



**MINUTES OF A REGULAR MEETING OF THE
LOS ALTOS HILLS COUNTY FIRE DISTRICT BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
HELD ON TUESDAY, OCTOBER 17, 2023 BEGINNING AT 7:00 P.M.**

A video recording of this meeting is available at:

<https://www.lahcfd.org/download/october-17-2023-fire-district-commission-meeting/>

Discussion of each agenda item is time-stamped with the hour, minute, and second [hh:mm:ss]

1. Roll Call [00:00:51]:

President Spreen called the meeting to order at 7:01 p.m. A quorum was present in person.

Attendee Name	Title	Status
Roger Spreen	President	Present
Joan Sherlock	Vice President	Present
Jim Basiji	Commissioner	Not Present
Toby McDonell	Commissioner	Present
Kavita Tankha	Commissioner	Present
George Tyson	Commissioner	Present
Mark Warren	Commissioner	Present

ALSO PRESENT IN-PERSON: Municipal Resources Group Strategic Planning Consultant Marcie Scott, Community Education and Risk Reduction Manager Denise Gluhan, Emergency Services Manager Victoria Bebee, Programs, Planning and Grants Manager Eugenia Woods, Technical Analyst/Project Manager Ryan Cronin, Program Operations Manager Paige Russell, General Analyst Laura Giorgi, Field Manager A. Harmon, Technical Data Analyst Edgar Martinez, General Manager J. Logan, and Financial Consultant and District Clerk Cori Vargas.

ALSO PRESENT REMOTELY: Santa Clara County Fire Department Fire Chief Suwanna Kerdkaew, Finance Manager Russ Morreale, Deputy County Counsel Aaron Forbath, and Lead Deputy County Counsel Andrew Gottlieb.

2. Commission President Remarks [00:02:58]:

President Spreen thanked staff for their attendance.

3. Public Comment [00:03:14]:

There was no public comment for items not on the agenda.

4. Agenda Amendments and Changes [00:03:53]:

There were no recommended agenda amendments or changes to the order of the agenda.

5. Consent Calendar [00:04:16]:

A. Approve Draft Minutes of September 19, 2023, Regular Meeting

B. Receive Financial Statement Package - Period 3, September 2023

C. Receive Disbursements for October 2023

D. Approve Fourth Amendment to the Professional Services Agreement for Operational Data Collection Integration and Mapping Services with Lynx Technologies, Inc., dated November 18, 2020, to modify and extend the term to November 1, 2024, and to restate the authorized compensation, with all other terms and conditions to remain the same, that has been reviewed and approved by County Counsel as to form and legality

i. Receive Memorandum Report

- E. Receive notice that the General Manager, pursuant to a delegation of authority previously approved by the Commission, executed an Agreement between the Los Altos Hills County Fire District and O’Grady Paving for adjustment to the hydrant value box covers and the affected infrastructure and painting of the covers of the valve boxes as part of the Town of Los Altos Hills annual pavement rehabilitation capital improvements project in an amount not to exceed Six-Thousand Seven-Hundred Fifty Dollars (\$6,750) that has been reviewed and approved by County Counsel as to form and legality
 - i. Receive Agreement between Los Altos Hills County Fire District and O’Grady Paving for Adjustment to Hydrant Valve Boxes
- F. Receive notice that the General Manager, pursuant to the delegation of authority in Resolution 20-20 for limited agreements for goods and services, executed an Agreement with Big Shaker Enterprises, LLC for Earthquake Simulation and Education Services to commence and conclude services on September 30, 2023, for an amount not to exceed Five-Thousand Dollars (\$5,000) that has been reviewed and approved by County Counsel as to form and legality
 - i. Receive Agreement between the Los Altos Hills County Fire District and Big Shaker Enterprises, LLC for Earthquake Simulation and Education Services

Item Nos. 5.A. – 5.F. were received concurrently and are included in the agenda packet.

