

Minutes from the September 26, 2016 Bolinas Fire Protection District Board Meeting

Pres. Bass called the regular meeting of the Bolinas Fire Protection District to order at 7:00PM. Dir. Gade and Dir. Kimball were present. Vice Pres. Chiera and Dir. Shaw were absent. Also present: Chief Brown and Admin Asst. Brown.

MSC Kimball/Gade (unan with two absences) to approve the agenda.

CHIEF'S REPORT

Mera

Chief Brown was unable to attend the regular MERA meeting on Wednesday August 24th. Reports were received on the Strategic Plan Implementation, the Project Oversight Committee and the Tomales Site documents. An addendum was accepted for the contract between Federal Engineering and MERA regarding the providing of wireless communications in support of the Gen II system.

Asst. Chief Marcotte attended the MERA Operations meeting held on September 7th. Discussion included the proposal received from Motorola and necessary changes required involving the height, placement and number of new communications towers.

Asst. Chief Marcotte and Stinson Fire Chief Kenny Stevens attended a meeting with MERA and Motorola representatives. Chief Marcotte and Stevens, after discussion with Inverness Chief Fox and Chief Brown, decided to attend the special meeting without invitation as there is great concern among all West Marin agencies regarding how Gen II will interface with the volunteer paging system. The current low band system used is reaching the end of its technological life span and Motorola has already begun to not support the system in regards to replacement parts. Chief's Stevens and Marcotte wanted to convey at the meeting that we are aware of the issues and wish to work cooperatively and in a timely manner to resolve any problems. Dir. Kimball asked if perhaps MERA could reissue the RFP in order to receive other proposals from other providers besides Motorola. Chief Brown responded that that option has been discussed, and mentioned to Motorola, but not decided upon. He asked how committed MERA is to the paging issue in West Marin and if they are bound to address the unique needs of West Marin agencies in the new system. Chief Brown answered that since West Marin agencies are paying members, the new Gen II system will address the paging issues and needs in our area. He then asked which West Marin agencies are included in the MERA proposal for the Gen 11 system. Chief Brown answered that while all West Marin agencies, including Bolinas, Stinson Beach, Inverness, Tomales, Nicasio, Muir Beach and Marin County,

utilize MERA, only Marin County, Bolinas, Inverness and Stinson Beach are MERA member agencies.

Prevention

Chief Brown gave an update later in the meeting under General Business.

Inspections

None.

Planning

20 Nymph Road – Demolish existing residence, construct new one

324 Ocean Parkway – Addition

23 Rafael Way – Single family residence remodel

28 Crescente – Single family residence

350 Fern – Studio addition

415 Yucca – Legalize Second Unit

380 Larch Road – New septic system, habitat restoration

480 Horseshoe Hill Road, Barn construction

555 Dogwood – New Construction

210 Laurel – Legalize second unit, new guest house

350 Lauff Ranch Rd. – Legalize multiple structures

4900 Shoreline Highway - Remodel

120 Horseshoe Hill Rd – Addition, remodel

10 Olema-Bolinas Rd – Second Unit

11 Brighton – propane tank placement

370 Overlook – Remodel, addition of 2nd unit

100 Mesa Road – AT&T Communications Tower Modification

12 Olema-Bolinas Road – 2nd Unit

105 Wharf Road - Lifting

Grants

The District received \$4,000, of the West Marin Emergency Services grant funding. Historically, West Marin agencies share approximately \$96,000 of funding from the National Park Service to alleviate the impacts of responses to surrounding Park lands. The majority of the funding goes to Marin County Fire Department to partially fund the summer ambulance stationed out of Stinson Beach. The remaining funds are split between the remaining agencies with Bolinas typically receiving \$8,000. Due to agreement negotiations between the NPS and Marin County Fire Department, the funds this year have been reduced. Reception of the other half of the grant monies is currently undetermined. Typically, the funds are used for wild land response equipment and Personal Protective Equipment (PPE).

