

Newcastle Fire Protection District

Minutes of Regular Board of Directors Meeting

Pursuant to the Governor's Special-Order N-29-20, issued March 17, 2020, the January 20, 2021 Regular Board of Director's Meeting was held via teleconference.

**1. Call Meeting to Order**

- a. Chairman Kahrl called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.
- b. Director Heisterkamp led the Flag Salute.
- c. All Directors were present.
- d. Chief Gow, District Manager Lofrano, BC Nelson, BC Williamson and Fire Marshal D'Ambrogi were present.

**2. Approval of Agenda**

- a. Secretary Elder made a motion to approve the agenda as presented. Director Enos seconds the motion. Motion carries unanimously via roll call (5/0).

**3. Approval of Minutes**

- a. Chairman Kahrl pointed out that Architect John Bohnett's name has been misspelled in the minutes. Recording Secretary Metz will make the correction.
- b. VC Bettencourt made a motion to approve the minutes as amended. Director Enos seconds the motion. Motion carries unanimously via roll call (5/0).

**4. Approval and Financial Report**

- a. Chief Gow reported that the district is currently 52% of their budget.
  - i. Monies from strike team deployments are still outstanding.
  - ii. Newcastle is now paying their own bills each month.
- b. Director Heisterkamp asked about the Secure Property Tax received. DM Lofrano explained the Teeter program where the county disperses property tax in 2-3 installments through the year. 55% is received in December, 40% is received in April and 5% is received in June (certain restrictions apply to the June disbursement).
- c. VC Bettencourt made a motion to approve the financial report as presented. Director Enos seconds the motion. Motion carries unanimously via roll call (5/0).

**5. Correspondence**

- a. Chairman Kahrl reported that the Board received a letter from Neil Anderson stating that he will be unable to prepare the documentation for the collection of next fiscal year's direct charges. He added that once the Board decides how they will proceed with filling this need, the new person(s) can contact him to get his notes. The Board has expressed interest in recognizing Mr. Anderson with a resolution at the next meeting.

**6. Public Comment**

- a. None

**7. Fire Chief Gow's Report:**

- a. Chief Gow reported that PHF is in the middle of contract negotiations with L3800. A new generator has been installed at their administration office.
- b. County News
  - i. Penryn has hired a new Interim Fire Chief. Chief Brian Shannon is a former Division Chief from Sac. Metro Fire.
  - ii. South Placer Chief Walder has announced his retirement effective at the beginning of March.
  - iii. South Placer Fire is still considering a contract for administrative services with Penryn Fire.

- iv. VC Bettencourt and Chief Gow were interviewed for KAH1 radio regarding the happenings at Newcastle Fire. The interview was arranged by Director Enos.
- c. Prevention (Fire Marshal D'Ambrogi Reporting)
  - i. Currently working on 2 minor subdivisions, 8 single family dwellings and 1 commercial building.
  - ii. Attended the Auburn Fire Safe Council meeting.
  - iii. Working on the Local Hazardous Mitigation Plan (LHMP) for PHF and NEW.
  - iv. Going to be adding a Fire Prevention section to the district's website.
- d. BC Nelson's Report
  - i. Currently working career development projects.
  - ii. Operations Report given by Captain Kirk:
    - a) 56 calls in December
    - b) 27 EMS
    - c) 5 MVA (2 rollover)
    - d) 8 Fires
    - e) 16 Other Types of Calls
    - f) 1 Billable Call

#### **8. Newcastle Professional Firefighter's Association**

- a. Engineer McCoy reported:
  - i. Currently maintain lockdown protocols.
  - ii. Captain Hicks is out for a family medical issue. Captain Kirk will be filling in on A Shift.

#### **9. Board Committee Reports**

- a. Building Committee: update on the new fire station and possible NEPA requirement.
  - i. VC Bettencourt reported that NEPA (National Environmental Policy Act) is applicable to the new fire station project as it is a requirement to get a USDA loan. In many cases the state equivalent (CEQA) is more stringent than NEPA. VC Bettencourt has contacted Placer County for guidance with the process. George Rosasco has been assigned to help.
  - ii. There are 3 levels of NEPA requirement:
    - a) Categorical Exclusion (CX)
    - b) Environmental Finding of No Impact (EA/FONSI), has a 45-day review process.
    - c) Environmental Impact Statement (EIS).
- b. Finance Committee: Update on USDA loan and possible need for Bond Counsel.
  - i. Chief Gow reported that the Finance Committee has been busy. Mike Vukas reported that his immediate supervisor is working on our pre-application. USDA was seeking a second refusal letter for financing the new station. DM Lofrano was able to get one from CA Bank.
  - ii. Yes, we will require Bond Counsel. DM Lofrano has spent a lot of time on this. There are a number of people who can do the job. The cost is (roughly):
    - a) PHF Counsel ~\$25K
    - b) KMTG (current counsel) ~\$25K
    - c) Capitol Finance (they do not use a lawyer) ~\$10K
    - d) Scott's Valley Firm ~\$30K
  - iii. The Board gave direction to Chief Gow to pursue getting firm information from the district's current counsel, KMTG.

## 10. Informational/Non-Action Items

- a. Update on First Responder Medical Service Fee and ALS programs.
  - i. Chief Gow reported that things are coming along quickly. So far, it looks like Wittman Enterprises will be the preferred company to provide billing services. Their price per call is \$15. AMR will send the call data to Wittman.
  - ii. Staff is working on an equipment list which we will take to the Chief's ambulance group and ask them to pay for the equipment.
  - iii. The district will have to pay for a nexus study to come up with a true "cost per call" amount.
- b. Update on the Departments' COVID-19 response.
  - i. This takes a lot of staff time.
  - ii. So far, we have seen a decline in sick people and an incline in available ICU beds.
  - iii. We have been responding to many known COVID calls as well as respiratory distress calls.
  - iv. Staff directives for the handling of COVID issues will be included in the Health and Safety Plan that will come before the board soon.
  - v. It is believed that 40% of eligible people (countywide) are getting the vaccine.
  - vi. Chief Gow was able to purchase in-house test kits through his medical license at a cost of ~\$20 each.

