

Rancho Adobe Fire Protection District

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**MINUTES OF THE REGULAR BOARD MEETING
JULY 17, 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 July 12, 2019.

Roll Call:

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

Directors Absent: Harold Griffith

Minutes Conducted by: Jennifer Bechtold

II. ORAL AND WRITTEN COMMUNICATIONS

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

Daniel Ikalani, a part-time firefighter and district resident spoke to the Board regarding the concerns the firefighters have about the long-range plan that was shared at the June Board meeting. Specifically the groups concerns are that the plan to begin hiring paramedics starting in January as opposed to already trained and ready EMT/firefighters.

B. Correspondence and/or Presentations

Mrs. Bechtold asked Board members to RSVP for the SCFDA Dinner on July 25th in Geyserville.

III. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

A. Regular Meeting of June 19, 2019

Motion moved by Mrs. Grube and seconded by Mr. Pacheco.
Motion Carried: Aye 5 No 0 Abstain 1 (Mr. Gadoua) Absent 1

IV. CONSENT CALENDAR

A. Ratification of Claims and Journal Vouchers

Motion moved by Mr. Gadoua and seconded by Mrs. Cozad.
Motion Carried: Aye 6 No 0 Abstain 0 Absent 1

V. ADMINISTRATIVE COMMUNICATIONS

A. Chief's Report

Chief Thompson reviewed the following report with Board members:

- 1.) PFD and RAFD are working together on live fire training June 14, 16, and 18 at a commercial structure in Petaluma.
- 2.) Image Trend training is ongoing, and the system went live on July 1st.
- 3.) Red cards are being issued as wildland fire training is completed.
- 4.) Training with Reach and Henry 1 has been completed. Training included landing multiple helicopters at several sites within the district as well as familiarization with aircraft capabilities and loading procedures.
- 5.) The new Captains are being trained for their placement at station 3 on August 1st.
- 6.) A badge pinning ceremony will be held on August 14th at the Penngrove station at 1500 hours. We will be pinning Engineer Foss, Captains Nappi, Rania, Torres and Gromala.
- 7.) Nine and 12-month probationary testing continues.
- 8.) We have five new interns from the JC who are working three of which are new to our program.
- 9.) The asphalt at station 2 has been completed. The price came in a bit higher due to some additional excavation and backfill.
- 10.) The new engineer's academy will begin on August 1st and run three days per week initially. We have eight personnel who have committed to this program.
- 11.) We are meeting with other county agency reps to have a unified effort on the new vegetation management ordinance. We are using part-time personnel to assist with inspections.
- 12.) BC Weihman is meeting this week with a group from the county to work on a local process for the juvenile fire starter program.
- 13.) We have a good pool of part-time firefighters and need to decide on a policy for the engineers so they can continue to have the opportunity take shifts and maintain proficiency.
- 14.) Chief Thompson and BC Weihman will be meeting with the Cotati City Manager on July 25th to discuss weed abatement and the PG&E power shutdowns.

B. Director Reports

Mr. Hemmendinger received a phone call from a director at Bodega Bay Fire about working together with them on sharing of services. Mr. Hemmendinger said he would be happy to speak with them further. He has asked for a copy of their three-year plan, though nothing has been received. He feels we need to continue to look at partnerships with other fire districts.

C. Committee Reports

a. Finance/Budget

Mr. Proteau commented that the budget committee met last week and went over the final budget for FY 19/20. One of the things we are still looking at is the list of capital improvements for the coming year. Chief Thompson feels that eliminating the need for these items isn't a continuing benefit for the district. We can do the things we have projected but we need to evaluate if we will do them all this year or stretch them out over a couple of years. Mr. Proteau commented that one of these items to look at closely is the generators and how this comes into play with PG&E's shutdowns. Captain Bernal commented that

Petaluma just installed a natural gas generator with a propane backup, so we will investigate that idea as well.

