

# Rancho Adobe Fire Protection District

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**MINUTES OF THE REGULAR BOARD MEETING  
JUNE 15, 2022 — 7:00 P.M.  
COTATI FIRE STATION - #1 EAST COTATI AVE.  
COTATI, CALIFORNIA**

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

President, Michael Gadoua, called the Regular Board Meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. The agenda for this meeting was posted on June 10, 2022.

Directors Present: Mark Hemmendinger, Michael Gadoua, Bret Herman, Brian Proteau

Directors Absent: Leslie Cozad, Ray Peterson

Minutes Conducted by: Jennifer Bechtold

**II. ORAL AND WRITTEN COMMUNICATIONS**

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

There was no citizen business.

B. Correspondence and/or Presentations

There was no correspondence.

**III. APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

A. Regular Meeting of May 18, 2022

Mr. Hemmendinger asked about the total health savings funds mentioned under Public Hearing and asked Mrs. Bechtold to confirm if the total paid is \$250K or \$200K. If an amendment needs to be in minutes, Board has approved.

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

Motion Carried: Aye 4 No 0 Abstain 0 Absent 2

**IV. CONSENT CALENDAR**

A. Ratification of Checks Issued

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

Motion Carried: Aye 4 No 0 Abstain 0 Absent 2

V. ADMINISTRATIVE COMMUNICATIONS

A. Chief's Report

Chief Gossner reported the following information:

- 1.) Paramedic program – we are still accepting applications but have not had any applicants. Pushing the job announcement out to partners so we can initiate our ALS program.
- 2.) Chiefs Heine and Gossner met with Supervisor Rabbitt on May 27 to discuss the funding gap for consolidation and how the County might be able to help. There have been no further meetings since this date. Chiefs have discussed writing a formal letter to Supervisors signed by both Board presidents requesting funding and why it makes sense. County is in their budget process right now. Mr. Hemmendinger asked if the Board would have a chance to see and vet the letter prior to being sent to the County. Chief Gossner said yes it would be written and then fanned out. Chief Heine said this is a different approach than taken with other funding requests. He thinks because the letter is asking for funding, it may need approval from both boards before being sent. Another meeting may occur next week with Supervisor Rabbitt.
- 3.) We have received five applications for Fire Chief and the posting closes July 1.
- 4.) Sonoma Valley Fire is going to take over the costing and funding of Lexipol. We will continue with three subscription rates based on our number of employees. We should hear about the cost and process soon.
- 5.) Tomorrow is a multi-agency drill, which includes North Bay Fire, Petaluma, CalFire, Rohnert Park and Rancho Adobe. Two drills to be held; one in the morning and one in the afternoon. Graton Fire is also having live fire training at the end of the month and we can send up to five people.
- 6.) Today the Dept. of Emergency Services held a three-hour talk on the upcoming fire season.
- 7.) All equipment orders are on schedule.
- 8.) Chief Gossner has a meeting next week with Petaluma Fire to discuss the first quarter of the BLS program and how we can make it better.
- 9.) The public comment period opens June 23 for the Sonoma County Fire RFP. Chief Gossner will be working with Sonoma Co. Fire Chiefs and Districts Association to ensure the same message is delivered.
- 10.) Coast Guard will have a change in command on June 24 and Chief Gossner will attend the ceremony.
- 11.) 169 service calls in May, which is slower than usual. There were 19 calls to SSU in May, which is less due to school being out. Last week the District received a donation of animal rescue equipment, which was then used yesterday on a vehicle accident involving a horse trailer.

Mr. Herman asked which supervisors represent SCFD and Chief Heine said all of them. Chief Gossner noted we primary deal with Supervisor Rabbitt, though parts of our District now also touch areas overseen by Supervisors Gorin and Coursey. Mr. Hemmendinger feels the biggest challenge is that the county states they are no longer funding fire. Chief Heine disagreed saying he feels the biggest challenge is getting a response from any of them.

