SUNSITES-PEARCE FIRE DISTRICT

SERVING RESIDENTS OF THE SUNSITES-PEARCE FIRE DISTRICT,
AND NEIGHBORING COCHISE COUNTY
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Sunsites-Pearce Fire District
Regular Meeting
November 10, 2026

1. **Call to Order -** The meeting was called to order at 5:00PM. by Board Chair Tucker.

2. **Roll Call**
   - **A. Attendance Board** Chair Tucker, Board Member Reed, Board Member Fino and Board Member Olivia
   - **B. Board Members Absent–** Board Clerk Meister
   - **C. Staff in Attendance** Deputy Fire Chief Ader, and Same Green

3. **The Pledge of Allegiance –**Board Member Robert Fino led the attendees in the Pledge of Allegiance.
4. **Recognition of Guests –**Robert Sowards, Chris Neifert, Sharon Davis, Richard Davis, Sharon Creasman, Gene Gilbert, Lisa Le, Jo Peterson, Doug Coyp, Diana Alen, Chris Hess, Clive Ebsen, Julie Smith
5. **Consent Agenda**
   - **A. Acceptance of the October Bank Statements.**
     - **i. October Bank Statements** October Bank Statements Following Discussion Board Member Fino made a motion to approved and Board Member Reed seconded the motion. Vote: All Board Members were in favor of the motion. The motion passed unanimously.
   - **B. Approval of Minutes –**
     - i. **October 13, 2026, Regular Meeting.** Following Discussion Board Member Fino made a motion to approved and Board Member Reed seconded the motion. **Vote:** All Board Members were in favor of the motion. The motion passed unanimously.
6. **Financial Report**
   - **A Review, discuss and possible approval of the financials for October 2026.** Following Discussion Board Member Reed made a motion to table due to staff being out of the office. Board Member Beemer seconded the motion. **Vote:** All Board Members were in favor of the motion. The motion passed unanimously.
7. **Fire Chief's Report** The Fire Chief's Report is typically presented by the Fire Chief. However, as Chief Garner will be absent, Deputy Fire Chief Ader will present the report in his place.

Call Volume as of October 31st: October Call Volume: 67 Fire: 23 EMS: 44 YTD 2026: 679

Training: 1. EMS training was completed regarding IV placement and IV pumps.
2. Fire Training was conducted on driver training.

Wildland:

1. Terry Tingle has officially been approved by the state redcard committee as a qualified Taskforce and Striketeam, leader. This is a huge accomplishment, congratulations to him.

Out of District Services:

1. SpaceX has filed paperwork with the county to build a data center in Cochise. The site is within our CON but outside of our Fire District. SPFD is listed on their application for primary fire protection, but no meetings have yet occurred, and no agreements have been made regarding cost of services.

Emergency Medical Services:

1. CON renewal is due before the end of the year, currently working on renewal application and automatic rate increase.

Hazardous Materials and Technical Rescue:

1. Attended two regional HazMat meetings and working on a grant request for additional HazMat equipment.
2. SPFD will be receiving a rescue litter wheel from a regional grant that was awarded.
3. Assisting later this month with a cave rescue preplan in Cochise County.

Maintenance

1. New Excess property truck has been delivered. It is in the process of being put into service.

Communications:

1. All outstanding federal grants were denied. We are still in the running for Congressional funding for a water tender.
2. As a reminder, SPFD does not own, or have any authority over the water system in Sunsites, Complaints regarding fire hydrants and water system should be directed to Hope Water: 623-219-4740. If complaints go unaddressed, community members may then contact the Arizona corporation commission for follow-up. Roughly 75% of the 69 identified hydrants are in service and able to flow water. Exact flow capacities have not been tested. I have reached out to the Arizona Fire Marshals office for advice on how to proceed with the issues of OOS hydrants and flow testing and they state that there is not much that can be done from code enforcement. AZ law trumps fire code and case history shows that AZ law does not require private water companies to meet fire flow requirements.
3. I will be attending a special meeting of the Local Emergency Planning Committee (LEPC) to provide input and recommendations on the SpaceX data center permit. I intend to recommend no permits be issued until P&Z has a signed fire agreement in hand

Staffing

1. All full-time positions have been filled. One employee is currently out for an injury.
2. Part-time hours/wildland staffing has been reduced due to budget concerns.

Following discussion

A Board Member asked for clarification regarding the source of the grant funding and how the money would be used. Deputy Chief Ader explained that the grant information did not specifically identify where the wheel was coming from. He further explained that the wheel would be used with a Stokes basket, also known as litter. A litter is essentially a stretcher with sides, typically made of plastic, poly material, or metal. The wheel attaches to the bottom of the litter, making it easier to move and transport patients during rescue operations.