5. RESULT:	APPROVED [6-0, 1 ABSENT]
MOVER:	Tankha
SECONDER:	Warren
AYES:	Spreen, Sherlock, McDonnel, Tankha, Tyson, Warren
ABSTAIN:	None
ABSENT:	Basiji

6. Receive Santa Clara County Fire Chief Report [00:05:16]:

- A. Monthly report for September 2023
- B. Palo Alto Fire Station 8 monthly report for September 2023
- C. Palo Alto Fire Station 8 amended monthly report for August 2023

Fire Chief Kerdkaew presented the monthly report for September 2023. The Santa Clara County Central Fire Protection District’s (SCCCFPD) new Computer Aided Dispatch (CAD) system went live on September 12 and the aggregate data is still being analyzed for accuracy and potential reporting improvements. There were two calls dispatched as fires which ended up being smoke investigations.

Palo Alto Station 8 was staffed by SCCCFPD in September and responded to a total of nine incidents. The August report was amended to correct the total number of responses to five. Staffing at Station 8 will end on October 31, unless weather conditions warrant continuation into November as needed.

7. Receive General Manager Report [00:15:08]:

- A. Updates events and activities
- B. Local Agency Formation Commission (LAFCO) adoption of the Final Countywide Fire Service Review
- C. Update on a feasibility study on use of Artificial Intelligence (AI) Fire Detection Sensors in Santa Clara County wildland urban interface areas

General Manager Logan mentioned October 17 marks the 34th anniversary of the 1989 Loma Prieta Earthquake and stressed the importance of October’s Earthquake Awareness Month to educate the public on preparedness measures.

LAFCO approved a series of actions to conclude the Countywide Fire Service Review at their October 4 meeting. The LAFCO materials and links to the final report and public comments are provided in the agenda packet. LAFCO has directed their staff to facilitate discussions with affected agencies on plans to implement the report’s recommendations.

The County Board of Supervisors (BOS) has proposed a study on the feasibility and options available for the use of artificial intelligence (AI) fire detection sensors in the County wildland urban interface (WUI) areas, such as the ALERT California network of camera devices. SCCCFPD and the District will stay informed on the study’s progress and provide input as requested.

Public Comment: Los Altos Hills resident Allan Epstein asked if there were any updates on the County Comprehensive Fire Review Study. Logan said the matrix study was brought up at the BOS meeting regarding AI fire detection devices, but no other updates have been provided.

8. Approve Supplemental Fire and Emergency Medical Services Agreement with Santa Clara County Central Fire Protection District (Central Fire) for reimbursement, purchase, and operation of a fire truck apparatus (Apparatus) to enhance firefighting services and capabilities for the primary benefit of the Los Altos Hills County Fire District (LAHCFD) and its residents to be paid for by LAHCFD in an amount equal to the cost to Central Fire to purchase the Apparatus, which shall not exceed \$1,959,133.96, and to be owned, operated, maintained, and insured by Central Fire at its sole expense, that has been reviewed and approved by County Counsel as to form and legality [00:19:49]:

A. Receive Staff Memorandum Report

Logan noted a revised fire truck apparatus agreement, along with a red-line version tracking the changes from the agreement provided with the September Meeting materials, is included in the agenda packet. The reimbursement to SCCCFPD for the purchase, operation and maintenance of a fire truck apparatus for the primary benefit of the District shall not exceed \$1,959,133.96 and has been budgeted for fiscal year 2023-2024. The BOS approved the agreement at their October 17 Meeting, and it is recommended the Commission similarly approve. Commissioner Warren thanked staff for working with SCCCFPD to procure the truck which will enhance the firefighting capabilities within the District.

Public Comment: Los Altos Hills resident Allan Epstein opined that the agreement should provide a description of the vehicle, specify where the truck will be stationed and noted a possible correction to section 10.1.

8. RESULT:	APPROVED [6-0, 1 ABSENT]
MOVER:	Warren
SECONDER:	Tyson
AYES:	Spreen, Sherlock, McDonnel, Tankha, Tyson, Warren
ABSTAIN:	None
ABSENT:	Basiji

9. Report on District Workplan [00:24:02]:

A. Receive report on the District Workplan

Strategic Planning Consultant Scott presented the District Workplan, which is split into eight Service Area and provides an overview of the functions and responsibilities for each Service Area. The Workplan is a dynamic tool to assist the Commission and the community in understanding the progression of current and planned District programs, projects and operations. Commissioners Tyson, McDonnel, Warren and Tankha provided positive feedback and thanked staff for their hard work.

B. Approve dissolution of 2023 Ad Hoc Commission Organizational Planning Subcommittee

President Spreen thanked Commissioners Tankha, Warren and McDonnel for providing guidance to staff, and recommended dissolution of the subcommittee.

