

PONDEROSA SPRINGS COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION

General Meeting October 8, 2022

At 11:20 am, President Kaja-Anne Jezycki welcomed all attendees to the meeting and called the meeting to order. This year's meeting was held at the Christopher-Kohls Fire Department Station 53. Approximately 50 people were in attendance. President Kaja-Anne Jezycki led the group in the Pledge of Allegiance, introduced the officers, and gave the group information concerning the history of changes to our organization. We are now named Ponderosa Springs Community Organization, fully incorporated with the state. We are not an HOA (Home Owners Association) but rather a voluntary community association. We have no enforcement authority over the CC&Rs of the properties. This is the same as the past practices.

Secretary Tom Hiscox briefly reviewed the minutes from our last meeting held on June 12, 2021. These minutes are posted on our website. There were no corrections or comments on the minutes.

Vice President Susan Keown, standing in for Treasurer Dave Duprest, gave a report on our association finances. Our expenses have been low, mostly associated with the new organization and creation of the website. The full financial report is posted on the website. There were no corrections or comments on the financial report.

Secretary Tom Hiscox gave a report on the new association website. The portal is intended to share information on Ponderosa Springs and surrounding area activities and events of interest to the residents. A summary of the website information as handed out and is attached to the minutes.

The group then broke for lunch. Hamburgers and hot dogs were once again grilled courtesy of the Christopher Kohls Fire Department. Two tables full of side dishes were brought by residents. No one went home hungry.

We were very fortunate to have two Gila County Supervisors in attendance at the meeting, as well as Fire Chief Lockhart. The group congratulated Fire Chief Lockhart on achieving his 49th anniversary as a professional fire fighter. We then went into the presentations.

Fire Chief Lockhart reported the department is running well. The 2022 fire season was relatively mild in our immediate area, but CKFD crews were sent to support activities in other areas primarily New Mexico. He discussed the financial situation of the department. Fuel accounts for 40% of the costs so the recent rise in fuel has a big impact. Also, the Covid pandemic impacts the costs negatively. The districts get no Federal support to offset the costs. Workers Compensation costs alone have increased by 115%. This year's tax increase is solely due to the increase in workers compensation. There is no money planned for equipment replacement or capital improvements, although both these areas need attention. We discussed the local station 53 situation. There is no well, no septic system, and no toilet. The Chief estimated the well would cost \$10,000 and the septic would cost \$35,000. The department is just scraping by due to the increasing expense.

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The department is planning to install a fire phone at station 53 which would be a direct line to the fire dispatcher. In our area we cannot rely on cell phones to be available to report a fire, so many residents keep a land line only for the reason to be available to call emergency. A direct line fire phone at the fire station would greatly improve the reporting availability. The fire phone installation would be about \$600.

Chief then introduced the Firebelles at our meeting. Firebelles is an auxiliary support organization which provides services and support to the fire department. In the old days, it was mostly made up of spouses of the volunteer fire fighters. Now it is staffed with locals interested volunteers from Christopher Creek who wish to support their fire department. At our meeting were Anne Coury, President, Deb Minter, Secretary, and several other volunteers. We expressed our appreciation for their efforts with applause and a donation to support their work. The Firebelles have a page on Facebook for following their activities.

Our local Gila County Supervisors were next on the agenda. We were very fortunate to have two with us: Steve Christensen and Woody Cline. Due to this year's redrawing of the district map boundaries due to the census results, Steve Christensen our current Supervisor will no longer represent Ponderosa Springs, and Woody Cline will become our supervisor. Both gentlemen are long time Gila County residents, and incumbent supervisors.

Steve Christensen, District 1 Supervisor, opened the session. He first explained how important the ballot issue 310 is to our district and fire department. This initiative would add a small tax surcharge which would go directly to rural fire districts such as ours who are struggling due to rising cost. Steve reported that Gila County has no intention to increase county taxes. They have not increased taxes in a long time, allowing the increasing property values to provide additional funding.

Woody Cline then gave an introduction and remarks. He explained the process and difficulties of re-districting. There are three reservations in the county, and they are required to be in the same district. So geographically district 3 is the largest and district 1 is the smallest. But based on population, they are roughly equal.

