



Long Valley Fire Protection District
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**MINUTES OF REGULAR MEETING
November 13th, 2024**

Date: Wednesday, November 13th, 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, Secretary Kathryn Durgin (via Google Meet), Billy Czeschin, Hap Hazard

Others Absent: None

1. Call to order, roll call, Pledge of Allegiance, and announcements. The meeting was called to order at 7:05pm. Commissioner Czeschin led all in attendance to the Pledge of Allegiance. No announcements were made.
2. Opportunity for the public to address the Board on items of interest to the public that are not agendized and within the jurisdiction of the Board. Division Chief Fred Stump announced that the Firewise community recently held a meeting to plan the formation of three potential Firewise groups within the Crowley Community. He explained that he sent an email last week to initiate the process. The Firewise groups are currently named Crowley 1, Crowley 2, and Crowley 3, and are outlined on a segmented map. He is planning to hold another meeting next week. The designated areas include Sierra Springs, Juniper Loop, and a section covering the three complexes near Aspen Terrace and Beaver Brook.
3. Report and provide direction 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 R.O. Anderson Engineering is completing the site survey for Sunny Slope Station 2. Chief McGuire attempted to obtain previously created topographical map files from TRIAD to reduce costs; however, the files were not compatible with R.O. Anderson's requirements.

According to Chief, R.O. Anderson estimates the site survey will take 8-10 weeks to complete and has already begun the work, keeping the project on track. Once the survey is finished, Chief McGuire will have the information needed to initiate the conditional use permit process.

Comment from Division Chief Fred Stump: Fred Stump reported that the county is still determining the level of California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) documentation required for the project. He noted that the county is leaning toward a minimal-level CEQA document, which would be less costly and require less information, though a final decision has not yet been made. Fred explained that if a more formal CEQA document is required, it could incur additional costs. He explained the purpose of the CEQA document, stating that it provides sufficient information to support and defend the project, ensuring that potential claims about environmental concerns do not hinder development.

Public Comment: Hap Hazard noted that a university has already conducted archaeological studies and environmental assessments for plant species in the project area. He raised the question of whether there is a time limit on the validity of these studies and whether they can still be used or provide value for the project. Hap had a final comment clarifying that this is not a complaint, sharing that he spoke with a member of the community regarding a some items left at the Sunny Slopes Station 2 site possibly by one of the crew members.

4. Approval of the Minutes of the October 9th, 2024 Regular Meeting. A MOTION WAS MADE BY COMMISSIONER MELCHIOR, SECONDED BY COMMISSIONER GORDON, TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE OCTOBER 9TH, 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, reporting a current roster of 25 volunteer firefighters, including Wyatt Czeschin, who is newly active with the department. He noted a 20% increase in calls compared to this time last year, with 124 calls year-to-date compared to 102 during the same period last year. He reported that since the last meeting, the department has responded to 13 calls, including several fire incidents. Chief McGuire shared that there has been a strong personnel turnout for emergency responses. He explained that over the past few years, the department has averaged 7-7.5 responders per call at this time of year. This year, the year-to-date average has increased to 8.1 responders per call, with an average of 8.6 responders per call in the last month. With input from Billy Czeschin, Chief McGuire provided details on some of the more notable recent calls. He also shared that upcoming volunteer firefighter training will focus on hypothermia and ice rescues in the coming weeks, with EMR training scheduled to start in January.

B. Report on Current Fire Department Activities, Assignments, and Schedule for potential Board direction. Chief McGuire reported that progress on the California Radio Interoperable System (CRIS) is currently at a standstill. According to Chief, the Office of Emergency Services (OES) is unsure if further installations will be completed within the next six months. However, he shared that after meeting with the IT department and receiving approval, the department now has access to the programming software. Chief McGuire plans to use this to program all department radios, correct frequencies, and ensure they are operational. He shared that at the recent Chief's Association meeting, all Chiefs agreed that each department will maintain its own radio system outside of CRIS, allowing the department to meet fire scope requirements and incident command needs with the Forest Service and other agencies on analog systems. Chief McGuire would like to begin installing new higher-power EK radios in the apparatus.

Chief McGuire also reported speaking with Dr. Andre Burnier, the emergency physician at Mammoth Hospital, who has agreed to serve as the medical director for Long Valley Fire. Chief shared that Dr. Burnier has also been approached to be the medical director for all fire departments in the county, similar to the current arrangement in Inyo County. While the cost associated with the role has not yet been discussed, according to Chief, Dr. Burnier is primarily focused on understanding what the liability is to become the medical director. Chief McGuire noted that there are no significant changes anticipated to the department's protocols with Inland Counties Emergency Medical Agency (ICEMA) as Dr. Burnier steps into the role, though some minor adjustments may be considered.

