

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

PLACER HILLS FIRE PROTECTION DISTRICT
P.O. Box 350, Meadow Vista, CA 95722
(530) 878-0405 Fax (530) 878-0959
www.placerhillsfire.org



Alex Harvey
Peter Hills
Fred Lofrano
Russell McCray
Mark Wright

MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING: September 25, 2019

1. Call to order; Flag salute; Roll call:

Director Hills convened the regular meeting at 6:00 p.m.

Directors in attendance: Hills, Lofrano, McCray and Wright.

Directors absent: Director Harvey.

Staff in attendance: Chief Kushen, District Manager Lofrano, Fire Marshal Brothers and Battalion Chiefs Nelson and Slusher.

2. Agenda approval:

Director Hills allowed the public to comment on any item due to the scheduling of the closed sessions. Motion made and passed by all present to accept the posted agenda. (Wright/McCray).

3. Approval of the minutes: Motion made and passed by all present to approve the minutes of the regular meeting on August 28, 2019. (Wright/ Lofrano).

4. Public Comment: Mr. Oslund from the Winchester Firewise Community Committee, voiced his support for the proposed Hazard Abatement Ordinance and hoped that the County will follow suit with a similar ordinance. Ms. Walsh agreed with Mr. Oslund and praised the district for taking the initiative. Another gentleman was interested in the appeals process for the Measure A parcel tax. This was an action item later on in the agenda.

5. Correspondence (not covered in Agenda items below): Received a request from Mr. Steinhauer to waive the Measure "A" parcel tax on a small parcel.

7. Discussion and Action Items:

The open meeting was adjourned and the Board went into closed session with Jeff Small, Capitol Public Finance Group, and Paul Gant, District Counsel.

a. Closed Session:

- i. CONFERENCE WITH LEGAL COUNSEL pursuant to California Government Code § 54957.6(a) District negotiators: Directors Harvey and Lofrano;
- ii. CONFERENCE WITH REAL PROPERTY NEGOTIATOR pursuant to California Government Code § 54956.8;

The open meeting was reconvened at 7:21 p.m. Director Hills reported that the first item of closed session will be continued at the end of the open meeting. For the second item of closed session the Board gave direction to the real estate negotiator.

c. Approve the appeals process for Measure A:

The appeals process was similar to the one used by Newcastle Fire District. Guidelines will be developed as they arise. Motion made and passed by all present to approve the appeals process and application. (Wright/Lofrano). Director Harvey was absent. The policy and application will be sent to Mr. Steinhauer.

6. Information items:

a. *Fire Chief Kushen*

- There was a red flag warning for the past 3 days. Chief Kushen had several conference calls with Placer County OES regarding the public safety power shut downs by PG&E. Foresthill had its power shut off but was re-energized this afternoon. Public relief centers were open in Auburn and Loomis.
- One of our seasonal employees resigned. This position was filled by an intern.
- Staff is working on a proposal for ballistic gear for the EMS ambulance grant. The 22 SCBAs from the regional Assistance to Firefighters Grant will be in service at the end of the year. The grant for the live fire burn simulator has been extended to the end of the year. We still have not heard about the FEMA Fire Prevention and Safety grant for the Fire Marshal's position. The Finance committee is recommending a 90-day extension for this position with potentially 74% of the costs being covered by fire code inspection fees.
- Staff is collecting the data for our ISO evaluation on October 21, 2019.
- There is a new fuels project in the footprint of the Applegate fire. The funding has run out for the Winchester shaded fuel break.
- Chief Kushen met with Supervisor Gustafson and discussed the funding needs of the fire districts.
- Placer County hosted a community town hall meeting to address the home insurance crisis. Assembly Bill 1816 will assist with insurance issues.
- Engineer Havard hopes to have the new district website live by the next Board meeting.

Acting Battalion Chief Slusher

- We ran 124 incidents over the past month with slightly more calls in Station 86's zone. We had several engines assisting with a commercial fire at the Sears store in Auburn.
- We should receive maximum points for staff training in the ISO evaluation. Acting Battalion Chief Slusher thanked the Board for approving the purchase of the swift water technical rescue equipment.

Fire Marshal Brothers

- Placer County is appreciative that we have taken over the fire code safety inspections as they are short-staffed and unable to conduct the inspections in a timely manner.
- Busy with defensible space inspections.