B. Director Reports

No report filed.

C. Committee Reports

a. Finance/Budget

Mr. Hemmendinger noted that we are on target with our budgetary expectations. We are over budget on extra help but part of this is because we have shifted

chief costs to this category. Mr. Hemmendinger asked Chief Gossner if there were any large expenses coming up and Chief said this was discussed at our management meeting this morning and there is nothing we are aware of. Mr. Hemmendinger said we should roll about \$800K over at the end of fiscal year.

b. Negotiations

No report filed.

c. Ad-Hoc Equipment

No report filed.

d. Ad-Hoc Legislative

No report filed.

e. Ad-Hoc Chief's Evaluation

No report filed.

f. Long Range Planning

Mr. Hemmendinger noted the past two LRPC meetings have been canceled with nothing up for discussion. He recommends we meet in July to review the Chiefs resumes.

g. Ad-Hoc Capital Improvements

Mr. Proteau said we did receive the preliminary plans from strata for station 2 remodel. We are looking at some budgets to compare with architects. Mr. Proteau received a report he is putting bid proposals together for stations 1 and 3.

h. Ad-Hoc Fire Chief Selection

No report filed.

D. Firefighters' Association Report

BC Weihman, on behalf of the Association, invited everyone to the July 2 breakfast in Penngrove. The following day the Penngrove parade and BBQ will be held.

E. Firefighter's Union Report

No report filed.

**VI. UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

A. Discussion on Sonoma State University Funding

Mr. Hemmendinger said through research, he and Mr. Peterson have found the SSU land was once part of the Cotati Fire District. There has been no evidence stating this land was ever pulled out of the sphere of influence. We can probably take this item off the agenda until the change in leadership occurs at SSU. We may consider submitting a sphere of influence change to LAFCO and put some pressure on the school. Mr. Hemmendinger said we need to find an effective way to look at this. Chief Gossner will continue working on our relationship with the Chief of Police and BC Taylor is working with the school on the alarm issues.

**Public Hearing was opened at 7:32 p.m.**

**VII. PUBLIC HEARING**

A. Presentation and Discussion on Preliminary Budget FY 2022/2023 (2<sup>nd</sup> Reading)

Mr. Hemmendinger commented there have been significant changes to the budget since last month. During a review of our property/liability plans, Mr. Proteau found that our property was grossly undervalued and we have reported this to SDRM. The change in values has increased our insurance by about \$53K. SDRMA will reevaluate our insurance in the coming year.

In 8510, \$353K is budgeted for building and facility improvements. This is a conglomerate of fix-it issues for the stations. Mr. Hemmendinger noted it is critical to look at these and have BC Wandel prioritize this list over a two-year period. In account 8560, \$90K is for the purchase of the last pickup. This leaves the budget with a \$60K deficit.

Mr. Hemmendinger noted we are now separating out capital improvements from our operating budget. The beginning capital reserves of \$1.2 million is just an estimate at this time until we get the final numbers in early July and close the books. The capital budget is spread out over five years so we can budget more effectively knowing our five-year costs. As of now, we have projected \$700K for the replacement of 9183, \$120K for 9132s chassis and \$195K for HVAC systems at station 1 and 3, which leads to reserve expenses of \$1.1 million. This leave us with \$267K in reserves. Mr. Proteau said the capital committee met and decided some expenses were more maintenance items than capital expenses. We do not have another piece of equipment due for replacement until FY 24/25.

