

Rancho Adobe Fire Protection District

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**MINUTES OF THE REGULAR BOARD MEETING
DECEMBER 18, 2024 — 7:00 P.M.
COTATI FIRE STATION - #1 EAST COTATI AVE.
COTATI, CALIFORNIA**

I. CALL TO ORDER / ROLL CALL / PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

President Mark Hemmendinger, called the Regular Board Meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. The agenda for this meeting was posted on December 13, 2024.

Directors Present: Mark Hemmendinger, Bob Moretti, Sage Howell, Bret Herman, Michael Gadoua, Ray Peterson

Directors Absent: Brian Proteau

Minutes Conducted by: Jennifer Bechtold

II. ORAL AND WRITTEN COMMUNICATIONS

A. Citizen Business/Public Comments on Items not appearing on Agenda

There was no comment from the public.

B. Correspondence and/or Presentations

A letter from Generation Housing was included in Board packets addressing the proposed fire impact fees.

The Board of Directors presented a plaque to outgoing Board member, Sage Howell, and thanked him for his years of service to the District.

C. Oaths of Office Administered to Mark Hemmendinger, Brian Proteau, Bret Herman and Pete Albini

Board Clerk, Jennifer Bechtold administered the Oaths of Office to Directors Hemmendinger, Herman and Albini.

III. BOARD REORGANIZATION

A. Election of Chairman and Vice-Chairman, and Passing of Gavel to New Chair

Chairman: Bob Moretti

Motion moved by Mr. Herman and seconded by Mr. Gadoua.
Motion Carried: Aye 6 No 0 Abstain 0 Absent 1

Vice Chairman: Ray Peterson

Motion moved by Mr. Herman and seconded by Mr. Hemmendinger.
Motion Carried: Aye 6 No 0 Abstain 0 Absent 1

B. Appointment of Board Secretary/Clerk

Board Secretary/Clerk: Jennifer Bechtold

C. Appointment of Fiscal Officer

Fiscal Officer: Chief Veliquette

D. Appointments to Committees and Charges to Meet Regularly:

1. Budget/Finance Committee: Chief and 3 Directors

Mr. Hemmendinger (Chair), Mr. Moretti, Mr. Peterson

E. Confirmation of Board Meeting Dates for 2025: Third Wednesday of Every Month:
January 15, February 19, March 19, April 16, May 21, June 18, July 16, August 20,
September 17, October 15, November 19, December 17

IV. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

A. Regular Board Meeting of November 20, 2024

Motion moved by Mr. Gadoua to approve the minutes of November 20, 2024 and seconded by Mr. Herman.

Motion Carried: Aye 6 No 0 Abstain 0 Absent 1

B. Special Board Meeting of December 9, 2024

Motion moved by Mr. Hemmendinger to approve the minutes of December 9, 2024 and seconded by Mr. Herman.

Motion Carried: Aye 5 No 0 Abstain 1 (Mr. Gadoua) Absent 1

V. CONSENT CALENDAR

A. Ratification of Checks Issued

Motion moved by Mr. Gadoua to approve the consent calendar and seconded by Mr. Peterson.

Motion Carried: Aye 6 No 0 Abstain 0 Absent 1

VI. ADMINISTRATIVE COMMUNICATIONS

A. Firefighter's Union Report

There was no report filed.

B. Firefighters' Association Report

Captain Ikalani noted crab feed tickets are on sale and the event will be held on February 1st. Tickets cost \$75/each.

C. Chief's Report

Chief Veliquette reported the following information:

- 1.) District activities: significant responses to rain and wind events, toy drive wrapping was held last weekend with deliveries occurring Saturday 12/21, Association holiday dinner held 12/14, labor management meeting on 12/3, impact fee presentation to the Cotati City Council, meeting with SSU President Cutrer, mechanic recruitment yielded one job offer, but candidate turned this down, new hire fire academy, on boarded 2 full-time firefighter/EMTs and 3 part-time firefighters, academy concludes Friday 12/27 with live burn evolutions.
- 2.) November calls for service: 116 good intent, 114 EMS, 17 service calls, 15 hazardous conditions, 12 false alarms, 7 fire, 1 severe weather and 1 overpressure.
- 3.) Proposed development at 120 E. Cotati Ave. (across from station 1) – 3 story complex with retail and affordable housing.
- 4.) Upcoming events: Crab Feed February 1, FDAC Conference in Napa, April 2025.

D. Director Reports

Mr. Peterson gave an update on his efforts to pursue sales tax funds from the Barnes and Noble bookstore at SSU. There have been past lawsuits in California regarding tax exemption for bookstores like this which is referred to as a possessory interest. This may also pertain to the Green Music Center. Mr. Peterson will be seeking further information from the State Board of Equalization.

