



Long Valley Fire Protection District
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**MINUTES OF REGULAR MEETING
September 11th, 2024**

Date: Wednesday, September 11th, 2024
Time: 7:00 p.m.
Location: 3605 Crowley Lake Drive, Crowley Lake, CA 93546

Members Present: David Melchior, Lorinda Beatty, Ron Day, Kim Czeschin, Dan Gordon

Members Absent: None

Others Present: Fire Chief Scott McGuire, Division Chief Fred Stump, Equipment Manager Billy Czeschin, Secretary Kathryn Durgin (via Google Meet), Chaplain Paul Zastoupil, Cody Zornes, Gerry LeFrancois, Hap Hazard, Rich Booher

Others Absent: None

1. Call to order, roll call, Pledge of Allegiance, and announcements. The meeting was called to order at 7:01 pm. Commissioner Gordon led all in attendance to the Pledge of Allegiance. No announcements were made.
 - a. *A moment of silence was observed to honor those who lost their lives on September 11, 2001, and to solemnly reflect on the profound impact that day had on the nation and its communities.*
2. Opportunity for the public to address the Board on items of interest to the public that are not agendaized and within the jurisdiction of the Board. No public comments were made.
3. Report on the progress of the Sunny Slopes Station 2 project. Commissioner Beatty opened the discussion with staff reports to be followed by public comment.

Report from Long Valley Fire Chief Scott McGuire: Chief McGuire reported that there has been no response from TRIAD regarding the site plan, as they remain extremely busy. However, he shared that Gerry LeFrancois successfully contacted another provider from Nevada, recommended by Mike Britton. Chief McGuire shared that, unfortunately, the new provider will not be able to complete a site plan for another 60 days, pushing the timeline to around November 1st before the department can move forward. Division

Chief Fred Stump noted that he had instructed Gerry to have the new provider send over a contract. Chief McGuire also discussed the process for accessing the \$100,000 in preliminary funding from Mono County. He explained that the county will hold the funds in a separate account, and the department will draw from them on a reimbursement basis.

Public Comment from Sunny Slopes Resident Hap Hazard: Hap Hazard inquired if there are any other projects the department can work on while waiting for the site plan. Chief McGuire responded that no further projects can proceed at this time, as the site plan is the critical next step needed to move the overall project forward.

4. Approval of the Minutes of the August 14th, 2024 Regular Meeting. A MOTION WAS MADE BY COMMISSIONER MELCHIOR, SECONDED BY COMMISSIONER GORDON, TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE AUGUST 14TH, 2024 REGULAR MEETING. Motion passed 5-0.

5. Chief's Report.

A. Volunteer Report. Chief McGuire provided an update on department activities since the last regular meeting. He reported that there have been nine emergency response calls, bringing the total to 102 calls for the year, compared to 109 at the same time last year. Volunteer trainings have focused on preparations for the upcoming Tri-Annual Mass Casualty Incident (MCI) event, including tabletop drills, trauma assessments, and a review of the MCI trailer. Last Thursday, the volunteers conducted a field drill, focusing on communication training using the Incident Command System (ICS). Chief McGuire concluded by noting that the volunteer roster currently stands at 27 firefighters.

B. Report on Current Fire Department Activities, Assignments, and Schedule for potential Board direction. Chief McGuire provided an update on recent activities since the last meeting. He reported that he and the Long Valley Fire volunteers, along with Mammoth Fire, toured the ORMAT Geothermal Complex, noting a large turnout for the event. He expressed appreciation for Mammoth Fire's proactive efforts in organizing cross-trainings and fostering collaboration with Long Valley Fire.

Chief McGuire also gave a brief update on the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between the Airport and the Town of Mammoth Lakes, stating that the MOU is with the Town of Mammoth Lakes, and the department is waiting on them for review and approval.

Chief McGuire reported that the department has received a dozen new handheld radios, which are not part of the California Radio Interoperability System (CRIS). He noted that the old BK radios, which these replace, are no longer permitted for use on fires. He shared that while most of the county has received their CRIS radios, the system is still not operational due to ongoing challenges. The CRIS handheld radios

for Long Valley Fire are currently with the county, and he is waiting on distribution from the IT department. Chief McGuire also shared that the department applied for additional mobile radios for vehicles through the Volunteer Fire Capacity (VFC) Grant from CalFire, the department was denied and did not receive the grant.

Chief McGuire noted that the Tri-Annual Mass Casualty Incident (MCI) training is scheduled for September 28th, with Sierra Life Flight and Care Flight participating. He expects a strong turnout, with Bishop Fire, Mammoth Fire, and Wheeler Crest joining the drill. Regarding Inland Counties Emergency and Medical Agency (ICEMA), Chief McGuire reported that Mono County has agreed to allow the purchase of items from the ICEMA mandatory list for Basic Life Support (BLS). Though this brings resolution for the challenges Long Valley Fire were facing, Chief McGuire suggested that discussions around long-term medical direction for the department would be beneficial. Chief McGuire shared that he had spoken to the new ER doctor at Mammoth Hospital, who is eager to collaborate with local agencies.

