

YARNELL FIRE DISTRICT
FIRE BOARD PUBLIC SESSION MINUTES

November 17, 2025

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:

Present were Chair Arlon Rice, Treasurer Richard Mayer, Secretary Nina Bour-Beau,
Members at Large: Denise Manone, John Sutherland

Others present: Chief Shearer.

Call in: Bill Whittington & Tomas Montoya, lawyers

Guest: Tom Blessin, Stacey Pizzirusso, Rose Davis, Joyce Ritner, Cheryl Shearer, Marco Cecala

3. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

4. CONSENT AGENDA:

- A. Board Member Richard Mayer motioned to approve the Board Meeting Minutes of October 20, 2025, second by Board Member Denise Manone. The motion was carried by all.
- B. Board Member Richard Mayer motioned to approve the Minutes of Executive Session of October 20, 2025, second by Board Chair Arlon Rice. The motion was carried by all.
- C. Board Member Richard Mayer motioned to approve the Minutes of Executive Session November 5, 2025, second by Board Member John Sutherland. The motion was carried by all.
- D. Board Member Richard Mayer motioned to approve the Minutes of Public Session and Open Session of November 5, 2025, second by Board Member John Sutherland. The motion was carried by all.

5. REPORTS AND CORRESPONDENCE:

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

B. Secretary's Report-Letters and Correspondence. There was no report from the secretary.

C. Treasurer's Report

- 1. Discussion/possible approval of treasurer's report.

General Fund:	\$107,845.20
Capital:	\$ 77,184.83
Donations & Grants	\$3,465.71
Pension:	\$25,957.03
Shuttle:	\$3,022.63
Training:	\$5,219.60
Wildland Fire	\$8,139.94

Board Chair Arlon Rice motioned to approve the Treasurer's Report, second by Board Member John Sutherland. Motion carried by all.

b. Discussion/possible approval of transfer log:

DATE	AMOUNT		REASON
10/22/2025	\$6,567.63*	FROM CAPITAL RESERVE TO GENERAL FUND	BILLS
10/29/2025	\$9,899.52	FROM CAPITAL RESERVE TO GENERAL FUND	REGULAR PAYROLL/BILLS
11/5/2025	\$5,053.55	FROM CAPITAL RESERVE TO GENERAL FUND	STIPENDS AND BILLS
11/12/2025	\$9,744.47	FROM CAPITAL RESERVE TO GENERAL FUND	PAYROLL AND BILLS
11/14/2025	\$106,845.20	FROM GENERAL FUND TO CAPITAL RESERVE	PROPERTY TAXES

Board Member Nina Bour-Beau motioned to approve transfer log. Second by Board Member John Sutherland. The motion was carried by all.

D Chief's Report:

a. Administration:

**b. Equipment:
Training:**

d. Miscellaneous:

e. Call Volume:

26 total calls: 20 EMS, 2 MVA,, 4 Welfare Check

f. Grants Report:

Chief is currently working on SCBA's with ADEQ Grant with the State.

The Chief reports that with this Grant, the District can get free turnouts with the State of AZ.

6. OLD BUSINESS:

A. Board Member ___ discussed the recent website failure and stated that he/she would contact the Board of Supervisors to advise them of the issue.

7. NEW BUSINESS:

There was no business discussed under this item.

8. EXECUTIVE SESSION:

- a. **Discussion and possible action re: possible vote to go into executive session for:**
 - i. **Personnel matters, pursuant to A.R.S. § 38-431.03(A)(1) regarding the Fire Chief's performance evaluation and employment; legal advice pursuant to A.R.S. § 38-431.03(A)(3) re: same.**
 - ii. **Possible instructions to attorney, pursuant to A.R.S. § 38-431.03(A)(4) regarding the Fire Chief's contract.**

Board Chair Arlon Rice confirmed with Chief Shearer that he did receive his 24-notice regarding his evaluation. Chief Shearer confirmed receipt of the notice and chose to receive his evaluation during the public session of the Board Meeting.

Chair Arlon Rice confirmed that all Board Members had turned in their evaluation forms regarding Chief Shearer's annual review. Board Member Bour-Beau stated that she would compile the forms and present them at the December meeting.

Chair Arlon Rice stated that the Chief had missed many meetings and the Board would like the Chief to present information to the Board with his goal and plans for the District. The Board Chair noted that Chief Shearer was not at the recent town meeting and both the representative of Yavapai County and the citizens of Yarnell and Glen Ilah were not happy about that.

Board Member John Sutherland stated that as the Chief represents the town, he should present himself in a professional manner with a clean, professional uniform with shined shoes, especially at the town events such as the town meeting and the June 30th Hotshots memorial. Board Member Sutherland indicated that he thought this was a real problem for the Chief.

Chair Arlon Rice stated that the Chief needed to be in the office more and said there are times when no one appears to be sure of where the Chief is. The Board Chair stated that the Chief used to be in the office when there was a full staff in the administration office and indicated that the Department needed to hire a grant writer, a wildland billing person, and an HR person. The Chief currently performs all of these duties as well as his other duties.

Chair Arlon Rice also stated that Chief Shearer needed to pay more attention to detail and make safety a priority. Chair added that the Chief has been good with money, but it should not come at the cost of safety. The Chair stated as an example that the oxygen bottles were not filled and could not be certified, and one of the oil filters had a 2018 date on it.

