

MINUTES

Regular Board Meeting

February 11, 2020

5:30 p.m.

Location: 631 9th Street, Arcata

Arcata Fire Station Classroom

Board of Directors

Nicole Johnson (Division 2) - President, Randy Mendosa (Division 3) - Vice-President,

Rene Campbell (Division 1) - Director, Elena David (Division 4) - Director

David Rosen (Division 5) - Director

1. CALL TO ORDER

The regular session of the Board of Directors for the Arcata Fire District was called to order by President Nicole Johnson at 5:30 pm.

2. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The Pledge of Allegiance was led by President Johnson.

3. ATTENDANCE AND DETERMINATION OF A QUORUM

The meeting continued with a quorum and the following were present: President Nicole Johnson, Director Rene Campbell, Director Elena David and Director David Rosen. Vice President Randy Mendosa was absent.

Additional District staff included Fire Chief Justin McDonald and Board Secretary Becky Schuette.

4. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Prior to approval of the Agenda, Board Secretary Schuette pointed out a correction on the last page where the date for the next meeting was listed incorrectly. It should have read March 10, 2020 instead of February 11, 2020.

It was moved to approve the agenda with the noted correction.

Motion: Campbell; Second: David

Roll Call: Ayes; Campbell, David, Rosen and Johnson. **Absent;** Mendosa

Motion Carries

5. PUBLIC COMMENT

There were no public comments at this time.

6. CONSENT CALENDAR

6.1 Approval of Minutes from January 14, 2020 Regular Meeting

6.2 January 2020 Financial Report

There were no public comments and no comments from the Board.

It was moved to approve the consent calendar.

Motion: Campbell; Second: David

Roll Call: Ayes; Campbell, David, Rosen and Johnson. Absent; Mendosa

Motion Carries

7. PUBLIC HEARING

There was no public hearing.

8. OLD BUSINESS

8.1 Measure R Update: Chief McDonald reported on the Town Hall meetings and public attendance. He had presented earlier today to the Arcata Main Street business owners.

Director David advised that the Chief and Director Mendosa had presented to Soroptimist and did a great job.

There was a short discussion about scheduling a special closed session meeting on March 5th or 6th to confer with legal counsel about side letters related to violations of the MOU's if Measure R were to fail. The Board Secretary will follow up with a Doodle poll to determine dates and times that work best for everyone.

President Johnson directed several questions to the Local/PAC regarding an update on the legal disclaimer language on their flyer, when their canvassing would begin and if they would notify the Board Secretary of the details so that the Directors could be involved as well. The Local/PAC was also reminded that there was an email list of members of the public who were Measure R supporters that also wanted to be involved and they should be contacted. Additionally, President Johnson urged the group that they should reach out to neighboring partners, such as APD, Arcata/Mad River Ambulance and Humboldt Bay Fire, to request their support and assistance.

Fire Captain Lillard and Firefighter/Local President Anthony Benelisha responded to the Board and the questions from President Johnson. Flyers are being printed and canvassing should begin this weekend. Information will be provided to the Board Secretary to disperse to the Directors.

In response to a question from one of the Directors regarding the status of District volunteers, Chief McDonald advised the Board that due to lack of funding, the volunteer program has been suspended.

There were no additional comments from the public or the Board.

This item was for information only, no action taken.

9. NEW BUSINESS

9.1 Consider Approval of the Fiscal Year 2019/20 Amended Mid-Year Budget: Chief McDonald advised revenues are down. Projections were not as accurate as in the past due to low property tax payments. Additional updates in the budget are related to the soon to

be vacant Battalion Chief (retirement) position and at least one firefighter position. There was also a second part-time inspector hired since the budget was passed.

Director Rosen had questions regarding the tax revenue number that appears to be incorrect; too much having been accrued to date, based on the budget. Chief explained it may be related to having reverted to the old way of entering accruals, rather than using the County Treasury accounts receivable. Those corrections will be made.

There was an additional request in the language being used in the budget summaries, with reference to “net profit” and “excess cash.” The wording is misleading as the District does not make a profit. The language should be “net surplus” instead and in the expenditures chart, the “excess cash (shortfall)” language should be “surplus (deficit)” and no use of the word excess.

There were no further comments from the Board and no public comments.

It was moved to approve the Fiscal Year 2019/20 Amended Mid-Year Budget with the recommended changes.

Motion: David; Second: Rosen

Roll Call: Ayes; Campbell, David, Rosen and Johnson. **Absent;** Mendosa

Motion Carries

9.2 Review of the 2019 Year End Statistics: Chief McDonald reviewed his staff note indicating last year had a 15% increase in calls for service. EMS calls were also up 15%, likely due to the engines getting to calls before the ambulance, 70% of the time. There have been fewer responses cancelled by the ambulance before arrival.

A discussion followed regarding whether or not there really were fewer fires last year and if the stat was skewed based upon fire type and cancellations. A member of the board was concerned that the number is too low and that the public is not seeing the full picture. Hearing that less than one percent of District fire responses are for working structure fires, would have a greater impact if the public is advised that the District averages at least one major structure fire per month.