Training

Training continues with focus on response to Coast Trail calls. The last several drills have focused on Low Angle Rope Rescue training. Classroom

training culminated in a hands-on training in the field, practicing securing a patient into the stokes basket, setting up safety lines and hauling systems and removing the patient from a hillside. Chief Brown thanked Asst. Chief Marcotte and Capt. Krakauer for their excellent guidance and training.

Asst. Chief Marcotte, FF Pete Maendle, and FF Joe Walker attended an Off-Road Driving class in E265 provided free of charge by Marin County Fire. The class took place on the hills of Hicks Valley on Friday, September 16th. The valuable training focused on safety skills for driving large vehicles loaded with water on steep grades and loose dirt. The training will be shared with the rest of the volunteers in the District.

Capt. Krakauer will be attending training on Marin County's 911 Referral System. As per the Grand Jury Report, more agencies are being required to participate in order to more readily recognize seniors in need of services. The Novato Fire Protection District is offering the training free of charge. Capt. Krakauer will bring the training back to the District for the rest of the volunteers.

Chief Brown taught CPR to West Marin Senior Service care givers and members of the public on September 24th. A renewal CPR class is scheduled for the Volunteers on September 22nd.

Volunteers

Two new potential volunteers have recently attended trainings.

The Volunteer Association voted to purchase new furniture for the Day Room. A new couch and two new chairs are scheduled to be delivered on September 21st.

Apparatus

U231 received an annual safety service at Cheda's Garage in Point Reyes Station. No problems were noted.

E285 received its annual safety service at Diego Truck Repair on September 29th. No problems were noted.

U219 is scheduled to be serviced next at Cheda's Garage on October 10th.

Disaster Council

Cadance Lynam is now the new Bolinas Disaster Council Coordinator. She and Chief Brown meet each week and are working on organizing a large scale radio training involving Stinson Beach and Muir Beach. Richard Dillman has graciously offered to assist once the logistics have been worked out.

The next Community Emergency Response Training will be taking place in Nacasio on October 15th and 22nd. Chief Brown will be teaching the Disaster First Aid portion as well as helping with the scenario training at the end of the second day.

The draft agreement between the Bolinas Community Health Clinic and the Bolinas Disaster Council to use the clinic premises during a disaster is still under review. Steven Siegel, the Director, has concerns regarding non-clinic employees working in the clinic due to the sensitive nature of records as well as liability issues. Chief Brown has begun requesting copies of licenses from Disaster medical volunteers to keep on file.

Resource Recovery

Chief Brown attended the most recent meeting on September 13th. Attendees included representatives from Stinson Beach Fire, BCPUD, State Regional Water Quality Control Board, and the Marin County Environmental Health Services. Jeff Creque, a biologist with vast experience with green waste and compost sites, attended as an advisor (and has from the beginning of the site development) along with Mike Aitken, the Resource Recovery Manager. The site visit was held to access the setback requirements from the drainage ditch and the irrigation well. BCPUD has been working to acquire an exemption to the setback requirements that were defined under new rules adopted by the State of CA. The new rules are adversely affecting smaller sites such as Resource Recovery due to a lack of adequate space. The new rules are particularly concerned with sites that compost animal and food waste along with green waste. While other sites in West Marin do accept animal waste, Resource Recovery only accepts vegetation. Also, GM Blackman has been asking for an exemption to the setback requirements during the summer months as the nearby waterway is completely dry during those months. The State representative noted that the nearby waterway was dry and with the earthen berm in place between the water way and the material, there is little to no chance for cross contamination. He approved the variances for the setbacks for the well site and the waterway. The County representative stated that she would follow the recommendations made by the State representative. All issues look likely to resolve leaving the site operational.

Building and Grounds

No update.

General Operations/Administration

Chief Brown reported that all the work that was sited to be completed during the last meeting with the National Park representatives regarding Coastal Trail maintenance and upgrades has been done. The trail is now wider and more level in two places that were difficult to maneuver patients in stokes litters. Chief Brown expressed her appreciation for the trail work done and of the ongoing working relationship with the National Park Service.