The Board Chair also indicated he had received citizen complaints about the District hummer being parked on a construction site and that the Chief has not been communicating with the Board or others within the District.

The Chair indicated that the Chief is responsible for repairs on the facilities and equipment.

Chief Shearer stated that he can do a better job performing his duties.

The Chair stated that the Board needs to be able to trust the Chief's word and that the fire buildings belong to the citizens.

Board Member Sutherland repairs for certain items were needed 3 months ago including the 409 pump test; plastic valves should be out of service and need to be replaced on the trucks; 406 is currently an overweight vehicle and it swerves before curves because the brakes are not designed to handle a mountain road; the shift brakes need to be fixed; and all of these items should be considered high priority safety issues.

Board Member Arlon discussed the expired turnouts and stated that the Chief needs to present to the Board the cost of new turnouts and the number of turnouts needed.

Board Member Arlon suggested that the Chief should liquidate extra vehicles that are not being used pursuant to the guidelines presented in the statutes as surplus.

Board Member Arlon suggested an ultimatum that the Chief have no other additional jobs outside of being the Fire Chief and that the Chief should give the Board 10 days' notice if something new comes up because this is what the new employment contract will require.

Board Chair Rice stated that he addressed the issues of the refrigerator not working in the crew quarters with Chief Shearer four months ago and stated that the crew quarters looked like a flop house. To date, nothing has been done to correct these issues.

Board Chair Rice cited issues with paying for insurance for two ambulances for wildland fires, when they never went out on wildland fires because the District does not have paramedics willing to go out on wildland fires.

Board Chair Rice stated that the Chief's personal RV was for sale in the administration office parking lot, and that the Chief did not ask permission of the Board to leave it there. He stated that as the District is not insured for personal items, this was a problem.

Board Chair Rice stated that Lifeline-Fire District built the quarters, but they do not utilize them because they do not include sleeping quarters, so Lifeline is utilizing the District's crew quarters and leaving them a mess. He also stated that Lifeline does not pay for the use of the quarters and that the Chief should have kept in touch with Lifeline to work out a contract whereby the District could be paid for Lifeline using the quarters.

Board Chair Rice stated the priorities for the District including: Chief needs to start taking care of the District facilities and equipment; Chief needs to communicate more with Board; Chief needs to sell one of the ambulances; bring the engines up to par; Chief needs to get a quote for what it will cost for decals on the vehicles that need them; Chief to present costs for insurance on vehicles.

Board Chair Rice said the Board's goal is to have the best District they can with the finances that are available.

Board Chair Rice said that the 911 yearly app is used for on-call and the Chief controls it. Tom recently updated the app, which tells First Responders who what where and when. He also indicated that the Board needed to tour the facilities during a town hall fire department meeting.

Board Member Sutherland asked if the District had an Auxiliary Board. Board Member Bour-Beau stated that the District did have one and Linda Ma is the president. Chief Shearer said that he had been calling Linda Ma, but Board member Bour-Beau stated that Linda Ma only received communication from Chief Shearer when the station needs water as the auxiliary pays for the water. Board Member Bour-Beau stated that the members of the Auxiliary Board were Linda Ma, Trish Edwards, and Nina Bour-Beau.

Board Chair Rice stated that the Chief needed to review the employment agreement and the proposed new contract, and that the Chief needed to do his job.

Arlon stated that the Chief is on light duty and can do a few items.

Board Member Sutherland motioned to go into executive session for legal advice pursuant to A.R.S. § 38-431.03 (A)(3), and for possible instructions to attorney pursuant to A.R.S. § 38-431.03 (A)(4) pertaining to the Fire Chief's contract. Board Member Richard Mayer seconded the motion. The motion was carried by all.

The Board adjourned into executive session at approximately 11:47 a.m.

The Board Chairman reconvened the meeting into public session at approximately session meeting at approximately 12:10 p.m.

Chief Shearer rejoined the meeting, and Mr. Whittington had to end his phone participation.

9. Discussion and possible action re: Fire Chief's evaluation and employment.

Board Chair Rice motioned to instruct Board Member Nina Bour-Beau to prepare a list of expectations for Chief Shearer and combine all of the Board Members' evaluations of the Chief and bring it back at the next meeting. Seconded by Board Member Richard Mayer. Motion carried unanimously.

10. Discussion and possible action re: Fire Chief's Employment Contract.

Board Chair Rice requested that the Chief review the proposed contract and reply to the Board with any requested revisions to the contract.

Board Member Sutherland motioned to request a scheduled Board Meeting with the Chief in 30 days to review the contract and any possible revisions thereto. Board Member Richard Mayer seconded the motion. Motion carried unanimously.

11. **CALL TO THE PUBLIC:**

Stacy Pizzirusso stated that she felt the Chief needed to ignore fund raising and focus on his duties. She suggested the public help by way of a donation of a refrigerator for the crew quarters, and other items that might possibly be needed. She stated that the public is here to help and that she specifically will help.

Joyce Ritner spoke about the Chief not showing up at a town meeting and how that looked to folks in town.

ADJOURNMENT:

Meeting was adjourned by Arlon at approximately 12:19 p.m.

The next regular session will be held on December 15th .

Respectfully submitted,

Nina M Bour-Beau, YFD Secretary