9.B. RESULT:	APPROVED [6-0, 1 ABSENT]
MOVER:	Sherlock
SECONDER:	Warren
AYES:	Spreen, Sherlock, McDonnel, Tankha, Tyson, Warren
ABSTAIN:	None
ABSENT:	Basiji

10. Receive Reports and Provide Direction to Staff:

A. Reports on Emergency Services Manager projects, programs and events [00:35:28]:

- i. Emergency Preparedness Events - Safety Fair/ Touch a Truck event**
- ii. Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) Program update - upcoming Triage Drill**

Bebee reviewed the Emergency Preparedness Program events including the Sept. 30 Touch a Truck event, an upcoming Be Ready Be Prepared for the Holidays event on Nov. 4, and an upcoming triage training drill in conjunction with CERT, SCCCFPD, American Medical Response, and the Scouts of America on November 4.

B. Reports on Community Education & Risk Reduction projects, programs and events [00:41:07]:

- i. Firewise USA update
- ii. Vines & Wines event
- iii. Acknowledgement of District historic contribution to Los Altos Hills Dog Park

Community Education & Risk Reduction Manager Gluhan reported Zone LAH-E014 will be turning in their process report to the Nation Fire Protection Association (NFPA) which will bring the total of Firewise USA recognized communities within the District to three. Six more zones are in the process of or have shown interest in being recognized. An NFPA Preparedness Day event is scheduled for May 4, 2024, at the Town Hall. Gluhan also reviewed the recent Vines & Wines event and shared photos of an out-of-service hydrant the District donated to the dog park on Purissima Road.

C. Reports on Integrated Hazardous Fuel Reduction (IHFR) Field Operations [00:46:14]:

- i. Magdalena-Summerhill Evacuation Route Project update
- ii. Robleda-Burke Evacuation Route Project update
- iii. Upcoming presentation to Town of Los Altos Hills City Council on October 19, 2023

Field Manager Harmon detailed the work completed on the Magdalena-Summerhill Evacuation Route Project since the September Commission Meeting, and reported work is scheduled to commence on October 23.

Technical Analyst/Project Manager Cronin introduced the Robleda-Burke Evacuation Route Project which will provide vegetation management to 5.86 miles along six roads within the District. The targeted start date of the Project is November 27.

Cronin reported he will be sharing information about the District's IHFR Projects to the Town of Los Altos Hills City Council on October 19.

D. Reports on future Evacuation Programs, Planning and Grants [00:57:28]:

- i. Programs and Planning update

Programs, Planning and Grants Manager Woods reported a new process for the Evacuation Route Projects is to hold informational webinar meetings for the community. The first meeting for the Magdalena-Summerhill Project occurred on October 11, and a meeting for the Robleda-Burke Project is planned for November 2. The IHFR FAQ videos have been uploaded to the District's YouTube channel.

The District is providing support to local agencies and regional partners who are working on road hardening along the upper portion of Page Mill Road adjacent to the District. Woods will meet with Hidden Villa to provide assistance with their wildfire defense grant application process and to discuss the possibility of creating a temporary refuge area on Hidden Villa open space.

Public Comment: Los Altos Hills resident Allan Epstein asked if there has been any progress on the fire break between the Town of Los Altos Hills and the Mid-Peninsula Regional Open Space. President Spreen responded staff is not aware of any updates but can research and report back at a future meeting.

11. Receive Report on Cal OES/FEMA I-280 Hazardous Mitigation Project [01:02:28]:

- A. Receive report on Cal OES/FEMA Hazardous Mitigation Grant (HMG) applications: DR4482 and DR4683 for I-280 Hazardous Fuel Reduction Project
- B. Provide direction on options for I-280 project funding, planning and implementation and consider withdrawal of HMG grant applications and use of District funding and Integrated Hazardous Fuel Reduction (IHFR) operations for the I-280 Hazardous Fuel Reduction Project

Woods reported FEMA notified the District that its DR4482 grant application was waitlisted. Staff do not believe any waitlisted projects will be awarded since no additional funding has been made available and no competing agencies have withdrawn their awards. The District's DR4482 application will expire in December 2023. The DR4683 grant award cycle is not expected to begin until approximately February 2025.

