



# NORTHERN SONOMA COUNTY FIRE PROTECTION DISTRICT

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## MINUTES OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS' MEETING SEPTEMBER 17, 2020 AT 7:00 PM

This meeting was held via teleconference, pursuant to the Governor of California's Executive Order N-29-20 dated March 17, 2020.

### 1. OPENING GREETING:

- a. Meeting Called to Order by President Rob Stewart at 7:03 PM
- b. Pledge of Allegiance: There was no group pledge at this meeting.
- c. Roll Call: Directors Rob Stewart, Fred Peterson, Scott Newman and Paul Bernier (joined late) were participating. Fire Chief Marshall Turbeville, Administrative Manager Anneke Turbeville and District Treasurer Michael Pigoni were also participating.
- d. Approval of the Agenda: **A motion was made and seconded (Newman/Peterson) to approve the agenda. All ayes.**

2. **PUBLIC DISCUSSION:** Larry Heiges noted that his community was dismayed with the results of Measure K and wants to create a special tax area to supplement annual services. The special tax area has approximately 100 parcels and 2,000 acres. This would sunset if/when there is a district-wide tax. Ryan Petersen wondered why the homeowner's association does not make fees to cover the same services; Heiges explained that homeowners associations do not have the authority to tax. Both Scott Newman and Fred Peterson expressed support for the effort.

3. **MINUTES:** Scott Newman noted that the lawyer's objective (not expectation) is to retrieve 100% of the costs of the Kincade Fire. **A motion was made and seconded (Okaya/Newman) to approve the September 30, 2020 meeting minutes. All ayes.** Peterson

4. **FINANCIAL REPORT:** Rob Stewart reviewed the Financial Summary. Scott Newman questioned the need for a separate bank for payroll. He wondered if we could do away with the account at Exchange Bank and consolidate. Michael Pigoni suggested talking to the payroll company to see if they can work with Summit Bank and discussing it with the auditor.

5. **CONSENT CALENDAR:** The current bills were discussed. The Board wondered at the large month. Anneke Turbeville noted that the largest costs were related to The Center and Cloverdale Fire and explained how state reimbursement works. Chief Turbeville reported that there will be an ad hoc meeting about the 5% fee for the administration costs of Cloverdale Fire. The Walbridge Fire was a Cal Fire fire so there will be no cost share. **A motion was made and seconded (Peterson/Newman) to pay the bills. All ayes.**

6. **CHIEF'S REPORT:** Chief Marshall Turbeville reported 81 calls during August, many related to lightning. We currently have an engine assigned to a fire near Oroville. Much of the money owed to us is from Cal OES and Assistance by Hire. Sasha of Audubon Canyon, along with wildland fire trained fuels crew members and Fire Forward crew members, formed a wildland fire crew. We are currently



establishing a new rate and new position for wildland fire crew members as part of an on-call fire crew. The benefits to the District include training personnel for burning in winter months.

Chief Turbeville would like to move forward with seasonal firefighter hiring for the month of October. The seasonal firefighters can support the fuels crew and fire prevention efforts.

Fred Peterson reported that efforts to communicate with COPE were well received and appreciated. Scott Newman and Chief Turbeville spent 3 hours touring Walbridge, which was an eye-opening experience of the conditions we are working with, including the unmaintained roads and the expectations for the firefighters. He suggested holding a meeting about what makes an ideal board member- what are the Board's strengths, what can Board members do better, and how can the Board support Marshall Turbeville better. Fred Peterson noted this will need to be a public meeting. He suggested holding the meeting in January, when they can (hopefully) meet in person.

7. **PRESIDENT'S REPORT:** No report.

8. **GEYSERVILLE FIREFIGHTER EMPLOYEE ASSOCIATION REPORT:** No report.

9. **GEYSERVILLE VOLUNTEER FIREFIGHTERS' ASSOCIATION REPORT:** No report.

10. **CORRESPONDENCE:** Rob Stewart reported that the Board received a letter this week that will be discussed in New Business. The letter is from a district resident who took offense with a social media posting.

