



# HIGHLANDS FIRE DISTRICT

## BOARD OF DIRECTORS REGULAR MEETING MINUTES · 02/17/26

A regular meeting of the Fire Board was held on **Tuesday, February 17, 2026, at 5:00 PM** at Fire Station 23, Administration Board Room, 3350 Old Munds Hwy, Flagstaff, AZ. The meeting was also available through Zoom Video Conferencing.

1. **Call to Order.** Chairperson Smith called the meeting to order at 5:01 PM.
2. **Adjourn for Promotional Ceremony 5:00PM – 5:30PM**
3. **Reconvene to Regular Meeting**
4. **Roll Call.** Chairperson Jay Smith, Clerk Carl Nelson, Director Tom Hanecak, and Ira Allen\* were present. Director Brad Bippus was absent.

Fire Chief Todd Miller, Battalion Chief Chris Pond, Ms. Jayme Jones, Mrs. Erica Lyons, Wiatt Wong, and Mr. Dominic Filosa\* were present as well as several members of staff.

\*Attendance through Video Conferencing.

5. **Introduction** – Welcome Erica Lyons, Administrative Assistant III
6. **Pledge of Allegiance, Invocation, Mission and Vision Statements, and Board Responsibilities.**  
The Pledge of Allegiance was recited, followed by a short invocation. The District's mission, vision, and Board responsibilities were reviewed.
7. **Welcome Visitors.** The Board welcomed Mr. Wiatt Wong to the meeting.
8. **Call to the Public.** There were no comments from the public.
9. **Approval of Minutes**
  - A. JANUARY 20, 2026 REGULAR MEETING. The Board reviewed the minutes of the January 20, 2026 meeting. An annotation was added to Item 9A at the recommendation of Chief Miller regarding Director Ira Allen's abstention. It was noted for the record that Director Allen abstained due to his recent appointment, as he was not a seated member of the Board during the relevant rating period. A **MOTION** was made by Director Hanecak and was seconded by Clerk Nelson to approve the minutes as discussed; the motion was unanimously **APPROVED**.
10. **Approval of Financial Report presented by James Vincent Group.** Mr. Filosa presented the January Financial Report, which highlighted the following:
  - Revenue for January was \$236,762, which is \$17,911 over budget.
  - Expenses for January were \$310,596, which is \$80,782 under budget.
  - Revenue year-to-date was \$3,574,497, which was \$84,822 under budget.
  - Expenses year-to-date were \$2,402,993 which was \$325,210 under budget.

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A **MOTION** was made by Clerk Nelson and was seconded by Director Hanecak to approve the Monthly Financial Report as presented. The motion was unanimously **APPROVED**.

## 11. Summary Reports & Correspondence

- A. IAFF LOCAL CHAPTER 1505 SUMMARY REPORT – Captain Blue reported that the Highlands Fire District participated in the Canyon Coolers "Cooler Runnings" event held at Fort Tuthill. The Union contributed a \$1,000 donation from their charity account to support the Flagstaff Family Food Center. The firefighters designed and constructed a custom cooler sled, named "Engine 25 1/2," for the competition. This is the District's first year engaging in this community event, which saw an excellent public turn out.
- B. BATTALION FIRE CHIEF'S SUMMARY REPORT – Battalion Chief Chris Pond presented the Battalion Chief's Report. He reported 51 calls for service in December. Battalion Chief Pond presented the monthly response data, providing reports from both the National Fire Incident Reporting System (NFIRS) and the new National Emergency Response Information System (NERIS). It was noted that the District is currently in a transition period as it migrates to the mandated NERIS platform, which is replacing the legacy NFIRS system nationwide to provide more modern, real-time data analytics. Battalion Chief Pond also provided a year-end report summarizing NFIRS call data from 2014 through 2025. The report provided a decade-long perspective on District responses, highlighting the evolution of call types and volume as part of a comprehensive historical audit. See written report for details.
- C. FIRE CHIEF'S SUMMARY REPORT – Fire Chief Miller presented the Chief's Report for December. He announced the retirement of Jayme Jones after 26 years of service and welcomed Erica Lyons as the new Administrative Assistant III. Additionally, Firefighter Clayton Carillo was recognized for qualifying as an Acting Engineer. Chief Miller stated based on recommendations from legal counsel, the District is managing the expenditure of the remaining \$400,000 in G.O. Bond funds to meet the March 2027 deadline. Chief Miller reported receiving notification from Pinewood Fire District Chief Tope that, following their Board meeting held earlier today, Pinewood has elected to withdraw from the Bear Jaw Intergovernmental Agreement (IGA). See written report for details.
- D. FIRE BOARD CHAIRPERSON'S SUMMARY REPORT – Chairperson Smith had no additional comments.
- E. CORRESPONDENCE – There was no correspondence presented.

