

MINUTES

**Central Arizona Fire and Medical Authority
Central Yavapai / Chino / Central Arizona Fire and Medical
Joint Fire Board Meeting**

Tuesday, March 21, 2017, 4:30 pm - 5:30 pm

Central Arizona Regional Training Academy - 9601 E Valley Road - Classroom 1 -

Prescott Valley

In Attendance:

Darlene Packard; Dave Dobbs; Dave Tharp; Jeff Wasowicz; Julie Pettit; Laura Mowrer; Matt Zurcher; Nicolas Cornelius; Rick Mayday; Scott A Freitag; Susanne Dixson; Todd League; Tom Steele; ViciLee Jacobs

Not In Attendance:

Cyndy Ducote

NOTICE OF MEETING

Pursuant to A.R.S. § 38-431.02, notice is hereby given to the members of the Chino Valley and Central Yavapai Fire Districts and Central Arizona Fire and Medical Authority Board of Directors and the general public that the Chino Valley Fire District, Central Yavapai Fire District, and Central Arizona Fire and Medical Authority will hold a special meeting open to the public on **Tuesday, March 21, 2017 at 4:30 p.m. The meeting will be held at Central Arizona Regional Training Academy, 9601 E. Valley Road, Classroom 1, Prescott Valley, Arizona.** The Board may vote to go into Executive Session on any agenda item, pursuant to A.R.S. §38-431.03(A)(3) for discussion and consultation for legal advice with the District's Attorney on matters as set forth in the agenda item. The following topics and any variables thereto, will be subject to Board consideration, discussion, approval, or other action. All items are set for possible action.

1. CALL TO ORDER / ROLL CALL OF BOARD MEMBERS

A. Chino Valley Fire District Board of Directors

Board Clerk Dobbs called the Chino Valley Fire District Board to order on March 21, 2017 at 5:00 p.m. and asked roll to be taken. Todd League attending telephonically. Board quorum present.

B. Central Yavapai Fire District Board of Directors

Board Chair Packard called Central Yavapai Fire District Board to order at 5:01p.m. and asked roll to be taken. Board quorum present.

C. Central Arizona Fire and Medical Authority Board of Directors

Board Chair Pettit called the Central Arizona Fire and Medical Authority Board to order at 5:01 p.m. and asked roll to be taken. Board quorum present.

2. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Board Member Steele led the Pledge of Allegiance.

3. CALL TO THE PUBLIC

Those wishing to address the Chino Valley Fire District, Central Yavapai Fire District, or Central Arizona Fire and Medical Authority Board of Directors need not request permission

in advance. However, we ask that you complete a Call To Public Form for the record. The Board is not permitted to discuss or take action on any item raised in the Call to the Public due to restrictions of the Open Meeting Law; however, individual Board members may be permitted to respond to criticism directed to them. Otherwise, the Board may direct the staff to review the matter or the matter may be placed on a future agenda. Individuals may be limited to speak for three (3) minutes with a total of 30 minutes allotted for Call to the Public per meeting.

Board Clerk Dobbs opened the meeting for public comments.

No comments.

4. CONSENT AGENDA

A. Approve Special Joint Session Minutes - February 21, 2017

Motion to approve Consent Agenda.

Move: Julie Pettit Second: Darlene Packard Status: Passed

Yes: Dave Dobbs, ViciLee Jacobs, Darlene Packard, Tom Steele, Julie Pettit, Jeff Wasowicz, Matt Zurcher, Todd League

5. PRESENTATION

A. Presentation and Discussion Regarding Salary and Benefits Request

Chief Freitag stated this is the first budget presentation since the creation of CAFMA, and we believe that all three boards need to provide input for the budget moving forward.

Union President Kontz addressed the Boards and thanked them for allowing him the opportunity to present the wage and benefit request. He explained that Labor has only requested minor changes in the last 10 years. A wage survey was conducted utilizing similar fire agencies that the former Board had approved, and Labor is seeking a 2% wage increase for Fiscal Year 2017-2018. Labor is not asking for any other benefits.

Union President Kontz's presentation:

History

- Each year the labor group presents to the Board a wage and benefit update at the March meeting
- Over the last 10 years the group has presented updates, but has only requested minor changes
- In the last 10 years our group has experienced
 - Wage Freezes
 - Wage Compression
 - Merit increases drop from 5% to 2.5%, extending the wage scale from a 7 year scale to a 13 year scale
- We have come before the Board the last few years in support of the agency's direction and did not ask for any adjustments.

