls totaled 20 or 57% and out of district calls totaled 15 or 43%. Our calls numbers are running very close to 2012 numbers, just not as many car vs. elk calls, which is due to the elk fencing.

**CHIEF'S REPORT:**

**A. Response Exception Reports:**

1. Fire
2. EMS
3. Rescue

Chief stated "The Bear Jaw group asked if they could speak to the board briefly at this meeting and I told them they could give a short presentation during my report; I am going to let them start off and I will do my report after they have finished". Chief introduced Shelby Erickson, the head of the Bear Jaw group, including Carl Nelson and Bryan Monreal to the board.

Carl Nelson gave a quick update on the Munds Canyon grant for the property owners in our district. They are hoping to get the crew into the canyon next week and start the thinning project, this project will take approximately a year and a half to complete. The fire wise committee met today, they are trying to get more flyers out to the property owners letting them know that the grant is still available to them. To date we have had 2 property owners apply for the grant and hopefully they will be reimbursed in the near future.

Shelby Erickson thanked the chief and the board for letting the Bear Jaw group speak at the meeting. Shelby went on to state "We just wanted to do a presentation to the Chief and Jim Daulton for supporting the Bear Jaw group the last 5 years. Being part of this interagency group (Pinewood, Highlands and Summit) I understand the importance of cooperation between agencies. We are very excited to start on

the 40 acres inside the canyon that need to be cut. We have a small present for the management team, Chief and Jim, to thank them for everything they have done to see that the Bear Jaw group was successful. We have designed a belt buckle for the Bear Jaw crew and want to present Chief and Jim each with one of these belt buckles with our thanks for all their support." Chief and Jim thanked them for their presentation and the gifts.

Chief asked Shelby to give an update on the coming season's plans for the Bear Jaw group.

Shelby stated "We have been a Type 2 IA Crew for the last several years. We have received a lot of positive feedback from the different people that we have come in contact with over the last few years. I would be happy to make up a packet for the board so that they can read what these individuals have said. Much like a hot shot crew we have 20 people that we can send any where in the nation. We run with just 6 guys in the winter time and we ramp up in the spring. We have 5 positions that are culled as needed, this means that we train them up and then we don't see them until we call them for a fire. We do not have the budget to keep these people on all year. We also have 15 positions that are filled by AmeriCorps, which is a national based volunteer program in the nation. It costs us about \$30,000.00 a year to employ 5 people that come and cut with us in the different districts. The hiring process has been completed with a couple of the AmeriCorps folks started yesterday and this brings up to 10 people in the crew. They are going to be with us in the canyon; we like to talk to people in the district but it is as important to keep our heads down and get the work done, especially in a canyon like this one that is so rugged."

Clerk Friedlund stated "You probably already told us this but the canyon is actually owned by 3 different people. The Pinewood Country Club owns a half, one fourth is the county and a California corporation just bought the other fourth. Do you communicate with these people and let them know what is going on and do you need permission from them to cut?"

Shelby replied "We do communicate with them; Carl has been the point man for this cut with help from Jim and the fire wise committee they have contacted all the owners and gotten agreements from them to do this thinning project. So we are ready to start cutting, we are kept to a time frame with this particular grant which is a year and a half. We have to make sure that we get the project completed on time. Our group does have commitments of this kind in Kachina and Summit also. We will be out here a lot in the next few weeks and we are really looking forward to getting started. In May we will be fully staffed and trained and ready to go on fires or do cuts".

Chief stated "As you know we don't expend any money on fire prevention except in our wildland urban interface program with the Bear Jaw group. Jim has gone ahead and dug up the wildland urban interface part of the international fire code, with some adjustments we are going to put these codes into effect with the approval of the board as an amendment to our current fire code so that we have authorization to make property owners clean up their property. We may not be as popular as we are now but we cannot allow residents to endanger the community by not cleaning up their property."