Chief McGuire reported that there have been changes to the district's State Responsibility Area (SRA) and provided details on the affected areas. Fred Stump commented that the changes stem from a 30-year-old "Balance of Acres" agreement between the State of California and the Bureau of Land Management (BLM). He explained that this agreement aimed to enhance agency coverage without requiring extensive infrastructure development. He shared that recently, BLM sought to reclaim acres in the San Bernardino County desert, which required relinquishing some protection areas in Mono County back to the SRA. Fred Stump further explained that this agreement has led to the statewide re-administration of SRA boundaries. Discussion was made among the Board members regarding the changes being made to the district's SRA land.

Chief McGuire also reported that CalFire recently conducted an inspection at University of California Santa Barbara (UCSB) Sierra Nevada Aquatic Research Laboratory (SNARL) and plans to perform additional inspections in the district, including at Tom's Place, Church on the Mountain, the school, McGee Creek Lodge, Convict Lake, and the industrial park.

Lastly, Chief McGuire highlighted a key point from the Chief's Association meeting regarding a request from some Fire Chiefs to increase the number of personnel sent on emergency response task forces, as fewer personnel have been participating recently. He noted that Antelope Valley generates significant income by sending fire

response teams, which is motivating their push to send more personnel. However, Chief McGuire expressed concerns that sending more personnel could deplete local resources and apparatus coverage. He anticipates this issue will be discussed further in future meetings. The Board also discussed the challenge of balancing the allocation of resources while ensuring adequate coverage within the district.

C. Long-Range Planning Discussion.

(a) Personnel. No news.

(b) Airport. Chief McGuire reported that the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between the Town of Mammoth Lakes and the Airport is still on a delay and in review. The initial goal was to present the MOU to the Town Council before December for approval and signing by the end of the year, but this timeline has been postponed.

(c) Geothermal. No news.

(d) Station Maintenance. Chief McGuire reported that he has not yet transitioned to the new cleaning service. He mentioned that he found someone to handle various station maintenance tasks. Additionally, Chief McGuire noted that he and Secretary Durgin have discussed the importance of records retention and the need to digitize the department's paper documents. He shared insights from a conversation he had with county staff, who explained their experience hiring a contractor to digitize their records. According to Chief, the county faced challenges with properly naming files to be easily searchable and accessible. Chief McGuire emphasized the need to find an effective way to digitize all records and establish a records retention policy.

(e) Vehicle and Equipment Maintenance. No news.

(f) County and Community Updates. Chief McGuire reported that Mono County and the Town of Mammoth Lakes began the Hazardous Waste Mitigation Program last week. A survey was distributed to identify interested participants, with plans to hire an external contractor to conduct a hazardous risk mitigation assessment. Chief McGuire noted that he raised concerns regarding the lack of an emergency response notification plan for the Rock Creek Dam and Convict Dam areas.

Commissioner Beatty opened the agenda item to public comment. No public comment was made.

6. Board review/approval of payment warrants since the last meeting. A MOTION WAS MADE BY COMMISSIONER GORDON, SECONDED BY COMMISSIONER MELCHIOR TO APPROVE PAYMENT WARRANTS SINCE LAST REGULAR BOARD MEETING. Motion passed 5-0.
7. Discussion and possible action concerning the dedication of a portion of Highway 395 to former Captain Vidar Anderson. Division Chief Fred Stump reported that he held a Zoom meeting with Cheri West, Capitol Director for California State Senator Marie

Alvarado-Gil. He shared that Cheri West requested follow-up information regarding the highway dedication, specifically seeking input from family members and community representatives. Fred contacted Julie Reid, Captain Vidar Anderson's daughter-in-law, who volunteered to serve as a representative and speak with the State Senator's office staff. Fred noted that District Supervisor Rhonda Duggan had independently reached out to the Senator's office and informed her he could assist in identifying additional community representatives if needed, including reaching out to Hap Hazard. Fred is waiting for further updates from Rhonda Duggan. He added that if the State Senator's office proceeds, legislation for the dedication could be submitted in December. According to Fred, all resolutions and supporting information from the department have been submitted, and Fred is waiting to hear whether the State Senator will move forward with the effort.

