

Union officers say fire chief 'hosed' district

Allege Wayne Eder abused position

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THE STANDARD

KINGMAN - Officers of a professional firefighters union with members throughout the Kingman area and Golden Valley are calling for the ouster of Hualapai Valley Fire Chief Wayne Eder. Local President Robert Borker said Eder should be removed from his position because of a pattern of "unethical" and "dishonorable" behavior.

Borker addressed the Kingman Unified School District Board (KUSD) Tuesday, alleging that Chief Eder abused his position to force the school district to purchase 5" fire hose for the Hualapai Valley Fire District.

Borker said Eder leveraged the school district's need for an inspection of modular buildings for freshman students at the North High School campus for several hundred feet of fire hose.

Borker explained that Eder first insisted that a fire hydrant must be moved for the buildings to be inspected.

He said Eder next told school officials the hydrant could remain temporarily if the school district agreed to purchase extra fire hose for several engines that could respond to the campus, if needed.

The KUSD purchased 600 ft. of fire hose through a vendor recommended by Eder for \$3,852. But Borker said neither Eder nor the Fire District needed the hose.

Borker alleged Eder claimed his engines were equipped with only 600 ft. of hose and that he needed 200 feet more for three trucks to use the hydrant in question to service the campus.

Borker said ledgers that checklist equipment show that each of the engines already had at least 800 feet of 5" hose.

"We found that Chief Eder misled the school district into believing they had to purchase the hose in order to obtain a final inspection for the new buildings," Borker told school board members. "You shouldn't have to buy something in order to pass an inspection. Nobody does that. It's so completely unethical."

Neither Chief Eder nor any Hualapai Valley Fire District representatives attended the school board meeting.

KUSD board members directed Superintendent Dr. Maurice Flores to see if the Boards of the two districts can meet to address the allegations.

"What happened to us was not right," said KUSD Board President Mike Cobb. "It comes down to Chief Eder said 'that's the way it's going to be' so there's no ifs, ands or buts, and that's the way it was."

"The point is that it's not only the school district, it's the taxpayers who paid for that," said KUSD Board member Doris Goodale.

Some 20 professional firefighters attended the KUSD meeting, drawing a round of applause upon

their exit.

Borker said firefighters value their reputation and community standing and would not allow that to be tarnished by Eder's conduct.

He urged that the KUSD seek reimbursement from the fire district.

Borker and Andrew Rucker, Secretary-Treasurer for the local firefighters union, conducted a media interview four days before the school board meeting. Chief Eder, attending a professional training academy near the nation's capitol, did not respond to messages and inquiries left on his cellphone and at the Fire District offices.

Eder in the past, however, has been quick to defend himself or the fire district when involved in various other public battles.

Borker and Rucker said the fire hose incident is one of many examples of Eder's abuse of his authority.

They said 33 employees have left the District during Eder's three year tenure and that he is to blame for the turnover and turmoil.

"He has basically been a cancer among the local fire service for a couple of years now," Rucker said. "His behavior has displayed such a pattern that we would be satisfied with nothing less than his resignation or termination."

EDITOR'S NOTE: The Standard will provide follow-up coverage on this story and will also provide space for Chief Eder should he choose to address the allegations or offer comment.