

Rancho Adobe Fire Protection District

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**MINUTES OF THE REGULAR BOARD MEETING
APRIL 15, 2020 — 7:00 P.M.
COTATI FIRE STATION - #1 EAST COTATI AVE.
COTATI, CALIFORNIA**

MEETING WAS HELD VIA TELECONFERENCE FOR ALL BOARD DIRECTORS, STAFF AND MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC

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

President, Mark Hemmendinger, called the Regular Board Meeting to order at 7:03 p.m. The agenda for this meeting was posted on April 10, 2020.

Roll Call:

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

Minutes Conducted by: Jennifer Bechtold

II. ORAL AND WRITTEN COMMUNICATIONS

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

Mr. George Barich commented he is concerned about weed abatement in the City of Cotati and within our fire district. The City of Cotati adopted a weed abatement ordinance the night prior he believed they have no right to do so. He requested the Board to look at the ordinance they wrote.

Ms. Laurie Alderman commented the City of Cotati did not properly notice the weed abatement ordinance for their meeting last night, which was scheduled to be held April 28. The ordinance was passed by City Council unanimously. Ms. Alderman also noted the city has not enforced their own ordinance since May 2008, and they are aware this is a huge legal issue if something were to happen.

Ms. Colleen Haley from California Special Districts Association offered their assistance to work with districts regarding funding and other resources during this difficult time.

B. Correspondence and/or Presentations

There was no correspondence.

III. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

A. Regular Meeting of March 18, 2020

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

Motion Carried: Aye 7 No 0 Abstain 0 Absent 0

Approval of Minutes Continued:

Roll Call:

Mr. Pacheco – aye
Mrs. Cozad – aye
Mr. Herman – aye
Mr. Proteau – aye
Mr. Hemmendinger – aye
Mr. Gadoua – aye
Mrs. Grube – aye

IV. CONSENT CALENDAR

A. Ratification of Claims and Journal Vouchers

Motion moved by Mrs. Grube and seconded by Mrs. Cozad.

Motion Carried: Aye 7 No 0 Abstain 0 Absent 0

Roll Call:

Mr. Pacheco – aye
Mrs. Cozad – aye
Mr. Herman – aye
Mr. Proteau – aye
Mr. Hemmendinger – aye
Mr. Gadoua – aye
Mrs. Grube – aye

V. ADMINISTRATIVE COMMUNICATIONS

A. Chief's Report

Chief Thompson reported the following:

1.) The total calls for service in March: 721, of those 468 were EMS (64%).

2.) Training:

* Full-time Firefighter EMT hiring process and two-week academy has been completed.

* BC Assessment - working with Clancy and Associates to deliver, and Battalion Chief's Assessment in the second half of May. They are going to lock in some dates and let Chief know.

* Live fire training - two live fire-training sessions were scheduled to be delivered to Chevron Fire, but had to be canceled due to COVID-19. The trainings will be rescheduled for May.

- * Multi-company Firefighter safety and survival –this was a successful drill based on feedback received. Captain James Deurloo participated as an instructor with PFD personnel.
- * Zone training – The group met and discussed planning multi-company drills with Region 9 partners.

3.) Annual Maintenance:

* Annual maintenance / inspections are in progress. Completed nine of our apparatus.

- * Fire Chief Personnel Inspection has been delayed due to COVID 19

4.) Facilities:

- * Station #1 Generator replacement has been completed.
- * Station #3 Emergency power – nothing new to report currently awaiting pricing.
- * Beginning needs assessment of facilities.

5.) Other:

* Director Hemmendinger, BC Andy Taylor and Chief Thompson had teleconferencing negotiations with BC Mark Dunn from Sonoma Fire District regarding Casino funding, which will be discussed later in the agenda.

* Vegetation management: BC Weihman took the new vegetation ordinance to the Cotati City Council last night where it was approved. This is a big step forward for our ability to set and enforce a consistent standard within the District. It will be read again in two weeks and then should go live in May. He is developing plans for how inspections and enforcement will be conducted this summer. We are coordinating with county partners to learn what their process and strategies will be.

