

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

PLACER HILLS FIRE PROTECTION DISTRICT
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www.placerhillsfire.org



Alex Harvey
Peter Hills
Fred Lofrano
Russell McCray
Mark Wright

MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING: October 25, 2023

17020 Placer Hills Rd. Suite 2A, Meadow Vista and by a Zoom teleconference.

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

President Hills convened the regular meeting at 6:02 p.m.

Directors in attendance: Harvey, Hills, McCray and Wright. Director Lofrano joined by Zoom at 6:05 p.m.

Directors absent: None.

Staff in attendance: Fire Chief Ian Gow, Fire Marshal D'Ambrogi, District Manager Lofrano and Battalion Chiefs Nelson and Slusher.

2. Agenda approval:

Director Wright moved to approve the agenda. Director McCray seconded the motion which passed 4 to 0.

3. Approval of the minutes:

Director McCray amended the August 23 minutes to reflect that he was the one who seconded the motion to approve the minutes. Director Wright moved to approve the amended minutes. Director Harvey seconded the motion which passed 4 to 0.

Motion made and passed 4 to 0 to approve the minutes of the canceled meeting on September 27, 2023. (Wright/Harvey).

4. Public Comment: Wayne Nader introduced himself to the Board. He is a former Board member of Placer Consolidated Fire District and is running for the District 5 Supervisor.

Director Harvey, Chair Kahrl and Chair Hotaling met with Supervisor Jones. She is suggesting setting aside a line item in the budget of 10% of 1% of the ad valorem taxes for fire. They discussed the reorganization of Placer Hills and Newcastle and the LAFCO Municipal Services Review (MSR). The Supervisors have no control over the CalFire contract.

President Hills, Chief Gow, Fire Marshal D'Ambrogi and Battalion Chief Slusher met with the consultant regarding the MSR. The draft should be ready in December or January.

Chief Gow had a productive conversation with the consultant subsequently and conveyed his desires for the outcome of the report.

5. Correspondence (not covered in Agenda items below):

- i. Chief Gow sent a letter in support of Placer County's FFA Broadband Grant application.
- ii. Received 3 dates in November and December for Chief Gow and 2 Board members to meet with Congressman Kiley.
- iii. Received Grand Jury request for copies of the Board members' ethics training and 700 conflict of interest forms.
- iv. Received the CHP report of the accident between the water tender and a private car. The tender's lug nut flattened the car's tire.

6. Information Items:

a. Fire Chief Gow's Report

- i. Penryn is in the middle of MOU negotiations. Staff are looking at specifications for a new Type 3 engine. One of Penryn's command cars was made surplus.
- ii. Newcastle currently has no applicants for the vacant Board position. Newcastle does not qualify for the USDA grant for equipment as their median household income is too high. Staff will be requesting to purchase a fuel vault for approximately \$20,000 and SCBAs for \$80,000 at the next Board meeting. Newcastle has a different manufacture of SCBAs which is a safety issue when using staffing through the JOA.
- iii. Placer Hills union met with Supervisor Jones. Chief Gow met with Bridget Powers who is Supervisor Gustafson's Director. Chief Gow has an upcoming video conference with Supervisor Gustafson to discuss the reorganization.
- iv. There were 3 applicants for the vacant Engineer's position. Chief Gow still has to interview the third applicant.
- v. It is going to become increasingly problematic to hire and retain paramedics. Sierra College will offer a paramedic program next year. Chief Williams of Rocklin is going to hire paramedics and then put them through the fire academy.
- vi. Placer Hills' MOU negotiations are starting tomorrow.
- vii. Auburn City has closed one of its fire stations. The Joint Operations Agreement with Auburn City is almost up and running.
- viii. Administrative Assistant Nicole Paskey gave in her notice and is currently onboarding Rhiannon Fairchild.
- ix. Director Harvey reported that Stan MacDonald, a former Board member of Placer Hills had passed away at 91 years old.

b. Fire Marshal D'Ambrogi's report

- i. Inspections conducted: 5 sets of plans, 5 single family dwellings (SFD) finals, 4 rough sprinkler systems and 10 propane gas line inspections.
- ii. Dealing with 2 setbacks and 2 variance applications.
- iii. Company inspections led by Chief Williamson are going well. The state mandated report will be ready by the end of the year.
- iv. Placer County counsel has some issues with the resolutions requesting an increase in the mitigation fees and the 5-year Development Impact report prepared for Penryn. Chief D'Ambrogi is meeting with the counsel next week.
- v. The County has identified 3 commercial parcels in Applegate that could be rezoned for affordable housing (not sustainable housing) allowing 20 to 30 units per acre. A modified EIR has been completed by May 11, 2024. There were concerns about parking for this project.

c. Battalion Chief Nelson

- i. Engine 86 is out of service with a leak.

