

**MINUTES OF TONTO BASIN FIRE DISTRICT**  
**BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING**  
Regular Session  
October 24, 2024

**Call to Order:** This regular session Board Meeting was called to order at 1501 hours by Chairman John France at Tonto Basin Fire Station #1, 46189 N AZ Highway 188, Tonto Basin, AZ.

**Pledge of Allegiance:** Led by Board Member John France.

**Roll Call of Board Members:** The following Board Members were present: Chairman John France, Clerk Debra “Deb” Morris, Secretary/Treasurer Robert Cooper, Board Member Clifford “Cliff” Metz and Board Member Keli Smith.

**Also Present:** Chief James Stoltenberg. Dottie France as a Community member.

Dustin Richards with BDR Richards CPA’s, PLC via Teams.

Jeffrey Matura with Barrett & Matura , P.C. via Teams.

A Motion was made by Board Member Robert Cooper to move Agenda Item 11, Discuss Board Member attendance information with possible action, to the next topic following the Roll Call. The motion was seconded by Board Member Cliff Metz. The vote to move agenda item 11 forward following Roll Call was unanimously approved.

**Discussion/Information and Action:** Proceeded regarding the discussion on Board Member attendance. Board Member Robert Cooper presented his concerns that he raised in the September Board Meeting about the number of meetings that Board Member Keli Smith had missed during 2024. Board Member Smith has missed 4 meetings (February, June, July and September) and the contract that she had signed when applying for the Board stated:

“I understand that if I am appointed to the Governing Board of TBFD I may be removed from office if:

- I do not sign the required Oath of Office within the time prescribed by law.
- If I cease to discharge the duties of my office for the period of three (3) consecutive months, or for four (4) months during any calendar year.
- I am convicted of a felony or an offense involving a violation of my official duties.
- Other reasons as may be prescribed by law.”

A discussion followed after the concern was raised with all Board Members participating. A motion was made by Board Member Robert Cooper to remove Board Member Keli Smith from the TBFD Board. The motion was seconded by Board Member Cliff Metz. Board Member John France voted Aye, Board Member Deb Morris voted Aye, Board Member Robert Cooper voted Aye, Board Member Cliff Metz voted Aye, Board Member Keli Smith voted Nay.

Keli Smith left the meeting following the vote to remove her from the Board.

Ben Archer-Clowes “Ben” with James Vincent Group (JVG) then joined the Board Meeting.

**Awards & Recognition:** Chief Stoltenberg recognized Tri-City Fire for assisting TBFD in an accident at Grape Vine. The Chief will get the names of the Tri-City employees and TBFD will recognize them via a letter signed by Board Chairman John France.

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**Reading and Approval of the September 19, 2024 Meeting Minutes:** Following the review of the regular meeting minutes from September 19, 2024, a motion to approve the minutes was duly made by Board Member Cliff Metz and seconded by Board Member Deb Morris. Meeting minutes were unanimously approved and adopted.

**Reports and Correspondence:** The Chief's Report was presented by Chief Stoltenberg. Discussions ensued on the items as presented. Ben presented the financial reports with the following ending balances as of 09/30/2024:

National Bank:	\$ 111,656.87
Warrant Account:	\$ 639,246.34
Capital Reserve Account:	\$ 342,619.74

Following discussions on the Chief's and Financial Reports a motion was made to accept both reports as presented by Board Member Deb Morris and seconded by Board Member Cliff Metz. The vote to accept both reports was unanimous.

**Call to the Public on Agenda items:** None

**Discussion/Information and Action:** Proceeded regarding review and approval of the 2023/2024 Tonto Basin Fire District (TBFD) Financial Audit as prepared and presented by Dustin Richards of BDR Richards CPA's, PLC. The audit report states: "In our opinion, the financial statements referred to above present fairly, in all material respects, the respective financial position of the governmental activities, each major fund, and the aggregate remaining fund information of the Tonto Basin Fire District, as of June 30, 2024, and the respective changes in financial position, and, where applicable, cash flows thereof for the year then ended in accordance with accounting principles generally accepted in the United States of America." Following discussion on the 2023/2024 TBFD Financial Audit a motion was made by Board Member John France to accept and approve the 2023/2024 TBFD Financial Audit as presented. The motion was seconded by Board Member Deb Morris. The vote to accept and approve the 2023/2024 TBFD Financial Audit was unanimous.

**Discussion/Information and Action:** Proceeded regarding review and approval of the VFIS Insurance Policy that covers the TBFD buildings, vehicles, and the Liability policy with the Accident and Illness premium as presented by Chief Stoltenberg. The policy has increased by 6% year on year to a total amount of \$34,856.20. Following discussion on the VFIS Insurance policy for TBFD a motion was made by Board Member Robert Cooper to accept and approve the VFIS Insurance policy for TBFD as presented. The motion was seconded by Board Member Cliff Metz. The vote to approve the renewal of the insurance policy with VFIS was unanimous.

**Discussion/Information and Action:** Proceeded regarding review and approval of the proposal to change the TBFD legal representation to the law firm of Barrett & Matura, P.C. The Chief introduced Jeffrey Matura to the Board. There was discussion between the Board and Mr. Matura. Mr. Matura's firm is recognized by other Fire Districts for his work and has better expertise in regards to Fire District legal matters as compared to the existing TBFD legal representation. Following the discussion on the proposal to change TBFD legal representation a motion was made by Board Member John France to approve the change of TBFD legal representation to Barrett & Matura, P.C.. The motion was seconded by Board Member Deb Morris. The vote to accept and approve the change of TBFD legal representation to Barrett & Matura, P.C. was unanimous.

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**Call to the Public on Non-Agenda items:** Dottie France highlighted the fact that for future TBFD minutes the Board should put in the minutes whether an absence by a Board Member is excused or unexcused.

**Adjournment:** There being no further business to come before the Board a motion to adjourn the meeting was made by Board Member John France and seconded by Board Member Cliff Metz. The vote to adjourn was unanimously adopted and the meeting adjourned at 1610 hours.