* Part-time firefighters: BC Weihman is looking at a future need for part-time firefighters and so will be starting the hiring process. We have several SRJC interns as well as several part-time BLS candidates who are interested. We will work out a process in light of COVID restrictions.

Mr. Hemmendinger asked about the use of SSU for Covid-19 and how this might affect us. Chief Thompson commented that BC Andy Taylor has been involved in the communications on this plan with the County. There will approximately 500 beds, which will house people waiting on test results as well as those with positive tests. They are putting in security around this area and we will respond as needed.

B. Director Reports

No reports filed.

C. Committee Reports

a. Finance/Budget

Mr. Hemmendinger has reviewed the budget and we are on target for spending unless there are any large unbudgeted expenses that come up in the next three months. We appear to have just enough dry period funds for May through December as best he can tell. We will have to look at our spending in the first few months of the fiscal year in order to determine this further. Mrs. Bechtold has sent out budget requests to staff and they have until April 28 to return those. Mr. Hemmendinger would like the budget committee to meet in early May.

Mr. Proteau asked about the increase to our liability insurance and asked when this will hit us. Mr. Hemmendinger replied next fiscal year.

b. Negotiations

Mr. Gadoua commented the committee has made contact with the three employee groups and received feedback from everyone but the BCs, who are still reviewing their requests. The committee will report to the Board at the May meeting.

c. Equipment

No report filed.

d. Legislative

No report filed.

e. Chief's Evaluation

No report filed.

f. Long Range Planning

Mr. Hemmendinger noted the LAFCO meeting on April 1st was canceled but we will stay tuned to this.

D. Firefighters' Association Report

No report filed.

E. Firefighter's Union Report

Captain Jimmy Bernal commented the Union had their first negotiations meeting and thanked the committee for their time. The Union is looking forward to participating in future budget meetings. The group would like to be included in any casino discussions in the future and would be happy to assist in any way.

VI. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

A. Discussion on Board Committee Scope and Responsibilities

Mr. Hemmendinger commented that all committees provided reports except the

equipment committee, which Mr. Pacheco will provide next month. Item deferred to May.

B. Discussion of Casino Contract Renewal

Mr. Hemmendinger noted that he, Chief and BC Taylor met with BC Mark Dunn of Sonoma County Fire District (SCFD) and BC Mike Bates of Rohnert Park Fire. The County administrator asked that Sonoma County Fire work with us to come up with the new split for the next five-year contract, which starts next fiscal year. RAFD currently runs less than 1% of the call volume to the casino, so based on this, SCFD would like to reduce our current \$330K allocation by \$50K per fiscal year until year five when that amount is \$70K per year. Our representatives feel this is a reasonable approach. Mr. Pacheco asked if we will continue to receive \$70K after the five years and Mr. Hemmendinger replied that this would be decided after the next contract expires. Mrs. Cozad said Rohnert Park has been receiving a flat \$100K and asked what call volume they have run to the casino. Mr. Hemmendinger is not sure on that statistic, but believes it is in the 4-5% range. He said that our call volume is also used to support back-fill to Rohnert Park.

Ms. Alderman noted at the Rohnert Park City Council meeting last night, after three months of the casino being closed, they would lose funding to the city, so will there be any ramifications of this to us. Mr. Hemmendinger stated this was not discussed at the time of our meeting, even though we were in shelter in place. He suspects this may be related to the direct funding Rohnert Park gets from the casino but we should keep an eye on this.