## 12. Topics of Discussion and Possible Legal Action

- A. CONSIDERATION TO APPROVE POLLING AGREEMENT WITH COCONINO COUNTY ELECTION – Ms. Jones presented the Coconino County Polling Place Agreement to the Board. She recommended the Board approve the agreement to allow the County to utilize the Hirsch Center as a polling location for the 2026 election. After discussion, a **MOTION** was made by Clerk Nelson and was seconded by Director Allen to approve the Polling Place Agreement as presented; the motion was unanimously **APPROVED**.

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- B. CONSIDERATION TO APPROVE DISTRICT INSURANCE RENEWAL WITH VFIS; PRESENTATION FROM WIATT WONG\* – Mr. Wong presented the VFIS renewal proposal (see written proposal for details). Mr. Wong stated adjustments were made to policy coverage to ensure only fire and EMS related issues are covered. To minimize costs for auto physical damage the deductibles have been increased to \$1,000, which is a practice that's being put into place throughout VFIS. Director Allen asked if the premium adjustment is provisional or anticipate continuing premium adjustments year over year. Mr. Wong states this to be an incremental change, however, noted that it's anticipated that it will last for the next five to ten years. He stated the annual premium quote decreased by \$518, from \$47,884 to \$47,366, which is in part due to the marked improvement in loss ratio over the past five years. He stated for 2020 - 2021 the loss ratio was 73%, which has reduced to 18.9%, 10% and 0% respectively for the past three years. Mr. Wong reviewed the crime coverage which has a higher-than-average limit of \$100,000 to cover computer and funds transfer fraud, fraudulent impersonation, and identity fraud exposure. He stated the policy reads that should there be a request of more than \$25,000 the verification process should be in accordance with a pre-arranged callback or other established verification procedures before acting upon any such transfer. Chief Miller and Mr. Filosa discussed the District's established verification procedures which they believe have adequate internal controls to approve a transfer of funds. Chief Miller stated if the premiums are affordable that the District should maintain the policy as is. Mr. Wong reviewed options for adjusting agreed values on the District's apparatuses as well as incorporating newly purchased apparatus while removing older units slated for the upcoming surplus sale. He presented policy renewal cost implications on different scenarios. Chairperson Smith stated that with apparatuses that will be removed from the policy, it would be beneficial to increase values on newer vehicles to better reflect replacement costs. Mr. Wong also presented cyber liability insurance as standalone policy through AIG subsidiary company as the VFIS policy is at its maximum allowable coverage of \$20,000. The Board expressed interest in exploring this option further. The discussion ended with a decision for Chief Miller to review the cyber liability quote and potentially adjust agreed upon values for the apparatus. A final version of the renewal policy will be presented to the Board for formal approval at the March meeting.
- C. CONSIDERATION TO APPROVE REVISION TO DISTRICT BYLAWS – Ms. Jones presented the Fire Board Bylaws as revised based on recommendations during the January Board meeting. After discussion, a **MOTION** was made by Director Hanecak and was seconded by Clerk Nelson to approve the Fire Board Bylaws as presented; the motion was unanimously **APPROVED**.
- D. CONFIRM BOARD PARTICIPATION ON BUDGET COMMITTEE – The Board discussed their involvement on Budget Committees. Director Hanecak and Clerk Nelson offered to serve on the Budget Committee.
- E. CONSIDERATION OF REQUEST FOR DISPOSAL OF SURPLUS PROPERTY IN ACCORDANCE WITH HFD FISCAL POLICY 160 – Chief Miller presented the list of surplus property and Fiscal Policy 160 to the Board. After discussion, a **MOTION** was made by Director Allen and was seconded by Clerk Nelson to approve the disposal of surplus property in accordance with HFD Fiscal Policy 160; the motion was unanimously **APPROVED**.
- F. ACCEPTANCE OF RESIGNATION OF JAYME JONES FROM PSPRS LOCAL BOARD – Ms. Jones presented ARS 38-847 to the Board. She advised that a new member must be appointed to the PSPRS Board by the Local Fire Board during the March Board meeting.

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G. REVIEW FIRE BOARD TASK CALENDAR. The Board reviewed the Board Task Calendar.

\*This topic of discussion with possible legal action was moved to an earlier slot in the agenda at the request of the Board Chairperson.

**13. Board Members Comment.** There were no additional comments.

**14. Adjournment.** A **MOTION** was made by Clerk Nelson and was seconded by Director Allen to adjourn; the motion was unanimously **APPROVED**. The meeting adjourned at 7:07 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Erica Lyons  
Administrative Assistant III