



South Santa Clara County Fire District

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Derek J. Witmer, Fire Chief

MINUTES OF THE SOUTH SANTA CLARA COUNTY FIRE DISTRICT BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS REGULAR MEETING OF FEBRUARY 7, 2018

1. CALL TO ORDER

The regular meeting of the Board of Commissioners of the South Santa Clara County Fire District was held on Wednesday, February 7, 2018 at Masten Fire Station. Chairperson Ludewig called the meeting to order at 6:01 p.m.

1.1 ROLL CALL

- A. Commissioners Present: Acker, Burback, Lewis, Ludewig, Monaco and Velasco
- B. Fire District Staff: Chiefs Witmer and Provence
- C. Absent: Commissioner Scatena, Chief Crawford

INTRODUCTIONS

None

1.2 DECLARATION OF POSTING OF AGENDA

District Clerk Healy certified that the meeting's agenda was duly noticed and posted in accordance with Government Code 54954.2.

2. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

None

3. AGENDA AMENDMENTS

None

4. MINUTES AND EXPENDITURES

- 4.1 Approve Board Meeting Minutes of December 13, 2017

On motion of Commissioner Burback and seconded by Commissioner Acker, the December 13, 2017 minutes were approved by the following vote:

AYES: Acker, Burback, Lewis, Ludewig, Monaco and Velasco
NOES: None
ABSENT: Scatena

- 4.2 Approve December/January Expenditures

Purchases of a commercial treadmill at Station 2 and security cameras for Stations 2 and 3 were noted and substantiated by Chief Witmer.

On motion of Commissioner Lewis and seconded by Commissioner Monaco, the expenditures from December and January were approved by the following vote:

AYES: Acker, Burback, Lewis, Ludewig, Monaco and Velasco

NOES: None

ABSENT: Scatena

5. BOARD, STAFF AND COMMITTEE REPORTS

5.1 Statistical Report of Incidents

Chief Witmer summarized the report provided for November and December statistics, as well as for the year. There were 196 responses to the District from November and December and the District provided 377 responses to other agencies during these months.

Chief Witmer reviewed the District's call volumes for last year; aid responses to the District totaled 1341 and there were 2297 District responses to other agencies (1704 to Morgan Hill and 567 to Gilroy). The total of engine responses reached 1982 for the year. A summary of all incidents illustrates 69% were medical, 12% public assist, 3% vegetation fires, 1% structure fires and 15% "other" fires.

The response numbers between the District and Gilroy are tightening, but there is still an imbalance with Morgan Hill. Chief Witmer said that the issue is being addressed as the next contract cycle is negotiated.

5.2 Battalion Chief Response Statistical Report

Chief Witmer summarized the statistical report of Battalion Chief Responses within South County for the months of November, December and the year as a whole.

BCs responded to 107 incidents during this time period - 55 incidents were in the District, 23 in Gilroy and 29 in Morgan Hill. The BCs were on scene at 49 of those incidents, and on scene in less than 15 minutes nearly 88% of the time. The average response time remains concurrent with previous months, the average for the year was 87% for 492 on scene responses out of 960 incidents.

5.3 Inspector Statistical Report

Craig Farley worked a total of 54.5 hours from November through December. There were nine new inspections and eight follow-ups. There were no complaints/referrals that required response from his office. Seven plan reviews were conducted during the reporting period.

Chief Witmer summarized the year's totals for the Board; 466.5 hours of inspection services were provided in 2017.

5.4 Volunteer Firefighters Report

New volunteers are going through the RPP process for clearance to begin training and responding to incidents. A total of 14 training hours during this period focused on orientation for the new volunteers and testing of E169 gear and equipment.

There are now 15 volunteers, with two qualified to drive.

5.5 Mitigation Fees Report

There were no expenditures. During the November and December reporting period, total fees collected were \$5445.86. Revenues collected reflect fees for 11,114 square feet of various construction.

5.6 Correspondence

The District received thanks from the Ventura County Fire Department for their response to the Thomas Fire.