Board member Timberman explained to the board that the fire wise committee has received permission to place the wood that is cut out of the canyon as well as wood chips on the sanitary districts property. She also explained that the sanitary district has agreed to put the fire wise flyers into the sanitary bills that go to all the property owners in the district.

Chief stated "We want to commend the fire wise group because they have worked hand in hand with the Bear Jaw group in signing folks up and making the project happen. They have been working towards zone 1 and 2 becoming fire safe in case of a fire in Munds Park". "I will be sending letters to the insurance companies of the residents that have complied with our efforts to keep our community safe, I don't know if it will do them any good but it can't hurt their insurance rates".

Chief asked Shelby "When are the new trucks coming?"

Shelby stated "The first truck will be here at the end of the month and will go to Drake for a week to get fitted with the equipment. In April the other two will be here and will go to Drake also for a week to be fitted with their equipment and then we are ready to go into the fire season".

Shelby thanked the board and the Chief for their time and their support of the Bear Jaw group; the board and Chief Welsch thanked the Bear Jaw group for everything that they do.

### **CHIEF'S REPORT:**

Chief explained that we are slow this time of year, we are making up our call volume with smoke alarm installations. We are not seeing the number of car vs. elk hits that we had in past years. Chief stated "I have to commend ADOT group they have done a remarkable job of keeping the interstate open".

Chief explained that E81 came back from the shop but it was pulling to the left. It has gone back into the shop for an alignment issue; they are waiting for spring shackle issue because the rear axle is out of alignment. To date we have spent \$6,630.00 fixing from the accident, no one was hurt and no damage done to property.

Board member Click asked Chief about the assessed valuation for the district. Chief stated "It went down another 8.1%, I have the budget here for you to look at. We are all currently looking at the cuts that need to be made."

### **BUDGET DISCUSSION:**

Chief handed out his preliminary budget for them to look over; explaining that this was still a work in progress not the final budget.

Chief explained to the board that in 2008 when he became the fire chief that our assessed evaluation was 72 million dollars; this year it is under 53 million dollars, so in 4 years time we have lost almost 20 million dollars from our assessed evaluation. He went on to explain that we are going to have a lot of cutting to do in the 2000 & 4000 categories. The ambulance income is below what we had hoped it would be but the year is not over yet, we should make at least \$115,000.00 which is what we made last year. Obama care is significantly going to impact us in February 2014. Last year the mill rate was \$2.53 and the maximum mill rate is \$3.25 by law. If you look in the packet you will see that this year's budget that we are currently working with has many categories that have not been spent or that still have money remaining in them, we will be cutting off spending in April for any of these categories except the 3000 category which is operational expenses.

The budget is broken down into 4 categories; 1000 is human resources, 2000 physical resources, 3000 is operational expenses and 4000 is capital expenses and capital reserve which is what we have been doing for the last 3 years. Obviously we are going to have to make a lot of adjustments in our preliminary budget and we will do what we have to do to get back on track. We will have to put most of our strategic plans on hold for the next couple of years.

Chief explained that he knows this is a lot of information to look at and that he would be happy to sit down with each board member and explain the budget or even do a special meeting where he could go over everything. He is hoping that by the next board meeting we will have made the cuts we need to make and we will have a complete budget for them.

Chief went on to explain how Obama Care will effect us next year in February; at this time we have a high deductible to keep the cost of our health insurance down and we pay all the deductible expenses. Next February we will have to go to a \$2000.00 deductible because the new law says that anyone with less than 50 employees cannot have more than a \$2000.00 deductible and our money will go to paying higher premiums so we won't be able to pay deductibles any more. It is quite possible that we could pay up to triple in health insurance premiums.

FEMA grants have also taken a hit this year, we were turned down for the new generator that we applied for and we will not have the \$62,000.00 it will take to replace the old one.

The county assessor is also expecting the assessed evaluations to go down another 2%. So we still have another year of taking a hit in the pocket book.

