

LOCKWOOD FIRE PROTECTION DISTRICT

23141 Shake Ridge Road Volcano, CA 95689

Meeting of the Board of Directors

Minutes - September 25, 2023 (rescheduled to October 9, 2023) - 6:00 p.m.

In-person Meeting at Station 151 - 23141 Shake Ridge Rd., Volcano CA 95689

Join Zoom Meeting:

<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/86091148620?pwd=VDhob0ZWTDRubS9YSzFoaUQ4Wm1xdz09>

Meeting ID: 860 9114 8620

Passcode: 881553

Nicole notes: Minutes are in summary format, not word verbatim. There was no podium. Members of the public presented would speak over each other and/or not state their name. The Board did not request that the state their name for the record.

Start: 6 PM

1. Call to order and reading of the mission statement.

LFPD CREED: The principal purpose of this district is the protection of its citizens through the prevention and extinguishing of fires and the protection of life and property. May each action taken by this board be for the benefit of the district and for no other purpose – self-serving or otherwise.

2. Establish quorum-roll call

President called roll-call, all present

Staff Present:

Robert Withrow, Fire Chief

Nicole Cook, Board Clerk

Byron Damiani, LAFCO Representation

Twenty members from the public present

3. Closed session. Closed session Authority:

According to the California Government Code 54957, the Lockwood Fire Protection District Board of Directors reserves the right to hold a closed session for consideration of real property negotiations, pending litigation, threats to public buildings or public access and personnel matters. **No closed session.**

4. Public Comments:

PUBLIC MATTERS NOT ON THE AGENDA: Discussion items only, no action to be taken. Any person may address the Board at this time upon any subject within the jurisdiction of the Lockwood Fire Protection District; however, any matter that requires action may be referred to staff and/or Committee for a report and recommendation for possible action at a subsequent Board meeting.

Member of the public requested appropriate point of contact for email correspondence. President stated email. Member stated that she has not had a response after different attempts. The correspondence was related to support of raising property tax vs. consolidation.

No other public comment.

5. Presentation by Director Don Dowell - LFPD Finances: Discussion ensued relative to subject matter. Last page was missing from presentation board packet, "Measure M income and Expenditure." Director Dowell stated that the presentation was to prove that the LFPD is not in a fiscal crisis and with fiscal responsibility and discipline merging is not necessary. LFPD has been able to cover the over expenditures by using the reserves. President Jan Hewitt stated that the Fire Chief has sought approval for purchases as well as sought out Board approval for anything larger than two thousand. The goal of the board is to support the Fire Chief and the daily operations needed or required. The reserves are depleting and unsustainable for daily operations.

6. Approval of Minutes from Board Meeting of August 28, 2023

Motion: _____ 2nd _____ Vote: Yeas _____ No _____ Absent _____ Abstain _____

Motion to approve minutes with minor corrections from Director Stevens and seconded by Director Dowell and carried 5-0-0. Corrections: #4 name corrected from Sorres to Soares and "Next Meeting: August 28th, 2023 changed to Sept. 25" at the end of the minutes, after item 8.

7. Discussion/Possible Action Items

- a. Discuss draft resolution to investigate/research change of organization for LFPD. Discussion ensued relative to subject matter. **No action was taken on said resolution**, discussion only. Nicole notes: *resolution was not included in the Board packet. President Hewitt stated that there is confusion from property tax and a benefit assessment and if there can be clear definition of revenue provided by Byron, LAFCO representative by the next BOD meeting.

How will revenue be protected and designated specifically for LFPD and not by AFD if to merge?

Byron also mentioned that the resolution is only the first step of many and by approving would only allow the initial efforts of investigating/research change of organization for LFPD. There would have to be a series of studies, public hearings, opportunities to protest and community workshops prior to any approval of merging, if merging at all after findings. There would be minimal costs to LFPD but most likely more costs associated with AFD since their studies would be more extensive.

Fire Chief stated that there has been good work from the Board of Directors, volunteers, community members and dedication from him to restore LFPD. LFPD however needs long term stability.

**Chair requested to skip item 7b and 7c to discuss parcel assessment increase.

Motion: _____ 2nd _____ Vote: Yeas _____ No _____ Absent _____ Abstain _____

- b. Discuss/Approve insurance renewal with George Petersen Insurance Agency. Discussion ensued relative to subject matter. No action was taken, renewal paperwork and a firm increase percentage was not provided by GPIs. This item needs to be added back onto the next agenda.