- ii. Chief Nelson publically recognized Captain Lippold for doing an excellent job with the fleet.

Battalion Chief Slusher

- i. There were 45 vegetation fires last year, 25 this year. 101 calls for September and 1230 calls year to date. Gave mutual aid 21 times (mainly to the east) and received it 11 times.
- ii. Working on a CAD to CAD solution for the 5 dispatch centers in Placer County to reduce lag time for responding resources.
- iii. \$60,000 was budgeted last year and this year to install Tablet Command, a mobile incident management program. Both Newcastle and Penryn have also budgeted funding for this program.

d. Placer Hills Firefighters Association report: No report.

e. Local 3800: Chief Slusher reported that the union met with Supervisor Jones to advocate for additional funding.

f. Board Committee reports:

- i. Finance Committee: The Final Budget was an action item on the agenda.
- ii. Long Range Committee: Director Lofrano reported that the committee met with the Applegate Civic Center representatives. The library building is in good condition and could potentially be used for housing the crews if we move forward with rebuilding Station 84. A new building could be added to the back of Station 85 to expand the mechanic's facilities and a container could be moved to the side for storage.
- iii. Ad hoc Committee for reorganizations: President Hills is continuously updating the financial data for the LAFCO application.

7. Discussion and Action Items:

a. Adopt Resolution No. 2023-07 approving the Final Budget for Fiscal Year 2023-2024:

There were minor changes from the preliminary budget. There is a deficit of \$118,000 with putting \$375,000 into depreciation. Director Wright moved to adopt Resolution No. 2023-07 approving the Final Budget for Fiscal Year 2023-2024. Director McCray seconded the motion that passed unanimously.

b. Reject the claim against the Fire District for property damages submitted by Ms. Berg of Meadow Vista:

The automatic gate closed on the engine as it was exiting the property. This has happened previously on a prior call for service. The District's insurance has already rejected the claim. Director Wright moved to reject the claim made by Ms. Berg. Director Harvey seconded the motion that passed unanimously.

c. Approve the Appropriations (GANN) Limit of \$5,225,043.44 for Fiscal Year 2023 – 2024 prepared by the Placer County Auditor Controller:

Director Wright moved to approve the Appropriations Limit as prepared by the Placer County Auditor Controller. Director Harvey seconded the motion that passed unanimously.

d. Update on the hiring process for the District Manager's position:

The initial interviews were conducted by Chief D'Ambrogi, Director Mahoney from Penryn and Director Heisterkamp from Newcastle. 3 applicants moved forward to the final interviews conducted by Chief Gow and District Manager Lofrano. Directors Hills and McCray and Chief Slusher sat in on the final interviews. Michelle Armstrong accepted a conditional offer yesterday.

e. County request to move all in-house financial transactions and payroll into the County's system:

The District Manager has a meeting with the County to discuss the process for the transition at the end of this year.

f. Approve the Budget update and monthly expenses:

Motion made and passed unanimously to approve the budget update and the expenses of \$565,929.90. (McCray/Wright).

President Hills recused himself from the first Closed Session item regarding the Applegate Civic Center properties.

The open meeting was adjourned at 7:21 pm and the Board went into Closed Session.

g. Closed Sessions

- i. Pursuant to California Government Code § 54956.8 **CONFERENCE WITH REAL PROPERTY NEGOTIATORS:** Directors Lofrano and McCray regarding the Applegate Civic Center properties
- ii. **CONFERENCE WITH LEGAL COUNSEL – ANTICIPATED LITIGATION** Pursuant to Government Code Section 54956.9(d)(2): Significant exposure to litigation. (One potential case – receipt of a tort claim for damages pursuant to Government Code section 810, et seq.)

The open meeting was reconvened at 7:41 pm.

Director Harvey reported that for item 1 of closed session, the Board gave direction to the Ad Hoc Committee for the Applegate Civic Center Club properties.

For item 2 of closed session, President Hills reported that the Board voted unanimously passing a resolution to reject the claim. Director Wright moved to adopt the Resolution from closed session. Director McCray seconded the motion that passed unanimously.

Michael Murray, who is running for the Supervisor position for District 3, was in the audience.

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.

Director Wright thanked everyone for the sympathy flowers. He discussed the Placer County contract for fire services with Supervisor Jones.

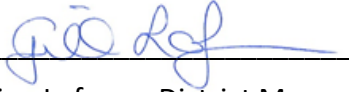
b. *Request items for inclusion in subsequent meetings or request a special meeting:*

c. *Reminder of next Board meeting(s): November 22, 2023.*

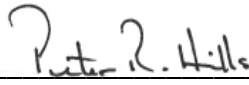
9. Adjournment:

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 8:00 pm.

Respectfully submitted by:



Gillian Lofrano, District Manager

Approved by: 

Peter Hills, President