

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 19, 2022 Regular Board of Director's Meeting was held via teleconference and in-person at:
Long Valley Community Hall
2005 Rattlesnake Rd., Newcastle, CA 95658

1. Call Meeting to Order

- a. Chairman Kahrl called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.
- b. Director Bettencourt led the flag salute.
- c. All directors were present.
- d. Chief Gow, Fire Marshal D'Ambrogi and BC Williamson were present.

2. Approval of Agenda

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

3. Approval of Minutes

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

4. Approval of Financial Report

- a. Secretary Heisterkamp moved to approve the financial report as presented. Director Enos seconds the motion. Motion carries unanimously via roll call (5/0).

5. Correspondence

- a. None

6. Public Comment

- i. Auburn Fire Safe Council (FSC) representative, Frank Udvarhelyi announced that there will be a meeting on Friday, 1/21 via Zoom.
- b. Jon Anacker stated that the mutual aid between the districts and Auburn City is much appreciated and beneficial.

7. Chief's Report

- a. Chief Gow reporting:
 - i. The winter storm ("snowmageddon") was horrific. More than 100 calls were run during that period. Multiple trees came down, the power was out to many areas for days. All crews performed heroically. All 3 Battalion Chiefs and Chief Gow were actively working during the storm.
 - ii. Newcastle has hired a new Engineer, Jeff Costa.
 - iii. The fuel issue has been addressed. The district will now purchase its fuel from Dawson Oil. This is estimated to save the district \$.60 per gallon.
 - iv. There is an Engineer test pending. Penryn and Placer Hills each have one open position. Newcastle will be establishing a hiring list.
 - v. Penryn signed a labor contract with Local 3800.
 - vi. Penryn's PERS application is basically done at this point.
- b. Fire Marshal D'Ambrogi reporting:
 - i. Inspections and plan reviews have continued to be slow.
 - ii. Currently working on a winery project which has a four-level winery in Penryn (approx. 30K square feet) and a warehouse (approx. 20K square feet) in Newcastle.
 - iii. A replacement utility vehicle was donated by Placer County for Newcastle. It's a 2013 Chevy Tahoe that was previously used by the Probation department.
 1. DM Lofrano to write a thank you letter to Placer County for the donation.

- c. BC Williamson reporting:
 - i. 741 calls run in 2021.
 - ii. 43 calls run in December.
 - iii. December was an extremely busy month.

8. Newcastle Professional Firefighter's Association

- a. None

9. Board Committee Reports

- a. Building Committee report on the new fire station.
 - i. Director Bettencourt reporting:
 - 1. 1/10, there was a pre-construction meeting at the architect's office. Contractors, PCWA, County Engineering, and SPMUD were in attendance (meeting was in person and via Zoom).
 - 2. Everyone got the information they need to order supplies for the project. Hopefully, there will not be any supply chain issues.
 - 3. All parties signed the agreement at the pre-construction meeting.
 - 4. The USDA wants the district to purchase and install a 4' x 8' sign at the station site indicating that USDA has provided financing for the project. The cost of the sign from Paradise Signs is \$288. Brian Toppel will see to installing the sign at the site.
 - 5. Construction slated to start the week of 2/21.

10. Informational/Non-Action Items

- a. Discuss a business opportunity for the existing fire station suggested by Mr. and Mrs. Withrow.
 - i. Chairman Kahrl gave background information on the Withrow's. Chairman Kahrl also reinforced that there is no commitment by the board to support a particular project.
 - ii. Mr. Withrow indicated that he and his wife have just recently gotten into the winemaking business. They are currently looking into the feasibility of having a crushery located in Placer County to cater to small growers in the region.
 - iii. The board will address the creation of an ad-hoc committee to work on selling the current station and organizing the dedication of the new station (item 11/C).
- b. Update on the Departments' COVID-19 response.
 - i. Chief Gow reporting:
 - 1. Omicron seems to be more contagious and less acute. It is running through Placer County now. The stations continue to be closed to the public. Hoping that cases start to drop off in the next 2 weeks. If cases continue to rise, the board may want to consider going back to Zoom meetings for a bit.

11. Action Items

- a. Consider and approve the 2nd reading of the Catastrophic Leave policy.
 - i. Chief Gow reported that Penryn has approved the policy with one addition:
 - 1. §1043.3 (g) "The District Chief will ensure that the donating employee retains enough hours in his or her accruals as to avoid any significant hardship. As regards sick leave, the employee must retain at least a minimum of two years' worth of accrual."
 - 2. No intra-department donations are allowed.
 - ii. VC Elder and Director Bettencourt continue to be opposed to this policy. They do not believe the employee owns their sick leave and therefore cannot give it away.
 - iii. Director Heisterkamp made a motion to approve the second reading of the Catastrophic Leave Policy as presented. Director Enos seconds the motion. Motion carries 3-2 via roll call with Kahrl, Enos and Heisterkamp voting yes; Elder and Bettencourt voting no.

- b. Consider and approve setting up a "GoFundMe" account to purchase designated items for the new fire station.
 - i. Secretary Heisterkamp stated that an opinion by legal counsel is needed to establish whether or not donations to the fire district through GoFundMe are tax deductible.
 - ii. Secretary Heisterkamp is seeking permission from the board to research this idea.
 - iii. The board granted permission for "research only" to move forward, but the item is considered "tabled" for now.
- c. Consider and approve the selection of a new ad-hoc committee to work on selling the current fire station and organize the dedication of the new station.
 - i. VC Elder made a motion to appoint Secretary Heisterkamp and Director Enos to the ad-hoc committee. Director Bettencourt seconds the motion. Motion carries unanimously via roll call vote (5/0).
- d. Consider and approve creating a subcommittee on inter-district cooperation and to enhance coordination in our part of the county.
 - i. Secretary Heisterkamp made a motion to appoint Chairman Kahrl and VC Elder to an ad-hoc committee on inter-district cooperation and to enhance coordination in our part of the county. Director Bettencourt seconds the motion. Motion carries unanimously via roll call vote (5/0).
- e. Election of Board Officers and appointment of Committee Assignments.
 - i. Secretary Heisterkamp made a motion to keep Board Officers and committee assignments the same in 2022. VC Elder seconds the motion. Motion carries unanimously via roll call vote (5/0).
 - 1. Chair: Bill Kahrl
 - 2. Vice-Chair: Joni Elder
 - 3. Secretary: Jim Heisterkamp
 - 4. Building Committee: Bettencourt/Kahrl
 - 5. Personnel Committee: Enos/Heisterkamp
 - 6. Finance Committee: Elder/Heisterkamp
 - 7. Contracts: Bettencourt/Heisterkamp

12. Director's Reports

- a. Director Bettencourt reported that retired South Placer Fire Chief, Tony Corado passed away from a mountain bike accident he had over the weekend. Chief Corado was 61 years old and had retired from SPL in 2012. Services are pending.

13. Chairman Kahrl adjourned the meeting in memory of Chief Tony Corado at 7:52 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted:



Patrice Metz, Recording Secretary

Approved