C. Long-Range Planning Discussion.

(a) Personnel. Chief McGuire provided an update on the discussions within the volunteer leadership team about assigning new leadership roles. He explained that while promotions have traditionally occurred at the Christmas Party, he would like to move forward with formalizing these roles sooner. He plans to promote Paul Zastoupil and Devin Preston to approved leadership as well as encourage Billy Czeschin and Joseph Santos to take on new responsibilities due to their strong leadership capabilities.

(b) Airport. No news.

(c) Geothermal. No news.

(d) Station Maintenance. No news.

(e) Vehicle and Equipment Maintenance. Chief reported that all of the self-contained breathing apparatus (SCBA) have been inspected and are current.

(f) Board of Forestry Fire Safe Regulations Discussion and Possible Action. No news.

Commissioner Beatty opened the agenda item to public comment.

Public Comment: Hap Hazard provided public comment, recalling a discussion at a prior Long Valley Fire Board meeting from a few months ago about the notification and emergency response services for the potential failure of the Rock Creek Lake dam. He shared that at that time, Long Valley Fire indicated that the issue had been addressed at the county level and was not a concern. Since then, Hap stated that he has done further research and discovered that Inyo County does not have an emergency notification or response plan in place for the dam. He expressed surprise that Inyo County does not even acknowledge responsibility for the lake, which he sees as problematic, as they would be responsible for notifying Mono County if the dam failed.

Hap also mentioned speaking with Chris Mokracek from Mono County's Office of Emergency Management, who according to Hap, is currently looking into whether Mammoth Fire has an emergency response plan for the situation. He pointed out that approximately 500 campsites in the canyon, along with Toms Place and around 80 homes in Sunny Slopes, would be affected if the dam were compromised. Hap requested that the department take a more active role in investigating what its emergency response responsibilities would be in the event of a dam failure. Hap clarified that he is not asking the department to inspect or monitor the dam, but rather to be involved in discussions about what the response plan should be if the dam fails.

Commissioner Beatty responded, stating that while the lake itself may not be the department's concern, the aftermath of a potential dam failure would fall within the department's jurisdiction. She noted that while the department cannot prevent the dam from failing, its role would be to provide medical and property response in such an event. Hap reiterated that his main concern is the lack of monitoring and notification procedures, and that he is asking for the department to engage in discussions regarding a response plan. Commissioner Beatty agreed, stating that the department's responsibility is to respond within its jurisdiction and assist neighboring jurisdictions in emergencies. She added that while it is impossible to predict when a dam might fail, it is important to be prepared.

Commissioner Beatty thanked Hap for bringing the issue to the Board's attention and requested that it be added to the agenda for future Board meetings.

6. Board review/approval of payment warrants since the last meeting. A MOTION WAS MADE BY COMMISSIONER CZESCHIN, SECONDED BY COMMISSIONER GORDON TO APPROVE PAYMENT WARRANTS SINCE LAST REGULAR BOARD MEETING. Motion passed 5-0.
7. Discussion and action on refurbishment of the Memorial Garden. Chief McGuire reported that there has not been much progress made since last regular meeting on the Memorial Garden. No action at this time.
8. Discussion and possible action on compensation for the Fire Chief and Board Secretary positions. Commissioner Beatty opened the discussion by presenting a payroll formula spreadsheet that detailed the current salaries for both the Fire Chief and the Secretary. The spreadsheet showed the salaries for these positions, their hourly rates, and projections for raises ranging from 5% to 25%, along with how each increase would impact the department's budget. Division Chief Fred Stump commented that during his 12-year tenure as Fire Chief, he received a \$6,000 increase in compensation, while in the last 12 years, the Fire Chief's salary has only increased by \$1,000. Both Commissioner Beatty and Commissioner Day expressed that given the responsibilities and workload of the Fire Chief and Secretary, they should receive a salary increase.

Commissioner Beatty opened the agenda item to public comment.

Public Comment: Sunny Slopes resident Hap Hazard suggested considering a salary survey from comparable departments and examining the responsibilities of these positions to establish department compensation rates. He mentioned that while he does not believe a 25% increase is inappropriate, conducting a salary survey could help justify the Board's decision-making. Fred Stump added that he recently went through a similar process with county staff and found it challenging to determine a comparable salary for this department due to the varying levels of responsibility and funding compared to other, less-funded departments in the county.