7. Discussion and Action Items:

b. *Approve the first reading of Ordinance 2019-03 Hazardous Vegetation Abatement:*

Fire Marshal Brothers made the recommended changes from the prior Board meeting. There was a lengthy discussion on the proposed ordinance and several recommended language changes. Motion made and passed by 3 votes to 1 to approve the first reading of Ordinance 2019-03 with the recommended changes. (Lofrano/Wright). Director McCray voted against the motion as he would prefer to see a clean copy of all the proposed changes. Director Harvey was absent.

d. Approve staff's request to surplus the breathing air compressor:

The compressor is not compatible with the new SCBA bottles. Motion made and passed by all present to approve the surplus of the compressor when it is no longer needed. (Lofrano/Wright). Director Harvey was absent.

e. Adopt the Final Budget for Fiscal Year 2019-2020:

Director Hills summarized the Finance Committee recommendations that were presented in the memos. Anticipated property tax revenues have been increased from 4% to 5% upon the recommendation of the County. The proposed final budget has a carryover of \$359,000 which is the first time in many years that there has not been deficit spending. The Committee recommended holding off on the remodel of the existing offices and weight room at Station 84. Proposed remodel costs were more than anticipated. The Committee recommended using the \$150,000 dedicated for future facility improvements for tenant and site improvements. The Finance Committee requested staff to present options at the Board meeting for the Fire Marshal position including a 90-day interim agreement as there had been no award notification from FEMA regarding the grant funding. There could still be several rounds of FEMA funding to be awarded. The grant funding ends on September 27, 2019. Board representatives will meet with Foresthill and Newcastle to discuss the funding of the Fire Marshal's position. Chief Kushen presented the staff report by Fire Marshal Brothers and advocated for the temporary funding for the position. Director Wright moved to continue the Fire Marshal's position for 90 days which was seconded by Director Lofrano. Discussion followed on the current salary of \$60,000 plus benefits for the position compared to the proposed salary of \$90,000 plus benefits in the staff report. Director Hills did not realize that there was an adjustment to the salary and benefit package and thought that the 90-day extension would be at the existing salary package. Director Wright also did not realize there was an adjustment in the salary. The Fire Marshal declined to continue at the current pay and benefits. Director McCray moved to amend the motion to extend the Fire Marshal for 30 days at the proposed salary package presented in the staff report. Director Lofrano seconded the motion stating that the 30 days would at least give us the answer on whether we are awarded the grant. The Board voted on the second motion which did not pass. Director McCray voted in favor and Directors Hills, Lofrano and Wright voted against. Director Harvey was absent. Director Wright then amended his original motion to extend the Fire Marshal position for 90 days with an annual salary of \$75,000 plus benefits. Director Lofrano seconded the amended motion which passed 3 votes to 1. Director Hills opposed the motion. Director Harvey was absent. Motion made and passed by all present to adopt the Final Budget for Fiscal Year 2019-2020 as presented. (Lofrano/Wright).

f. Approve the salary and benefit adjustments for the Fire Chief, District Manager and unrepresented employees:

Motion made and passed to approve the salary and benefit adjustments recommended by the Finance Committee for the Fire Chief, District Manager and unrepresented employees. (McCray/Wright). Director Lofrano abstained and Director Harvey was absent.

g. Approve the Appropriations (Gann) Limit for FY 2019-2020:

Motion made and passed by all present to approve the Appropriations Limit calculated by Placer County at \$4,041,624.61 for Fiscal Year 2019-2020. (Lofrano/Wright). Director Harvey was absent.

h. Budget update and approval of expenses:

Staff reported that the medical equipment and supplies account is over due to the annual service of the defibrillators. CalPERS costs are over due to the payment of the annual unfunded liability. Wages slightly over with the strike team deployment. All other accounts are appropriate. Motion made and passed by all present to accept the budget update and the expenses of \$153,511.94 for the period from August 28 through September 20, 2019. (Lofrano/Wright). Director Harvey was absent.

The open meeting was adjourned and the Board went back into closed session.

a. Closed Session:

- i. CONFERENCE WITH LEGAL COUNSEL pursuant to California Government Code § 54957.6(a) District negotiators: Directors Harvey and Lofrano;*

The Board came out of closed session at 10:30 pm. Director Hills reported that the negotiating team was given direction.

8. Directors' comments:

- a. Report on activities of interest to the District which the Director is engaged in or is considering. No action will be taken on these items at this meeting.*
- b. Request items for inclusion in subsequent meetings or request a special meeting:*
- c. Reminder of next Board meeting: Regular meeting October 23, 2019 at 6 pm.*

9. Adjournment:

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 10:39 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by: 
Gillian Lofrano, Board Secretary

Approved by: 