8. Discussion and possible action regarding compensatory roles including volunteer firefighter year-end stipend, Training Officer, Assistant Training Officer, and Assistant Fire Chief/Duty Chief. Commissioner Gordon opened the discussion by revisiting his suggestion from the previous meeting to increase pay for certain positions by 25%. He shared that his calculations confirmed this increase would fit comfortably within the budget. Commissioner Beatty noted that after speaking with several firefighters, they expressed appreciation for the proposed pay increase but preferred prioritizing funds for improved equipment instead. Captain Billy Czeschin clarified that while the firefighters value the pay increase, they would rather allocate those funds toward upgrading fire equipment if it means sacrificing resources in that area. Commissioner Beatty emphasized her desire to ensure firefighters feel valued for their hard work. Chief McGuire explained that an increase to the Volunteer Year-End Stipend would not impact the department's fee schedule or mutual aid agreements. The Board discussed the proposed 25% increase for compensatory roles. Captain Czeschin also requested the Board consider compensating the department mechanic, Rigo Lemus Briviesca, at his standard rate, which exceeds what he is currently paid. Chief McGuire and Commissioner Beatty recommended transitioning Rigo to a contractor status starting January 1, 2025, as his role aligns with contractor qualifications rather than an employee under the department payroll. A MOTION WAS MADE BY COMMISSIONER MELCHIOR, SECONDED BY COMMISSIONER DAY, TO INCREASE COMPENSATION BY 25% FOR THE VOLUNTEER FIREFIGHTER YEAR-END STIPEND, TRAINING OFFICER, ASSISTANT TRAINING OFFICER, AND ASSISTANT FIRE CHIEF/DUTY CHIEF RETROACTIVE TO NOVEMBER 1ST, 2024. Motion passed 5-0.
9. Discussion and action on refurbishment of the Memorial Garden. Chief McGuire reported that he met with Delfino Leguna who has done some work within the community. Chief shared that he was very excited to work on the Memorial Garden and will draw some ideas up for Chief McGuire to review.
10. Board Secretary Report. Secretary Durgin provided updates on various activities since the last regular meeting. She reported an overage in budget line item #202 (Office Supplies) due to the Xerox machine settlement payment. After disputing the charge with

the collections agency and providing email documentation, she shared that the agency determined the documentation was insufficient, citing a buyout quote issued by Xerox at the time. After discussing with Chief McGuire, Secretary Durgin requested a settlement 20% lower than the original amount, which was approved, resulting in a payment of \$2,839.82.

Secretary Durgin also noted that Mary Snyder, Mono County Chief Administrative Officer for Special Projects, sent a questionnaire to special districts seeking feedback on potential county support. Secretary Durgin has completed and submitted her responses, highlighting areas where she could use assistance, and noted that the questionnaire was also distributed to the Fire Chief and Board members.

Additionally, Secretary Durgin reported receiving the November and December holiday warrant processing schedule from Shannon LeGrand at the Mono County Finance Department. Secretary Durgin has informed relevant personnel of the department's adjusted warrant submission deadlines to align with the county's timeline. She informed the Board that the Volunteer Year-End Stipend will be processed next week, with the payout reflected in the December meeting's expenditure summary. She also announced that Joanne Berry from Fetcher and Company has initiated the department's annual financial audit, with the engagement letter sent to both Chief McGuire and Commissioner Beatty for signatures. Secretary Durgin is also anticipating correspondence from the State Compensation Insurance Fund regarding the year-end workers' compensation audit.

Chief McGuire commented that the county's questionnaire was discussed at the Chief's Association meeting, where some participants viewed it as disingenuous. He explained that this perception stemmed from recent discussions between the Bridgeport Fire Protection District (BFPD) and the Mono County Board of Supervisors regarding tax-exempt county buildings within BFPD's district. Commissioner Beatty, who attended related Board of Supervisors meetings, acknowledged the concerns raised but expressed appreciation for the county's effort to gather input through the questionnaire. The Board and staff engaged in further discussion about the questionnaire. No public comment.

11. Review correspondence received since the last regular meeting. All correspondence was included in prior agenda item reports.
12. Review and adjust current fiscal year budget line items as necessary and accept. Chief McGuire stated that the budget requires adjustments to reflect the 25% increase in compensation. He also noted the overage in line item #202 (Office Supplies) and emphasized that additional office supplies are still needed. To address this, he proposed increasing the Office Supplies budget to \$3,300. A MOTION WAS MADE BY COMMISSIONER GORDON, SECONDED BY COMMISSIONER MELCHIOR, TO ADJUST THE BUDGET LINE ITEM #202 OFFICE SUPPLIES TO \$3,300 AS SPECIFIED BY THE FIRE CHIEF, AND TO ADJUST THE NECESSARY BUDGET LINE ITEMS TO INCLUDE THE 25% PAY INCREASE FOR DEPARTMENT COMPENSATORY ROLES. Motion passed 5-0.

13. New business and Board member reports. Commissioner Beatty informed the Board that the department will soon undergo a Municipal Service Review and would like to work with Secretary Durgin and Chief McGuire to prepare for it. Chief McGuire announced that the Long Valley Fire Christmas party is scheduled for Saturday, December 14th, at Convict Lake.
14. Call for Agenda items for the next regular meeting. Staff report on the progress of the Sunny Slopes Station 2 project; 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.
15. Adjournment. A motion was made by Commissioner Day, seconded by Commissioner Czeschin, to adjourn the meeting and reconvene in regular session on December 11th, 2024, at 7:00pm at the Long Valley Fire Station, 3605 Crowley Lake Drive, Crowley Lake, California. Motion passed 5-0. Meeting adjourned at 8:30pm.

Katie Durgin
Secretary to the Board
Long Valley Fire Protection District