Today

- The Board has always supported our employees
- To that end the Board policy suggests keeping wages competitive with the

market striving for the 50th to 75th percentile when fiscally feasible

- A wage comparison was completed this year utilizing the agencies who were agreed upon by a former Board

Wages

- Out of the 11 agencies utilized for the study, CAFMA's starting firefighters rank last

- In addition, other agencies reach top pay in less time

- Based on the study, our firefighter wages are out of alignment and could be considered less than competitive

- Prop. 206 (minimum wage) further complicates the matter when one considers the hourly rate

- This impacts other positions within the agency as well, especially when we consider compression caused by past wage freezes

Proposal

- We would like to work with the Board and staff on a plan that will make CAFMA competitive in the market while remaining fiscally responsible.

- Working with management we have developed a possible path forward

- To that end we would request a 2% increase for Fiscal Year 17-18

Future

- The difference between our current ranking and the 50th percentile is 9%.

- The difference between our current ranking and the 75th percentile is currently 12%

- In subsequent years: Provide staff direction to work with labor on a long term plan that will bring our wages back in alignment with the market.

Other Benefits

- The costs for health care to our members is currently higher than most of our peers.

- We understand that changes are possible in the future based on where health care is headed.

- To that end, we are not requesting any changes this year; however, it is something we should keep in mind.

Board Member Steele asked who the fire agencies were that Labor used in their wage comparison.

Chief Bliss named a few of the agencies such as Flagstaff Fire, Verde Valley, Daisy Mountain, Sun Lakes, Superstition, Prescott, and others.

Board Clerk Wasowicz confirmed that the 2% wage increase request was for all employees.

Union President Kontz explained that if the wage increase was for firefighters only the wage scales would become more compressed.

Board Clerk Dobbs asked when the wage survey was completed.

Union President Kontz stated that they began in January; however, they are going to start 6 months early in the future. If we start too early, we do not have the net assessed values. Ideas and plans can be developed, and the values can be added once they are received.

Board Member Steele confirmed that the comparisons are just for this year.

Chief Freitag explained that the Boards will be provided with three budgets during

the budget work study session starting with the 2%. There are summary documents included in today's packet.

Board Chair Packard asked for the Central Yavapai Fire District bond rate. Chief Tharp stated the current rate is \$.2341; it may go down to \$.22 next year.

6. OLD BUSINESS

A. Discussion Regarding Fiscal Year 2017-2018 Budget

Chief Tharp explained that annually staff provides three budget options. One summary has no increase, it only covers the MO expenses. This covers health insurance increases, PSPRS, etc. Labor would like to see a 2% wage increase; we provided summaries for 1% and 2% showing projected tax rates. He believes the points that Labor mentioned are important; the Town of Prescott Valley is already moving in the direction of raising their minimum wage to \$12.00 per hour in anticipation of the statutory change. We provided a summary to show the impact.

Board Member Mayday arrived 5:18 pm.

Chief Freitag explained that Proposition 206 impacts everyone across Arizona. It has a little more impact on us as we rank last in starting wages. The other categories of employees are also in the lower percentiles. Staff wants to work with the Board and Labor to allow us to be competitive to attract high quality members. Chief stated that the \$12.00 per hour minimum wage increments over a period of years; however, if our wage scale is not modified, when the \$12.00 per hour hits, our professional firefighters will only be making \$1.74 more than minimum wage.

Chair Pettit mentioned that there are two parts to consider: 1. Wages behind due to wage freezes and 2. The minimum wage increase.

Chief Freitag stated the Central Yavapai employee's wages were frozen for 3 years, and Chino Valley employee's wages were frozen for 8 causing compression. He noted that the wage scales have not changed for the past 10 years and there has not been a COLA for 10 years.

Board Clerk Dobbs mentioned that new entry-level employees start at the same pay as a current employee with 8 years of experience.

Chief Tharp explained that once the tentative budget is approved in May we cannot increase the budget; it is then posted for 30 days and is scheduled for Board approval in June to allow for a July 1 starting date. Staff will provide a revised budget after the April budget workshop.

Chair Pettit suggested April 4th for the budget workshop at 2:00 p.m.

Chief Tharp suggested at least 2 to 3 hours for the meeting and the meeting will be held at Central Arizona Regional Training Academy to allow room for all Board members and staff.

7. ADJOURNMENT

Board Member Zurcher made a motion to adjourn Central Yavapai's meeting. Board Member Jacobs seconded.

CYFD Board Chair Packard adjourned Central Yavapai's meeting at 5:29 p.m.