The NPS continues to work to address the increasing number of visitors to the Coastal Trail. There are now signs on Highway One in the area of the Wye that are deployed when the trailhead is closed due to the number of vehicles already parked. They have been very aggressive in their social media posts, such as Twitter, regarding the closures as well as informing the

public of alternate access points. In addition, they are working on public education regarding the nature of the hike, hazards, and appropriate attire and gear. The NPS has requested to place a sign on District property that would inform vehicles when the trailhead is closed, allowing vehicles an opportunity to turn around sooner. This item will be discussed under General Business on the agenda.

All of the District ground ladders are scheduled for a bi-annual safety inspection on September 27th.

Admin Asst. Brown has begun working with Bookkeeper Cheryl Robbins for the upcoming annual District audit.

Thanks to Asst. Chief Marcotte, the new District web site is up and running. It is continually being updated but currently reflects many of the changes the Grand Jury Report suggested last March in order to provide better transparency for the public regarding District information. Chief Brown asked the Board to review the site and offer feedback if necessary. Dir. Gade requested that "official site" be added to the web address to distinguish it from other web entries that appear when a search is conducted. Pres. Bass noted that the timing of the regular Board meetings is incorrect and needs to be changed from 7:30pm to 7:00pm. Dir. Gade noted that the Point Reyes Light lists the meeting at a wrong time also. Admin Asst. Brown will correct the listing.

Discussion continued regarding the use of an electric bicycle for conducting hasty searches when the District is dispatched for an unknown location medical aid on the Coastal Trail. Responding with an electric bike would necessitate permission from the NPS to utilize it on trails designated as wilderness, a new District policy regarding training for operators and proper safety equipment, and a list of conditions that would warrant the use of the bicycle. The NPS is not opposed to the use of the bike but has concerns regarding safety issues and liability. The Board discussed the costs (\$800-\$2000) and related issues and concluded that the current nature of most calls does not warrant the purchase of an electric bicycle. The Board would like to make purchases that have a greater benefit to the public.

Chief Brown attended the most recent BCPUD meeting as there were several items on the agenda of interest. One item was a request by the resident at 125 Rosewood to have her water reinstated despite the property being uninhabitable. The resident would like to be able to water landscaping. The BCPUD operational staff made the determination that reinstating the water is a danger to the water system should the property continue to slide. Chief Brown's interest in the issue is purely from a safety standpoint. Reinstating water could lead to illegal habitation of the site causing concerns for fire department personnel when responding.

Chief Brown reviewed a recent Marin County permit in process to rebuild and widen the sea wall walkway at 100 Brighton Avenue. The width of the walkway and proposed railings are of concern. Chief Brown will follow up with the projects architect.

Chief Brown encouraged Board members who have not yet completed their online ethics training to please do so.

VP Chiera forwarded a news article speaking to the “true” condition of pension funds. There is concern that agencies may not be aware of their realistic pension liability based on how CalPERS is reporting. Chief Brown and Admin. Asst. Brown will conduct research with CalPERS and bring the information back to the Board.

Chief Brown stated that adoption of 2016 California Fire Codes will be on the October and November agendas. Every three years, the District, along with all other Marin County agencies, are required to formally adopt the ordinance outlining the changes adopted by Marin County. The October meeting will be the first reading of the ordinance by title only. A special meeting will be scheduled for early November in order to hold a public hearing on the ordinance and take action on the corresponding resolution. The special meeting is needed in order to make the November Marin County Board of Supervisors meeting where the ordinance will be ratified along with all other agencies ordinances. This work is necessary in order for the proper fire codes to be enforced by the Marin County Building department. November 14th was suggested as a Special meeting date. Admin Asst. Brown will contact Vice Pres. Chiera and Dir. Shaw about their availability on the proposed date.

Surfers’ Overlook Repair/Terrace Avenue

No update.