8. **Old Business**
   - A. **Review, discuss and possible action regarding the status of collections.** Deputy Chief Ader reported that Chief Garner had reached out to other companies for pricing but had not yet received any official written quotes. One company provided similar pricing verbally, while others advised they are not accepting new customers.
   - B. **Review, discuss and possible action regarding follow-up to contract services.** Deputy Chief Ader provided information regarding two insurance quotes for the district's property and liability coverage: VFIS Insurance, the District's current provider, and Provident. A Board Member asked whether comparison pricing had been received to evaluate the costs against the current provider. Deputy Chief Ader stated that the comparison numbers were not available at this time. A member of the public, Robert Sowards, asked whether Chief Garner had requested that the meeting be postponed so certain agenda items could be addressed and why the request was not approved. The Board responded that there would be no discussion with the public on the matter. Mr. Sowards disagreed, stating that District policy allows the public to speak and that the meeting could have been canceled or changes made to the notice within the 24-hour notification period. The Board clarified that postponing the meeting had been a request, not a requirement, and that Deputy Chief Ader was available in Chief Garner's absence. Following discussion Board Member Beemer made a motion to table the item. Board Member Reed seconded the motion. **Vote:** All Board Members were in favor. The motion passed unanimously.
   - C. **Review, discuss and possible action regarding Open House October 24, 2026, including Raffle Items, Auction Items, and Financials.** Board Member Fino read a statement Board Member Fino read a statement thanking Mr. Davis for his generosity and donation of one-third of the potatoes to the district. He also noted that over 30 raffle and auction items were donated by local businesses and that the number of donors was missing from the event report.

Deputy Chief Ader read Chief Garner's statement regarding the success of the Open House, thanking the community, volunteers, staff, visiting fire chiefs, and Board Members. The event included 13 chili entries, a successful raffle and auction, and provided an opportunity to connect with the community. The statement also addressed concerns and miscommunication regarding the distribution of an auction prize and recommended establishing clearer procedures for future events. Mr. Davis and Mr. Sowards addressed concerns regarding the potato donation and distribution, expressing concerns about communication, ownership, transparency, and the actions taken without agreement from all parties involved. Board Chair Tucker provided her account of the arrangements made with the donor and the events surrounding the distribution. Following discussion, the Board stated that, as of October 30, all potatoes belonged to the district, there was no evidence of theft or malicious intent, and the potatoes were distributed to the public as intended. Mr. Davis clarified that portions of the Board's statements included interpretations that were not in his original letter. Board Member Beemer recommended establishing policies and procedures for donations and requested that the matter be placed on a future agenda for discussion. Board Member Reed made a motion to deposit $6,052.00 into the Reserve Account. Motion was revised by Board Member Reed to say all funds from the fundraiser go to the reserve account. Board Member Beemer seconded the motion. **Vote:** All Board Member were in favor. The motion passed unanimously.

D. **Review, discuss and possible action regarding September 8, 2026, Regular Meeting.** Board Member Beemer stated that the minutes from the September 8, 2026, Regular Meeting were inaccurate. She requested that the Board listen to the meeting recording and review the previously approved minutes side by side to compare the information. She recommended that Board Members review the differences and come prepared to discuss how to make the necessary corrections at the next meeting. Mr. Sowards spoke regarding the agenda item to clarify the misunderstanding, explaining that the public understood the Chief had recommended waiting before moving forward. Board Member Reed stated that he understood the Chief's comments the same way. It was also noted that the Chief had stated during the meeting that he was comfortable moving forward with the Board's decision. Board Member Reed made a motion to revisit the September 8, 2026, meeting minutes to ensure their accuracy and table the item for further discussion at the next meeting. Board Member Fino seconded the motion. **Vote:** All Board Members were in favor. The motion passed unanimously.

9. **New Business.**
   A. **Review, discuss and possible action regarding moving the call to the Public to the beginning rather than the end.** Following discussion Board Member Beemer

proposed moving the Call to the Public at the beginning of the meeting, while Board Member Reed preferred keeping it at the end. Board Member Fino addressed how the Call to the Public is currently handled, and Board Chair Tucker responded to the discussion. Board Member Beemer made a motion to move the Call to the Public to the beginning of the meeting right after the recognition of guests. For future meetings. Board Member Fino seconded the motion. **Vote:** All Board Members were in favor. The motion passed unanimously.

B. **Review, discuss and possible action regarding adoption of policies. There is nothing for presentation this evening.** No items were presented or brought forward for consideration. Please ensure that this item is placed back on the agenda for the next meeting.

C. **Review, discuss and possible action regarding information pertaining to new data center and battery storage.** Deputy Chief Ader provided a written update advising that the SpaceX data center has been announced. The Chief will be attending multiple meetings and intends to advocate for all data centers and solar farms to have signed agreements in place prior to the issuance of permits. The Board requested that updates regarding data centers, solar farms, and battery storage facilities be included on the agenda for the next several meetings to allow the Chief to share information received during these meetings Board Member Reed made a motion to establish a committee to address data center matters. The motion failed due to a lack of a second. A member of the public, Clive Eloser, asked whether the district is required to provide protection to SpaceX. In response, Board Member Reed made a motion to include this matter on the agendas for the next several meetings. The motion was seconded by Board Member Fino. **Vote:** All Board Members were in favor. The motion passed unanimously.

