

**KENWOOD FIRE PROTECTION DISTRICT  
REGULAR MEETING OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS  
OCTOBER 11, 2022**

**MINUTES**

**MEETING:** Meeting called to order at 16:00 hrs. Directors Cooper, Doss, Moretti, Atkin, Uboldi and Chief Bellach were present.

**ROSTER:** 13 Volunteers, 5 Part-Time and 2 Full-Time

**CLAIMS:** MSP Atkin/Cooper to approve claims #22-23-4 for \$34,085.12 and payrolls 9/9/22 for \$28,806.51 and 9/23/22 for \$37,147.13.

**OLD BUSINESS:** MSP Doss/Moretti for approval of video conference option AB 36. Director Doss asked what our technology to do a zoom meeting is. Chief Bellach stated we have the technology to do a hybrid meeting if the Board approves to do so in the future.

MSP Moretti/Doss to approve the resolution for Determination of Disability for Pers. This resolution to PERS will allow the Chief to make the recommendation for retirement to PERS for disability.

**CHIEF'S REPORT:** Director Doss reported on the HR Committee. He stated that they are working on the first steps of the Chiefs evaluation form. He handed out the policy and procedures that applied to the Chief's evaluation process. Pages 30 and 31 of the policy manual talk about this. The evaluation process is reviewed at the regular December Board Meeting and any modifications will take place before the actual evaluation. An evaluation form from Bodega Bay was handed out as an example. Tuesday of next week the ad hoc committee will meet to look at the form.

Director Atkin asked about the timing. When would you anticipate the form being completed and when would the evaluation with the Chief be performed. The policy does not explain the process. Director Doss stated that he would hope in the December meeting the Board would discuss the process. The process should be done before the new fiscal year in case there is a salary adjustment needed. Director Moretti asked if the Chief would perform a self-evaluation. This is also a common way to do an evaluation.

Director Atkin and Doss reported on the Consolidation Report that had been completed. The report is available on our website under Finances and Reports. Director Doss discussed who they talked to and answered questions that came to the committee as well as the questions they asked to individual members and groups. The recommendation is based on what they know today. They looked at how Kenwood would be identified in a consolidation. The ask today of the Board is to receive the report as a document and not a final action. This ad hoc committee will end that the report is now completed.

Director Atkin stated, if the County was able to give the amount of the gap funding for consolidation, the operations in Kenwood could be maintained in adjacent Districts. Wage levels would go up, Staffing would go from 2.0 to 3.0 with ALS response. It's hard to make the argument that consolidation is not in the best interest to the community. The availability of the gap funding is uncertain. It's hard to believe that any District considering consolidation with Kenwood would be able to fund the gap needed. Until the Board determines if they want to go forward with the consolidation effort and gap funding can be secured, it is essential that the district operates as an independent district and allocate our resources the best we can. Director Uboldi stated that he would like to see our Consolidation Ad Hoc Committee stay intact and may be switch out some Board Members in order to explore some of these issues.

Chief Bellach stated that if we need to look further down the road, will the District be sustainable 15-20 years from now? We need to be engaged with the County BOS discussing consolidation gap funding now. There may come an opportunity where the County does have the funding available, we need to be ready if that happens and along with other districts who may also be approaching the County for funding. Director Moretti asked for some clarification on what would be the task of this ad hoc committee. Chief Bellach stated that this ad hoc would have to be fully engaged with the BOS and what they are planning for future funding for consolidation. We also need to be talking with Sonoma Valley Fire and coming up with a plan to propose to the County for consolidation.

Director Atkin agreed that continuing the ad hoc committee was a good idea. He felt that Director Doss has the knowledge and should be on the new committee. He felt if this board wants to persue consolidation, they would have to take some action maybe next month. One of the next steps for this committee would be to find out if the gap funding is really available and who would be the candidates for consolidation. He felt the only two candidates for consolidation would be Sonoma Valley Fire and Sonoma County Fire. We have had no conversation with Sonoma County Fire. Would it be in our interest to at least talk with them? He agreed to have talks with Sonoma County Fire.