Both supervisors then led a wide-ranging open discussion of issues important to Ponderosa Springs area residents. Both Supervisors took questions from the group which are summarized below:

- Within Gila County, funds are allocated due to need, not population. Although some districts provide more revenue than others, all funds are lumped together then spent wherever most needed.
- Gila county faced a problem with the retirement fund which is run by the state. Due to poor administration, the fund was in danger of going bankrupt and would

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have denied retiring police, firemen and other employees their earned retirement. The county bonded the \$12 million needed to restore the retirement fund, and in doing so have saved money. The retirement is now secure.

- The supervisors will look at ways to help the Christopher Kohls fire district with funding improvements such as the well and septic to Fire Station 53.
- The paving of Colcord Road was brought up in questions several times. The problem is funding. There is 2+ miles left to pave, and costs were \$1 million per mile and have risen. The county would very much like to pave the road and many other rural roads, as it reduces their maintenance cost.
- Within the county, major road projects include the Tonto Creek Bridge, Young Road North entrance, and the Control Road. The allocation of funds is based on how many people the project will help, and realistically, the Colcord Road paving is not going to happen.
- Other county road projects include the Lion Spring section of Hwy 260 from Star Valley out to Preacher Canyon. This has been delayed at least 12 years but is now on the schedule for 2024. The long-closed rest stop on the Beeline highway needs a complete septic upgrade and is not on any schedule. The bypass around Payson will never happen due to costs, but improvements on the flow of traffic through Payson such as removing lights are being planned.
- Gila county has been faced with difficulty in staffing the road maintenance crews due to retirements and labor shortages. They are getting some relief by using recently retired heavy equipment operators on part time service. We may see delays in grading Colcord and snow removal in the winter.
- Gila County has been able to reduce the overall county employee count.
- Both supervisors re-stated that the Gila County tax rate will remain the same with no increase.

We thanked Supervisors Christensen and Cline for their generous time and openness to take questions from the group. It was a most interesting session for all of us.

Following the supervisor's remarks, Chief Lockhart led a short discussion into the importance and impact of Ballot Proposition 310 which will provide funding for rural fire districts such as Christopher-Kohls.

President Kaja then passed out an advisory ballot to all the residents asking for their input on the priority of four suggested projects for the association to consider in 2023. Members indicated their preferences and returned the ballots. The board of directors will consider the ballots at a future board meeting.

At 1:21pm, a motion was made to adjourn the meeting, was seconded, and approved by voice vote. President Kaja thanked everyone for attending and participating in the meeting,

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Attach to these minutes is the summary of Information on our website. The financial report is posted on the website. These minutes will be posted on our website along with contact information and biographical information on Fire Chief Lockhart and Supervisor Woody Cline.

PonderosaSpringsCA.org



Tom Hiscox, Secretary

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Notes on our PSCA Website:

<http://PonderosaSpringsCA.org>

- The Association has created a website to share local information about Ponderosa Springs and the Association
- Main pages are:
 - **Home**
 - ◆ Includes links to all pages and three most recent news posts
 - **Resources**
 - ◆ Maps of our subdivision and local area
 - ◆ Area information, Articles of Incorporation and Bylaws, and CCRs for our subdivisions
 - **News**
 - ◆ Area for posting notices about current events
 - **Board Members and Meetings**
 - ◆ Biographies of the PSCA board and copies of meeting minutes
 - **Contact US**
 - ◆ Information on Dues and Donations
 - ◆ A form which can be used to send the board a message
 - **Gallery**
 - ◆ Submitted photographs of our area. You may submit photos for posting by emailing them to the association at PonderosaSprngsCommunityAssn@gmail.com
- The new email server is part of the website. This server keeps track of all email status including how many open the email, emails that are rejected, and emails that unsubscribe.
- Our email address is:
PonderosaSpringsCommunityAssn@gmail.com
- If you are having trouble receiving emails, please do the following:
 1. Check your SPAM folder. This email server is different from our former one, and some mail programs do not recognize it and put the messages in junk folder
 2. Send me an email at the above address and advise me of your correct email and I will try to trace the problem.
- You may opt out of receiving emails by unsubscribing at the bottom of any email
- Website and email links are on every email at the bottom
- You can hit Reply to any email to send us a message