



MEETING MINUTES

The Fire Board of the Rio Rico Medical and Fire District (RRMFD) met in special session on Thursday, August 22, 2024 at 6:00 p.m. The meeting was held at Rio Rico Medical and Fire District administrative office, 822 Pendleton Drive, Rio Rico, AZ.

1. CALL MEETING TO ORDER

- Meeting is being recorded
- Meeting called to order by Dora Urias at 6:00 p.m.

2. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

3. ROLL CALL OF BOARD MEMBERS

- Present: Brad Beach, Michael Carlson, and Dora Urias
- Absent: Frank Bejarano & Hank Thysell

4. CALL TO THE PUBLIC

a. None

b. Public Hearing re: Presentation of amendment of the Rio Rico Fire District's boundaries to annex certain properties within Santa Cruz County and adjacent to the southeastern boundaries of the Rio Rico Fire District known as the River Road Annexation pursuant to A.R.S. Section 48-262(H)

i. Chairman will open the hearing.

- Hearing opened by Dora Urias at 6:02 p.m.

ii. Chairman will call to all present for those who wish to comment on the Amendment of the Rio Rico Medical and Fire District's boundaries as described in 4 b. and each person desiring to speak will be provided 3 minutes.

- Chief Amezaga introduced himself, gave a history of the District and distributed RRMFD Strategic Plan booklets to those in attendance
 - RRMFD is now managing Nogales Suburban Fire District (NSFD)
 - Area between RRMFD and NSFD (property owners in the River Road Annexation area) has no fire district– has access to ambulance services (billed at a different rate than fire); however, should there be a wildland fire, house fire, hazmat situation or any situation requiring the fire district's response, property owner would be charged for services (including equipment \$85 to \$135 per unit and personnel, 15-18, at current rate of hourly wage, with an approximate operational time of four to six hours). Insurance rates for properties covered by a fire district are generally lower
 - Currently property owners within the River Road Annexation area are not paying taxes for fire services. With annexation, residential tax would increase 3.75% per \$100 valuation; agricultural properties would be taxed at a lesser rate. Legislators control tax rates.
 - Response to North River Road would be from the Patagonia Road station; response to South River Road would be from Station 3 – approximately 5-10 minutes. Have equipment that can respond to rural areas.
 - River Road Annexation would not bring in substantial revenue, but due to growth within the RRRMFD, additional tax revenue will be received.

- Additional income for District through wildland assignments. Equipment has been purchased with grants and wildland income
- Respect for resident's property – not part of the county government; special taxing district of the state; county only collects taxes for the District
- Ambulance service regulated by Title 36; Fire Districts regulated by Title 48
- Possible future annexation to include Sonoita Creek homeowners and Patagonia Lake Estates
- Fire Marshall Cluff addressed attendee's concerns
 - First Due app provides information within Fire District for preplanning (location, addresses, restrictions for access)
 - Community Connect app allows residents to upload information regarding their property – location, gate codes, medical information for use by the responding personnel
 - Fire equipment includes tankers to bring water to the fire
- RRMFD Board members introduced themselves and addressed the audience
 - Responsibility of Board members and the commitment to represent community members within the District
 - Critical review of financial statements, expenditures and checks monthly
 - Fiscal responsibility, budget process and accountability of revenue to the community. RRMFD has no debt obligation except for the Bond.
 - Personnel respond quickly and efficiently with a commitment and diligence to protect property and lives
 - Incredible training for personnel – constant and continual. Many training activities include firefighters from throughout the state of Arizona and Mexico. State of the art training tower has been approved for building at Station 2 to enhance training opportunities.
 - Progress and growth potential within RRMFD
 - Approximate increase in taxes on a residence valued at \$200,000 would be \$750. Peace of mind knowing you are within a fire district for minimal cost.
- Louie Chaboya addressed the audience
 - Reviewed information sent to property owners
 - Reviewed map of annexation area
 - Reviewed requirements for annexation – Impact statement; Board of Supervisors approval; RRMFD Board approval, collection of signatures and presentation to Board of Supervisors and Assessor for approval to proceed with taxation
 - Annexation is voluntary for community but not individually; however, should the required number of signatures be collected, annexation will take place.
- Discussion and concerns of residents in attendance:
 - Unaware their property was not within the Fire District and not covered for services
 - Thought Nogales Suburban Fire was their Fire District and had ceased operation
 - Annexation was to help subsidize the missing County Treasurer funds
 - Patagonia Road station now staffed 24/7 with an ambulance
 - Ability to locate property in an emergency
 - Access to water
 - North River Road area has a private road (does not want county to take road)
 - Rio Rico Medical and Fire District stability - fiscal responsibility
 - Revenue from annexation would be minimal due to types of property being annexed
 - Annexation – mandatory or voluntary

- Consensus of attendees is to not make a decision tonight
 - c. Chairman will close the hearing.
 - d. Hearing closed by Dora Urias at 7:14 p.m.
5. NEW BUSINESS
- a. Discussion and possible action: Adoption of Resolution #2025-01 authorizing the approval of the Rio Rico Medical and Fire District (District) impact statement to include the legal description/map, and to authorize the circulation of petitions to fulfill the Arizona statutory requirement pursuant to A.R.S. 48-262(H)
 - Motion to approve adoption of Resolution #2025-01 authorizing the approval of the RRMFD impact statement to include the legal description/map, and to authorize the circulation petitions to fulfill the Arizona statutory requirement pursuant to A.R.S. 48-262(H) made by Michael Carlson, second by Brad Beach
 - Motion approved unanimously by verbal vote
6. ADJOURNMENT
- Meeting adjourned at 7:15 p.m. by Dora Urias

Dated this 28th day of August, 2024.

Rio Rico Medical & Fire District Elected Official

Hank Thysell,  Clerk of the Board