E. Committee Reports

a. Finance/Budget

Mr. Hemmendinger noted there have not been any finance meetings. The budget is on target with supplies and services slightly over budget though this tends to go up and down based on need and when we are purchasing items.

b. Ad Hoc Capital Improvements

Chief Veliquette spoke with Van Pelt who continues to work on the facility assessment report. They believe the report will be ready for presentation to the Capital Improvement committee sometime in January, and to the Board by February.

VII. NEW BUSINESS

A. Discussion on Consolidation Process with SCFD

Chief Veliquette reported that the fiscal analysis is now complete and shows a \$1M deficit required for consolidation. SCFD is in the “drivers’ seat” and working with the CAO’s office for this ongoing funding. They will need a commitment by mid-January. The press/outreach will not occur until the funding is identified. LAFCO has confirmed they support the timeline for consolidation of July 1, 2024 and documents requested by them have been turned in. The application must be completed no later than March 1, 2025. Should the funding request be approved, an ad-hoc consolidation committee will be established.

Mr. Peterson would like to see SCFD’s financial situation to verify it is viable long-term and feels this information should also be shared with the community. Future goals are to keep communication open with the Board and staff, meet requests in a timely fashion, work on a “delayed” consolidation (dual path) plan and continue to meet RAFD obligations.

B. Discussion on Section 115 Pension Trust

Chief Veliquette commented that PARS said there is no harm in establishing the trust as this would move forward to the successor agency should we consolidate. Weist Law Firm said it may be prudent to delay funding of the Section 115 Trust, though funding the account would still generate a reasonable and safe return for the District.

Mr. Peterson feels it makes most sense not to move forward with funding the trust until we find out more about consolidation. If we don't consolidate, then we can continue this discussion after March 1.

Motion moved by Mr. Peterson to pause funding of the Section 115 Trust and seconded by Mr. Herman.

Motion Carried: Aye 6 No 0 Abstain 0 Absent 1

C. Discussion and Approval of Procurement Policies

Chief Veliquette noted that the District does not have a solid set of purchasing policies in place. The policies before the Board this evening came from samples from other agencies and then vetted through the finance committee and our legal team.

Mr. Hemmendinger noted the chart in Policy 218, section 218.8.2 seems to be missing some information. Chief Veliquette replied that we will amend this and bring the policy back to the Board in January.

Motion moved by Mr. Gadoua to accept the Procurement Policies, with clarification on Purchasing and Procurement Policy in Section 218.8.2, and seconded by Mr. Herman.

Motion Carried: Aye 6 No 0 Abstain 0 Absent 1

D. Discussion and Possible Approval of Measure H Funding Agreement between Rancho Adobe Fire District and the County of Sonoma

Chief Veliquette commented that we are required to have an agreement with the County of Sonoma in order to transfer Measure H tax funds quarterly. This agreement was developed by the Fire Chiefs Association, administrative group and county counsel. All Districts and cities will be adopting the same agreement. Our legal counsel has also vetted this, and their only comment was that indemnity agreement is very favorable to the County. County counsel said this language is similar to what we have in our other collection agreements, and they are not willing to change the language. Exhibit A provides a summary of the items that will be incorporated into the oversights committee's yearly audit of Measure H funds.

Motion moved by Mr. Herman to approve the Measure H Funding Agreement with the County of Sonoma and seconded by Mr. Albini.

Motion Carried: Aye 6 No 0 Abstain 0 Absent 1

E. Consideration of Employment Agreement between the District and the Fire Chief for December 1, 2024 – November 30, 2025

Mr. Hemmendinger, Mr. Peterson and Mr. Howell negotiated with Chief Veliquette and then met with the Board, who have agreed to a 10% increase in base pay starting January 1, 2025.

Motion moved by Mr. Herman to approve the Fire Chief's Employment Agreement for 2024-2025 and seconded by Mr. Peterson.

Motion Carried: Aye 6 No 0 Abstain 0 Absent 1

New Business Continued:

F. Discussion and Review of FY 2023/2024 Financial Audit

Syed Bukhari from Blomberg & Griffin Accountancy presented the financial audit and found no deficiencies in any of the District's financial statements.

Motion moved by Mr. Hemmendinger to accept the FY 2023/2024 Financial Audit and seconded by Mr. Gadoua.

Motion Carried: Aye 6 No 0 Abstain 0 Absent 1

VIII. DIRECTION ON FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS

- **Revise Chart A in Purchasing and Procurement Policy 218**
- **Oath of Office for Director Proteau**

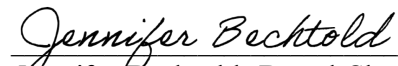
IX. ADJOURNMENT

With no further business to discuss, the Regular Board meeting was adjourned at 9:01 p.m.

Motion moved by Mr. Hemmendinger and seconded by Mr. Herman.

Motion Carried: Aye 6 No 0 Abstain 0 Absent 1

Respectfully submitted,



Jennifer Bechtold, Board Clerk

Date Approved by Board: January 15, 2025