

Rancho Adobe Fire Protection District

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**MINUTES OF THE REGULAR BOARD MEETING
AUGUST 16, 2023 — 7:00 P.M.
COTATI FIRE STATION - #1 EAST COTATI AVE.
COTATI, CALIFORNIA**

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

Vice-President Mark Hemmendinger, called the Regular Board Meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. The agenda for this meeting was posted on August 11, 2023.

Directors Present: Mark Hemmendinger, Michael Gadoua, Bob Moretti, Sage Howell, Ray Peterson

Directors Absent: Bret Herman, Brian Proteau

Minutes Conducted by: Jennifer Bechtold

The Pledge of Allegiance was said.

II. 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.

III. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

A. Regular Meeting of July 19, 2023

Motion moved by Mr. Howell to approve the minutes of July 19, 2023, and seconded by Mr. Gadoua.

Motion Carried: Aye 4 No 0 Abstain 1 (Mr. Peterson) Absent 2

IV. CONSENT CALENDAR

A. Ratification of Checks Issued

Motion moved by Mr. Moretti to approve the consent calendar and seconded by Mr. Gadoua.

Motion Carried: Aye 5 No 0 Abstain 0 Absent 2

V. **ADMINISTRATIVE COMMUNICATIONS**

A. Firefighter's Union Report

There was no report.

B. Firefighters' Association Report

Firefighter Matt Achen commented the Association approved funds to assist the District with the station remodel project. The first request has been received for the purchase of kitchen appliances. The Board thanked the Association for their donation.

C. Chief's Report

Chief Veliquette reported on the following items:

- 1.) 3 new part-time firefighters will be starting their employment tomorrow.
- 2.) 1 FF/P resigned to take a job with Sonoma Valley Fire.
- 3.) 1 FF/EMT is going through pre-employment testing.
- 4.) Major focus of District has been on facilities and recruitment.
- 5.) Penngrove remodel – flooring and bathroom plumbing will begin next week.
- 6.) Weed inspections are being completed by light duty personnel.
- 7.) The District participated in National Night Out, which was held at La Plaza Park.
- 8.) Calls – EMS 102, good intent – 64, fire – 16, false alarms – 16, Service – 14, hazardous conditions – 6.

Mr. Moretti asked if there was anything new with SSU. Chief Veliquette replied he met with the police chief as he does each month. Students are moving this week, and the census shows less students than last year will be living on campus. Student enrollment is about the same as last year. The chiefs also discussed some of the outreach requests from last year, which includes talking to students about dorms and better signage. They have made a better engagement with students this year. SSU is currently undergoing a \$34 million dollar infrastructure upgrade.

D. Director Reports

Mr. Peterson noted that Assemblyman Connolly is the chair of a special committee on wildfire prevention and Mr. Peterson has reached out to try and speak with him. Senator McGuire recently revealed that grant money was given to multiple fire districts in Northern California, including Sonoma County Fire District. Mr. Moretti asked how agencies find out about this money and Mr. Peterson replied that he would be looking into this.

E. Committee Reports

a. Finance/Budget

Mr. Hemmendinger said there is not much to report on the budget as we are only one month into the new fiscal year.

b. Long Range Planning

No report filed.

VI. **UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

A. Discussion on Proposed Sales Tax

Chief Veliquette said we have hit a bit of a lull in the process. Required signatures have been gathered (and 1% over the requirement) and all have been verified by the

contractors assisting. The signature sheets have been delivered to the Registrar of Voters and they have 30 days to validate signatures (September 7). Once this process is completed, the measure takes hold, and the campaign will begin after the first of the year. The FSWG and Fire Chiefs Association will be engaging stakeholders such as City Managers, City Councils, etc. so they can bring all elected officials up to date on the measure.

The Public Hearing was opened at 7:16 p.m.

