

Minutes from the December 17th, 2020, Bolinas Fire Protection District Board Meeting, Via Zoom.

Pres. Molesworth called the meeting of the Bolinas Fire Protection District to order at 7:00 P.M. Vice Pres. Kimball, Dir. Torrey, Dir. Dunne, and Dir. Martinelli were present. Also present: Chief Krakauer, Asst. Chief Marcotte, Administrative Manager Isaac Taylor, and Paul J. Kaymark, CPA of Nigro & Nigro, PC.

MSC Torrey/Dunne (unan.) to approve the Agenda with the amendment to move item 4a to the beginning of the meeting, and to change item 4b from an action item to a discussion item.

CHIEF'S REPORT

Chief Krakauer attended the Chief's meeting via phone on December 17th. Topics discussed included the idea of a countywide Community Emergency Response Team and hiring a new CERT coordinator, a consolidation of dispatch services with REDCOM, the rollout plan for COVID-19 vaccinations for first responders, an update on Marin Wildfire Prevention Authority from Executive Officer Mark Brown, a MERA update, and an update on resources available from FireSafe Marin, who are taking the lead on public information initiatives with help from new funding from MWPA.

MERA

Chief Krakauer attended the MERA meeting on Wednesday, December 9th. It was announced that mobile installations for Next Gen will begin in February 2021. Construction bid packages continue to move forward, and will be brought before the Governing Board in 2021 for approval. Three packages have already been approved, with fifteen pending. The Governing Board approved an increase to the construction budget, based on updated equipment lists and construction costs. A training committee is being formed for the Next Gen Project, with each agency asked to designate a representative. Chief Krakauer has designated Asst. Chief Steve Marcotte, the District's radio expert. Chief Krakauer thanked Steve for his service to this committee.

Prevention

Chief Krakauer discussed District wildfire preparedness and response in item 4e.

Roads

Chief Krakauer submitted a summary of input on Terrace Avenue issues to the Board of Directors. Recommended actions include addressing minor issues of signage location and striping for pedestrian access areas. Chief Krakauer recommends avoiding action on more controversial issues such as removal of parking spaces as proposed by a resident.

Inspections

No update.

Planning

No update.

Grants

No update.

Training

With in-person trainings currently suspended due to COVID-19 precautions, the focus has shifted to virtual EMT trainings using the Target Solutions online platform.

Volunteers

One new volunteer has been voted in. The Volunteer Raffle has completed, and gift prizes are being distributed. Chief Krakauer thanked Meg Gould for leading another successful raffle.

The Bylaws Committee is continuing to work on updating the outdated volunteer bylaws, including a provision to allow for online voting.

Apparatus

Recent repairs to the U232 flatbed truck are holding up, although it continues to have an undiagnosed electrical draw on the battery. Firefighter Joe Walker plans to replace the ignition component, and local mechanic Nick Weismiller will conduct a draw test if the battery is still being drained afterwards.

Engine 283 is due for service in February 2021.

Disaster Council

No update.

Resource Recovery

Asst. Chief Marcotte reported that the loader died, but Mike Aitken was able to get it fixed. Subsequently, Mike Aitken suffered an injury and will be out for approximately six weeks. Jennifer is attempting to find workarounds for loader operation. Succession planning continues to be a priority.

Buildings and Grounds

Chief Krakauer noted that Asst. Chief Marcotte and Capt. Pete Smith are working on a footer for the training storage container. Chief Krakauer installed an inexpensive but useful rain gauge, which recorded 2.6 inches so far in December.

General Operations/Administration

Chief Krakauer gave an update on COVID-19, noting recent spikes in transmission and hospitalizations that triggered Marin County's recent preemptive stay-at-home order. In a call with CalOES on December 9th, items discussed included limiting holiday travel, testing, and vaccination plans. Biweekly testing for District volunteers/employees is scheduled for 9:00am and 9:30am on Monday, December 21st. Testing is simple through provider Curative, Inc., with an oral self-swab, same-day shipping, and results in less than 48 hours.

Marin Health and Human Services will begin offering community testing for COVID-19 through Curative, Inc. at the Bolinas Fire Station parking lot every Monday from 10:00am to 12:30pm, starting Monday, December 21st. Isaac and Pres. Molesworth worked with our insurer and County Counsel to ensure a strong agreement with Curative, Inc., which Chief Krakauer signed and submitted to Marin HHS on Tuesday, December 15th. Bilingual flyers and notices were posted in the Hearsay, on Nextdoor, and in physical locations around town. Those wishing to be tested should register for a slot on [curative.com](https://www.curative.com) each Friday when they become available.

Vaccinations for first responders are being discussed at the Chiefs level, with a possible start date in early January. Hospital critical care workers were scheduled for this week, with the general public tentatively scheduled for March 2021. Chief Krakauer submitted a list of volunteers and employees to the North Bay Incident Management Team, and

took an email poll of everyone to see whom would like to receive an earlier vaccine as a first responder.