Staff outlined three options for the Commissioners to consider in proceeding with the I-280 Project:

1. Stay in the application grant cycle until concluded around February 2025.
2. Allow the DR4482 application to expire in December 2023, withdraw the DR4683 application, and bring I-280 Project funding, development, planning and implementation in-house.
3. Withdraw both applications and provide direction to staff to commence development of planning for the I-280 Project as soon as possible.

Woods also outlined work performed to date for the Cal OES/FEMA Grant that will support efforts to bring the I-280 project in-house if the Commission decides to withdraw the grant applications.

Commissioner Warren was concerned the probability of receiving a grant award is low and the waiting is too long. He expressed interest in withdrawing from the application process and proceeding in-house.

Vice President Sherlock agreed that time is of the essence and supports planning and funding the project in-house so long as it does not affect staff's ability to complete other planned evacuation route projects.

Commissioner Tyson asked for clarification of how much work can be completed before December if the District withdrew both applications, and if there are any optics concerns with withdrawal. Woods stated not much work can be accomplished before December, and allowing the first application to expire rather than withdrawing may bolster future grant applications with Cal OES/FEMA. With Woods's response, both Commissioners Tyson and Tankha expressed support for Option 2.

President Spreen asked if regional collaboration will be affected if the District does not obtain a grant. Woods explained regional partners are more likely to collaborate if the project is funded in-house because the paperwork, reporting and oversight required by Cal OES and FEMA are very extensive.

The Commission was in consensus to proceed with Option 2 to allow the DR4482 application to expire, to withdraw the DR4638 application, and to direct staff to begin planning for funding the project in-house. County Counsel Forbath suggested a motion to formalize the Commission's decision.

Public Comment: Los Altos Hills resident Allan Epstein asked for clarification on the support being provided by regional partners. Woods responded regional partners will provide in-kind assistance through traffic control, hand-crews, environmental consulting, permit collaboration and messaging to residents.

11.B. RESULT:	APPROVED [6-0, 1 ABSENT]
MOVER:	Warren
SECONDER:	Sherlock
AYES:	Spreen, Sherlock, McDonnel, Tankha, Tyson, Warren
ABSTAIN:	None
ABSENT:	Basiji

12. Receive Los Altos Hills County Fire District CWPP Annex 4 [01:38:49]:

A. Review the CWPP Annex 4

i. Upcoming Community Meeting on November 6, 2023, at 6:00 p.m. via Zoom Webinar

Woods reviewed a draft of the CWPP Annex 4 and reported a Community Meeting will take place on November 6. The final CWPP Annex 4 will be brought back for Commission approval at the November 21 Meeting. Santa Clara County FireSafe Council (SCCFSC) CEO Seth Schalet and Program Director Amanda Brenner-Cannon provided an overview on the Countywide CWPP process.

Public Comment: Los Altos Hills resident Allan Epstein suggested public access the report's maps via GIS system, as the maps are hard to read as presented. He also asked for the schedule for submission to the County and the status of the other annexes. President Spreen responded that staff can look into providing scalable maps for the public to view. Brenner-Cannon said each annex is currently in different stages of development and will be individually adopted when completed. There is currently no set due date, but SCCFSC is working with annexes who need additional support for completion.

13. Personnel [01:51:40]:

A. Approve revised position description and authorize execution of an at-will exempt employment agreement between the District and Victoria Bebee for the position of a full-time exempt Emergency Services Manager effective November 1, 2023, with compensation of Eighty-Two Dollars (\$82) per hour, which terminates the existing non-exempt hourly Emergency Services Manager Employment Agreement, that has been reviewed and approved by County Counsel as to form and legality

Logan reviewed the revised Emergency Services Manager position description and agreement, and noted California Government Code Section 54953(c)(3) requires the Commission to receive an oral report summary of the proposed compensation before taking final action to adopt the compensation via the Employment Agreement. The proposed at-will, full-time exempt employment agreement includes annual compensation of \$170,560 and will be effective November 1, 2023. The proposed employment agreement provides premium pay for assigned District Emergency

Response Special Duties for each hour that exceeds the minimum 40 hours per workweek at a rate of 1.5 times the hourly base rate, which is equivalent to \$123 per hour. The proposed agreement also includes vacation, sick leave, a vehicle stipend and a technology stipend. The proposed agreement does not provide holiday pay, medical benefits, or retirement benefits.

