

Rancho Adobe Fire Protection District

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**MINUTES OF THE REGULAR BOARD MEETING
AUGUST 20, 2025 — 7:00 P.M.
COTATI FIRE STATION - #1 EAST COTATI AVE.
COTATI, CALIFORNIA**

The Closed Session was opened at 6:00 p.m.

I. CLOSED SESSION

- A. Pursuant to Government Code §54957, the Board will hold a closed session for the following reason: PUBLIC EMPLOYEE PERFORMANCE EVALUATION
Title: Fire Chief
Action Taken: None

Closed Session was adjourned at 6:55 p.m.

II. 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 August 15, 2025.

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

Minutes Conducted by: Jennifer Bechtold

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

Items of correspondence included in Board packets were a PARS earnings statement for FY 24/25, annual reimbursement disclosure, a thank you letter for a financial donation to the District and LAFCO's approved budget for FY 25/26.

C. Presentation by Andrew Flynn of CalMuni Advisors on the Annual Pension Policy Compliance Report

Andrew Flynn presented the annual pension policy compliance report which included the following highlights:

- By next year, we will have further reduced our unfunded liability shortfall from 11% to 4%.
- 88.7% funded status for safety, 88.8% funded for the Miscellaneous plan and 90.6% funded for PEPR.
- Total 2024 funding overall is 88.8% and predicted in 2025 to be funded at 96.4%.

Mr. Peterson asked if PERS has changed any funding strategies to reflect the stabilized increases we have been seeing and Mr. Flynn replied that they are constantly rebalancing their portfolios.

IV. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

A. Regular Board Meeting of July 16, 2025

Motion moved by Mr. Herman to approve the minutes of July 16, 2025 and seconded by Mr. Peterson.

Motion Carried: Aye 7 No 0 Abstain 0 Absent 0

V. CONSENT CALENDAR

A. Ratification of Checks Issued

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

Motion Carried: Aye 7 No 0 Abstain 0 Absent 0

VI. ADMINISTRATIVE COMMUNICATIONS

A. Firefighter's Union Report

Captain Gromala said the Union is excited about the merge with SCFD.

B. Firefighters' Association Report

No report filed.

C. Chief's Report

Chief Veliquette reported the following information:

- 1.) District activities – finance committee meeting held, Kyle Heard one-year remembrance and plaque dedication, strike team deployments to Southern CA, wildland fire training, preparation and defensible space inspections, fire station, apparatus and safety clothing inspections, development review meetings with the City of Cotati, fire prevention shared services development, Sonoma State Town Hall meeting and Penngrove Town Hall meeting.
- 2.) Calls for Service – 106 EMS, 57 good intent, 16 service, 15 fire, 14 false alarm, 2 hazardous conditions, 1 special and 5 SSU.
- 3.) DSI – inspections and reinspection's for compliance, one chipper event has been held and the next event is September 15-18 for Railroad and Liberty Valley, crew work on Sonoma Mountain Rd.
- 4.) Operational Update: strike team deployments, several vehicle accidents with extrication, one medical aid with traumatic debriefing, training ongoing, thanks to everyone for attending Kyle's memorial dedication.
- 5.) Health Benefits - Kaiser preliminary increase is 8% (lock in in October), dental has a 7% increase and no vision changes until 2026.

D. Director Reports

No reports filed.

E. Committee Reports

a. Finance/Budget

Mr. Hemmendinger noted that the finance committee met and reviewed the final budget. FY 24/25 rollover funds of \$1.7M were due to property taxes and Measure H revenues exceeding budget as well as 5910 falling under budget because open medic positions were not filled.

b. Ad Hoc Capital Improvements

No report pending consolidation.

c. Ad Hoc Consolidation

Mr. Hemmendinger noted the committee met with SCFD a few weeks ago and they presented us with a revised financial outlook of a consolidated district. We discussed benefits of this to community which include ALS service, depth of administration, fleet and continuity of operations and fire prevention. A revised plan for not hiring Measure H positions as allocated as well as a credit for the mechanic position helped close the gap in funding. One concept being explored is leaving our Measure W parcel tax in place for RAFD residents. There are positives and negatives to this but there is a less strict financial policy. SCFD parcel tax would reduce the typical residential tax base but significantly adds to agricultural and commercial taxes. Counsel on both sides as well as LAFCO do not see any legal hurdles with this. The goal will be to complete consolidation by June 2026.

Mr. Proteau commented that the consensus of the entire committee favored keeping the RAFD parcel tax in place.

Chief Busch mentioned that combining our parcel tax and theirs creates a lot more efficiencies and we can bond around \$55M for infrastructure needs and look to lease or purchase a more centrally located mechanic shop. There will be \$6.1M of Measure H funding between the two agencies which will also help add a third person to engines and upgrade facilities.

