

**MINUTES OF REGULAR MEETING OF THE
RINCON VALLEY FIRE DISTRICT GOVERNING BOARD MEETING
VIRTUAL AND IN-PERSON MEETING
HELD April 17, 2025**

A public meeting of the Rincon Valley Fire District Governing Board was convened on **April 17, 2025, at 6:00 P.M.** The following members were Present at the meeting: Chairperson Jennifer Spears, Clerk Kevin McKinley, Member Glen Rodriguez, and Member Chris Klasen.

The following matters were discussed, considered, and decided at the meeting:

1. Call to Order at 6:13 P.M. by Chairperson Jennifer Spears

A. Roll Call –Chairperson Jennifer Spears	Present
Member Chris Klasen	Present
Member Kevin McKinley	Present
Member Glen Rodriguez	Present
Member Lora Gruner	Absent

- Fire Chief James Tucker, Assistant Chief Allen Yalen, Battalion Chief Kris Middleton, Captain Travis Mooney, the On-Duty Crew, VFFA President Steven Rodriguez, and Administrative Manager Laura Bucklin attended. Gabe Buldra, with James Vincent Group, was also present.

2. Pledge of Allegiance – Fire Chief Tucker led the Pledge of Allegiance.

3. The next meeting is scheduled for May 15, 2025, at 6:00 P.M.

- Confirmed by all board members present.

4. Call to the Public

- No response.

5. Employee Recognition

- **C-Shift Recognition** – An email was sent to thank RVFD Medic Billy Rivinius and his crew for their exceptional patience and exemplary bedside manner during an incident regarding her husband.

6. Consent Agenda – 2025-054 – Review, discussion, and possible action of the Consent Agenda

A. Approval of the Minutes of March 20, 2025, Board Meeting.

- Motion by Member Klasen, seconded by Chairperson Spears, to approve the monthly consent agenda. The motion passed 4 to 0.

7. Reports and Correspondence

A. Board Member Report

- Board Member Chris Klasen attended the Accreditation Hearing with Fire Chief Tucker, Assistant Chief Yalen, and Captain/Accreditation Manager Scott Haller. He thanked Captain Haller for his exemplary work on the project and said Accreditation will help our service delivery.

B. 2025-055 - Fire Chief's Report – Reviewed by the Board. Report on file.

- We achieved accreditation status on April 1st. The agreement has been attached.
- Our bonds are scheduled to close on April 24th.
- We received a donation of 500 smoke detectors from Kiddie.
- Met with several county agencies to discuss how to collaborate on recruitment, training, etc.
- Worked on the FY 25-26 Budget with JVG.
- 48 New Housing Permits
- 208 Incidents and 114 Transports

Chief Tucker mentioned that a formal Station Design discussion will take place soon, and he would like to have one board member on the committee.

C. 2025-056 - March's Financial Reports—Review, discussion, and possible action for the district's financial status, including monthly summary reports for March 2025. Gabe Buldra, with JVG, presented the financial report.

Key points:

- Revenues for March were \$376,668, which was \$1,151 over budget.
 - o Pima County revenue for March is \$255,060, \$33,415 under budget.
 - o Non-Tax Levy revenue for March is \$121,608, which is \$34,566 over budget.
- Expenses for March were \$659,248, which was \$33,528 under budget.
- Fiscal year revenue is \$5,273,690, over budget by \$168,024, or 79% of the total annual budget.
- Fiscal year expense is \$4,974,687, under budget by \$487,923, and 66% of the total annual budget.

Clerk McKinley moved, seconded by Member Rodriguez, to approve the monthly financial reports. The motion passed 4 to 0.

8. Unfinished Business

A. None

9. New Business

A. 2025-057 – Review, discussion, and possible action to renew health insurance with EMI.

- We consulted our broker, who provided an alternative directly through BCBS, but there was a reduction in benefits, and they would not manage our COBRA.

Renewing with EMI is the best option this year. The estimated total premium is \$524,798, an increase of approximately \$15,500 (3.04%) over FY 24-25.