Board member Click inquired if Chief would have the budget done by the next board meeting.

Chief said "Yes, I will have it done by then for sure".

Board member Click asked "What had to be done by the May board meeting?"

Chief stated "We would need to vote to approve the budget for posting."

Board member Click asked "Then it has to be posted in June and then at the June board meeting we can do final approval?"

Office manager Ball stated "We have to post the budget for 30 days and then have a final vote to approve budget as posted."

Chief explained that he plans to have the final budget done before the April meeting and getting it out to the board members before the board meeting by e-mail. This way any questions or adjustments that the board would like to make can be done; which would leave the May board meeting for approval to post and the June meeting would be the final approval. If we have to push the June meeting back to the 4th week in June we can do that and still get the budget finalized in time to present to the county.

Chief went on to state "Obviously we will have categories that we will continue to see increases in no matter how much we cut the budget. The 3000 category which is operational expenses such as electricity, fuel, propane, et cetera which we have no control over. The other one is our human resources account, this is a contract year and we will be joining into a new MOU. The line staff has not had a raise in 4 years, the last MOU they asked for a better benefit package not an increase in pay. We will do what we can; I am a firm believer in taking care of our people first, fire trucks do not go to calls by themselves".

Board member Timberman asked the Chief "So you are saying that we will be having extra meetings to work on the budget?"

Chief stated "If you can give me a week to a week and a half I will have a better idea of where we are. I will e-mail all the board members and we can decide where to go at that time."

Board member Click suggested that Chief and Chairman Drinen work on the budget together and they can decide whether or not to have budget meetings. This suggestion was acceptable to the Chief.

Chief went on to explain that we have started taking steps to decrease as many of our operational costs as possible, we are fueling at the ADOT yard now and this is beginning to save us some money.

Board member Timberman requested that if the board does decide to have additional meetings about the budget can we discuss the health insurance issue at that time. Chief was agreeable to discussing any human resources issue at that time.

### **SUMMARIZE ACTION ITEMS:**

1. Budget 2013/2014

### **FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS:**

1. Budget 2013/2014
2. Propane Usage

### **CALL TO PUBLIC:**

Bob Timberman asked about whether or not we own or lease our 1000 gallon propane tank.

Chief stated that it was leased. The office manager told the board that our lease is \$1.00 per year on the propane tank.

Bob Timberman stated "If you owned the tank you could get better pricing on propane."

Board member DeGroot stated "When you own your own tank you can shop for the best price on propane."

Chief stated "He had found a couple of used 550 gallon tanks at the state yard but they sold before he could get down there to purchase one."

Bob Timberman stated "If you owned the tank you save a considerable amount of money when it comes to filling a 1000 gallon tank."

Board member DeGroot asked "How often do they fill the propane tank?"

The office manager told him they come by once a month to check where our level is, if it is above the half full mark he doesn't fill it until the next month.

Kris Jordan brought up the fact that if there is a big storm and the power goes out we need the 1000 gallon tank because when the power goes off the generator runs on propane and Titan may not be able to get out here for several weeks.

Chief stated "He will have Devon look at the figures and see how often we are getting filled and see if there is some way we can purchase a propane tank."

Board member Timberman asked "Do you do a pre-buy every year or how does it work."

Chief replied "They just give us a guaranteed price each year at the beginning of the season."

The office manager brought up the fact that when the propane company fills us in May it is usually the last time that they fill us until September or October because we don't use as much in the summer.

Chairman Drinen asked that the propane usage be put on the agenda for the next board meeting.

Chairman Drinen then asked "Are there any further questions or discussion on any of these topics?"

All board members answer that there was no further discussion necessary. Meeting adjourned.

NEXT MEETING: April 16, 2013 at 5 PM.

The meeting adjourned at 5:50 PM.

Respectfully submitted by \_\_\_\_\_  
(Clerk of the Board, Len Friedlund)