

YARNELL FIRE DISTRICT
OPEN/PUBLIC BOARD MINUTES

November 17, 2025

1. CALL TO ORDER:

Chair Arlon Rice called the meeting to order and made the motion, at 10:40 AM, second by Nina. Motion carried by all.

All board members were present including Chief Shearer who received his 24-hour notice.

Call in: Mr. Whittington and Mr. Montoya

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

FIRST PUBLIC SESSION:

Fire chief evaluation -public session, (A)(1) per chief okay. He received 24-hour notice.

All board members turned in Chief evaluation to Nina who will compile these and present at the December board meeting.

Arlon's and the boards first item to Chief: he has missed many meetings, he needs to present to board his goals, plans for fire district. State the mission of Fire District. Chief was not at the town meeting. Both representatives of Yavapai county were not happy about this along with the citizens of Yarnell and Glen Ilah.

John: Chief represents the town and needs to present himself in a professional manner. Clean uniform, shine shoes, professional uniform especially at the town main events ie: June 30th for the 19 Hotshots Memorial.

John was very upset General appearance disturbs how Fire District looks and how we present ourselves in public. Chief has a real problem with this.

Arlon: Chief needs to be around all the time in the office. He's never there and no one is sure where he is. He used to be in the office when he had a full staff in Administration office (Grant Writer and Bookkeeper). The Fire Dept needs to hire a grant writer, Wildland Billing person and HR person. Chief does this currently along with his other duties, that and Wildland Fire Billing.

The district building blocks starts with the Chief.

Chief needs to pay attention to detail, safety not a priority, oxygen bottles not filled and couldn't be certified.

2018 date on oil filter of tanks.

District hummer on a construction job site. Citizens are not happy and report on a regular basis as to where and question why the hummer is parked where it is.

Chief is not communicating with the board or others.

E419-needs repair, Chief is responsible for facilities and equipment

When Arlon asked Chief, Chief admitted he can do better on the job.

14 total score on evaluation from Arlon. Got to make sure Arlon and the board can trust Chief's word; fire buildings belong to the citizens. John stated that improvements were

needed 3 months ago-409 pump test not passing, plastic valves should be out of service and need to be replaced on trucks. 406 is current an overweight vehicle, swerves before curves-brakes not designed to handle a mountain road. Shift brakes need to be fixed and can't be ignored. This should be a high priority safety issue.

Turnouts: must be up to date, we have expired turnouts. The board needs to be presented with the costs of turnouts and how many are needed from Chief.

Chief has a problem with expired turnouts.

John: gutters and truck not working, attention to detail, professional uniform-19 Memorial how Chief looked really made John mad.

Board new contract – copy to Chief, liquidate the asset (extra vehicles not being used) – follow the law.

Had Ben Palm, former Chief, to help current Chief in the job when Chief first had the job. Chief had the sandwich shop and apartments, plumbing business, uniforms for district – put insignia on t-shirts for uniforms.

Ultimatum – Chief should have no other jobs; give board 10 days' notice if something comes up.

It's been four months and there is still no working refrigerator in crew quarters. Crew Quarters look like a flop house, Arlon addressed these issues to Chief several months ago, nothing has been done.

We have 2 ambulances, one has new engine, for Wildland Fires, they never went out because we needed paramedics. John Rice is our paramedic, but he didn't want to go out on Wildland Fires. The paramedics in other districts wouldn't go out either. So we pay insurance on 2 ambulances that sit in the extra parking lot.

2 vans wide open, personal items up at extra parking lot. Chief's private RV was for sale in the Administration office parking lot. Board was never asked if this was okay, Chief over-stepped his bounds and we are not insured for personal items on Fire Dept lot and premises.

Areas to improve, cost to get turn outs tomorrow,

Board Increased money for volunteers from \$65.00 a 24-hour shift to at least \$95.00 24-hour shift when we found out that we couldn't get volunteers to come up here because of the current pay.

Chief should have spent a little more time on the details and talked to the board about items needed.

