

NEWCASTLE FIRE PROTECTION DISTRICT

November 16, 2016, 6:00 P.M.

at 461 Main Street, Newcastle, CA 95658, Newcastle, CA 95658

MEETING MINUTES

Board Present: Eric Sprouse, Chairman
Jonita Elder, Secretary
Robin Enos, Director
Neil Anderson, Interim Vice Chairman
Lawrence Bettencourt, Interim Director

1. CALL MEETING TO ORDER:

- (A) Chairman called the meeting to order at 6:00 pm.
- (B) All Board members present
- (C) Chief Gow was also in attendance
- (D) Pledge of Allegiance.
- (E) Chairman Sprouse:
 - Regarding the election of new board members... The County needs to finish counting. Should be done by Thanksgiving. After County is done the count, will look at by-laws and move forward with the transition.
 - The Board has signed the contract for our new Chief. Waiting for one more official signature, but everything is done. Would like to welcome Chief Gow to NFPD.
 - With the Board's permission, would like to skip to item 12(A) of the agenda. Chairman Sprouse asks for Board approval to amend the agenda as such. VOTE: all in favor – Aye 5-0, with all board members present.

2. ACTION ITEM:

- (A) PERSONNEL: Approve the hiring and badge pinning of Engineers Matthew McCoy and Kenny Kolster.
 - 1. Chief Gow: we have two new employees - Kenny Kolster works B shift with Captain Kirk. Came on in July. Mathew McCoy is a very new hire – just started. Will be working with Capt. Hickok.
 - Badges presented to new hires.
 - Per Chief Gow, the men come highly recommended. They've filled out our roster. Will keep us from having station closures. He recommends them highly.
 - 2. Chairman Sprouse asks for a motion from the board to approve the new staff. Vice Chairman Anderson made the motion; seconded by Secretary Elder.
 - Roll call VOTE: Secretary Elder – Aye; Director Enos – Aye; Vice Chairman Anderson – Aye; Director Bettencourt – Aye; Chairman Sprouse – Aye. 5-0 all in favor. Vote carries with all board members present.
 - 3. Sprouse: We really appreciate Chief Gow helping and starting ahead of his official contract.

3. APPROVAL OF AGENDA:

- (A) November 16, 2016 Meeting Agenda.
 - Amended Item 12(A) to come first in the agenda
 - Vice Chairman Anderson made the motion to approve the agenda as amended; seconded by Secretary Elder. VOTE: All in favor 5-0. Motion carried out unanimously with all Board members present.

4. Executive Session (CLOSED – 6:09 pm –6:32 pm)

- (A) Labor Negotiations (Gov. C. sec. 54957.6); Discuss negotiations with bargaining unit.

5. Reconvene Open Session:

(A) Chairman Sprouse reported on the closed session:

- Discussed were the contract negotiations with the Placer Hills Firefighters Association. There will be a report out with the ad hoc later in the agenda.

6. APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

(A) October 19, 2016 Regular Meeting Minutes

(B) November 3rd, 2016 Special Meeting

- Vice Chairman Anderson made the motion to approve both regular and special meeting minutes; seconded by Director Bettencourt. VOTE: All in favor 5-0. Vote carries with all board members present.

(C) Sprouse: The link to the board packet on the website did not work. Apologies. Communication issues. More to come on that.

7. BILL APPROVAL:

(A) Monthly Expense Report – Month of November, 2016.

- Chief Gow: Regarding budget, we are at 33 percent-expenditures we're all in line with that. We got the \$10K in mitigation funds for the new building, that'll help. Next month we will see a bill for a computer expert consultant who handled computer issues. Guessing it will be a couple hundred dollars. Everything is working okay with the computers.
- Sprouse: There were some questions about budget which we will table until ad hoc report out.
- Vice Chairman Anderson made the motion to approve the monthly expense report; seconded by Director Enos. VOTE: All in favor, 5-0. Motion carries with all board members present.
- Financial Report: Email copy available upon request info@newcastlefire.org

8. CORRESPONDENCE: None

9. PUBLIC COMMENT: None

10. FIRE CHIEF IAN GOW'S REPORT:

(A) Last month Newcastle responded to 42 calls. There were some significant calls. Capt. Hickok responded to a potential honey oil situation. It is a manufactured by-product of THC or marijuana...potent...the way they produce it...uses vast amounts of butane...highly explosive. Capt. Hickok took care of it.