**11. OLD BUSINESS:**

- a. Consolidation and Annexation: There will be a LAFCO meeting on the first Tuesday of the month to discuss sphere of influence.
- b. Alexander Valley Fire Station: The Geyserville MAC (Municipal Advisory Committee) is going to try to find funding for this station. Part of the plan is to create resiliency centers for use during power outages and emergencies.
- c. (Proposed) Chalk Hill Fire Station: Rob Stewart did not have an update. Scott Newman is working on options.
- d. 457 Administration Fees and Life Insurance Policy: The current MOU allows for the employees to choose to apply unused health insurance funds toward life insurance. **A motion was made and seconded (Peterson/Newman) to provide \$90,000 life insurance policy for the three employees covered under the MOU. All ayes**
- e. Fuel Reduction Fee Schedule: No updates.
- f. Kincade Fire Losses: Scott Newman reported that he had a conversation with the attorney today. The attorney is prepared to have a conversation with the fire chief to brainstorm losses from the Kincade Fire. He will be able to put value on apparatus used and other expenses to the District. Scott Newman and Rob Stewart will be part of an ad hoc committee for this project.

**12. NEW BUSINESS:**

- a. 2020-2021 Final Budget: The proposed final budget was presented and reviewed. Scott Newman wondered about the revenue account 46029; Chief Turbeville gave the following breakdown: \$275,000 from County (no funding secured for this after July 1, 2021), 2 grants (Lake Sonoma Watershed and Roadside Clearance), and defensible space inspections reimbursements. This account will be much higher once strike team reimbursements come

in. **A motion was made and seconded (Bernier/Newman) to approve the 2020-2021 Final Budget. All ayes.**

- b. **FDAC EBA Renewal: A motion was made and seconded (Peterson/Newman) to maintain the current benefit package for 2021. All ayes.**
- c. Review of letter to Chief Jenkins regarding employee: The letter from the public noted in Correspondence refers to comments made by a firefighter during the Walbridge Fire. Rob Stewart introduced a draft letter to Chief Jenkins (the firefighter's employer) in response to this public complaint. The Board agreed with the gist of the letter and hopes for a public apology; the comments made on social media are not part of the image the Board wants. It was noted that our social media policy needs to forbid social media comments such as the ones made by this firefighter. The Board wants Rob Stewart's letter amended to ask the employer (Cloverdale Fire) to look further into this allegation and make it clear that the Board does not support this firefighter's opinion. Rob Stewart will amend the letter accordingly. **A motion was made and seconded (Peterson/Newman) to approve the letter with those changes. All ayes.**
- d. Discussion of establishment of a social media policy: Rob Stewart, Michael Pigoni and Anneke Turbeville will work on the social media policy. Chief Turbeville noted that Lexipol should have a policy that can be shared between Cloverdale and Northern Sonoma County.

**13. GOOD OF THE ORDER:** Fred Peterson thanked Dave Bernier, Paul Bernier, and Rob Stewart for their support during the Walbridge Fire. Michael Pigoni reported that Erik Padilla is working on transforming the pancake breakfast into a drive-through event. Chief Turbeville reported that there are four new volunteers starting the JC volunteer fire academy, two of whom are from the fuels crew.

**14. ADJOURNMENT OF THE MEETING:** Discussion and schedule of the next regular meeting to be held on October 15, 2020 at 7:00 P.M. **A motion was made and seconded (Peterson/Newman) to adjourn the meeting at 8:33 PM. All ayes.**

Minutes approved as written- Motion/Second: Bernier/Newman

Clerk of the Board: Anneke Turbeville

Date: 10/15/2020

The District does not transcribe its proceedings. Anyone who desires a verbatim record of this meeting should arrange for attendance by a court reporter or for other acceptable means of recordation. The public is allowed to use any form of audio or video recording, absent a reasonable finding by the Board that this action will disrupt proceedings. Such arrangements will be at the sole expense of the individual requesting the recordation. Questions about this agenda – call the Fire District's Office at 707/857-4373.