Personnel

Chief Brown proposed that a committee be formed to address strategic and succession planning for the District. She stated that the discussion began last year when the Board was considering hiring Asst. Chief Marcotte as an Operational Chief. Since then, Capt. George Krakauer was hired as a full time firefighter. He has proven to be an exceptional hire. Despite the fact that Chief Marcotte was unable to come to work for the District, succession planning still needs to take place. She suggested that the committee consist of one or two Board members, Chief Brown, Asst. Chief Marcotte, Capt. George Krakauer, and an additional volunteer.

Dir. Kimball presented an agenda to be considered at a possible Board retreat to address strategic and succession planning before forming a committee. He outlined a list of long term issues including:

Succession planning for:

- 1) Fire Chief position
- 2) Board positions
- 3) Volunteers.

Medium to long term financial viability issues including:

- 1) Capacity to fund capital expenditures (i.e. engines) after meeting annual operating expenses
- 2) Trends away from all volunteer staffing
- 3) Revenue stability

Demographic shifts in Bolinas issues including:

- 1) An increase of part-time residents
- 2) Less “stock” for volunteers and Board member staffing
- 3) Volunteer aging realities
- 4) An increase of complexity of regulations regarding labor laws

Changes in Operational workload and technology issues

After more discussion, Pres. Bass suggested that a work session be completed to prioritize issues before a possible retreat early in the New Year where a committee would then be formed to address prioritized issues. The Board concluded that prioritizing of long term issues are on the Special meeting agenda scheduled for November 14th.

GENERAL BUSINESS

Discussion: Vegetation removal on Bolinas roads.

Chief Brown expressed her concern about the encroachment of vegetation along Bolinas roads, especially the dirt roads on the big Mesa. She asked the Board if they believe the District should consider spending prevention money for clearing overgrowth but warned against setting precedents for vegetation removal. Dir. Gade expressed her concern over the expense of tree and vegetation removal and asked whose responsibility is it ultimately for road clearing. Chief Brown answered that this has been an ongoing issue. No one agency is responsible for the roads. The BCPUD will address issues that impact their infrastructure and some neighborhoods will join together to improve their roads. Many areas are left completely unaddressed. Dir. Gade repeated her concern for the need for preventative measures such as road clearing in general. Dir. Kimball suggested that Chief Brown draft a policy that outlines the parameters of such a project with financial limits for the District. Chief Brown feels that if the District were to take on doing limited road clearing, it would be only in situations that require it due to the inability of emergency vehicles to pass.

Action Item #1: Consider request from Point Reyes National Seashore to place sign on fire district property.

Chief Brown described the “flip down” sign that the Park is requesting to erect on Fire District property. They have made this request in their ongoing efforts to address high numbers of visitors. The sign would advise drivers that the road and/or trailhead is closed. The District is able to give

permission to install a sign much quicker than if the request had been made to the County for another area of Mesa Road. Chief Brown is suggesting the sign could be on the south west most corner of the property adjacent to Mesa Park parking lot. She did express her concern that visitors might see the sign and then want to turn around in the apron in front of the fire engines. The Board agreed that if the public starts turning around in the apron and not in the park, they would request the Park to readdress the sign. MSC, Kimball/Gade (unan with two absences) to give permission to the Point Reyes National Seashore to place a sign on fire district property unless it proves to be a burden in which case the NPRS will be asked to revisit it.

CONSENT CALENDAR

MSC, Kimball/Gade (unan with two absences) to approve the Minutes from the August 22, 2016 regular meeting, the warrant lists from August 17 – September 13, 2016 and the account balances.

PUBLIC EXPRESSION

None.

BOARD MEMBER REPORT

None.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

None.

PERSONNEL MATTERS

None.

ANNOUNCEMENT

None.

GOOD OF THE ORDER

The Board thanked Asst. Chief Marcotte and SB Fire Chief Kenny Stevens for taking the initiative to attend the MERA meeting to address West Marin paging issues.

ADJOURNMENT

MSC, Gade/Kimball (unan with two absences) to adjourn the meeting at 8:37 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Molly Brown
District Secretary

Note: All minutes to all Board meetings are available for review at the Bolinas Library.