(B) Fire on Rancheria Road. A home under construction was fully involved. Destroyed. Accidental as far as we can tell.

(C) We've been managing with Gillian Lofrano, Business Manager for Placer Hills, and Patrice Metz. We will be transitioning Jill. They've done a really good job. Grateful.

(D) Things we've handled -staff hiring... worked out well. We've had two staff meetings. Will continue to have monthly team meetings. Now all positions are filled, which should drop OT dramatically. We don't have any part-time help to fill it, but will be his next search. Working on getting interns from colleges. Augments staffing, gives pool to bring in as part timers. We've sent flyers out on that program. Full-steam ahead on all those.

(E) Elk's dinner for firefighter of the year. Bobby Hicks for Newcastle. Can still buy tickets at the door. Will have other departments at the table.

(F) Short range things to do. We've already revamped automatic aid with the surrounding fire departments. We automatically have other agencies come to help. Revamped to add a number of other departments.

- Spouse: Were we on the list to go to other departments?
- Gow: No. closest resources to the incident. We have closest surrounding areas around to help.
- Sprouse: If Newcastle goes to a fire, do we have backup? Newcastle is signatory to Placer County.

- Gow: If we go to a fire, then it automatically starts backfilling. Another engine can backfill, but it takes time.
- (G) The Captains and he want to get staff back on strike teams. We are in the process of solving some staffing issues. Thinks it's critical we be back on strike teams for many reasons. Mutual help. Training is invaluable - can't get it anywhere else. Funds helps pay for new fire engines. Hopefully by next summer, should be back on the list.
 - Bettencourt: we should be covered with having two engines.
- (H) Fire departments mandated to do business inspections (meet code, alarms, etc.). Non-confrontational helpful visit. We created a new checkoff form with duplicates to the owner. We're getting that program up and running. Starting to talk about the training programs. (mandates, ISO, OSHA, etc).
- (I) Policies/procedures/SOG-Standard Operational Guides – give information on how to use Jaws of Life, load hoses. Placer Hills and Foresthill are working on finalizing guides right now. The biggest thing we [NFPD] don't have are policies and procedures – board sanction rules/regulations. Placer Hills re-wrote their manuals, but got a very good set done. His request to board is that we start looking at these as well. Board agrees.
- (J) Long range. There's a lot going on. Goal is to maintain three fire departments. When looking at funding big-picture, none of us have the funding to stand-alone. Been working on this for six years with the other Chiefs. Sharing management and workload seems to work. The plan for short term is Jill and he will manage it. Patrice will help. Fire Capt. Nelson - will move him up to admin, so it will be the two of them. Chief Gow is Monday thru Friday 24 hrs./day. Moving a Captain up to help with fire chief duties on the weekends. We need to solve the problem more globally. There are duty chiefs. Short term plan for little money/reasonable money. Solving the duty thing is really important.
- (K) Bigger picture - Fire chiefs have been talking with the County for 45 years about funding. We've gotten a little more insistent over past five years. Led to CityGate study. That study was less than optimal. What the County wanted was for CityGate to tell us the problem, how much money it would take, figure out how to solve problem. The County has decided to not use the study. They've taken what they could out of it. Ms. Windehausen has taken the lead for county executive staff. They are working on it, looking at staffing levels. We think the County will hire a consultant, SCI, and try to go back to County election in March or May.
- (L) Funds: half cent sales tax makes County \$35M year. 3% cost of living increase per year. All that goes to sheriffs and District Attorney offices. The state law says the counties will determine the allocation of these monies. At this point they are not willing to discuss it. We also talked about if any departments were failing, what can be done. Talked about general fund monies, other sources of money. Ms. Windehausen is highly aware that if any departments failed...that gap of coverage would cause many economic issues... She says the County won't let any department fail.
- (M) He will keep attending County meetings. We will be part of the discussion. Keep up to date/current.
- (N) Sprouse: Regarding any concerns about files, documents ...he has everything. Has been guarding the stuff since Chief Higgins departed. Will give to Chief Gow this evening. They will be kept on the fire station property...secured.
- (O) Anderson: regarding business inspections... someone will need the information when they do the direct special tax assessments. Need to identify businesses.
 - Enos: Who will do business inspections? Per Gow, Captain Potter will do them, and he will help.
 - Anderson: Do they record county parcel numbers, business number? No per Gow, but he can get them.

