

# Rancho Adobe Fire Protection District

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**MINUTES OF THE REGULAR BOARD MEETING  
FEBRUARY 19, 2020 — 7:00 P.M.  
COTATI FIRE STATION - #1 EAST COTATI AVE.  
COTATI, CALIFORNIA**

**I. CALL TO ORDER / ROLL CALL / PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

President, Mark Hemmendinger, called the Regular Board Meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. The agenda for this meeting was posted on February 14, 2020.

Roll Call:

Directors Present: Mark Hemmendinger, Brian Proteau, Michael Gadoua, Leslie Cozad, Carla Grube, Nole Pacheco, Bret Herman

Minutes Conducted by: Jennifer Bechtold

**II. ORAL AND WRITTEN COMMUNICATIONS**

A. Citizen Business/Public Comments on Items not appearing on Agenda

Mr. George Barich, of Cotati, commented he would like the Board to consider video recording and cablecasting the monthly Board meetings. He feels there is interest in the meetings and they could be watched from home or later. For a long time, we used to send reminders about our Board meeting and he would like that done again or shared on social media. Mr. Barich also noted that there have been discussions on the fire lane in front of the Cotati station on social media. The visuals may be confusing for people and they'd like us to look into restriping this in the proper format for fire lanes. Finally, he commented that we have had an ongoing issue with weed abatement and the city's responsibility versus ours. Now that the district has more money, he would like to see weed abatement done by the fire department and the city left behind.

B. Correspondence and/or Presentations

There was no correspondence.

### **III. APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

#### **A. Regular Meeting of January 15, 2020**

Motion moved by Mr. Proteau and seconded by Mrs. Grube.  
Motion Carried: Aye 7 No 0 Abstain 0 Absent 0

### **IV. CONSENT CALENDAR**

#### **A. Ratification of Claims and Journal Vouchers**

Motion moved by Mrs. Cozad and seconded by Mr. Herman.  
Motion Carried: Aye 7 No 0 Abstain 0 Absent 0

### **V. ADMINISTRATIVE COMMUNICATIONS**

#### **A. Chief's Report**

Chief Thompson shared the following report:

Total calls for January: 177, 86 of those being EMS.

- 1.) 2-week academy has begun for the full-time firefighter positions.
- 2.) The engineer assessment has been completed and we now have three candidates on the list. Daniel Ikalani has been offered the position and is in background and participating in the firefighter academy.
- 3.) Chief will be coordinating a date for the BC assessment utilizing an outside company for the assessment.
- 4.) Two nights of live fire training were held last week for volunteers from Wilmar Fire.
- 5.) Three dates have been scheduled to conduct firefighter safety and survival training. Instructors from both PFD and RAFD will be participating.
- 6.) Annual maintenance/inspections are in progress for apparatus. Some of the engines have already been completed.
- 7.) We have another cannabis operation moving into the City of Cotati.
- 8.) The ISO inspection has been completed but we have not heard back from them on the findings.
- 9.) A COPE class has been scheduled for Friday, 2/28 at the Cotati fire station. We are targeting the Charles Street Village retirement community.
- 10.) The man-down emergency trigger system is finally activated after two years. All of our portables have been programmed and we will be introducing the feature to the firefighters in the upcoming firefighter survival training.
- 11.) A multi-company agency safety training was conducted at SSU last month with participation from RAFD, PFD, RP and Gold Ridge.
- 12.) Chief and Director Hemmendinger met with Supervisors Rabbitt and Hopkins to discuss the casino funds and sphere of influence. Chief then met with the Fire Service Working Group (FSWG) to discuss the sphere of influence and his concerns. We need to take into consideration the community and proper training of firefighters in order to develop a good service model for the community.

#### **B. Director Reports**

Mr. Hemmendinger provided a written report to the Board and the Public on the recent County meetings. At the December Board of Supervisors meeting, Lynda Hopkins directed the working group to develop the sphere of influence that normally goes through LAFCO. The group seems to be leaning towards consolidating Regions 8 and 9, but excludes Rancho Adobe. The sphere of influence request we sent to LAFCO seems to be dead at this point, based upon Lynda Hopkins direction to the working group. Many of these changes hinge on the proposed sales tax on the

March 3<sup>rd</sup> ballot. If this passes, we will get some money from it for staffing and pay increases for the first three years. This funding may continue based upon our consolidation efforts. Mr. Pacheco noted that we have been trying to work towards consolidation but have been rebuffed multiple times. Chief Thompson commented that the response times would never be met in the Wilmar and Lakeville areas so he does not understand the proposals being reviewed. He has suggested to the working group to staff the Wilmar and Lakeville areas and staff volunteers at Petaluma and Rancho Adobe. Chief Thompson noted that we have a program in place to also help volunteers succeed in their future careers. He does not understand why this idea has been shut down. Mr. Gadoua said it seems like we have the best statement for response times and if this is a political issue, he wonders how we get past that. This fact really needs to resonate with the public. Mr. Proteau stated that he often sees Wilmar and Cal Fire driving right through our district to respond to calls and this makes no sense. The bottom line is the community is getting poor service, stated Chief Thompson. They also do not have the infrastructure or staffing in place to provide the level of service the community deserves. . . When asked, Chief Thompson has always shared that the community needs a paramedic resource at the Wilmar station. This will not happen unless they connect with a source that can provide the structure for paramedics. This service was offered by PFD who has all of this in place and no one seems to want to listen. Sadly, it's going to take a tragedy to happen before anyone realizes how all of these decisions affect the community. The Board feels we really need to see what happens with the sales tax measure in March.