VII. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

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

Chief Veliquette commented that he plans to meet with the City Manager in next couple weeks to continue work on extending the lease on the Cotati fire station.

B. Discussion on Bonding Options from Measure H Funding

No report. Mr. Proteau commented he found it interesting in Mr. Flynn's compliance report that he recommends taking loans for capital improvements instead of paying cash.

The Public Hearing was opened at: 7:48 p.m.

VIII. PUBLIC HEARING

A. Presentation and Discussion on Final Budget FY 2025/2026 (1st Reading)

Chief Veliquette reviewed the final budget for FY 25/26 and noted total operating revenues are \$10,330,536 and expenditures are \$9,758,779. The capital budget proposes spending \$711,300 which will leave a balance of \$1,866,238.

Chief Veliquette mentioned that our goals are to provide true figures and always maintain greater revenues over expenditures. Every budget request was met at or greater than requested – such as investing in our radios. Significant increases in FY 25/26 include the addition of a wellness program, workers compensation insurance increased \$80K, property and liability insurance is up \$16K, PERS up \$150K and health insurance increased \$58K. One other addition to the budget, if approved this evening, will be entering into a fire prevention services agreement with SCFD. The cost is \$200K per year.

Capital reserves are funded through carryover funds from previous fiscal years. We will carry over \$1.7M from FY 24/25 due to strike team revenues and higher than anticipated funds from Measure H. In FY 24/25, the District spent approximately \$1.1 million on a new Type 3 and rehab of Engine 9132. The budget committee recommends funding \$200K into the PERS reserve, \$410K into apparatus reserves, \$245K into Measure H contingency account, \$500K to building reserves and \$351,445 to Fire/EMS equipment replacement.

Mr. Proteau asked why 6501, Professional services increased to \$192K. Chief Veliquette replied this is for the fire prevention services shared contract.

The Public Hearing was adjourned at: 7:56 p.m.

IX. NEW BUSINESS

A. Discussion on Resolution R-3: A Concurrent Resolution of the Board of Directors of the Sonoma County Fire District and the Board of Directors of the Rancho Adobe Fire Protection District Constituting the Districts' Resolution of Application to the Local Agency Formation Commission of Sonoma County For Consolidation of the Rancho Adobe Fire Protection District into the Sonoma County Fire District

Chief Veliquette reviewed the concurrent resolution and noted there is just one change in this resolution which would keep the RAFD special parcel tax in place through consolidation. Next steps include a sphere of influence and municipal services review completed by LAFCO. From there, SCFD files an application with LAFCO that shows the service model, how consolidation is funded, etc.

Discussion ensued regarding next steps and consolidation benefits to our community.

Motion moved by Mr. Proteau to approve Resolution R-3 and seconded by Mr. Herman.

Motion Carried: Aye 7 No 0 Abstain 0 Absent 0

Roll Call:

Mr. Proteau – aye
Mr. Albin – aye
Mr. Peterson – aye
Mr. Gadoua – aye
Mr. Moretti – aye
Mr. Hemmendinger – aye
Mr. Herman – aye

B. Discussion and Approval of Contract for Fire Prevention Services with Sonoma County Fire District

Chief Veliquette commented we need more than a fire inspector which Measure H currently funds. Agreeing to a contract for fire prevention services provides a full bureau of services to the District at a cost of \$204K per year.

New Business Continued:

Motion moved by Mr. Gadoua to approve a contract for fire prevention services with SCFD in the amount of \$204,000 per year and seconded by Mr. Albini.

Motion Carried: Aye 7 No 0 Abstain 0 Absent 0

C. Discussion and Possible Approval of First Amendment to Measure H Funding Agreement Between the County of Sonoma and Rancho Adobe Fire Protection District

Chief Veliquette commented this amendment is needed to set the baseline personnel funding for FY 21/22 so that the oversight committee can see that we are not supplanting Measure H funds.

Motion moved by Mr. Peterson to approve the First Amendment to Measure H Funding Agreement and seconded by Mr. Herman.

Motion Carried: Aye 7 No 0 Abstain 0 Absent 0

Roll Call:

Mr. Proteau – aye

Mr. Albini – aye

Mr. Peterson – aye

Mr. Gadoua – aye

Mr. Moretti – aye

Mr. Hemmendinger – aye

Mr. Herman – aye

X. DIRECTION ON FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS

- Final Operating and Capital Budget for FY 25/26
- Vacancy Report on Open Positions

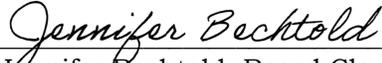
XI. ADJOURNMENT

With no further business to discuss, the Regular Board meeting was adjourned at 8:46 p.m.

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

Motion Carried: Aye 7 No 0 Abstain 0 Absent 0

Respectfully submitted,



Jennifer Bechtold, Board Clerk

Date Approved by Board: September 17, 2025