**Public Hearing was adjourned at 7:43 p.m.**

**VIII. NEW BUSINESS**

A. Resolution R-11: Adopting a Preliminary Budget for FY 2022/2023

Motion moved by Mr. Hemmendinger and seconded by Mr. Proteau.  
Motion Carried: Aye 4 No 0 Abstain 0 Absent 2

Roll Call:

Mr. Peterson – absent  
Mrs. Cozad – absent  
Mr. Herman – aye  
Mr. Proteau – aye  
Mr. Hemmendinger – aye  
Mr. Gadoua – aye

B. Discussion on Financing of New Fire Engine

Mr. Hemmendinger said the budget is constructed with a \$700K expense to the capital budget, which can either be taken from reserves or paid through a loan. In April, we were quoted 3.25% for a seven-year loan and as of today, that rate is 3.95%. The new interest rate increases that hit tomorrow will increase that rate again. Mr. Hemmendinger prefers that since we do not have another engine to purchase for two years, we spend the cash on the engine. While we cannot budget for an increase in strike team revenue, there is the likelihood to obtain more funds than we have budgeted, which can go into reserves. Mr. Gadoua said we have the opportunity to finance and then pay it off the loan early. Mr. Hemmendinger said there are limitations on when we can pay this off and that we do have limits to our debt ratio. We do have reserves to pay for the engine and operating reserves if we

ran into an emergency. Mr. Proteau feels we should pay cash. Mr. Herman asked if there were any deductions from a loan that would be advantageous and Mr. Hemmendinger said no. We did look at leasing when we ordered the engine and one of the down sides is that we do not have that engine to put into reserves once the lease is up.

Motion moved by Mr. Proteau to pay cash for the new fire engine and seconded by Mr. Herman.

Motion Carried: Aye   4   No   0   Abstain   0   Absent   2  

C. Discussion on Pay Increase for Part-Time Firefighters and BLS Staff (Staff Report by BC Weihman)

Mr. Hemmendinger noted the part-time firefighter and BLS positions have been budgeted at the new rates for FY 22/23.

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

Motion Carried: Aye   4   No   0   Abstain   0   Absent   2  

D. Discussion on Surplus of Auto Extrication Equipment (Staff Report by BC Wandel)

BC Weihman said we recently replaced all of our auto extrication tools and we are now left with the old equipment. The equipment is likely not worth a lot of cash so it is recommended that we donate this to another department. Captain Deurloo noted that we bought three of the new pieces of equipment with our money and the fourth set was received through a grant. The new extrication equipment is generation 5 and the old sets are generation 3, which is almost obsolete. The equipment committee has discuss donating the old extrication sets to McCloud Fire in Shasta County.

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

Motion Carried: Aye   4   No   0   Abstain   0   Absent   2  

E. Discussion and Approval of Healthcare, Dental and Vision Benefit Plans

We received the Kaiser renewal plans early and are looking at a 5.6% increase. The current dental and vision plans renew July 1 and have no rate increases.

Motion moved by Mr. Hemmendinger and seconded by Mr. Herman.

Motion Carried: Aye   4   No   0   Abstain   0   Absent   2  

F. Discussion on Five-Member Board

Mr. Hemmendinger said the Board reduction resolution has been brought to LAFCO but there are currently no reorganizations scheduled. The next reorganization to be seen is that of the Northern Sonoma County Fire areas, which is being held up because of mapping issues. We have approached the County for options to extend the 60-day timeframe, but we may need to replace both Mrs. Grube and Mrs. Cozad. We need to contact Supervisor Rabbitt's office and find out our options. Mrs. Grube officially left office on May 31 so that gives us 60 days to find someone otherwise the Supervisors office will appoint someone.

**X. DIRECTION ON FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS**

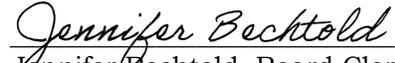
- **Discussion on Review to go to Bid for HVAC System Replacements at Stations 1 and 3.**

**XI. ADJOURNMENT**

With no further business to discuss, the Regular Board meeting was adjourned at 8:09 p.m.

Motion moved by Mr. Hemmendinger and seconded by Mr. Proteau.  
Motion Carried: Aye   4   No   0   Abstain   0   Absent   2  

Respectfully submitted,

  
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Jennifer Bechtold, Board Clerk

Date Approved by Board:

July 20, 2022  
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