11. Newcastle Professional Firefighter Association

- (A) Statement from the Association: none

12. INFORMATIONAL/NON-ACTION ITEMS:

- (A) Ad Hoc Committee Report out.

Director Reports:

1. New fire station progress report

- Bettencourt: will discuss in the action items part of the Agenda. He and Director Enos are still trying to work with Mr. Lichau on the contract. The issue is his insurance for liability will cover everything moving forward. We have approved civil plans from RDG. Contacting them for liability. They don't want to talk to Bettencourt, they want to talk to Lichau. Trying to make sure Newcastle is covered liability-wise before we sign. Has been in contact with Pearl Insurance... looking into policy.
- Sprouse: Regarding the contract – everything looking good. Lichau is good with it.

13. ACTION ITEMS:

(A) Item A was moved to the beginning of the agenda.

(B) Consider and approve lease agreement and insurance costs with the Newcastle Firefighter Volunteer Association for lease of 1941 Van Pelt Antique Fire Engine.

- This item will be tabled. Council (Kristianne) has informed us that because the Association is defunct, we can't enter agreements until they become whole. After they get things in order, we can add this back. Patrice will go to the State on Tuesday. Should have something to the Board by next meeting.
- Regarding the bill to pay for the fire engine's insurance... the Board approved to pay last month. Will check with Council to make sure this is good.
- There was one Public comment regarding an item not on the agenda.

(C) Board Direction for hiring an Auditor to audit the Financial Statements for Fiscal Year 2015-2016.

- Gow: The auditor who did our audit last year is not available. The County doesn't want to do the audit. The year before the County audited. They think it's a conflict of interest. They recommended Bob Johnson. He is the auditor for Placer Hills and Foresthill. He costs about \$4500/year. He's located in Citrus Heights.
- Secretary Elder made the motion to accept Robert Johnson as the Auditor; seconded by Director Enos. VOTE all in favor 5-0. Motion carries with all board members present.

(D) Consider and approve District credit card for staff use for station supplies.

- The previous credit card we had, Calcard, was destroyed. Per Gow, we can set it up any way we want. The other Fire Districts have limits of \$8000, \$9000. Covers strike team expenses, etc. For NFPD, want a \$1000 credit.
- Vice Chairman Anderson moves to approve the card at \$1000 limit; seconded by Director Enos. VOTE: All in favor 5-0. Motion carries with all board members present.

(E) Consider and approve alerting system to alarm the station when pagers are activated with estimated cost of \$1200.

- This has been an ongoing problem. Chief Gow: We have pagers which are low-watt. They typically suffice when we get emergency call. Dispatchers. Hard to hear, low power. They carry portable radios. At night time, they have to listen to the radio and hear all the radio noise. Can't turn off the radio noise while sleeping. The cost of the new system is \$1200. Battery backup is \$200, so cost of \$1400. They shouldn't have to listen to that noise all night long. It is a safety issue also. The pagers sometimes do not go off. We can't afford to miss a call.
- The vendor is Banner Electronic out of Nevada City.
- Bettencourt: New station... on separate contract. Low voltage
- Resident asked about ...are we changing an agenda item? Per Anderson, we are just changing the amount from \$1200 to \$1400, not the item itself.
- Resident: learned more this last hour... appreciates Chief Gow.
- VOTE: Vice Chairman Anderson made the motion to approve the estimate \$1400 w/Banner Electronics; seconded by Secretary Elder. All in favor 5-0. Motion carries with all board members present.

(F) Update and approve the signers for the Fire District's Placer County Auditor-Controller documents to include the Board members and Chief Gow.

