



## Northwest Fire District Governing Board

13535 North Marana Main Street  
Marana, Arizona

SCHEDULED

### FIRE CHIEF'S REPORT

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**Date:** February 27, 2024  
**To:** Governing Board  
**From:** Brad Bradley, Fire Chief  
**Department:** Fire Chief  
**Agenda Item** Fire Chief's Board Report

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#### ACTIVITIES:

**Assessed Values** – We received our assessed values information from Pima County earlier than anticipated. For upcoming fiscal year (FY) 2024-2025, Net Taxable Value increased 7.79% (from \$1,529,397,141 for the current fiscal year to \$1,648,537,835). Based on the current operating rate of \$2.911, that equates to an anticipated revenue increase for FY24/25 of \$3,468,186. After adjusting down for our 98% anticipated collection rate and setting aside 20% for contingency, we are left with \$2.7 million to meet a myriad of needs.

**Budget** – Staff is in full swing developing budget proposals for FY24/25. There are a handful of meetings scheduled over the coming weeks for Executive Staff to review the Capital Improvement Program (CIP) and budget submissions. As a reminder, the annual Governing Board ***Budget Study Session is scheduled for Wednesday, March 13 at 10:00 a.m.***

**ISO** – Staff, led by Chief Hamblen and Chief Wyckoff, will be completing the pre-site visit survey over the next couple of weeks in preparation for our site visit which is scheduled for early March. Obviously, our goal is to maintain our current Insurance Services Office (ISO) class 1 rating. Provided no changes have been made to the scoring and weighting rubrics by ISO, we should be just fine.

**Medical Benefits Costs** – We received the accounting for the 2023 medical plan year. Overall costs associated with medical claims, prescriptions, premiums, and District Health Savings Account (HSA) contributions increased by over 45%. This was primarily driven by large claims (over \$50K), which made up 39% of claims costs. An overview of our plan performance and various factors is bullet pointed below, and attached is a PPT review that was presented at the February Labor-Management Committee meeting:

- 2023 Actual Claims vs. Expected Claims = 117%
- 2023 Actual Claims vs. Maximum Claims Liability\* = 86%

\*Maximum claims liability is a reasonable estimator of what we would be charged if we had a fully insured, rather than self-insured plan. So, although our costs increased significantly, were we fully insured these costs would have been even higher.

- 2023 Per Employee Per Month Cost = \$1,057.94
- Medical Per Employee Per Month Costs increased by 47.8%
- RX Per Employee Per Month Costs increased by 59.6%
- Administrative Per Employee Per Month Costs increased by 11.3%

- Enrollment increased in 2023 by 5.4%

That said, we're going to need to increase our medical self-insurance fund this coming FY to account for the increased claim costs. This increase will likely total between \$500K-\$750K just to keep the fund balanced as required.

**NWFD Retiree Liaison & Alumni Association** – Retiree Jayme Kahle has agreed to volunteer as a liaison for retirees and former long-term employees of the District who wish to stay in touch with each other and stay engaged with the District. Initial ideas include the formation of an alumni association, a quarterly newsletter, and soliciting feedback from folks to see how and to what degree they would like to remain engaged with the District. The intent of this effort is to further our mission by caring for our community of retirees and former long-term employees. Jayme has scheduled a retiree/alumni breakfast at Station 339 on March 23<sup>rd</sup>. Local 3572 has graciously offered to cook and cover a portion of the costs.

**Personnel** – Peter Bath, Antero Gonzalez, Brandon Marchello, Rebecca Rodriguez, and Jake Wright promoted to the rank of Paramedic effective January 29<sup>th</sup>. Engineer Raymond Marquez retired to pursue a career with U.S. Customs and Border Protection. Steven Upton was promoted effective January 29<sup>th</sup> to fill the vacancy created by Marquez' retirement. Paramedic Mo Gran and Engineer Jason Lafferty are retiring as of February 26<sup>th</sup>. Bradner Lawrence was promoted to Engineer to fill the vacancy left by Lafferty. Memos for all are attached.

**Piechura Tribute Dedication** – I attended the dedication with members of staff and the Board. I cannot say enough about how well our folks did setting this event up and coordinating all the needs associated. From our Community Relations and Public Education folks to our Admin Services folks, and our Training staff – this really was a team effort. Assistant Chief Draper did an amazing job coordinating the construction process and representing the District on the Tribute Community. And a tip of the hat goes to Bruce Kaplan for his representation of the Governing Board on the Tribute Committee as well. There were approximately 200 attendees. I received lots of positive feedback about the event from folks who attended as well as those who streamed it online or saw it on the news.

**Pima County Fire Chiefs Association** – I attended the monthly meeting of the Pima County Fire Chiefs Association.

**Station 341 Lot Sale** – The sale of the vacant land associated with Station 341 went off without a hitch and the money was wired to our account on January 18<sup>th</sup>. Per policy, those funds were directed to the Capital Improvement Program fund balance.

**Station Inspection** – I attended the annual station inspection at 330. These scheduled inspections continue to provide not only an opportunity to review and address individual station facility issues, but also to sit down with the crews and engage in dialogue regarding a variety of topics.

**Strategic Planning** – Our current plan is wrapping up and we began development of the 2024-2028 Strategic Plan. Our first session was an internal stakeholder meeting where representatives from all areas of the organization spent the day together developing an organizational SWOC (strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and challenges) analysis. In March, we will hold an external stakeholder meeting to solicit feedback from our community members and partners. In April, staff will come together again to draft goals and objectives.

**A Governing Board Study Session is scheduled for May 16** to share our findings and solicit feedback and guidance from the Board. We look forward to seeing you there.

**Town of Marana** – I attended my monthly meeting with Town of Marana Development Director, Jason Angell. I also attended the promotion ceremony for new Town of Marana Police Chief, Jeff Pridgett. Lastly, I'm scheduled for a lunch meeting in a few weeks with Mayor Honea who has also asked that I join him on his monthly podcast to talk about all the great things going on at NWFD.

**Organizational Leadership Guide** – The District's newly revised Organizational Leadership Guide was published and distributed to members. This guide has been expanded from being operationally based, to organizationally based to benefit all the leaders within the organization, not just those wearing badges. This guide has proven to be an effective leadership development tool for positions of all ranks.

**GOALS:**

To save lives, protect property, and care for our community.

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**Attachments**

2023 Medical Plan Cost Review

MEMO 24-010

MEMO 24-014

MEMO 24-015

MEMO 24-023

MEMO 24-022

MEMO 24-028