Commissioner Gordon noted that most organizations typically provide a 2% cost-of-living increase. He pointed out that considering the lack of increases over the past 12 years for the Fire Chief position, a 2% increase per year would amount to approximately a 25% total increase. After discussion was made by the Board, a decision was made to increase the salaries of the Fire Chief and Secretary by 25%. A MOTION WAS MADE BY COMMISSIONER BEATTY, SECONDED BY COMMISSIONER DAY, TO INCREASE THE SALARY OF THE FIRE CHIEF AND SECRETARY POSITIONS BY 25% EFFECTIVE SEPTEMBER 1ST, 2024. Motion passed 5-0.

9. Board Secretary Report. Secretary Durgin reported that the Board of Equalization check for the boundary change application fee of \$350 was sent directly to Brent Calloway at the Local Agency Formation Commission (LAFCO). She explained that while the check was made out to the California Board of Equalization, it was sent to LAFCO to be included with the application they are submitting.

Secretary Durgin also noted that the department received a check in the amount of \$3,695.04 from the Town of Mammoth Lakes for the C17/Blackhawk Airport coverage. Secretary Durgin reported on the protocol for using the \$100,000 preliminary funding for the Sunny Slopes Station 2 project. She explained that whenever the department makes a qualifying purchase, they will follow the regular warrant process. Alongside submitting the warrant for that purchase, she will fill out a separate claim form provided by the county. This form will be signed by Commissioner Beatty as Board Chair and sent to Janet Dutcher, who will handle the approval and reimbursement from the \$100,000 preliminary funding. Lastly, Secretary Durgin highlighted some upcoming items for the next few months, including regular payroll next week, the start of the Quarter 4 Quarterly Tax Reports in October, the volunteer year-end stipend payroll at the beginning of November, and requests for year-end financial and workers' compensation audit information. There were no comments from the Board or the public.

10. Review correspondence received since the last regular meeting. Secretary Durgin reported on the correspondence received since the last regular meeting, including a renewal questionnaire from Volunteer Fireman's Insurance Services (VFIS), which Chief McGuire has completed and submitted. She also noted that there were two to three late payment notices from Southern California Edison and Linde Gas & Equipment, but those have been followed up on and confirmed as paid. Additionally, Chief McGuire mentioned that the department received an invoice today for its share of Digital 395.

Commissioner Beatty reopened public comment on items not agendized by the Board (7:49pm): Division Chief Fred Stump provided an update regarding the Vidar Anderson Highway Dedication. He began by expressing thanks to Hap Hazard and Ray Turner for attending the Board of Supervisors meeting, where a resolution was passed in support of dedicating a section of Highway 395 to former Captain Vidar Anderson. Fred shared that he had followed up with the office of State Senator Alvarado-Gil in Sacramento but noted the Senator's office is currently in transition. He further explained that the Senator's previous staff has been removed by her former party and replacements have not yet been appointed. Fred mentioned that he will be meeting with Mono County District 2 Supervisor Rhonda Duggan tomorrow to discuss the best course of action, which may include reaching out to Assemblyman Joe Patterson from Fresno to help move the dedication forward. He noted that Rhonda Duggan will also share additional information from Caltrans at their meeting. Fred emphasized that all necessary steps have been completed by the department, including passing the Long Valley Fire Resolution, the Board of Supervisors Resolution, having met the financial obligations, and verifying the availability of the highway section for dedication. He requested that the Secretary add the Vidar Anderson Highway Dedication to the agenda for future Board meetings.

11. Review and adjust current FY budget line items as necessary and accept. The Board reviewed the current budget and expenditures summary. Chief McGuire requested a correction to the Budget Expenditures summary, clarifying that the listed 2024-2025 budgeted revenues of \$434,865.00 is not the final AB8 revenue amount, but rather the budgeted amount. Commissioner Beatty also pointed out that the budget needs to be updated to reflect the changes in the Fire Chief and Secretary salaries.
12. New business and Board Member Reports. No report or comment was made.
13. Call for Agenda items for the next regular meeting. Staff report on the progress of the Sunny Slopes Station 2 project; Discussion and possible action regarding a public request to investigate responsibility for monitoring, notifications, and emergency response in the event of a Rock Creek Dam failure; Discussion and action on refurbishment of the Memorial Garden; Discussion and possible action concerning the dedication of a portion of Highway 395 to former Captain Vidar Anderson; Chief's Report addition of county and community updates.
14. Adjournment. A motion was made by Commissioner Melchior, seconded by Commissioner Czeschin, to adjourn the meeting and reconvene in regular session on October 9th, 2024, at 7:00 pm at the Long Valley Fire Station, 3605 Crowley Lake Drive, Crowley Lake, California. Motion passed 5-0. Meeting adjourned at 7:55pm.

Katie Durgin
Secretary to the Board
Long Valley Fire Protection District