Director Doss mentioned that through LAFCO we had done an MSR and are in the Sonoma Valley sphere of influence. We are also in Region 3, but in EOA 1 which is in Santa Rosa. Director Atkin asked if it would make more sense to have the fire and ambulance from the same agency verses consolidating with a different fire agency that has ambulance service in a different response area.

Chief Akre spoke in regards to some of these questions. He believed that there is a lot of value to have fire and ambulance response provided by the same entity. Sonoma Valley used to serve Kenwood and with a promise by AMR to have an ambulance at Pythian Rd., it was determined to be a better service. If Kenwood was to consolidate with Sonoma Valley Fire and Sonoma County Fire was to get the ambulance contract, they would come to an agreement to have Sonoma Valley provide the ambulance to Kenwood. Rancho Adobe Fire put a \$2mil request out to the County for consolidation with Sonoma County Fire. Rancho Adobe is in a very different situation then Kenwood. They are not having a staffing emergency. They are having to contract

with another agency to keep their station open. Their ask is looking down the road a bit. It is very important for the Kenwood District to have our discussions, deliberations and take some action to say yes we want to consolidate. Let the BOS know we are in a staffing emergency, this is what we need, and this is our path forward. Sonoma Valley Fire Board is strongly supportive of this. He believes that his board will not accept anything less than the current standard of service that they are currently providing which is 3.0 staffing ALS. This is what Sonoma County Fire and Santa Rosa Fire are currently providing. Director Moretti asked if there are other Districts staffed below 3.0 ALS in the County. Chief Akre stated, Cloverdale, Geyserville are 2.0 BLS staffing, but are in the process of changing those levels.

Director Atkin asked if we could have on the agenda for the next meeting an action item saying our Board has approved the process of pursuing consolidation.

Chief Bellach spoke in regards to Kenwood getting out of the EOA 1 ambulance response area. We had looked into this and spoke with County Health. Due to the process of getting approval from LEMSA, EMSA and the stakeholders, we would not have enough time to complete this process before the BOS meeting next week.

Chief Bellach reported that we are waiting for the contractor to give me a start date on the LED sign. We did talk with County DEM and they stated there was no funding right now for the LED sign. Chief Bellach spoke with Supervisor Gorin and she stated that there is funding available. Bellach stated that we would get it in writing regarding the funding.

Chief Bellach reported Chief Gulson and himself went down to Burtons to pick-up the water tender. There were a number of items that need to be completed and we would have to wait another week for those to be completed.

Chief Bellach reported on staffing going forward and we are going to start off with going to the SRJC Fire Academy and getting interns that we will pay a stipend to. These interns, like in the past, we will train them and be able to get them up to speed to be able to apply for an Engineer position or a Part-Time position. The next thing is to take our 2 part-timers that applied for the full-time engineer spots and work with them to get them ready for the testing. This could potentially give us up to 5 new recruits. The major factor is the pay schedule. We will not be able to get a lateral Captains position with our current pay scale. The pay needs to be increased. This will also help reduce the District's revolving door and be able to keep staff. Director Atkin stated we need to make it our top priority to increase our wage levels. The finance committee will meet and bring back some ideas at the next meeting. He also stated we should be more aggressive in seeking grants for funding.

**GOOD OF THE ORDER:** Chief Bellach stated the Sonoma County Fire Districts dinner meeting will be October 27<sup>th</sup>. Location TBD. Director Doss stated the Sonoma Valley Fire District has come out with their strategic plan. A 5 year plan, 2022-27. Goal number 5 is continue to explore regional consolidation opportunities to deliver a true service to the

constituents of the Sonoma Valley. Chief Gulson asked the board to reconsider the board meeting time to a later time so more community members could attend. He suggested maybe 5:00pm.

Respectfully submitted,

---

Attest:

---