

Los Altos Hills County Fire District

Minutes of a Special Meeting of the Los Altos Hills County Fire District Board Members, Held on Tuesday, November 13, 2018 Beginning at 7:00 p.m. at the El Monte Fire Station, Foothill College Campus, 12355 El Monte Road, Los Altos Hills, California

Vice-President Vaughn called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

1) **Roll Call:** **PRESENT:** Commissioners Carr, Wu, Warren, Spreen and Vaughn

ABSENT: Commissioner Price (Commissioner Tyson arrived at 7:11 p.m.)

ALSO PRESENT: General Manager J. Logan, Assistant Chief John Justice, Fire District Attorney Dan Siegel, Fire Consultant Stu Farwell, Financial Consultant Cori Vargas of Vargas Company, District Clerk Jeanne Evilsizer

Vaughn called for a moment of tribute to all the dedicated and brave firefighters standing ground against the deadly fires currently raging in California and a moment of silence for the victims.

Vaughn expressed the mission and purpose of the Los Altos Hills County Fire District has never been more clear or bright as demonstrated this week.

As a community and as a Fire District we all need to focus on supporting firefighters' efforts and doing all possible to strengthen the resiliency of our community to prevent and withstand disaster from any source.

2) **Public Comment:** public member Chase Behringer, Sherlock Road, expressed concern for the excessive use of Sherlock Road by drivers cutting through to avoid traffic on freeway 280. She distributed two handouts showing Sherlock Road as an emergency access road and a photo of the emergency access ridge. Behringer discussed the option of sending a letter to the neighbors; to educate people about the excessive use of the narrow road and the need to stop the extra traffic. Sherlock Road neighbors Margaret Brauns and JC Lilot agreed with Chase Behringers statements. Spreen asked if they had interacted with the Town of Los Altos Hills about their concerns? Spreen said it was more of a Town issue and offered to speak with them after the meeting.

3) **Resolution of the Board of the Los Altos Hills County Fire District Declaring Weeds or Brush Growing and/or Rubbish on Certain Described Properties to be a Public Nuisance.**

Resolution #18-27 **Action:** Motion made by Warren and seconded by Spreen to approve the resolution of the Board of the Los Altos Hills County Fire District declaring weeds or brush growing and/or rubbish on certain described properties to be a public nuisance. There was no Commissioner or public comment. **All in Favor:** Carr, Wu, Vaughn, Tyson, Warren and Spreen. **Absent** Price. **Opposed:** None.

4) CERT Activities and Update. CERT Supervisor Neil Katin noted there is one more CERT Supervisor meeting scheduled in December. Neil Katin will be honored at the Emergency Managers Association Recognition Event luncheon on December 13 in Morgan Hill. Congratulations were extended to Neil Katin.

5) Fire Chief Report: a.) Monthly Report for October, 2018: Assistant Chief John Justice stated there was no fire loss in October. He explained the Ready Set Go promotion which had tips on surviving a wildfire by being ready to go and evacuating early.
b. Consideration of Approval for County Fire to Install Card Key Access at El Monte Station: Assistant Chief Justice discussed the advantages of the card key system and how it is currently implemented at other stations. Commissioners Spreen and Tyson expressed support for a new card key security system. Chief Justice was asked to provide details and costs to the General Manager so that the Commission can consider and approve the project. Vaughn asked Assistant Chief Justice if any firefighter strike teams had gone to the Butte County fire? Chief Justice replied that 30 fire personnel had been deployed. Currently the fire was 35% contained with 7,600 homes destroyed, 48 people deceased and 5,000 firefighters fighting the fire.
Assistant Chief Justice also stated a senior fire mechanic staff member of SCCFD recently passed due to a cardiac arrest.

6) Consultant Reports: a.) Projects Update Dated November 1, 2018 Farwell updated the figures for dead trees removed 326 and 52 eucalyptus trees removed. The Brush Chipping program was beginning in Area 5. b.) Tree Species Report – Farwell said a total of 343 trees had been removed during the period July 11-October 30, 2018. Of the 343 trees removed, 47 were eucalyptus trees and 296 were other trees (with the majority being a species of pine tree). c.) Tree Program Financial Budget vs Actual: Cori Vargas explained the budget vs actual cumulative graph. Tyson stated the goal was not to exceed the budgeted amount; the intention is to stay on budget.

