

**YARNELL FIRE DISTRICT
FIRE BOARD PUBLIC SESSION MINUTES**

The Yanell Fire District Board of Directors held a Board meeting as follows:

Date: Monday, February 23, 2026

Time: 10:00 a.m.

Location: In-person and via Zoom

1. CALL TO ORDER AND PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE:

Board Chair Arlon Rice called the meeting to order at 10:00 AM.

2. ROLL CALL OF BOARD MEMBERS:

Board Members present: Arlon Rice, Board Chair; Richard Mayer, Treasurer; Nina Bour-Beau, Secretary; John Sutherland, Member-at-Large.

Others present: Jeff Shearer, Fire Chief, John Rice, Fire Chief, Chief Bryan Smith

20 guests per the sign in sheets.

CONSENT AGENDA

A. The Regular Board Meeting Minutes of January 26, 2026

B. The Executive Session Minutes of January 26, 2026

C. The Special Meeting Minutes of February 2, 2026

Board Member John Sutherland motioned to approve all the consent agendas. The motion was seconded by Board Treasurer Richard Mayer. The motion was approved unanimously.

3. REPORTS AND CORRESPONDENCE:

A. Chairman's Report. There was no report from the Chairman.

B. Secretary's Report – There was no report from the Secretary

C. Treasurer's Report

a. Discussion/possible approval of treasurer's report.

General Fund	\$ 15,990.91 \$13, 098.00 tax revenue
Capital:	\$ 164,086.27
Donations & Grants	\$ 3,209.16
Pension:	\$ 18,319.00
Shuttle:	\$ 5,051.67
Training:	\$ 7,273.10
Wildland Fire	\$ 113,604.57

Board Chair Arlon Rice motioned to approve the treasurer's report. The motion was seconded by Board Member Nina Bour-Beau. The motion was approved unanimously.

b. Discussion/possible approval of transfer log:

DATE	AMOUNT		REASON
2/4/2026	\$12,856.65	FROM CAPITAL RESERVE TO GENERAL FUND	PAYROLL/STIPENDS/BILLS

2/11/2026	\$320.39	FROM CAPITAL RESERVE TO GENERAL FUND	BILLS
2/20/2026	\$15,490.91	FROM GENERAL FUND TO CAPITAL RESERVE	PROPERTY TAXES DEPOSIT

Board Member John Sutherlad motioned to approve the transfer log. The motion was seconded by Board Member Arlon Rice. The motion was approved unanimously.

D Chief's Report: The Chief's report was given by Chief John Rice.

The crew quarters continue to be moved to the Fire Station. Wildland pop test is held at Peeples Valley School.

Still working on getting ambulance crew up to Yarnell Fire Admin Building.

5. NEW BUSINESS

- A. Discussion and possible action re: adopt the SOP's HR Policy Manual 2022- need more time to review-on hold
- B. Discussion and possible action re: adopt the Annex 19 parcels by Western Land & Ranches-on hold due to legal issues – parcel owned by one entity. In Kirkland, Southern Yavapai is a volunteer fire department. A special meeting will be held if this needs to be approved before the next regular board meeting.
- C. Discussion and possible action re: possible adoption of the 2018 International Fire Code-on hold Yarnell Fire is currently not under any Fire Code and Chief Smith has guidelines for us to follow before this fire code gets adopted.
County has 2021 fire code, Per Chief Smith, with the fire code you have local say instead of going through the county, you can make local adjustments, amendments, exceptions and variances that are common to our area without going through the County. County fire codes overlap us. This benefits citizens and homeowners posting requirements.
- D. Discussion and possible action re: acknowledgement of board letters for new a board member. Received 5 envelopes at Admin building.
Arlon and Richards board positions come up this year. Joyce Ritner, a resident asked when Denise's term would be up if she was still on the board. Per Board Chair, Arlon Rice the term would be up 2028.
Stacy Pizzirusso, a resident, commented on voting-need board packet by March 16th for early voting.
Vickie Verlasquez, a resident, commented that both Arlon and Richard positions would be up in December, March is early election. Per Board Chair, Arlon Rice, Yarnell Fire District board is non partisan –both board positions would be in the general election and not early.
- E. Budget from Chief Smith, working with Chief John Rice on current budget, about 5% done. Received from County revenue in taxes, working, our estimate is \$100,000.00 in taxes per Yavapai County. Craig Davis, a resident asked does the money go to the consortium? Per Chief Smith, no it goes to Congress Fire, and that the money is to share costs of the Chief. Stacy Pizzirusso, a resident asked will the money that Yarnell Fire District is paying be funneled since Consortium itself has no money, yes it will go to Congress Fire