Lifeline-Fire District built quarters which doesn't include sleeping quarters so they are not using it. Board was never told about the sleeping quarters. Lifeline is utilizing our crew quarters facilities and leaving a mess. Lifeline also doesn't pay the fire district for any use of quarters. Lifeline was going through new management when the bay was being built but Chief should have kept in touch with them about the revising the contract so the Fire District could be paid. The door on the new bay for Lifeline was busted and ruined the insulation in the bay. The door was manually closed several months later. The insulation was never replaced or repaired.

Priorities for the district, Chief needs to start taking care of it, reason for neglect, no staffing, Chief was here by himself and went on calls by himself which is in violation of the policy. Chief never advised the board, or asked for help from other Districts.

Hard to find a paramedic to go out on ambulances for Wildland, not an asset. Sell one ambulance and keep the 4-wheel drive one to use in district for winter time here.

Chief to give board a mission, explicit liability falls on the district.

We still have the State Truck – Arlon asked for 2 years to give this back to the State – it belongs to the State of Arizona and we want a replacement.

Chief will present to the board what it will cost for decals on vehicles that need them, insurance and etc. Tom and Chief will give cost to the board.

E-419 needs to be brought up to par, need to know how much it will cost. We have the money to use for repairs, matter of getting it done.

Fix what is broken, new contract is in force – Chief can no longer be a plumber or have extra jobs.

Chief must communicate to the board about any problems, any help if needed.

Board's goal is to have the best district with the finances we have.

911 yearly app is used for on-call. Chief controls it, Tom just did the update to app. This is a service that the Fire District pays for and was also used by Retired Chief Ben Palm. It tells the First Responders who what where and when, it's the 911 alert, we need to have a town hall fire department meeting, the board needs to tour the facilities- it is the board responsibility.

John asked about the Auxiliary board – do we have one? Nina answered yes, we do, Linda Ma is president. Chief needs to call Linda Ma with what fire district needs, fund raising, etc. Nina asked Chief if he had been calling Linda Ma and he said yes. Linda Ma is not getting any communication from Chief except when Station needs water (auxiliary pays for this). Nina let John know who was on the Auxiliary board: Linda Ma, Trish Edwards, Nina Bour-Beau.

Joyce spoke about Chief not showing up at town meeting and how that looks to folks in town.

Chief needs to review the employment agreement and the new contract, need Chief to do his job.

Stacy-Chief needs to ignore Wildland and be present for his duties. There are issues that need to be taken care of, public can donate fridge for Crew Quarters and help if Chief tells them what is needed. Chief needs to read contract and bring it back to board meeting either signed or with changes, can be done in a special meeting.

District vehicles should be used for on duty and on call, not for personal reasons. Not enough staffing to use district vehicles for personal reasons. Workers Comp: Chief is on light duty. Can do a few items.

John motioned to go into Executive Session regarding Fire Chief 38.431.03 (A)(3)A(4), Richard second, motion carried by all.

ADJOURNMENT

Meeting was adjourned by Arlon Rice at 11:47 am.

Respectfully submitted,
Nina M Bour-Beau, YFD Secretary

9. RECONVENE PUBLIC SESSION:

BACK TO OPEN MEETING:

Arlon motioned to re-convene Public Session, second by Richard at 12:10pm. Chief came back in.

Mr. Montota – stay with call, Mr. Whittington had to leave the call.

Instructions to Chief-make a list of what board expects of Chief, need Chief to review and sign contract, board needs to combine evaluations, John motioned to request scheduled board meeting – deficiencies that we would like to resolve – review employee contract – gave Chief 30 days, Richard second.

Stacy – the public is here to help, she specifically will help.

NEXT MEETING: Dec 15th 10am,

Give list of concerns to Nina, compile evals - & put on new agenda for the board.

Stacy: the public is here to help.

11. ADJOURNMENT

Meeting was adjourned by Arlon Rice at 12:19

Respectfully submitted,

Nina M Bour-Beau, YFD Secretary