



South Coast Fire Protection District

P.O. Box 334 Gualala, California 95445 (707)884-4700

Minutes from the Regular Meeting on September 16, 2021

Location: 39215 Church Street, Gualala, California

1. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 6:00pm by Pete Slunaker.

2. Roll Call

Present: Chair Pete Slunaker Directors Kevin Callanan, Rick O'Neil, Chuckie Sorensen, Flavia de Oliveira

3. Public Expression – 3-minute limit

None.

4. Financial Report

Maureen updated the numbers on the current tax income from the county. Since printing the financial reports for the meeting, the district has received some tax income from the county.

She also advised the board of our auditor's intent to raise his fee for service by \$2,000. A discussion ensued about whether or not it was time to look into using a different auditor because we had not changed auditors for over six years and it's a good practice to switch auditors now and then. Jason asked whether the board wanted to go the more formal route and ask for a RFP, or make some informal inquiries from neighboring departments to see who they were using. The board asked if he could find out who our neighboring departments were using and he said he would.

Maureen said that she is now the principle for handling payroll, and if anyone wants to have their check deposited into their account through direct deposit, she can handle that for them.

Pete Slunaker inquired whether the board had approved a position description for the administrative assistant job that Chris Dilks is performing. None had been approved at any previous meeting. Chris Dilks submitted a list several years ago to former Chief Gregg Warner that he brought to a board meeting, but it was not formally adopted. Jason said that any personnel decision should be discussed in closed session. He recommended that some board members be assigned to work with him in developing a position description. Kevin Callanan and Flavia de Oliveira agreed to work with Jason on creating a position description for the Assistant Secretary position.

Maureen added that she went to West America bank to get a copy of a bank statement that we didn't receive, and they informed her about Star Connect where she could retrieve statements on-line. It is a free service, but does not include any bill paying features.

5. Announcements

None.

6. Approval of Minutes from Last Meeting

Flavia de Oliveira motioned to approve the minutes from the regular meeting last July. Kevin Callanan seconded the motion. Rick O'Neil and Pete Slunaker abstained since they were not at the last meeting. The remaining board members, Kevin Callanan, Flavia de Oliveira, and Chuckie Sorensen approved. The motion passed.

7. New Business--Discuss/Action on:

a. Rural Fire Capacity Grant Resolution 2021 - 04. Jason said that this grant was known in the past as the VFA grant and has been renamed the Rural Fire Capacity Grant. It is still a 50/50 matching grant. The grant that the department submitted was awarded. It will include PPE (turnouts, and wildland gear) and new radios that will be in compliance to the new CALFIRE spec. The total project cost is about \$40,000, and the district will be reimbursed for half of that amount.

Flavia de Oliveira motioned to accept Resolution 2021 – 04 for the Rural Fire Capacity Grant, Kevin Callanan seconded the motion. The vote tally is as follows:

Pete Slunaker	Aye	Nays, none	Absent, N/A
Kevin Callanan	Aye		
Flavia de Oliveira	Aye		
Rick O'Neil	Aye		
Chuckie Sorensen	Aye		

b. Frequency of Board meeting. Jason requested that the board meeting be held on a monthly basis instead of every other month. After discussion, a majority of board members agreed to his request and approved monthly meetings to take place on the third Thursday of each month.

c. Cost Recovery—Fire R. Jason proposed that the district adopt using a cost recovery company to ensure invoices that the district sends out are fully paid. Currently, the district's cost recovery for bills that they have sent out has been intermittent. Jason said that several departments use Fire Recovery USA which he was promoting for our billing needs. The company handles the billing and collections and claims to have a 90% success rate. They charge 22% percent of what they collect for their services. The rate schedule that they use is much higher than what the district has been billing in the past. However, the department maintains the ability to refine the bill in terms of resources allocated to match the needs of the call. Jason said it was his intention not to bill for medical aids, but bill for rescues and some fires. Jason wants to have the ability to bill directly from the ImageTrend software the department is using. The cost of interfacing the Fire Recovery USA service with the ImageTrend software is \$2,000 annually. He also said that the district would have to revise the 93-1 ordinance to accept the contract for Fire Recovery USA.

Rick O'Neil motioned to revise the 93-1 ordinance to utilize Fire Recovery USA for billing and cost recovery service, and to accept the contract and mitigation rates of Fire Recovery USA. Chuckie Sorensen seconded the motion. All approved, the motion passed.

d. Rate Schedule. The rate schedule was discussed in the previous item "c".

e. West America Bank—Authorized Users. Jason needs to be added to the authorized users list so that the bank can have the authorization to share financial information with him.

Chuckie Sorensen motioned to add Jason Warner to the authorized users at West America Bank. Rick O'Neil seconded the motion. All approved, the motion passed.

f. Online Banking (Star Connect). This agenda item was discussed during the Financial Report.

g. 2021 Fire Agency Wildland and Mutual Aid PG&E Augmentation Funds. The county was awarded 22 million dollars of the settlement from PG&E for the massive wildfires that their equipment ignited. The district

will get about \$45,000 to spend on goods that can enhance wildland and mutual aid operations. Jason would like to get some more Ipads for the rigs, GPS units, new tires, hazmat monitor, a battery powered extrication combi-tool, circular chainsaws, vent fans, and small tools.

Chuckie Sorensen motioned to accept the 2021 Fire Agency Wildland and Mutual Aid PG&E Augmentation Funds as well as accept the list that Jason Warner presented to the board. Flavia de Oliveira seconded the motion. All approved, the motion passed

8. Old Business—Discuss/Action on:

a. Water Tank Grant—Land Use Agreement. Jason has been working on completing the installation of the water tanks at the Iversen station as well as other sites in remote areas of the district. He updated the board on the progress, and it looks like this grant, which was awarded in 2015, will come to a conclusion soon. Flavia de Oliveira signed the landowner access agreement for the Iversen station which is required to perform the project and monitor its progress.

b. Benefits for the Chief. Jason said he would like to continue the current agreement to pay for his current health insurance because he has not had time to research new insurance offers.

Pertaining to “Old Business,” Kevin inquired what the status of approving the budget was. At the last meeting approval was tabled to allow for more time for public input. However, it was not added to this agenda, so it will have to be added to next months’ agenda so the board can tack action on this item. Also, he inquired about promoting fire department hookups on private water tanks. Chuckie mentioned she saw that information on the department’s Facebook site.

9. Chief’s Report

- Calls have slowed down somewhat, but the department is on track to having the busiest year on record.
- Jason informed the board about the county’s vax or test policy.
- The district just received their ISO rating from this year’s audit. The district is classified as a 5.
- A discussion of the driving issues the department is experiencing with the 2019 Ford F-250 ensued. Jason has explored having it repaired versus trading it in for an F-150. Several shops have offered their opinions on the problem, but there hasn’t been much agreement on the fix. No action was taken at this time, and the department would continue to inquire about repairing the truck, and resort to trading it in as a back up plan.
- Jason updated the board on the status of strike team assignments. The engine that just came back has been out for 56 days on an OES assignment.
- There will be a community meeting here next month with Mendocino Health Alliance. They have received a grant for fire prevention outreach, so the department has been working with them on getting fire prevention messages out.

10. Closed Session

None.

11. Open Session after Closed Session

None.

12. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 7:30pm, next regular meeting is on October 21, 2021.