13.A. RESULT:	APPROVED [6-0, 1 ABSENT]
MOVER:	Sherlock
SECONDER:	Tankha
AYES:	Spren, Sherlock, McDonnel, Tankha, Tyson, Warren
ABSTAIN:	None
ABSENT:	Basiji

14. IT, Financial and District Clerk Reports [01:56:23]:

A. Approve Information Technology Responsibility Statement

i. Receive Memorandum Report

Finance Manger Morreale reviewed changes made to the District Information Technology (IT) Responsibility Statement from the draft version presented to the Commission at the September Meeting. Commission approval is recommended to establish responsibilities and policies for the use of District devices, systems, and networks.

14.A. RESULT:	APPROVED [6-0, 1 ABSENT]
MOVER:	Warren
SECONDER:	McDonnel
AYES:	Spren, Sherlock, McDonnel, Tankha, Tyson, Warren
ABSTAIN:	None
ABSENT:	Basiji

B. Approve Final Audited Annual Financial Report (AFR) for the fiscal year ended June 30, 2023 (FY2022-2023)

i. Receive Memorandum Report

Morreale stated the Memorandum Report included in the agenda packet outlines changes to the narrative portion of the FY2022-2023 AFR which were made from the draft version presented to the Commission at the September Meeting. It is recommended the Commission approve the final AFR report for transmission to the County Controller-Treasurer Department.

14.B. RESULT:	APPROVED [6-0, 1 ABSENT]
MOVER:	Sherlock
SECONDER:	Tyson
AYES:	Spren, Sherlock, McDonnel, Tankha, Tyson, Warren
ABSTAIN:	None
ABSENT:	Basiji

C. Update on FY2024-2025 Budget Development

i. Schedule date for Community Meeting and Finance Team FY2024-25 Budget Review

Financial Consultant Vargas announced a public meeting of the Ad Hoc Budget Subcommittee will be held on November 14, and a draft of the FY2024-2025 Budget will be presented to the Commission at the November 21 Meeting.

D. Adopt Resolution 23-09 of the Los Altos Hills County Fire District Board of Commissioners Establishing the Appropriations Limit for the District for Fiscal Year 2023-2024 in Accordance with Article XIII B of the California Constitution and Government Code Section 7910 and Establishing Period for Contesting Such Limits

i. Receive Memorandum Report

Vargas recommended approval of the District’s fiscal year 2023-2024 Appropriation Limit, which was computed by the County Controller Treasurer Department at \$27,805,143.

14.D. RESULT:	APPROVED [6-0, 1 ABSENT]
MOVER:	Warren
SECONDER:	Tankha
AYES:	Spreen, Sherlock, McDonnel, Tankha, Tyson, Warren
ABSTAIN:	None
ABSENT:	Basiji

15. Commission Member Reports [02:09:19]:

A. Future agenda items

Vice President Sherlock suggested a study be done on Cal-FIRE’s road width specifications for fire access, and the effects not meeting their requirements has on denial of building permit requests to residents. President Spreen recommended residents reach out to the Town’s Planning Department since the issue involves municipal and fire code enforcement.

B. Adopt Resolution 23-10 of the Los Altos Hills County Fire District Board of Commissioners Setting the Board of Commissioners 2024 Regular Meeting Schedule

Vargas recommended approval of the 2024 Regular Meeting Schedule, and noted the February 20, 2024, Meeting will be held at the Gardner Bullis School because the Town Hall Council Chambers will be undergoing renovations.

15.B. RESULT:	APPROVED [6-0, 1 ABSENT]
MOVER:	Warren
SECONDER:	Tankha
AYES:	Spreen, Sherlock, McDonnel, Tankha, Tyson, Warren
ABSTAIN:	None
ABSENT:	Basiji

C. Next Regular Commission Meeting, October 17, 2023, in person and hybrid, to be held at 26379 Fremont Road, Los Altos Hills, in Town Hall Council Chambers

The next Regular Commission meeting is scheduled for November 21, 2023. The meeting will be held in-person at the Town Hall Council Chambers with staff and members of the public welcome to join the meeting in-person or by virtual teleconference.

16. Adjournment [02:23:19]:

President Spreen adjourned the meeting at 9:24 p.m.

Prepared by,
Cori Vargas
District Clerk