D. **Review, discuss and possible action regarding possible Annexation projects.** Deputy Chief Ader provided a written update on behalf of the Chief regarding anticipated data center development and other growth within the community. The Chief noted that the Fire District currently encompasses only a portion of the area in which the district provides emergency response services. As a result, the district's boundaries are relatively small compared to its overall response area. The Chief has identified several areas for potential annexation and is requesting input from the Board regarding priority areas. It was noted that annexation requires following an established process, which includes involvement of property owners within the proposed boundaries, public hearings, and required votes. Board Member Reed made a motion to include annexation priorities on the agendas for the next couple of meetings. The motion was seconded by Board Member Beemer. **Vote:** All Board Members were in favor. The motion passed unanimously.

E. **Review, discuss and possible action regarding adoption of fire code.** Deputy Chief Ader discussed the proposed adoption of the Fire Code, explaining that the process is lengthy and will be presented in greater detail at the next meeting. He explained that adopting the Fire Code would allow the district to expand fire prevention and community risk reduction efforts through educational business inspections, plan reviews, and safer building practices. He also noted that adopting the Wildland-Urban Interface Fire Code could help reduce wildfire risks by encouraging the use of noncombustible building materials. He emphasized that fire prevention and fire suppression should work hand in hand to help protect the community and prevent emergencies whenever possible. Board Member Reed made a motion to authorize staff to continue researching the adoption of a Fire Code, including a cost-benefit analysis. And it will be on the next agenda The motion was seconded by Board Member Beemer. **Vote:** All Board Members were in favor. The motion passed unanimously.

F. **Review, discuss and possible action to advertise vacant board positions.** Board Chair Tucker opened a discussion regarding the upcoming Board vacancies, noting that, based on discussions with the County Attorney, formal action may need to wait until January. However, individuals interested in serving on the Board may submit letters of interest early by email to Board Clerk Meister and a designated staff member so both the Board and staff are aware of applicants. Board Member Reed discussed state law regarding Board elections, referencing A.R.S. § 48-803(F), which requires the election of officers to take place during the first month following an election. He noted that, based on his research, the statutes and District policies do not clearly specify when a Board member's term officially ends, but the law appears to assume the new Board is seated by the time officers are elected. He stated that the district could begin advertising the two upcoming vacancies immediately, potentially appoint new members at the December meeting, and conduct the officer election in accordance with state law. Chair Tucker also introduced Brenda Trancina, an Arizona board consultant, who is available to assist with the recruitment process, including developing position descriptions, announcements, and interview questions. Board Member Reed made a motion to advertise for two Board positions. The motion was seconded by Board Member Fino. **Vote: All Board Members were in favor. The motion passed unanimously.**

10. **Call to Public** Board Member **Beemer read a statement submitted by Elizabeth Hawkins**, who was unable to attend. Ms. Hawkins expressed concerns regarding transparency, public participation, accessibility, and public trust. She questioned the decision to move Call to the Public to the end of the meeting, raised concerns about public awareness of Board vacancies and the appearance of potential conflicts of interest, and encouraged the Board to pursue ethics training, welcome differing viewpoints, and treat community members with respect. **Jo Peterson** addressed the

Board, expressing concerns about transparency regarding the allocation of public funds for Board member cell phones and tablets, personal comments made about her within the community, and being denied an opportunity to speak during a previous meeting. She referenced District policy regarding the public's right to be heard and emphasized that community members have raised concerns for three consecutive months. Ms. Peterson urged the Board to restore public trust, ensure meaningful public participation, hold leadership accountable, and involve the community in the selection of new Board members and leadership.

11. **Announcements and updates from the Board Chair Board** Chair Tucker encouraged community members to meet individually with Board Members to discuss concerns, clarify information, and help prevent misunderstandings. She noted that all Board Members were available to speak one-on-one with members of the public. Chair Tucker shared information from her recent attendance at the Arizona Special District Alliance conference, which provided training and resources on the roles and responsibilities of special districts, collaboration between districts, website accessibility, Board duties, and proper meeting procedures. She highlighted the importance of understanding that special districts operate independently, while also benefiting from collaboration and shared training opportunities. She encouraged the Board to consider joining the Alliance. Chair Tucker requested that website accessibility be placed on the next meeting agenda, emphasizing that the district must meet accessibility requirements by April 24, 2027, and that additional work may be needed to ensure compliance. She also reminded Board Members that required Arizona Fire District Association training must be completed and discussed the importance of proper procedures for motions, seconds, discussion, voting, and meeting minutes. She provided a reminder that the Arizona Fire District Association conference and training will take place during the first week of January. She also addressed ongoing questions regarding the expiration dates of current Board terms and stated that she would continue researching the matter. Finally, she reiterated that letters of interest or application for the two upcoming Board vacancies should be submitted to the Board Clerk and a designated staff member to ensure transparency and proper documentation.
12. **Requests from Board members regarding future agenda items**. AFTA Conference, Review of board polices, Possible installation of board members, fire code update, committee for data centers, solar batteries, AZ Special District Alliance.
    A. **Adjournment** Board Member Fino made a motion to adjourn at 7:34pm. Board Member Beemer seconded the motion. **Vote:** All Board Members were in favor. The motion passed unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,

Nancy Sowards