Captain Lillard spoke to advise that he had been fact checking while the board discussed the topic (from firefighter-nation.com). He found that comparing the District fire statistics to that of the Stockton Fire Department, which is one of the busier departments per capita in the state of California, Arcata is within the average. The Stockton Fire total call volume for working structure fires is also less than one percent of their call volume each year.

Brief wrap up of the topic surrounded the best way to deliver a great deal of information and statistics to the public at the Town Hall meetings, in a short period and have it have an effect on an informed vote.

This item was for information only, no action was taken.

9.3 Updates to District Policy 1002 - Performance Evaluations: Chief McDonald reminded the Board that this item had been on the agenda back in September when the Local requested it be pulled for review by their counsel. Their updates are noted in the attachment. Chief offered that discussion would be warranted during this meeting, however, there is a grievance related to this policy with the potential for another still to come. He does not recommend that anything be changed until the grievance process is

completed. He also reminded the Board that Director Mendosa had questions about this policy and that he is not in attendance tonight.

There were no further comments from the Board and no public comments.

It was moved to table this discussion until a future board meeting.

Motion: Rosen; Second: David

Roll Call: Ayes; Campbell, David, Rosen and Johnson. **Absent;** Mendosa

Motion Carries

9.4 Liability claims processing: Following review of his staff note by the Chief, there was a short discussion regarding the claims procedure and what the Chief explained he had learned from the District FAIRA representative.

There were no comments from the public and not additional discussion or comments from the Board.

It was moved to leave the liability claims processing as is.

Motion: Campbell; Second: David

Roll Call: Ayes; Campbell, David, Rosen and Johnson. **Absent;** Mendosa

Motion Carries

9.5 Removal of Rick Gomes as a Coast Central Account Signatory: Chief Gomes is retiring and it is a requirement of Coast Central Credit Union to have approved minutes from the Board that reflect the removal of Battalion Chief Gomes from the account.

It was moved to remove Rick Gomes as a Coast Central Account Signatory effective on his last day of employment with the District.

Motion: Campbell; Second: David

Roll Call: Ayes; Campbell, David, Rosen and Johnson. **Absent;** Mendosa

Motion Carries

10. CORRESPONDENCE

President Johnson reviewed the correspondence.

11. MONTHLY ACTIVITY REPORTS

11.1 Chiefs Report - Chief McDonald verbally reviewed his staff report. He then showed the board the ballistic vests for MCI and violent incidents to be purchased via grant funding from the Jalmer-Berg Foundation.

11.2 Committee Reports - Finance committee met and discussed the mid-year budget. Plan to meet to determine the pass/no pass Measure R budgets. Following the election they will begin next year's budget.

11.3 Director Matters - Director David apologized for her limitations with her current medical condition and again praised the Chief for speaking at Soropotimist.

President Johnson commended the Chief for all of the hard work and the informative slide show revolving around Measure R. She also advised that a friend encouraged the District to participate in the Bowl for Kids' Sake this year.

Director Campbell agreed with President Johnson and thanked staff for their hard work with the Measure R forums.

11.4 Bargaining Group & Association Reports

Senior Management Group (SMG) - Battalion Chief Rick Gomes did not have a report for the group, however, he did speak about his upcoming retirement. He also commended the current Board for being dynamic and proactive and appreciated the energy and cohesiveness among the board and the association groups at this time.

Local 4981 - President Anthony Benelisha added a few comments that had not been included in his report. He advised that the Local was prepared to work with Administration and the Board regarding scheduling and staffing issues if Measure R does not pass. He provided the board an update on Humboldt Bay Fire's dog Cali who was back following cancer surgery in Oregon. Before reviewing his association staff note, he informed the Board of the Spaghetti Feed fundraiser on Mar 6th at the Wharfinger Building in Eureka to earn funds for the Eureka fallen firefighters Memorial. He also added that Chief Gomes would be missed.

Arcata Volunteer Firefighters Association (AVFA) - President Rob Cannon reviewed his report with a few updates. The purchase of the ballistic vests with the funds from the Berg Foundation will be modified slightly by purchasing fewer vests, but include rifle plats and more helmets instead. He also added that AVFA will be applying for the Simpson Spring 2020 grant with the hopes of purchasing a new utility truck.

12. CLOSED SESSION

12.1 CONFERENCE WITH LABOR NEGOTIATORS (Gov. Code Section 54957.6) Agency designated representative: *Counsel Jack Hughes*
Employee Organization: *Local 4981*

President Johnson adjourned to closed session at 6:41pm.

The meeting reconvened at 6:54 pm.

Report out of closed session by President Johnson; the Board gave direction to negotiators.

13. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 6:55 pm

Motion: Rosen; **Second:** Campbell

The next Regular Meeting is scheduled for **March 10, 2020 at 5:30 pm at the Arcata Station Classroom.**

Respectfully submitted,



Becky Schuette
Clerk of the Board