Motion: _____ 2nd _____ Vote: Yeas _____ No _____ Absent _____ Abstain _____

- c. Discussion: Treasurer Position Discussion ensued relative to subject matter. Tim Worny has resigned, sold his house and has moved away. Chief Withrow reported that for a short period of time, until LFPD can hire a Treasurer, AFD will perform accounts payable, payroll, etc. AFD already works with the Auditor. Tim Worny averaged \$700-\$800 a month. This arrangement was approved.
- d. Discussion: Process to assess community interest regarding parcel assessment increase. Discussion ensued relative to subject matter. Many present expressed no interest to merge with AFD, mostly because of the Board of Supervisors serving as their Directors. Census of those present stated that they would rather pay a higher tax. President Hewitt stated that a survey of what the members would do is crucial, speak to people in the community. Request from members of the public was to form an adhoc committee. The following action was taken: Director Dowell, President Hewitt, Sylvia and Jackie Vaughn as members of this adhoc committee to determine parcel assessment increase process, etc.

Chief Withrow addressed the Board that to ensure there is no partiality, a conflict of interest, that there be a clear and clean line of separation as the Fire Chief between AFD and LFPD, he will present to the AFD BOD to terminate the JOA between AFD and LFPD while LFPD is trying to figure out additional revenue sources to sustain operationally. Since AFD is an option, withdrawing or resigning as Fire Chief for LFPD seems the most ethical. The goal of a Fire Chief is to serve the people but also be able to sustain the operation. In order for LFPD to sustain operationally is to seek additional revenue sources.

Member of the public asked what happened with the agreement between LFPD and Cal Fire. President Hewitt answered that Cal Fire was sought out to reestablish and build LFPD back up again. There was only one volunteer. Cal Fire contract was ninety thousand but only covered personnel, never the operating costs such as insurance, apparatus, tools, day to day, etc.

Director McLachlan stated that AFPA was initially moving in the right direction to consolidate. Perhaps LFPD is duplicating efforts. Countywide consolidation is the way to go – each District is paying for a treasurer, insurance, Fire Chief. All efforts should be toward consolidation.

Bryon reiterated that reorganizing can be an extension of services, dissolving, etc. however consolidation is a narrower situation; it will require a new board and less freedom for “conditions”.

Member of the public asked how much does LFPD pay through the JOA to AFD? Director Dowell answered with thirty-five hundred. Chief Withrow stated that it includes Battalion Chief coverage, Fire Chief services, training, prevention, etc.

Recess: 8:04 PM

Reconvened: 8:16 PM

Many members from the public exited and did not return.

8. Treasurer's report: Discussion ensued relative to subject matter. No action was taken.

9. Chief's Report: Discussion ensued relative to subject matter below.

- a. Training Update: On September 30, 2023, there was a multi company training drill held at station 151. The training was successful.
- b. Volunteer Status: currently 15 volunteers. Due to finances, a hold to bring additional volunteers has been implemented.
- c. Total Calls for the month of August: 17
- d. Finances: Request to purchase rear tires for E-6546 in the amount of \$900 was approved. E-6520 will need all new tires (6) soon and that estimate is \$6,000. LFPD FF Tomlinson stated that new tires are required by the Department of Transportation. Board approval was given.

10. Committee Reports: Discussion ensued relative to subject matter. No action was taken.

Grant Committee

N/A Nicole notes*check with Justin regarding 50/50 grant

Special thank you to Megan Watts for the JRCH grant being approved for hose pre-connects.

Fiscal and Planning Committee

N/A

Policies and Procedures Committee

N/A

Building and Maintenance Committee

N/A

Communications and Outreach

Megan Watts is absent

11. Auxiliary Report: Discussion ensued relative to subject matter. Director Stevens gave report and announced Zidane Golightly as the new secretary by welcoming her. The request for more volunteers to have more events, potlucks, dinners, etc. is needed. Next event is the October 28th Fall Halloween Concert.

12. Adjournment at 8:48 PM

Motion: _____ 2nd _____ Vote: Yeas _____ No _____ Absent _____ Abstain _____

Motion to approve adjournment by President Hewitt, seconded by Director Stevens and carried 5-0-0.

Next Board Meeting: October 23, 2023