- Gow: We need two board members to sign each check. Recommends that all board members can sign. Makes it easier to track them down. There's a form.
- Vice Chairman Anderson abstains, as this is probably his last meeting.
- Secretary Elder made the motion to approve the signers to include the Board members and Chief Gow; seconded by Director Bettencourt. VOTE: All in favor 4-0, Motion carries. With VC Anderson abstaining.

(G) Facility Ad Hoc Committee: Director Bettencourt

1. New Station: Approval to complete application for building permit when Architect is ready with initial application fee of \$1,825.00. Estimate of total charges is \$5,682 before permit is done. The fee could go up. This is the estimate that Placer County gave us.
 - Resident moves to approve. Price will go up.
 - Enos: The architect has a list of a few items. The County is excited to get this done.
 - Vice Chairman Anderson made the motion to approve this item; seconded by Secretary Elder. VOTE: All in favor 5-0. Motion carries with all board members present.
2. New Station: Approval to begin application to public works for traffic mitigation fees for new entrance on Old State Highway
 - Bettencourt wants to make sure the board understands what's going on. The application doesn't cost anything.
 - Comments by the Board: none.
 - Robin and he will work on.
 - Vice Chairman Anderson made the motion to approve to begin the application; seconded by Director Bettencourt. VOTE: All in favor 5-0. Motion carries with all board members present.

(H) Finance Committee: Presentation on First Quarter budget report

- Bettencourt: Eric and he went through PASS report Sept. 30, then a quarterly budget reports...current. We used some reserves for salaries. The mitigation revenue, we are assuming \$29K for the year. He thinks we are on schedule. CFAA staffing reimbursements...zero budgeted. Hopefully by next year we will have some numbers in there.
- Salaries – 6 pay periods reporting. We are in negotiations, so that's why it's a low number.
- Service & Ops, it's way under. No Chief around. In addition, there were some payments like insurance will come out of this item. Will see this go up.
- New Fire Station. New permit application. To date have only paid for some copies.
- Mitigation expenditures: Thinks the payment is due for engine – February/March 2017. To pay for red engine. There's plenty in the mitigation account to cover this.
- Board questions: none
- Residents: none
- Secretary Elder: balanced amounts. Salary wages...\$156K overspent. She called the County. Doesn't know what happened. The approved budget was Mitch's original budget. The wrong budget got sent to the County. We can fix it per Secretary Elder. We need to get right budgets in there.
- Sprouse: put this at the top of the priority list. Now that we are doing the Station, and getting finances in order. Thanks Joni for her help on this.

14. Board of Director Reports:

A. Vice Chairman Anderson:

- Pointed out that there were several areas in the new agreement with Placer Hills, supposed to change/add as additional insureds. Need to make sure that happens. His last meeting will be next week.
- Some of the things we've managed to accomplish since August...we have responded to the Grand Jury Report of 2016. Just got it.
- We created new spaces/items on website...made available to the public. Under taxes item, it lists a variety of documentation. Included instructions for special tax job responsibilities. We

put there Measures F and B – the text of both of these measures is on the website. Included 2015-2016 files to the County listing tax charges by parcel number.

- Elder: Hiring new Chief... very proud accomplishment
- B. Secretary Elder: There will be a Special Board Meeting held on Tuesday 11/22/16, to approve the labor MOU. The MOU and agenda will be online to review as soon as possible. Jill will help with this. Call/email webmaster. Neil can do this. Put MOU on the front page so folks can find it.
- C. Chairman Sprouse: none
- D. Director Enos: On the second Wednesday... Christmas Event will be held in the square. Mark your calendars. There will be some new vendors. It will be a little bigger this year. Music program. The event will be December 14th between 5:00 and 9:00. There will be a tree.
- E. Director Bettencourt: none
- F. Sprouse: regarding the board election - they are counting the ballot. It is very close – within 4 or 5 votes. Folks can go on the website to look at current tally. Not official yet, but hopefully we will know by Thanksgiving.

15. Meeting adjourned at 7:41 PM.

SPECIAL MEETING: Tuesday, November 22, 2016. Location: to be determined.

NEXT REGULAR MEETING: Wednesday, December 21, 2016. Location: 461 Main Street.

Respectfully Submitted,
Gayle Capik, Recording Secretary