Isaac purchased and installed two H13 HEPA filter air purifiers in the station: one in the front office and one in the firefighters' day room.

Chief Krakauer submitted a contract to Verizon to receive government pricing on new Verizon account, established for two iPhones and one iPad. This will help us catch up in operational efficiency by using digital applications for dispatch information and patient care reports.

Chief Krakauer, Pres. Molesworth, and Isaac had a Zoom call with new Petaluma Health Center management staff regarding plans for the Bolinas Community Health Clinic. The meeting was good and productive, making introductions, establishing points of contact, and receiving updated clinic reopening plans. Isaac will distribute a meeting summary to the Board.

Isaac has been working with representatives from CalPERS and doing independent research to better understand the retirement system and potential investment opportunities with the California Employers Pension Prefunding Trust (CEPPT). This was discussed further in item 4b.

Chief Krakauer and Ian Johnson continue to look into the draft policy for security cameras provided by Kerry Gerchow at County Counsel.

Next board meeting will be Thursday, January 28th. We will vote to approve the 2021 board meeting schedule and assign new officer seats. Pres. Molesworth encouraged other directors to let her know if they have interest in serving as President.

Surfers' Overlook Repair/Terrace Avenue

No Update.

Personnel

Chief Krakauer noted that Isaac is recovering well, and they continue to work well together on new and existing tasks. Pres. Molesworth and Chief Krakauer commended Isaac for a great job ramping up and learning so much in a short time.

GENERAL BUSINESS

Action Item #1 – Review and Accept Draft Audited Financial Statements

Vice Pres. Kimball thanked Paul Kaymark for his superb support, responsiveness, and willingness to help us complete the audit in a timely manner. Paul Kaymark introduced the financial statements from 2020 compared to 2019, explaining that consistency is one of the main things to look for. Overall, the comparison between 2020 and 2019 expenses and income show a high level of consistency with the Measure W TOT tax representing the main new “windfall” of District revenue, contributing to a year-over-year increase in net change in position from \$53,972 in 2019 to \$176,619 in 2020.

Chief Krakauer asked why the West Marin Emergency Services revenue was exactly half of the previous year. Paul Kaymark remarked that the revenue was likely collected late, resulting in two deposits during the 2019 fiscal year.

Vice Pres. Kimball asked about the source of seemingly high investment income. Paul noted that Marin County's investment portfolio got a fair market value adjustment in approximately June 2020, and cautioned not to use this rate of return as a budgetary guide for next fiscal year.

Paul Kaymark noted in budget vs. actual reporting that property tax revenue substantially exceeded the budgeted amount, and recommended revising this number upward in the next budget. Paul remarked that budgeting was very good overall, with good cash reserves.

Vice Pres. Kimball asked if fund balance is equivalent to a for-profit company's net worth, and Paul confirmed.

Paul Kaymark remarked that it was a good year overall, particularly during COVID-19, and stated that a final report would be submitted by approximately the first week of January.

Pres. Molesworth and Chief Krakauer gave her appreciation to Paul Kaymark and his team for helping us complete this year's audit on time.

Pres. Molesworth and Vice Pres. Kimball noted that the Finance Committee met to review these statements with Isaac and Chief Krakauer on Wednesday, December 16th, and felt very comfortable with the contents.

MSC Martinelli/Torrey (unan.) to approve the Draft Audited Financial Statements.

Discussion (formerly Action Item #2) – District Participation in CALPers Prefunding Program for Required Pension Contributions

Isaac explained that CalPERS established the California Employers' Pension Prefunding Trust to allow districts to put money aside for projected increases to pension costs such as Unfunded Accrued Liability (UAL) in a low- to moderate-risk trust fund earning 4-5% interest.

After speaking with CalPERS representatives, reviewing our actuarial valuation statements, comparing other district budgets and participation strategies, and seeking input from auditor Paul Kaymark, the Finance Committee concluded that the potential gains from participating in the trust at this time are negligible. Paul Kaymark pointed out that the administrative cost to participate in the Trust would result in negligible gain. Our pension plan is currently 79-80% funded, which is an excellent number compared with other districts. Also, since we are a small district, we believe any increased annual payments can be absorbed without significant budgetary impact, and for now our preferred strategy for maintaining a high funding percentage is to contribute additional money to annual payments when financially prudent.

Vice Pres. Kimball suggested that the District consider making an additional payment toward our unfunded liability before the end of the current fiscal year. Pres. Molesworth and Chief Krakauer thanked Isaac for doing the research into this opportunity, and Isaac thanked Paul Kaymark for his valuable observations.

Action Item #3 – Approve District Policy for Mutual Aid Staffing and Compensation.

Isaac introduced the policy as a follow-up to the previously-approved resolution authorizing portal-to-portal pay for employees and volunteers assigned to incidents out-of-district.