7) General Manager Report: a.) Update on Audio Visual Needs: J Logan, General Manager, presented a PowerPoint presentation. She explained the TV needed to be configured as did the Apple mini. She thanked resident Neil Katin for his assistance with this project. New cables and dongles had been installed and tested. b.) Program Suggestions: Logan met with Chief Bowden and Assistant Chief Justice to discuss fuel reduction programs. Discussion included the Community Wildfire Protection Program (CWPP) and looking at opportunities for collaboration, communication and connections. They also discussed progress made on the hydrant flow and pipeline resiliency project.
Work was continuing on Strategic Plan Goal 2 pertaining to developing guidelines and procedures for the Fire District's business.
c.) Purissima Hills Water District Pipeline Water Flow Project: Deferred to agenda item 8 b. Water Flow Project Subcommittee Update.
d.) Management Audit Update: The auditors had received all of the documents requested. A draft report is projected to be available in November.

8) Sub-Committee Reports: a) Strategic Plan Update: Spreen mentioned meeting with Price and discussing District Administration portion of the Strategic Plan. This led to the hiring of the

General Manager, as well as accomplishing the completion of the New Commissioner Orientation booklet. Spreen said much has been learned from looking at Poudre Fire Authorities procedures in Fort Collins, CO. For example, the desire to do an Annual Report. Also, the Our Town Newsletter that is sent to all of the residents and unincorporated areas is a means of communicating the mission and accomplishments of the Fire District. Spreen said the committee is looking at the over-all communication structure and asking what are we trying to convey to the public?

b.) Water Flow Project Subcommittee Update: Patrick Walter, General Manager of the Purissima Hills Water District and Peter Evans, PHWD Board Member, were present to discuss the proposed hydrant flow and pipeline resiliency improvement project. Warren stated they had met on November 5 with the Fire District sub-committee to discuss the details of the project. The location of Taffee Road and Elena Road is under discussion; an area where there are three earthquake faults located and currently has a large, aging infrastructure in need of repair. Warren explained we agreed to partner with PHWD because of public safety concerns. The project is in the design phase. They are looking to begin construction in the fall. The District would cost share with PHWD beginning with the design work phase. After the design phase bids will go out. Accurate costs cannot be obtained until the bids come back. Approximately \$316,000 for design work from each entity has been estimated. The design phase will last approximately 9 months. A resolution is proposed for the December meeting to consider sharing the cost of the design work. The committee will consider coming back with another resolution for a funding request for the construction of the project. It is an incremental approach. Tyson mentioned that the other water purveyor in town, California Water Service, is harder to get things started with because they are a public utility with more regulations. But they will be approached for future projects as well. Public member Allan Epstein asked if the size of the pipe would increase? Patrick Walter said yes, all pipes would be replaced and upsized.

c.) Tree Subcommittee Report – Tyson stated there was ongoing progress with our current tree removal contract. With the General Manager on board, Tyson stated they were looking at what is the best way we can provide safety in terms of fuel load within our District? Possibly looking at other agencies to work with us such as Mid-Peninsula Regional Open Space District. Tyson said we need to take a broad look at our whole strategy. Wu asked when would the new strategy be considered? Tyson replied possibly the first quarter of 2019. Public member Allan Epstein asked if the District would inform the 100-plus residents that need trees removed but are not part of the current program. Tyson responded that was a good idea and the District would give them an update.

d.) CERT Subcommittee Update: No report

e.) Current Contracts: None currently. Possible the Engineering Design work proposed with a resolution for consideration at the December 18, 2018 meeting.

9.) **Consent Calendar:** a.) Minutes of October 16, 2018 Regular Meeting

b.) Period Report 4, October 2018

Action: A motion was made by Spreen to approve the Consent Calendar as submitted; Vaughn seconded the motion. **All in Favor:** Tyson, Spreen, Wu, Carr, Vaughn and Warren. **Absent:** Price. **Opposed:** None.

Cori Vargas distributed the Period 13 (July 1, 2017 –June 30, 2018) report at this time.

10.) Disbursements for November, 2018: Cori Vargas distributed an updated November, 2018 list of disbursements.

11.) Board Member Reports: a.) Understanding Wildfire - Seminar of October 30, 2018: Held at the Los Altos Hills Town Hall and hosted by the Open Space Committee, this was a very successful event featuring a panel of experts from Santa Clara County Fire Department, SCCFire Safe Council, Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District and PG&E. Several Fire Commissioners attended as well. b.) Two Commissioner Vacancies 12/31/18: Town of Los Altos Hills (1) and Unincorporated Area (1). The Clerk mentioned the ad would appear in the November 14, 2018 issue of the Los Altos Town Crier. Both Tyson and Vaughn said they were planning to apply. c.) Calendar of Meetings and Events 2019. The calendar of meeting and events 2019 was included in the packet.

12.) Confirm Regular Meeting of December 18, 2018: By consensus, it was agreed that there would be a Regular Meeting of December 18, 2018.

13.) Adjournment. By consensus the meeting was adjourned at 8:10 p.m.

Prepared by,

Jeanne Evilsizer
District Clerk

Approved 1-15-19