

Rancho Adobe Fire Protection District

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**MINUTES OF THE REGULAR BOARD MEETING
NOVEMBER 19, 2025 — 7:00 P.M.
COTATI FIRE STATION - #1 EAST COTATI AVE.
COTATI, CALIFORNIA**

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

President Bob Moretti, called the Regular Board Meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. The agenda for this meeting was posted on November 14, 2025.

Directors Present: Mark Hemmendinger, Bob Moretti, Michael Gadoua, Brian Proteau, Pete Albini, Bret Herman

Directors Absent: 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 public comment.

B. Correspondence and/or Presentations

There was no correspondence.

III. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

A. Regular Board Meeting of October 15, 2025

Motion moved by Mr. Hemmendinger to approve the minutes of October 15, 2025 and seconded by Mr. Herman.

Motion Carried: Aye 6 No 0 Abstain 0 Absent 1

B. Special Board Meeting of October 27, 2025

Motion moved by Mr. Proteau to approve the minutes of October 27, 2025 and seconded by Mr. Albini.

Motion Carried: Aye 6 No 0 Abstain 0 Absent 1

IV. CONSENT CALENDAR

A. Ratification of Checks Issued

Motion moved by Mr. Hemmendinger to approve the consent calendar and seconded by Mr. Herman.

Motion Carried: Aye 6 No 0 Abstain 0 Absent 1

V. **ADMINISTRATIVE COMMUNICATIONS**

A. Firefighter's Union Report

Captain Eric Gromala said they are working through consolidation items with SCFD.

B. Firefighters' Association Report

Engineer Matt Achen noted the holiday dinner will be held December 13. Mike Weihman added that the Indiana participated in the Veteran's Day parade.

C. Chief's Report

Chief Veliquette reported the following information:

1.) District Activities: attended LAFCO meeting, met with Cotati City Manager about station lease, City Council presentation on California Fire Code, development review meetings with Cotati, fire prevention shared services program development, Fire Chief's Association meeting, community fire safety presentation, Chief Caldwell supported fire inspector interview process with SCFD, December SCFCA meeting will have a presentation from Public Policy Advocates that elected officials will be invited to attend via Zoom.

2.) Calls for Service: 249 calls for service in October, including 46 to SSU.

3.) Operational Update: BC Caldwell reported task books have been opened for Engineers, probationary firefighter testing soon, Captain on B shift from SCFD working in Cotati.

D. Director Reports

Mr. Hemmendinger mentioned that he received a copy of the proposed December LAFCO meeting agenda and the MSR for consolidation is included for approval.

E. Committee Reports

a. Finance/Budget

Mr. Hemmendinger noted the overtime budget is \$330K over budget. Chief Veliquette also commented that the first part of our fiscal year is our busiest time of strike team season, and we have billed out almost half of this difference.

b. Ad Hoc Capital Improvements

Mr. Proteau commented we are doing some remedial work at the stations, but no committee meetings have been held. We can remove this item from future agendas.

c. Ad Hoc Consolidation

Chief Veliquette said no meetings were held but a lot of work is going on behind the scenes with the incident action plan. BC Wandel noted that the leadership is going through large cost projects, identifying facilities projects we can complete, sending out communications and getting everyone involved.

VI. **UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

A. Discussion on Lease Agreement for Station 1 with the City of Cotati

Chief Veliquette noted that we are seeing progress on getting the lease written and in place.

The Public Hearing was opened at: 7:23 p.m.

VII. PUBLIC HEARING

A. Ordinance 2025-02: Presentation of the 2025 California Fire Code (2nd Reading)

There were no public comments.

The Public Hearing was adjourned at: 7:24 p.m.

VIII. NEW BUSINESS

A. Discussion and Possible Approval of Ordinance 2025-02 2025 California Fire Code

Chief Veliquette noted we have concluded two public hearings on the California Fire Code and the Ordinance will go into effect on January 1, 2026, for a term of three years.

Motion moved by Mr. Proteau to approve Ordinance 2025-02 2025 California Fire Code and seconded by Mr. Hemmendinger.

Motion Carried: Aye 6 No 0 Abstain 0 Absent 1

Roll Call:

Mr. Proteau – aye

Mr. Albini – aye

Mr. Peterson – absent

Mr. Gadoua – aye

Mr. Moretti – aye

Mr. Hemmendinger – aye

Mr. Herman – aye

B. Discussion and Possible Approval of Apparatus Maintenance Lifts

BC Wandel commented that the fleet division is looking to purchase maintenance lifts for efficiency and to get a better visual within the apparatus. The lifts are portable and can be moved to another location if the shop were to move. Mr. Albini mentioned he has these in his shop and there are incredible benefits to having them. Mr. Hemmendinger asked if we should bring this purchase up with SCFD and BC Wandel mentioned it was equipment they were looking for, and the need will only increase with more apparatus. Mr. Proteau asked about the stability of the concrete pads at station 3 and BC Wandel said that these will be less weight than the current air jacks that we use.

Motion moved by Mr. Gadoua to approve the purchase of apparatus maintenance lifts and seconded by Mr. Albini.

Motion Carried: Aye 6 No 0 Abstain 0 Absent 1

C. Discussion on Administrative Manager FY 2025/2026 Employment Agreement, Section 18 Severance Pay

Chief Veliquette mentioned that in June when we negotiated the employment agreement, it included a clause for severance pay. The negotiations committee asked our attorney to write the language which is now in front of the full Board for approval. Mr. Hemmendinger said the purpose of this clause was to recognize the 20 years of service for an employee who may or may not be included in consolidation, plus providing incentive to work until the end of consolidation regardless of personal decisions being made. Mr. Proteau is not comfortable with the current language and requests that we ask legal counsel to clarify that severance would not be paid if a job is accepted on July 1, 2026.

D. Discussion on Retiree Healthcare Premiums

Chief Veliquette said this item came up with regards to consolidation and what happens to this approved benefit. Currently, through a Resolution from 2002, a quarterly stipend is paid to employees who retire with 20 years of service up to age 65. SCFD has agreed to honor this benefit for those retirees currently receiving the stipend for those who retire prior to June 30, 2026. As of June 30, 2026, we will have seven additional members who would be eligible for this benefit if they retired under RAFD. We will continue to work with staff on options for how this can be handled.

IX. DIRECTION ON FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS

- **Board reorganization**
- **Severance agreement**
- **Retiree health insurance**

X. ADJOURNMENT

With no further business to discuss, the Regular Board meeting was adjourned at 8:11 p.m.

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

Motion Carried: Aye 6 No 0 Abstain 0 Absent 1

Respectfully submitted,



Jennifer Bechtold, Board Clerk

Date Approved by Board: December 17, 2025