## 11. Action Items

- a. Election of Board Officers and appointment of Committee Assignments.
  - i. Chairman Kahrl thanked everyone for their patience and cooperation over the past year.
  - ii. He outlined the following accomplishments:
    - a) Clearing of the las of the County permit process.
    - b) The District went out to bid for the new station.
    - c) A new agreement with labor was reached.
    - d) A new Fire Chief was brought on.
    - e) The County Treasurer pulled out of funding the new station, but with Chief Gow's assistance the District still has her cooperation.
    - f) A loan from the USDA is in the process of being obtained.
  - iii. Secretary Elder stated that the group works very well together and, in her opinion, we should keep the everyone in place for another year.
    - a) VC Bettencourt wants the committee assignments to remain the same, but he does not want to be Chair or Vice-Chair. The work of the Building Committee will most likely increase when the construction of the new station begins.
    - b) Directors Enos and Heisterkamp concur with leaving everyone in place for another year.
  - iv. Director Elder made a motion to nominate Director Kahrl for Chairman. Director Heisterkamp seconds the motion. Motion carries unanimously vial roll call vote (5/0).
  - v. Director Bettencourt made a motion to nominate Director Elder for Vice-Chairman. Director Heisterkamp seconds the motion. Motion carries unanimously vial roll call vote (5/0).

- vi. Director Elder made a motion to nominate Director Heisterkamp for Secretary. Director Kahrl seconds the motion. Motion carries unanimously via roll call vote (5/0).
- vii. The Committee Assignments will remain the same:
  - a) Building: Bettencourt/Kahrl
  - b) Personnel: Enos/Heisterkamp
  - c) Finance: Elder/Heisterkamp
  - d) Administration Contracts: Bettencourt/Heisterkamp
- b. Lexipol Policy review; Consider and approve the second reading of §2 Policies: 213, Credit Cards, 214, Payroll and §4: Fire Prevention.
  - 400 Fire Inspections
  - 401 Permits
  - 402 Fire Investigations
  - 403 Code Enforcement
  - 404 Alternative Materials and Methods Requests
  - 405 Public Education
  - 406 Fireworks Displays
  - 407 Hazardous Materials Disclosures
  - 408 Maximum Occupancy – Overcrowding
  - 409 Juvenile Fire Setter Referrals
  - 410 Fire Watch Services

Chief Gow reported that section F of the Payroll policy was added at the request of the Union.

Director Bettencourt made a motion to approve the second reading of policies 213, 214 and §4 Fire Prevention. Director Enos seconds the motion. Motion carries via roll call vote (5/0).

- c. Consider and approve the 1st reading of Section 5 of the Lexipol Policy Manual: Emergency Medical Services-
  - 500 Pre-Hospital Care Reports
  - 501 Medical Supplies
  - 502 Patient Refusal of Pre-Hospital Care
  - 503 Advance Health Care Directives
  - 504 Latex Sensitivity
  - 505 Controlled Substance Accountability
  - 506 CPR Training
  - 507 Automated External Defibrillators
  - 508 Automated External Defibrillator Training
  - 509 Bloodborne Pathogen Training
  - 510 Communicable Diseases
  - 511 Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA) Training
  - i. Chief Gow told the board that this section is very basic.
  - ii. Director Bettencourt made a motion to approve the 1<sup>st</sup> reading of Section 5. VC Elder seconds the motion. Motion carried unanimously via roll call (5/0).
- d. Consider and approve an addendum to the district's 2019/2020 Audit recording that the \$40K donation was an in-kind donation from another agency and that it was a non-cash transaction.
  - i. Secretary Heisterkamp stated that there needs to be a footnote added to the audit regarding this item.

- ii. Director Bettencourt believes there should be a footnote and an addendum added.
  - iii. DM Lofrano suggested that the approved minutes be included at the end of the audit.
  - iv. Secretary Heisterkamp made a motion to attach a copy of the approved meeting minutes to the approved 2019/2020 financial audit. VC Elder seconds the motion. Motion carries unanimously via roll call vote (5/0).
- e. Discussion and action regarding the Continuation of the Board Members' stipend.
- i. VC Elder reported that she personally would rather not receive the stipend.
  - ii. Director Bettencourt stated that he would like to keep receiving the stipend to offset some of the expenses incurred on behalf of the district.
  - iii. Secretary Heisterkamp suggested that the board leave it up to each individual member to decide if they would like to receive the stipend or not.
  - iv. No action was taken on this item.
- f. Consider and approve the amended agreement for services with the Placer County Auditor-Controller for FY 20/21 at a cost of \$3,153.73.
- i. DM Lofrano reported that the original cost of the contract was to be \$4,500.00, but since the district will pay its own bills the new cost is \$3,153.73.
    - a) Secretary Heisterkamp made a motion to approve the amended agreement with the County Auditor-Controller's office at a cost of \$3,153.73. VC Elder seconds the motion. Motion carries unanimously via roll call vote (5/0).
- g. Consider and approve the meeting calendar for 2021.
- i. VC Elder made a motion to approve the board calendar for 2021 as presented. Chairman Kahrl seconds the motion. Motion carries unanimously via roll call vote (5/0).

**12. Directors Reports:**

- a. None

**13. Chairman Kahrl adjourned the meeting at 7:43 p.m.**

Respectfully Submitted By:

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Patrice Metz, Recording Secretary

Approved: \_\_\_\_\_