Mr. Proteau asked why SCFDs totals go up and what changes are in the contract for them. Mr. Hemmendinger commented that likely nothing changes. Chief Thompson stated that some of the initial money in the first contract we received was to help us open up the browned out stations, which in turn helped the casino and Rohnert Park. Mr. Proteau also noted it was not the agreement of our taxpayers to support the casino but Mr. Hemmendinger commented back that we have mutual aid agreements with SCFD and Rohnert Park. The Board would like to see language in the contract, should things change in the future, where our services were needed much more, that funding would also increase. Mr. Hemmendinger commented that we have not seen a contract yet, but we could look at that language once the Board agrees to the numbers tonight. Mr. Hemmendinger will bring these points back to Mark Dunn, as they are all valid and important.

BC Mike Weihman asked if we could go back to this contract for an increase when we staff our engines with paramedics. This would be a benefit to SCFD in the south region, since there is no ALS resource on their engines. Chief Thompson does not want to tie this contract to that stipulation since the current climate does not support the paramedic service.

The Board agreed to the preliminary contract with Sonoma County Fire and the County with our general approval and stipulations to not go to zero funding and trying to hold the contract at \$100,000.

VII. NEW BUSINESS

A. Discussion on Property Liability Insurance Program

Mr. Hemmendinger stated we are currently insured through SDRMA. In the past year or two, they have settled one claim of ours for \$4.2 million and this claim is leading them to notice us that our yearly premiums will go from \$57K to \$96K. Our

self-insured deductible will go from \$1K to \$25K per incident. We have now provided SDRMA our intent to cancel, which is a legal step we need to take if we look to find other insurance. Mrs. Bechtold is requesting a quote from FAIRA in order to do our due diligence, though our history will likely affect the future quote. If we split our liability and workers compensation insurance, we may pay a slightly higher premium. We just received word from FAIRA today on what we need to provide to them to get a quote and will provide information to the Board at the May meeting. We would need to withdraw from SDRMA by June 1. This is a huge hit on our premium costs but also a large exposure to us if we have an accident.

Mrs. Cozad wondered with the pattern of low claims over the years, and this large settlement in one year, does this give us any leeway for reduced premiums. Mr. Hemmendinger commented that our coverage is part of a pool, and he agreed that he was shocked by their response but this may be a response in order to protect other members in the pool. There are increasing costs throughout the insurance market anyhow but he is not sure how much this relates to our premium increases. Mr. Proteau asked if we are looking at the other two liability coverage amounts being offered to lower our premiums. Mr. Hemmendinger and Mrs. Cozad both do not suggest reducing our coverage below \$ 5 million and possibly holding at the \$10M level.

B. Discussion and Direction on Crown Castle Lease Extension Offers

Mr. Hemmendinger commented on the discussion of the proposed Crown Castle lease extension offer, which he does not think we are interested in but it is up for discussion. Mr. Herman offered to go back and negotiate with Crown Capital for more money. He will work with Mr. Hemmendinger to have ore discussions and see what we can do. Option B might be a decent offer to start negotiations.

Discussion and Action on Amendment of Ordinance 2019-02, 2019 California Fire Code

Mrs. Bechtold explained the original ordinance was adopted in December, and then sent to the County of Sonoma for ratification. When they reviewed the ordinances written by Hans Henneberque, it was discovered there were two date errors that showed 2016 instead of 2019. These dates were fixed but the Board needs to make a motion to adopt the amended ordinance.

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

Motion Carried: Aye 7 No 0 Abstain 0 Absent 0

Roll Call:

Mr. Pacheco – aye
Mrs. Cozad – aye
Mr. Herman – aye
Mr. Proteau – aye
Mr. Hemmendinger – aye
Mr. Gadoua – aye
Mrs. Grube – aye

VIII. DIRECTION ON FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS

- Cotati Weed Abatement Adoption of Ordinance
- Closed Sessions for Negotiations

IV. ADJOURNMENT

With no further business to discuss, the Regular Board meeting was adjourned at 8:20 p.m.

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

Roll Call:

Mr. Pacheco – aye
Mrs. Cozad – aye
Mr. Herman – aye
Mr. Proteau – aye
Mr. Hemmendinger – aye
Mr. Gadoua – aye
Mrs. Grube – aye

Date Approved: 5/20/2020