Mrs. Bechtold commented that we received our final FY 18/19 tax deposit today and an updated budget report has been placed on desks. We have a rollover of \$306,964 and will need to identify where we want to place these funds.

b. Negotiations

There was no report filed.

c. Equipment

There was no report filed.

d. Legislative

There was no report filed.

e. Chief's Evaluation

There was no report filed.

f. Long Range Planning

Mr. Hemmendinger reported that we have not had a meeting in the last thirty days, but will do so once we finalize the budget for this fiscal year. As we look three to five years out, we are seeing some potential for deficits with the hiring we are doing as well as equipment purchases. We will resume meeting sometime in August and the invitation to join this meeting has been extended to a rep from the part-time firefighters group.

D. Firefighters' Association Report

Engineer Brian Sweet commented that we held our pancake breakfast and parade this month. We won't have the total numbers on the breakfast until after our August Association meeting. It does look that we had a successful event. The parade had two medical incidents; one with a runaway tractor and the other was a flying horseshoe, which injured a child. We also had engine 9181 and the Indiana in the parade last Saturday for the Cotati Kids Day parade. Firefighters held a static display at the park for a few hours afterwards.

The next 5th Tuesday dinner will be held on July 30 at the Penngrove Park. Dinner is at 7:00 p.m. August 6th is the first of our pasta feeds to thank the community for their support of Measure W. We may need to change this date as it coincides with the National Night Out event.

E. Firefighter's Union Report

Captain Bernal commented on July 9-10 some members of our staff attended a cancer prevention and awareness class in Petaluma. This taught them how to reduce the risk of exposures to cancer. The Press Democrat also ran an article about exposures that happened during the local fires in 2017. Staff members haven't received the full reports yet but will see what they can learn. Captain Bernal also extended a welcome to new union members, Engineer Chris Foss, Captain's Eric Gromala, Ryan Rania, Rene Torres and Robert Nappi. They thanked the Board for making this happen. The Union asked Board to notice attendance tonight at the meeting how important the negotiations is to them and their families.

VI. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

A. Discussion of Sonoma State Funding

Mr. Gadoua is still connecting with Paul Gullixon and meetings are moving in the right direction.

B. Discussion on Appointing Legal Counsel for District

McMurchie Law Firm is located in Sacramento and they focus on public entities. They have been recommended to us through the CSDA. Mrs. Bechtold will find out what we need to do to establish a relationship with them. Once we know this and if we need to do anything, she will let Board know.

C. Discussion on Formation of Appeals Committee and Guidelines for New Parcel Tax and Approval of Appeal Form (Staff Report by Jennifer Bechtold)

Mrs. Bechtold reviewed the changes to the policy she had written based on feedback from last month's Board meeting. Board agreed to go with the language provided and would like to see information added stating the appeals process and how a citizen can appeal a decision once it's made. Ms. Bechtold will write this in and share it with the Board at the August meeting.

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

Motion Carried: Aye 6 No 0 Abstain 0 Absent 1

Public Hearing was opened at 7:37 p.m.

VII. PUBLIC HEARING

A. Presentation and Discussion on Final Budget FY 2019/2020 (1st Reading)

Mrs. Bechtold reviewed the first version of the final budget for fiscal year 2019/2020. The only changes from the adopted preliminary budget was with the wages and benefits, which have a 3% pay increase factored in across the board. This is only tentative. The budget committee has asked Chief Thompson to review the capital expenditures for the year to determine necessity.

Public Hearing was adjourned at 7:42 p.m.

VIII. NEW BUSINESS

A. Resolution R-2: Set Rate for Special Tax – 50075 at \$300.00 Per Parcel for FY 2019/2020 (Staff report by Chief Thompson and Jennifer Bechtold)

Mrs. Bechtold commented that in past years, the Board has just approved a line item on the agenda for the parcel tax. Since this year is the first year for our new parcel tax, after doing some research, she put together a staff report reviewing our larger hits to the budget as well as a new resolution capturing pertinent information. If this format is acceptable to the Board, Mrs. Bechtold will repeat this practice yearly.

