

MINUTES OF TONTO BASIN FIRE DISTRICT
BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING
Regular Session
March 19, 2026

Call to Order: This regular session Board Meeting was called to order at 0930 hours by Chairman John France at Tonto Basin Fire Station #91, 46189 N AZ Highway 188, Tonto Basin, AZ.

Pledge of Allegiance: Led by John France.

Roll Call of Board Members: The following Board Members were present: Chairman John France, Clerk Brian Nail, Secretary/Treasurer Robert Cooper, Board Member Ilene Hailey, and Board Member Clifford “Cliff” Metz.

Also Present: Chief James Stoltenberg.
Tonto Basin Fire District Administrative Assistant Lore Lee Taylor.
Board Member at Large Debra “Deb” Morris.
Firefighter Tristan McBlane.
Firefighter Trenton Cline.
Ben Archer-Clowes “Ben” with James Vincent Group (JVG).
Stuart Levy, Deer Creek Resident.

Awards & Recognition: The Chief presented a letter sent in by a community member thanking Tristan, Trenton, and Theresa for their support during a transformer fire on the power line near her house.

Reading and Approval of the February 19, 2026 Regular Session Meeting minutes: The draft minutes from the prior Regular Session Board Meeting on February 19, 2026 were reviewed. Following the review of the prior meeting minutes on February 19, 2026 a motion to approve and adopt the February 19, 2026 meeting minutes was duly made by Board Member Brian Nail and seconded by Board Member Cliff Metz. The February 19, 2026 meeting minutes were unanimously approved and adopted.

At this time Agenda Item 9, Station 92 variance paperwork and agree on the date for an on-site meeting between the Board and adjacent property owners was moved to this point in the meeting.

Discussion/Information and Action: Proceeded regarding a discussion on the Station 92 variance paperwork and date for an on-site meeting between the Board and adjacent property owners as presented by Deb Morris. It is required that Tonto Basin Fire District (TBFD) send out a variance letter with a date for an on-site meeting to all thirteen (13) property owners within 300 feet of the Station 92 property line with a copy to Gila County. The variance paperwork must be sent at least 2 weeks prior to the meeting. The meeting is meant to explain the reason for the variance request and provide a venue for questions and answers to affected property owners. A motion was made by Board Member John France to approve the variance paperwork as presented and set the on-site meeting date for April 8, 2026 at 1700 hours (5:00 p.m.). The motion was seconded by Board Member Ilene Hailey. The vote to approve the variance paperwork and hold the on-site meeting on April 8, 2026 at 1700 hours was unanimous. The variance paperwork will be mailed to affected property owners and Gila County on March 20, 2026.

Following this item Deb Morris left the meeting.

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Chief's Report: The Chief's Report was presented by Chief Stoltenberg. Discussions ensued on the items as presented and highlighted by the Chief.

Financial Report: Ben presented the monthly financial reports with the following ending balances as of 02/28/2026:

National Bank:	\$ 49,400.67
Warrant Account:	\$ 1,005,964.96
Capital Reserve Account:	\$ 361,053.32

Following discussions on the Chief's Report and the Financial Report a motion was made to accept both reports as presented by Board Member Brian Nail and seconded by Board Member Cliff Metz. The vote to accept both reports was unanimous.

Tonto Basin Firefighter Association Updates: Tristan and Trenton gave an update on the Fishing Tournament and thanked the Board members for assisting and said that the fishing tournament will be continued for at least the next 3 years at a similar time of the year. They also stated that there would be upcoming events and will keep the Board updated to ensure we can continue to participate. Chairman France did thank the Firefighter Association for the tournament and other community activities that help to keep the Fire District involved in the Community and improve Community relations.

Call to the Public – Agenda Items: None.

Discussion/Information and Action: Proceeded regarding the approval to pay off the Tonto Basin Fire District Type 3 Engine loan in April 2026 as presented by Chief Stoltenberg. The Chief highlighted that the payoff amount is \$33,855.24 and would save TBFD ~\$1,900 in interest in 2026/2027. The Chief and Ben also highlighted that the money would be coming from cash on the balance sheet but that our reserves would not be lowered for the budget year given that operating costs are lower than budget. A motion was made by Board Member Cliff Metz to approve paying off the Type 3 Engine loan for \$33,855.24 in April 2026. The motion was seconded by Board Member Brian Nail. The vote to approve paying off the Type 3 Engine loan in April 2026 for \$33,855.24 was unanimous.

Discussion/Information and Action: Proceeded regarding potential increases to the existing employee pay as presented by Chief Stoltenberg. The Chief recommended a \$1/hour wage adjustment increase for all employees as well as for TBFD to pay for employees' short-term disability, accident insurance, and hospital indemnity through Hartford which amounts to ~\$22/month per employee. The recommendation is for all of these changes to take effect on April 1, 2026. The Chief did highlight the fact that the money was available as highlighted during the Board Work Session on March 18, 2026 and that it would not negatively affect the 2026 budget. Following discussions a motion was made by Board Member John France to approve the wage adjustment increases of \$1/hour and for TBFD to pay employee short term disability, accident insurance, and hospital indemnity effective April 1, 2026. The motion was seconded by Board Member Brian Nail. The vote to approve the wage adjustments of \$1/hour and for TBFD to pay employee short term disability, accident insurance, and hospital indemnity effective April 1, 2026 was unanimous.

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Discussion/Information and Action: Proceeded regarding the potential adoption of a policy on how TBFDF will dispose of excess and out of service equipment as presented by Chief Stoltenberg. The Chief presented a document titled “Asset Management and Disposal.” There was a change noted on page 1, Section III, Definitions, which was to change the value of \$1,500 to \$5,000. The Chief did highlight that the document could not be approved as a policy given that TBFDF is updating the policy manual and there was not a formal number for this policy. Following discussions a motion was made by Board Member John France to approve the “Asset Management and Disposal” document as a working draft with the change highlighted above and that the Chief would bring back a final policy for Board approval in the future. The motion was seconded by Board Member Cliff Metz. The vote to approve the “Asset Management and Disposal” document with noted changes as a working draft was unanimous.

Call to the Public – Non-Agenda Items: Stuart Levy, Deer Creek Resident, spoke to the Board in regards to the potential to annex Deer Creek into the current Tonto Basin Fire District. Stuart let the Board know that at present Deer Creek has a Fire Brigade but is open to discussing future annexation. Chief Stoltenberg explained the annexation timeline and did state that there would be community involvement prior to anything proceeding.

Adjournment: There being no further business to come before the Board a motion to adjourn the meeting was made by Board Member Cliff Metz and seconded by Board Member Brian Nail. The vote to adjourn was unanimously adopted and the meeting adjourned at 1107 hours.