VII. PUBLIC HEARING

A. Presentation and Discussion on Final Budget FY 2023/2024 (1st Reading)

Mr. Hemmendinger commented that since the last review of the budget, there have been some changes to both revenues and expenditures. Our last-minute revenue projections were increased to 3.5%, which is still conservative, based on a public report showing increases in home values from the Assessor's office.

Closed Public Hearing on the budget at 7:21 p.m.

Chief Veliquette reviewed a spreadsheet he created to show ending cash balances at 6/30 alongside revenues and expenditures. We had a carryover of \$970K at the end of FY 22/23. In our current fiscal year, expenditures are projected at \$7,739,497 and we need to have half of this set aside for the first six months of the fiscal year. We have all but \$86K so this will be debited from the carryover. We will also need \$136,562 to finish up the station remodel, which leaves the carryover at \$884,450. Chief Veliquette suggested the following distributions of the carryover fund; add \$130K for 9132 chassis, add \$20K for station 2 fencing, \$10K for soft construction costs, pay PERS underfunded minimum payment of \$100K and set aside \$450K for the replacement of 9160 in FY 24/25. One more suggestion for this fiscal year is to pay down the PERS UAL to the amount of \$37,888.16.

Mr. Hemmendinger would like to defer any decisions on the rollover funds distribution until next month. He also mentioned that Board policies and procedures state we should attempt to not have any negative CalPERS unfunded liability and need to set aside at least half of operational reserves at beginning of the fiscal year. Mr. Hemmendinger suggested we might want to consider putting the \$450K into PERS since that interest rate is 7.5%, and then taking a loan for 9160 at a lower interest rate. Mr. Peterson suggested we need to consider being more conservative with our cash until we know more about the tax measure. We would not make a payment to PERS until the end of the fiscal year. Chief Veliquette suggested we identify CalPERS funds in an accrued, restricted account.

Opened public hearing on Fee Ordinance at 7:40 p.m.

B. Ordinance 2023-01: Fee Schedule (1st Reading)

The public hearing is to discuss the revision of our fee schedule, which has not been revised since 2013, and no CPI was ever built in. The new ordinance has been reviewed by the District's legal counsel and only a couple verbiage changes were recommended. The new ordinance also has a CPI built into it which would occur July 1 of each year. The fee schedule is consistent with fees of other fire districts and of our current pay schedule. This allows us to get full cost recovery of the services we offer to our citizens, contractors, etc. Further, the District can charge for emergency services provided. Many of the fire prevention fees are only charged within the City of Cotati as the County of Sonoma provides fire marshal services to the unincorporated areas of the District.

Chief Veliquette noted that BC Taylor ran a cross-reference of fees charged by the City of Petaluma, Santa Rosa and Sonoma County Fire District and compared them to our fees.

The Public Hearing for Ordinance 2023-01 was closed at 7:56 p.m.

VIII. NEW BUSINESS

A. Discussion and Approval of Change Orders for Station 2 Remodel

Chief Veliquette noted this is a request for prime change order #3. This change order is requested in the amount of \$39,326.89 which revises the total contract amount to \$1,150,982.99. Much of this change order is for bringing full walls to a certain height, electrical work, and outlets to meet code, ADA revisions to the front parking lot and entrance and improvement to the kitchen island surface.

Motion moved by Mr. Gadoua to approve the change orders for Station 2's remodel and seconded by Mr. Howell.

Motion Carried: Aye 5 No 0 Abstain 0 Absent 2

IX. DIRECTION ON FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS

- Adoption of Final Budget for FY 23/24 and rollover funds
- Adoption of Ordinance 2023-01: Fee Schedule

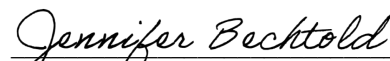
X. ADJOURNMENT

With no further business to discuss, the Regular Board meeting was adjourned at 8:10 p.m.

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

Motion Carried: Aye 5 No 0 Abstain 0 Absent 2

Respectfully submitted,



Jennifer Bechtold, Board Clerk

Date Approved by Board: September 20, 2023