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

Motion Carried: Aye 6 No 0 Abstain 0 Absent 1

Roll Call:

Mr. Pacheco – aye
Mrs. Cozad – aye
Mr. Griffith – absent
Mr. Proteau – aye
Mr. Hemmendinger – aye
Mr. Gadoua – aye
Mrs. Grube – aye

B. Resolution R-1: Resolution Adopting Prop IV Limit for FY 2019/2020

Mrs. Bechtold noted that she and Mr. Hemmendinger as well as Mr. Pacheco have done extensive research with the County to update how we calculate the Prop 4 limit. Because our new parcel tax is bringing in over \$2M in revenues, we now add that amount on to the Prop 4 limit given to us yearly by the County. This is what brought us to the \$6,653,076 total for FY 19/20.

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

Motion Carried: Aye 6 No 0 Abstain 0 Absent 1

Roll Call:

Mr. Pacheco – aye
Mrs. Cozad – aye
Mr. Griffith – absent
Mr. Proteau – aye
Mr. Hemmendinger – aye
Mr. Gadoua – aye
Mrs. Grube – aye

C. Consideration of Memorandum of Understanding between the District and the Battalion Chiefs for July 1, 2019 – June 30, 2020

Mr. Pacheco commented that the language in section 10, under letter H is confusing and he would like to see the language changed to 96 hours per year, maximum, not two cash-outs of 48 hours. He would like more clarification as to when this gets paid out as well. Mr. Pacheco does not feel is necessary for the Chief to approve the cash-out since it's already being approved in the MOU. Chief Thompson clarified that the only time he would not approve the time if it prevents operations from moving forward.

Mrs. Cozad also presented some clarifying language in Section 7; letter F regarding health savings accounts. In addition, Section G, the Board will uncouple the language with the IRS limits from the current amounts being paid. This now does not obligate the Board to follow the caps set by the IRS yearly.

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

Motion Carried: Aye 6 No 0 Abstain 0 Absent 1

D. Consideration of Employment Agreement between the District and the Administrative Manager for July 1, 2019 – June 30, 2020

There was no discussion.

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

Motion Carried: Aye 6 No 0 Abstain 0 Absent 1

E. Discussion on Letter of Authorization Execution for Cell Towers at Station 3

Mr. Proteau noted that we were approached by Crown Castle to approve them making modifications to the cell tower at station 3. They are still awaiting their construction documents, and until we review those, the Board is not comfortable authorizing this work. Until that happens, this item will remain on the agenda. Due to the construction they have proposed, we would like to ask them to negotiate on some improvements to the station such as purchasing the new generator. We will be reviewing the original buy-out contract.

F. Discussion on Approval of Funds for Future Capital Assets Projects

Mr. Proteau commented that public agencies could go through an informal bidding process once we prequalify certain vendors. We still have to follow public contract code and prevailing wages. There is no cost to the district and in fact, there might be cost savings from having to request multiple bids.

Mrs. Bechtold asked what the threshold is to approve funds for contracts. The current purchasing policy will be reviewed at the next Board meeting and updated. The thought is the BCs can approve up to \$5000 in purchases and Chief can approve between \$5001 up to \$25K in purchases. Over \$25K must go back to the Board for approval.

IX. DIRECTION ON FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS

- **Bring forward Capital Purchase Policy for Review.**

Closed Session was opened at 8:22 p.m.

X. CLOSED SESSION

- A. Pursuant to Government Code §54957.6, the Board will hold a closed session for the following reason: CONFERENCE WITH LABOR NEGOTIATORS. District Subcommittee: Carla Grube, Michael Gadoua and Leslie Cozad
Employee Organization: Paid Firefighters Union
Action Taken: None

Closed Session was adjourned at 9:59 p.m.

XI. ADJOURNMENT

With no further business to discuss, the Regular Board meeting was adjourned at 10:03 p.m.

Motion moved by Mr. Gadoua and seconded by Mrs. Grube
Motion Carried: Aye 6 No 0 Abstain 0 Absent 1

Date Approved: 8/21/19