Dir. Torrey and Pres. Molesworth raised concerns about language borrowed from Stinson Beach Fire stating that “volunteers are considered employees of the district when on a qualifying assignment.” Dir. Martinelli stated that the policy name should not include “mutual aid”, which is generally understood to be “free” and not reimbursable. Due to these concerns, the item was continued and will be taken up at a future board meeting when more research is done on potential liabilities and appropriate revisions are implemented.

Vice Pres. Kimball thanked Isaac for putting the policy together, and Dir. Torrey and Pres. Molesworth for voicing important concerns.

Action Item #4 – Approve Appreciation Letter for District Volunteers and Staff.

MSC Martinelli/Torrey (unan.) to approve the Appreciation Letter for District Volunteers and Staff.

Pres. Molesworth thanked everyone who worked on the letter, and Chief Krakauer thanked Dir. Dunne for creating the letter. After discussion, the Board agreed that Pres. Molesworth will create a revised version of the letter for publication in the Bolinas Hearsay newspaper.

Discussion – District Wildfire Preparedness and Response

Vice Pres. Kimball attended a meeting of the MWPA Finance Committee on December 17th, where the committee is preparing financial policies for approval by the full Board. Two ad hoc committee have been created: one to to develop a team among Board members and plan a retreat to set the stage for developing a Strategic Plan, and another to address environmental compliance and CEQA. Vice Pres. Kimball noted that the work is very encouraging, and Executive Officer Mark Brown is doing a great job.

Chief Krakauer attended a meeting of the MWPA Operations Committee on December 3rd, where Novato Chief Bill Tyler was introduced as the new committee chair. The committee received updates from various subcommittees, including initial CEQA compliance reports, and a possible formation of a new job title to move tasks to completion through the work plan. The committee reviewed the 2020 Community Wildfire Protection Plan, which was similar to the previous 2016 report.

Chief Krakauer has been working with PG&E representative Jim Wickham about locating a site for a potential weather station in Bolinas to fill a gap in current PG&E coverage for real time weather analysis. The weather information would be publicly accessible, and would also inform Public Safety Power Shutoff decisions.

Chief Krakauer participated in a call to get updates on the UC Berkeley-UC Davis traffic and communications study with Davis professor Thomas Moriana. The project would like to pick up where we left off before fire season, and wants to know if the District is also ready to resume the study. Professor Moriana is looking at a model-based simulation or “game” that can be shared publicly, attract youth participation, and be a tool for community education and increasing understanding emergency response strategies. The Directors agreed that continuing our participation would be valuable, and Chief Krakauer stated he would arrange a new meeting with the researchers.

Chief Krakauer would like to add information to our website about the NOAA emergency radios, in order to get the word out in the community, and distribute the radios soon to the Disaster Council Area Coordinators.

Chief Krakauer noted that two community members are exploring the possibility of establishing a local 501(c)3 to raise money for community wildfire prevention and mitigation projects, using the template from Firewise USA as suggested by local fire ecologist Ray Moritz. Chief Krakauer was in full support of such a community-based wildfire preparedness approach, but added that while the Fire District could act as a liaison, the bulk of the work needed to rest on the shoulders of strong community members. Krakauer suggested that smaller neighborhoods could act as a pilot program for the community by implementing FIRESafe Marin's Firewise community standards. Chief Krakauer was excited to discuss the topic further and support it at the Fire District level, in full hope that it can become a successful endeavor. Chief Krakauer expressed thanks to the community members leading this cause.

CONSENT CALENDAR

MSC Kimball/Martinelli (unan.) to approve the Consent Calendar.

PUBLIC EXPRESSION

None.

BOARD MEMBER REPORT

None.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Updates from Finance and Budget, Personnel, Building and Grounds and Operations Working Group.

Finance Committee – The committee met on December 16th to review the CalPERS agenda item and draft audited financial statements. Chief Krakauer and Isaac had a follow up call with Paul Kaymark earlier today to better familiarize ourselves with the layout of the reports. The committee plans to meet again in January to look at where we are in the budget, and will report on this at the January board meeting.

Isaac identified a non-operating expense nested within our operating expenses, and is working to make the appropriate adjustment in QuickBooks to fix budget vs. actual reporting for the current fiscal year.

Personnel Committee – No Update.

Buildings and Grounds – No Update.

Operations Working Group –No Update.

PERSONNEL MATTERS

None.

ANNOUNCEMENTS:

None.

GOOD OF THE ORDER

Pres. Molesworth thanked the Board members for their positive working relationship and diverse perspectives.

Chief Krakauer noted that the District is working with Age Forward Marin and Marin County Fire to poll community members in order to identify potential new services for local seniors.

ADJOURNMENT

MSC Martinelli/Dunne (unan.) to adjourn at 9:07 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Isaac Taylor
Administrative Manager

Note: Minutes of all Board meetings are available for review at the Bolinas Library and on the District's website www.bolinasfire.org.