6. OLD BUSINESS

6.1 Cooperative Fire Protection Agreement ♦ Information

Chief Witmer reported that progress continues on the District's agreement with CAL FIRE. The five year plan will begin in FY 2018-2019. There are few changes planned in the agreement; staffing will

remain at the same level and there will be cost sharing of some of the District's administrative positions with the City of Morgan Hill and the percentage the City pays for the headquarters' engine is proposed to increase. There will be one significant staffing change, the addition of a Division Chief to oversee the South County cooperative agreements and to provide continuity of operations. The funding for the Chief's position will be amortized over time; the District and City will each fund 25% with the State funding 50% in 2018-2019 and the cost will be adjusted over time to the District and City's full funding of the position.

The Chief is anticipating the agreement proposal will go to the Board of Supervisors in April, and no later than May. Staff are waiting for the final rate letter to be approved by CAL FIRE's budget office and executive staff to provide the salary information necessary to complete the agreement.

6.2 Standards of Cover ♦ Information

Chief Witmer reported on the progress of the standards of cover study. The County has been consulted regarding the sole source concern and using the original vendor for this updated study. The existing scope of work is still relevant and only requires some updating to address future communications issues which will provide data to move emergency services forward. The emphasis of the study will focus on the regional coverage and services in South County and management from the City of Morgan Hill and Gilroy Fire Department are interested in participating, though are not committed at this early stage of the process.

6.3 Development Impact Fee Increase ♦ Information

The status of the fee increase was discussed. Staff have consulted with County Counsel and Budget Analyst. At this time, after several reviews of ordinances and District documents (Taussig justification study), it appears that the request for increase of fees must be presented through a hearing with the Board of Directors and subsequently with the Board of Supervisors. Staff hope to have all issues resolved in time to schedule the hearings on the Board's agenda in March.

6.4 2018-2019 Budget ♦ Information

Chief Witmer reported that the budget is still on track. Revenue projections are only up approximately 2% for the upcoming year. Given the concern with continued limited revenue growth, the Board was provided with information on a "projected" timeline when the District could be at deficit spending; matching the policy that 20% of District reserves must be secured from the prior year's actual expenditures. The Chief discussed that, historically, District expenditures and revenues have always run very close. He has turned to the County for potential support in some public polling for feedback on a bond or tax initiative to alleviate the yearly risk of dipping into District reserves.

A question was presented regarding the best practice and the trending reserve minimums of other jurisdictions. The District developed the policy according to the baselines of other jurisdictions at that time. The Chief will query other fire districts regarding their budget policies on reserve fund minimums and provide the information to the Board at the next meeting.

Another question came up regarding the District's ability to absorb the cost of the additional chief's position, given the limited growth of future revenues. The cost sharing with the City of the analyst's and mechanic's positions and increased percentage of the City's costs for the headquarters engine will augment funding of the new position. The Board will be provided with the cost projections of these position changes.

Another factor that may have to be considered in future budgets is the pending County RFP for EMS transport, as it's unknown if there will be changes in ALS/First Responder funding with a new ambulance contract.

7. NEW BUSINESS

7.1 FDAC Conference ♦ Information

The Fire Districts Association of California is holding their annual conference in Monterey April 10-13. Their educational agenda has not been published, but Chief Witmer is hopeful that they will be presenting their Board of Directors series. He encourages anyone interested to attend as it can provide helpful information for staff and commissioners.

8. REQUEST FOR FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS

- ◆ Information on polling consultants.
- ◆ Information on generating revenues from fee for services.

9. CHIEF'S REPORT

- ◆ Chief Witmer announced the promotion of BC Mike Marcucci to East Bay Division Chief.
- ◆ Work continues on the Equipment Replacement Plan in the District's Depreciation Policy.
- ◆ Station 2 has a water issue in the well, testing positive for coliforms. The station is on bottled water until the well is repaired and testing determines negative coliforms. The safety seal on the top of the well is cracked and has moved and slumped, which is the cause of the coliforms development. The repair is approximately \$4900 and will be submitted to the insurance company for possible reimbursement. The seal must be repaired before the well can be shocked to eliminate the coliforms.

10. GOOD OF THE ORDER

- ◆ Reminder to all to submit Form 700s, due April 2.

11. ADJOURN MEETING

The meeting was adjourned at 7:12 p.m. Next regular meeting: April 11, 2018 at Morgan Hill Expanded.

ATTEST

Tache Ludewig, Chairperson

Karen Healy, Secretary