-Motion by Member Rodriguez, seconded by Clerk McKinley, to approve the health insurance renewal with EMI Health. The motion passed 4 to 0.

B. Possible Executive Session Regarding Fire Chief's Performance Evaluation and Employment Agreement – the board may vote to go into executive session pursuant to ARS 38-432.03(A)(1) for discussion or consideration of the Fire Chief's performance and employment agreement.

- **The Chairperson shall confirm that the Chief received at least 24 hours' notice of the possible executive session.**

Open Executive Session - Motion by Chairperson Spears, seconded by Member Klasen, to adjourn the Regular Meeting and enter Executive Session at 6:33 pm. The motion passed 4 to 0.

- **Executive sessions are confidential pursuant to ARS 38-432.03(C).**

Close Executive Session – Motion by Member Klasen, seconded by Chairperson Spears, to adjourn the Executive Session and reconvene the Regular Board Meeting at 6:59 pm. The motion passed 4 to 0.

C. 2025-058 – Review, discussion, and possible action of the Fire Chief's annual review.

- It is time for the annual fire chief review. The complete reviews are attached. The employment agreement from May 2024 has also been attached. The Board can roll forward the expiration date to April 30, 2027, or keep the current date of May 31, 2026. Any salary increase is at the discretion of the Board. Salary data from other agencies has been provided.

-Motion by Member Klasen, seconded by Chairperson Spears, to roll forward Chief Tucker's Employment Contract to April 30, 2027, and to approve a merit increase of 11% for an above-average performance appraisal. The motion passed unanimously, 4 to 0.

D. 2025-059 – Review, discussion, and possible action to accept the ADFFM 2024 ARPA Grant.

- Chief Tucker applied for the 2024 Arizona Department of Forestry & Fire Management ARPA grant in January. On March 21, He was notified that our application would be awarded. The grant award is \$189,666.00. The district match is \$100,020.00 plus AZ sales tax. The district match may increase based on new tariffs. Once the vendor receives the chassis, the district will be invoiced for it. We will use Sourcewell Cooperative Purchasing.

-Motion by Member Rodriguez, seconded by Member Klasen, to accept the 2024 ARPA Grant through ADFFM. The motion passed unanimously, 4 to 0.

E. 2025-060 - Review, discussion, and possible action of the Memorandum of Understanding between Rincon Valley Fire District and the Vail Firefighters Association L-5100.

- Before discussing this item, Board Member Glen Rodriguez excused himself from the meeting, declaring that he would cause a conflict of interest due to his son, Steven Rodriguez, being the VFFA President and an employee of RVFD. He will not vote on this item.
- VFFA President Steve Rodriguez and Chief Tucker have worked on this MOU for several months. It is attached for your review. Legal has also reviewed it, and her suggested edits have been incorporated into this final document. Chief Tucker fully supports the establishment of a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between our organization and the Vail Firefighters Association. The MOU provides a clear framework for expectations, roles, and responsibilities, benefiting both the administration and the workforce. This, in turn, establishes the expectations of future leaders from Labor and Management. Chief Tucker believes it sets the stage for continued progress, improved morale, and a strong, resilient future for Rincon Valley Fire District.

-Motion by Member Klasen, seconded by Chairperson Spears, to approve the MOU between the District and VFFA. The motion passed 3 to 0.

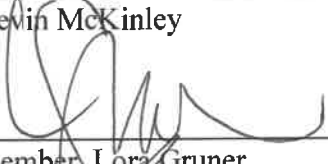
- 10. ADJOURNMENT** - Motion by Clerk McKinley, seconded by Chairperson Spears, to adjourn. The motion passed 4 to 0. The meeting was adjourned at 7:10 p.m.

Dated this 21st day of April 2025.

Rincon Valley Fire District Governing Board

Chairperson, Jennifer Spears

Clerk, Kevin McKinley



Board Member, Lora Gruner



Board Member, Christopher Klasen



Board Member, Glen Rodriguez