

# Rancho Adobe Fire Protection District

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**MINUTES OF THE REGULAR BOARD MEETING  
DECEMBER 18, 2019 — 7:00 P.M.  
COTATI FIRE STATION - #1 EAST COTATI AVE.  
COTATI, CALIFORNIA**

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

President, Brian Proteau, called the Regular Board Meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. The agenda for this meeting was posted on December 13, 2019.

Roll Call:

Directors Present: Mark Hemmendinger, Brian Proteau, Michael Gadoua, Leslie Cozad, Carla Grube

Directors Absent: Nole Pacheco

Minutes Conducted by: Jennifer Bechtold

**II. BOARD REORGANIZATION**

A. Election of New Chairman and Vice-Chairman, and Passing of Gavel to New Chair

Chairman: Mark Hemmendinger

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

Motion Carried: Aye   5   No   0   Abstain   0   Absent   1  

Vice Chairman: Michael Gadoua

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

Motion Carried: Aye   5   No   0   Abstain   0   Absent   1  

B. Appointment of Board Secretary/Clerk

Board Secretary/Clerk: Jennifer Bechtold

C. Appointment of Fiscal Officer

Fiscal Officer: Mark Hemmendinger

D. Appointments to Committees and Charges to Meet Regularly:

1. Budget/Finance Committee: Chief, Fiscal Officer and 3 Directors  
*(meeting as necessary, but at least quarterly)*

Mr. Hemmendinger (Chair), Mr. Proteau and Mrs. Cozad

2. Negotiation Committee: 3 Directors *(meeting as necessary)*

Mr. Gadoua (Chair), Mrs. Cozad and Mrs. Grube

3. Equipment Committee: 2 Directors to serve on committee  
otherwise composed of staff members *(meeting as necessary, but at least once quarterly)*

Mr. Pacheco (Chair) and Mr. Proteau

4. Legislative Committee: Chief, Board Chairman *(meeting as necessary)*

Mr. Hemmendinger

5. Chief's Evaluation Committee: 3 Directors *(meeting as necessary)*

Mr. Hemmendinger (Chair), Mr. Proteau

6. Long Range Planning Committee: 3 Directors to serve on  
committee otherwise composed of staff and members of the public  
*(meeting as necessary)*

Mr. Hemmendinger (Chair), Mr. Pacheco and Mrs. Grube

- E. Confirm Calendar of Meetings for 2020: Third Wednesday of Every Month: January 15, February 19, March 18, April 15, May 20, June 17, July 15, August 19, September 16, October 21, November 18, December 16

The Board has confirmed all meeting dates.

**III. 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.

**IV. APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

- A. Regular Meeting of November 20, 2019

Motion moved by Mr. Proteau and seconded by Mr. Gadoua.  
Motion Carried: Aye   5   No   0   Abstain   0   Absent   1

**V. CONSENT CALENDAR**

A. Ratification of Claims and Journal Vouchers

Motion moved by Mrs. Cozad and seconded by Mrs. Grube.  
Motion Carried: Aye   5   No   0   Abstain   0   Absent   1  

**VI. ADMINISTRATIVE COMMUNICATIONS**

A. Chief's Report

Chief Thompson commented on the following items:

Training:

- 1.) We have six personnel currently in background for the full-time firefighter spots and expect this process to be completed by the beginning of February.
- 2.) Currently, there is a plan to run a two-week academy for the new firefighters.
- 3.) All part-time firefighters have completed their probation.
- 4.) An assessment process will take place in January for four qualified engineer candidates.
- 5.) Evaluations and development of the new Captains is ongoing.
- 6.) The BC assessment will be moving forward in January. Several personnel issues interrupted the process.
- 7.) Currently running an S-390 class and several of our personnel are involved.

Facilities:

- 1.) The generator at station 1 has been replaced. During installation, it was discovered the elevator is not hooked into the emergency power side of the transfer switch.

General Items:

- 1.) Mentoring of the new captains has been a significant time commitment, both through meetings and conversations
- 2.) Annual evaluations of personnel along with continued development of improved process.
- 3.) Various issues and concerns from the Union are being addressed.
- 4.) Since rains have begun, there has not been much progress with building in the district. The Fire Code was ratified by the district and the City of Cotati.
- 5.) The FY 2019/2020 replacement of turnouts has been received and they have been inventoried and are awaiting pickup by staff.
- 6.) Captain Caldwell will be leading the AFG grant cycle this year, which will be starting up soon.

B. Director Reports

Mr. Hemmendinger attended the December 4<sup>th</sup> LAFCO meeting where the consolidation of some of the west county fire districts into Sonoma County Fire District (SCFD) was on the agenda. The sphere of influence to extend SCFD to Russina River and Bodega Bay Districts have been approved and only Forestville Fire District has decided they are not ready to be part of the SCFD.

Lynda Hopkins questioned how reducing Bodega Bay Fire Districts current assessment of \$500, to SCFD's \$180 would allow SCFD dela with Bodega Bay's existing deficit. As it turned out, based upon a PD article thereafter, . the action leaves a \$2.5 million shortfall the County would have to make up. This may be a major issue in moving forward.