Mr. Hemmendinger mentioned he spoke to our attorney's from LCW about some of the things he was concerned they missed in the handbook review. The feedback he received was if we want LCW to review some of the other issues, we need to clarify if we would like them to check this from a legal or procedural standpoint. Mr. Pacheco commented that the upside of utilizing the Lexipol system is that the policies have been vetted through the legal process as well.

Mr. Hemmendinger noted that SSU has given up their dispatch services to the City of Cotati. They are essentially paying for service to a public safety entity.

C. Committee Reports

a. Finance/Budget

Mr. Hemmendinger commented that he reviewed the budget and we are very much on track at this time.

b. Negotiations

Meeting dates and times will be forthcoming.

c. Equipment

No report filed.

d. Legislative

No report filed.

e. Chief's Evaluation

A meeting will be scheduled soon.

f. Long Range Planning

No report filed.

D. Firefighters' Association Report

BC Andy Taylor reported the Crab Feed last month was very successful and they did well making a profit. The July 4<sup>th</sup> breakfast is coming up and we will need to figure out what date that will be held, since the 4<sup>th</sup> is on a Saturday.

E. Firefighter's Union Report

Captain Bernal noted that some members attended a LCW webinar on union issues and negotiations. He also commented that we have six new full-time members.

**VI. NEW BUSINESS**

A. Approval of Permit to Use Land for Groundwater Monitoring Station

Mrs. Bechtold noted there is a contract from the Sonoma County Water Agency to be reviewed and signed allowing them to put in a well on the park and ride property at station 2 to monitor water levels. The question raised was whether this parcel even belongs to us. It is believed the park and ride was subdivided years ago and sold off to the County. The Board has directed Mrs. Bechtold to request a member of the Water Agency attend the March Board meeting and explain what they are doing. We also need to determine whether we have the authority to sign this and who the landowner is, as it is not the Chief. Mrs. Bechtold will reach out to them and request their presence at the next meeting.

B. Approval of Closing Wells Fargo Bank Payroll Account and Opening New Payroll Account with Summit State Bank

Mrs. Bechtold commented that we have been banking with Wells Fargo for years and now that we have established an excellent relationship with Summit Bank, it would be prudent to move our payroll account from Wells Fargo to Summit. There will be also better efficiencies in transfer funds between accounts.

Motion moved by Mr. Gadoua and seconded by Mrs. Grube.

Motion Carried: Aye   7   No   0   Abstain   0   Absent   0  

C. Approval of Administrative Extra Help Position (Staff Report by BC Andy Taylor)

BC Taylor stated that since switching over to the Image Trend reporting system in July, we have not yet updated our records from the old system. This is a process of data entry, which will be time-consuming. We also have the weed abatement program beginning soon and it looks like the County will reimbursing us for our time again this year, so those costs are covered to hire help. It would be advantageous to hire a part-time office assistant who can help with data entry for both programs and other things in the office. This would just be a temporary position part-time, less than 960 hours per fiscal year.

*New Business Continued:*

Motion moved by Mr. Proteau and seconded by Mrs. Cozad.

Motion Carried: Aye   7   No   0   Abstain   0   Absent   0  

D. Approval of Robert Taylor, Cloverdale Board Member, as SCFDA Representative to FSWG

Mr. Hemmendinger commented that Robert Taylor was nominated to be the SCFDA member to represent the fire districts at the FSWG meetings. He has so far attended two FSWG meetings. The SCFDA has asked for the fire districts to ratify this vote in favor of Mr. Taylor. Despite what has transpired thus far, Mr. Hemmendinger feels he is far and above better than the previous member. However, he does have bias against the district already, which is a concern, though he will continue to serve in the position regardless of the vote by RAFD.

Motion moved by Mr. Proteau to support Director Taylor and seconded by Mr. Gadoua.

Motion Carried: Aye   6   No   0   Abstain   1   (Mr. Hemmendinger)    Absent   0  

**VII. DIRECTION ON FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS**

- Discussion of Meeting Notifications to Public.

**VIII. ADJOURNMENT**

With no further business to discuss, the Regular Board meeting was adjourned at 8:17 p.m.

Motion moved by Mr. Proteau and seconded by Mr. Gadoua.

Motion Carried: Aye   7   No   0   Abstain   0   Absent   0  

Date Approved:   3/18/2020