6. POSSIBLE EXECUTIVE SESSION: No executive session was held. Chief never received 24 hour notice, never answered his phone, he was busy. Chief Shearer gave Nina his lawyers name and number: per Chief Shearer, conversation with his lawyer, Chief has the right to go into executive session.

7. RECONVENE IN PUBLIC SESSION

- A. Discussion and possible action re: removal of Fire Chief Shearer's personal items on Fire District property within 48 hours under supervision. Chief Shearer never asked to store personal items at the Station, therefore Arlon Rice Board Chair requested that he remove the pool table and ATV in 48 hours with supervision.
 - B. Discussion and possible action re: Chief Shearer to sign off on training for Hernandez and any other employees. Chief Shearer commented that he did this with registry, Alan Hernandez checked Registry during this meeting and this is still not showing. Chief Shearer said he would try again. Board Chair, Arlon Rice commented that Chief needs to make sure that this is done as soon as possible with Alan Hernandez and any other employees that need to be signed off in training.
 - C. Discussion and possible action re: possible approval of Revised Fire Chief Contract. Chief Shearer wants this discussed in executive session, he will not sign off on it until he has reviewed and this is discussed in executive session. Chief Shearer requested that the board call his lawyer.
 - D. Real property Conveyance issued: Coming back to this one.
 - E. Discussion and possible action re: Notice of Non-Renewal of Fire Chief Shearer's existing contract. Board Member John Sutherland moved that we do not renew the current Chief contract, board member Nina Bour-Beau second.
 - F. Discussion and possible action re: Fire Chief's Evaluation, employment, and possible resignation; and Chief's new contract. Board has accepted evaluation, table this, 66% of salary is what Workers Comp pays and Chief S is still on Workers Comp and medical leave.
 - G. Discussion and possible action: complaint against Fire Chief Shearer and Chief Shearer's written response to the same; possible investigation; possible approval of investigation. This will be tabled per Board Member Arlon Rice. Waiting for when we joined Consortium per Chief Rice.
- D. Discussion and possible action re: real property conveyance issue. Nina Bill Overmeyer asked Chief Shearer where's the original deed that Mills signed? Chief Shearer responded to call the Title Company. The Deed that Nina Bour-Beau took to be recorded had to be corrected, because the notary handwrote the date expired which was different from the stamp. Nina Bill Overmeyer corrected and Nina went back up to County reorders office to get this recorded. Now in Assessors office online both a and b parcels. Chief S needs to go to Franke Linzie to get original deed which needs to be destroyed because it could get filed and would complicate things.

OPEN:

Amy Cramer, a resident asked if Yarnell Fire District has received anymore updates from: Workers Comp? No updates after December, Nina will look into this, we lost our agent.

Joyce Ritner: asked when the current contract expires: June 30th, 2026.

Chief Rice explained that Chief S was on medical leave with workers' comp. Because Chief Shearer on medical leave and he and we have not received any more status updates other than December, he is not in charge of anything, Chief in name only. Before Chief S returns to duty, he must pass the physical per the SOG's. Not in charge of anything right now until he is released from Workers Comp.

The next meeting is March 16, 2026 at 10:00 am.

9. Meeting adjourned at 11:07 am by Board Chair, Arlon Rice.

Respectfully submitted,

Nina M Bour-Beau