C. Committee Reports

a. Negotiations

No report filed.

b. Equipment

No report filed.

c. Legislative

No report filed.

d. Chief's Evaluation

No report filed. The committee will look at this in January.

e. Long Range Planning

Mr. Hemmendinger made an update to the Five-Year Plan. He reviewed his reserve number projections with the Board and noted it will take some time to get used to the new budget we are working with. The negative numbers for FY 20/21 and FY 21/22 are due to equipment purchases we will need to make down the road. The hope would be to pay cash instead of taking another loan out. The Board feels comfortable with the numbers being presented. Mr. Hemmendinger will get together with Mrs. Bechtold to get this posted onto our website.

D. Budget/Finance Report

Mr. Hemmendinger said the current budget is presented in the Board packet. There were no comments. Mrs. Bechtold reported that with Mr. Hemmendinger's assistance, we finally received our first quarter's payment of the casino funds, which helped fund payroll through the tax delivery. After speaking further with Summit Bank regarding a line of credit, the waiting period was too long. Mrs. Bechtold did contact the county and ask for some assistance until property taxes are received, and they were able to fund \$150K. We are still waiting on the property tax infusion.

E. Firefighters' Association Report

Engineer Porter commented the Christmas dinner was good this year and the kids Christmas party was also a success. The toy drive wrapping was held last Saturday and delivery is this Saturday.

F. Firefighter's Union Report

Engineer Porter stated the Union is working on updating the policy and procedures and they would like to continue working on the Five-Year Plan. Captain Bernal will contact the LRPC about a meeting date.

**VII. UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

A. Discussion on Sphere of Influence Report for LAFCO

Mr. Hemmendinger commented that we submitted the letter to LAFCO and it was

noted at the hearing on December 4<sup>th</sup>. There are also a number of requests for consolidations from other districts and LAFCO would like to look at the broader view to see what everyone is attempting to do prior to any further consolidations occurring. Most of the County Chiefs attended at the LAFCO meeting, and it did not seem to be a surprise we had turned in a request for a sphere of influence review.

## **VIII. NEW BUSINESS**

### **A. Presentation of FY 2018/2019 Fiscal Year Audit (Presentation by Blake Goranson, Goranson CPA)**

Item A was moved to follow the Approval of Minutes.

Mrs. Blake Goranson commented that Mrs. Bechtold does a great job in her capacity and overall the district had a great year. There was a large influx of cash this fiscal year, with the biggest change occurring with an increase in property taxes of \$400K and strike team revenue of \$115K. One of things we are seeing is the slow chipping away of net pension liability, but often times this number is reevaluated by CalPERS so there is not a big rush to pay it off. Mrs. Goranson also mentioned the district was able to put away \$440K in cash, in comparison to \$150K the prior fiscal year.

Mr. Hemmendinger asked about the CalPERS funding and if we were to pay that down, would we be reassessed. Mrs. Goranson said this can happen and the liability changes can be influenced with market increases or decreases. Mr. Hemmendinger asked if there are any pros or cons of paying this down and Mrs. Goranson said she does not see any pros unless we plan to change the structure of the district. The classic safety fund is the plan with the higher liability, not the PEPRA plan. The discount rate quoted of 7.5% is more of a vision from PERS.

Mr. Hemmendinger asked if Mrs. Goranson would recommend any tighter controls in any areas and she said they evaluate this each year. We go through all the processes and fraud controls and make recommendations if necessary. Each year Mrs. Bechtold implements each of those controls recommended by the auditors. If there were a larger issue, it would be brought to the Board level.

### **B. Review of Board of Directors Applications, Interviews and Possible Appointment of New Board Member**

Mr. Hemmendinger commented that we received just one Board member applicant, Brett Herman. Mrs. Bechtold will let the County know we will be interviewing this candidate and possibly appointing him in January.

### **C. Discussion on Addition of Signers to Summit State Bank Account**

Item has been tabled until next month.

### **D. Approval of Patelco Health Savings Account Funding for January – June 2020**

As part of negotiations, the Board authorizes the funding of H.S.A.s every six months. The total paid out will be in January packets.

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

Motion Carried: Aye   5   No   0   Abstain   0   Absent   1

*New Business Continued:*

E. Discussion on Parcel Tax Exemption Request

Exemption Request #1: APN # 137-030-015  
Approved

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

Motion Carried: Aye   5   No   0   Abstain   0   Absent   1  

F. Review and Discussion on Revised Rancho Adobe Fire Protection District Employee Handbook

Mrs. Bechtold reviewed with the Board the process the district has gone through to amend the two current handbooks, one part-time and one for full-time, into one employee handbook. An extensive amount of time has been spent with our labor attorneys, LCW, reviewing the handbook, comparing it to current policies and procedures as well as to the MOUs. Many changes have been made and we are now in a much better place with the current labor laws and practices. Chief Thompson has also taken time to review and make suggestions in the handbook. The final review is with the Board and if they see any areas they recommend changing, please let Mrs. Bechtold know. We may need a meet and confer with the Union or to pass any further changes by the attorneys. Our hope is to have this in place by February 1.

The Board will get suggestions on changes to Mrs. Bechtold by January 6 and we will review the handbook again at the January board meeting.

**IX. DIRECTION ON FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS**

There were no items for the future agenda items.

The Board thanked Mr. Proteau for his year of service as Board Chairman.

**X. ADJOURNMENT**

With no further business to discuss, the Regular Board meeting was adjourned at 8:06 p.m.

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

Motion Carried: Aye   5   No   0   Abstain   0   Absent   1  

Date Approved:   1/15/2020