

# ORACLE FIRE DISTRICT BOARD MEETING MINUTES

Tuesday May 6, 2014 / (Approved June 3, 2014)

Meeting was officially called to order at 6pm, Tuesday May 6, 2014 at 1475 W. American Ave., Oracle, AZ.

## CALL TO ORDER / ROLL CALL:

Members Present: Chairman Navarro, Clerk Brown, OFDBM Bristow.

Members Absent: OFDBMs Doran and McMurry.

Staff Present: Chief Southard and Admin. Chief Acosta

## 1. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE.

## 2. CALL TO PUBLIC.

Public #1: Ross Hopkins, of Oracle, AZ. He worked with OFD on numerous issues, including 4 previous proposals on placement of a Verizon cell tower. Mr. Hopkins contacted NFPA for their stance on cell towers, which they do not have. They state that this is a "jurisdictional issue". However, the IAFF is opposed to cell tower placement on top of fire stations, as there is not enough research for or against. During the time that Mr. Hopkins worked for the National Parks Service, their policy was to reduce the exposure to radio towers because of possible negative health issues.

Another location was proposed by Mr. Hopkins, for the Verizon cell tower discussed, along highway 77, where he believes there would be adequate service for Oracle and still be far enough away from residents. He would like the decision to be based upon public comment.

Public #2: Chuck Smallhouse, of Oracle, AZ. Mr. Smallhouse stated that many areas in Oracle are in need of better cell phone reception, due to the topography. His concern is that, should the Board decide to move forward with the cell tower, that the contract be reviewed with an attorney and include a non-interference clause, amongst other considerations. Additionally, he asked where they would place an equipment room and what they are planning for back-up power. In response to this question, Chief Southard replied that he has not been able to find room on the property for an equipment building, without having an adverse affect on Operations.

OFDBM Bristow recommended that we handle this agenda item in a future public meeting. Clerk Brown suggested the meeting be publicized in advance and that we ask for public comment. The meeting could possibly take place at the Oracle Community Center, and Verizon could be asked to pay the fee (as well as to pay the OFD attorney's fee for reviewing the contract).

Chief Southard stated that he was told that a tower placed above the station would not provide any cell phone benefit for us; that we would need a "booster" for improved service.

Chairman Navarro asked the board members if they had had time to review and research on the cell tower topic. The others responded that they read what was provided to the board. Chairman Navarro stated that he read that other fire districts made contracts with cell phone companies, but later had issues with the contracts.

OFDBM Bristow made a motion to defer the decision to accept a proposal from Verizon to construct a cell tower at the OFD station (Item #5 on the agenda for this meeting) for a future date, to allow for public comment. Clerk Brown seconded. All were in favor. Motion passed.

### **3. APPROVAL OF PREVIOUS MINUTES INCLUDING BUDGET COMMITTEE MINUTES.**

Chairman Navarro made a motion to approve minutes from the special budget meeting on March 15, 2014. OFDBM Bristow seconded. All were in favor. Motion passed.

OFDBM Bristow made a motion to approve minutes from the regular board meeting on April 1, 2014. Clerk Brown seconded. All were in favor. Motion passed.

OFDBM Bristow made a motion to correct the minutes from the special budget meeting on April 5, 2014, to read Saturday April 5, 2014, in lieu of Tuesday. OFDBM Bristow then made a motion to approve these minutes, as corrected. Clerk Brown seconded. All were in favor. Motion passed.

### **4. CHIEF'S REPORT – Attached**

Also attached: April 2014 Financial Reports and Call Load Report.

Regarding the Staff Report, OFDBM Bristow questioned the promotional exams that will take place for the three current Engineers to promote to the rank of Captain. Chief replied that these exams are based upon those from other fire districts, and can only be taken upon successful completion of required classes. OFDBM Bristow asked if the Captains position is State certified and Chief replied that no, there is no State certification for the rank of Captain. It is up to each fire district to determine their own requirements.

5. DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE ACTION REGARDING A PROPOSAL FROM VERIZON WIRELESS TO CONSTRUCT A CELLULAR TOWER AT THE FIRE STATION LOCATED AT 1475 W. AMERICAN AVE. VERIZON WOULD REMOVE THE OLD RADIO TOWER

AND CONTRUCT A NEW TOWER AT THE NORTHWEST CORNER OF THE FIRESTATION AND CO-LOCATE ALL OFD EQUIPMENT TO THE NEW TOWER. A FIVE YEAR RENEWABLE LEASE WOULD BE OFFERED AT \$1,450 PER MONTH. VERIZON IS REQUESTING FIRE BOARD APPROVAL BEFORE MOVING FORWARD WITH THE DESIGN AND ENGINEERING.

As noted in the Call to the Public portion of the meeting minutes:

OFDBM Bristow made a motion to defer the decision to accept a proposal from Verizon to construct a cell tower at the OFD station for a future date, to allow for public comment. Clerk Brown seconded. All were in favor. Motion passed.

6. DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE ACTION REGARDING LEGAL NOTIFICATIONS AND ADVERTISING FOR TWO FIRE BOARD POSITIONS IN THE NOVEMBER 2014 ELECTION.

OFDBM Bristow made a motion to ask the Chief to request the two fire board positions from Pinal County. Clerk Brown seconded. All were in favor. Motion passed.

#### **Chiefs Report – May 6th, 2014**

Financial, Budget & Account Balances Report: Documents will be presented by Chief Acosta.

The proposed 2014/2015 Operations Budget was published in the Miner News on April 9, 2014 and it is also posted on the OFD website.

The Public Budget Hearing is May 10 at 9 AM.

Staff Report: A Captain Promotion exam is being drafted by the Chief Officers with testing tentatively scheduled to take place during the month of June. Chief Southard will be attending an out of state memorial service during the week of May 26. Assistant Chief Jennings will be in charge.

Vehicle Report: All vehicles are currently in service.

Fire Station & Equip Report: All equipment is currently in service.

Events: The Oracle Oaks Festival and Parade was held on April 26. Seven OFD fire engines and other apparatus were in the parade.

Current Fire Conditions: Fire conditions are currently at VERY HIGH and they are not expected to downgrade until after the monsoon begins. Coronado National Forest officials are expecting Stage One Fire Restrictions to go into effect on May 1st.

Wildland Fire Report: The wildland firefighter roster including available OFD apparatus has been updated by Casa Grande Fire Department; the agency in charge of maintaining the resource inventory list. A deployment rotation list, very similar to last year is being administered by the Pinal/Pima Wildland Team. OFD Wildland crews are ready for deployment if called.

Grant Report: The WFHF 2013 Grant is progressing well. The Florence DOC crew has

been staying close to meeting our schedule; however the 2014 wildfire season is likely to periodically take them away as they get deployed to wildfire incidents around the state. The WFHF 2014 Grant has been written and submitted to the AZ State Forestry Division. Award notifications are expected to be announced during summer 2014 providing federal funding has been allocated.

CERT/Firewise Report: Firewise and CERT volunteers provided and staffed a booth at the recent Oaks Festival. Firewise and CERT volunteers are continuing to provide Firewise property evaluations throughout Oracle. Firewise is scheduled to work with Rite of Passage on a Firewise education project during the month of May.

The updated "Reverse 911" phone number list has been received from Century Link. It will be used to update the Emergency Auto-Dialer device. Several CERT's have been trained on using the Auto-Dialer.

Training Report: Chief Southard has written a grant request to FEMA, to send 2 full time firefighters to an advanced Incident Command class being held during February 2015 at the National Fire Academy in Emmitsburg Maryland.

A multi-agency Mass Causality Incident Tabletop Exercise is being discussed with neighboring fire departments.

Brush Dump Report: Weather conditions have not been favorable for burning brush and with the Burn Ban still in effect, we'll continue to stockpile brush until during or after the Monsoon.

Call Load Report: Statement to be provided.

## **7. ADJOURNMENT**

OFDBM Bristow made a motion for the meeting to adjourn. This was seconded by Clerk Brown. All were in favor. Motion passed.

Meeting adjourned 6:58 pm. **Next Special Budget Meeting: Saturday, May 10, 2014 at 9am.**

Minutes respectfully submitted,  
Tina Acosta - Administrative Chief  
Reviewed by OFD Board Clerk Ellie Brown