



Long Valley Fire Protection District  
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## MINUTES OF REGULAR MEETING July 13<sup>th</sup>, 2022

Date: Wednesday, July 13<sup>th</sup>, 2022  
Time: 7:00 p.m.  
Location: 3605 Crowley Lake Drive, Crowley Lake, CA 93546

Members Present: Hank Brown, Sharon Shaw, Ron Day present via teleconference (arrived to meeting at 7:26pm), Kim Czeschin present via teleconference

Members Absent: Tom Beveridge

Others Present: Acting Fire Chief Vince Maniaci, Division Chief Fred Stump, Assistant Fire Chief Joseph Santos, Training Officer Scott McGuire, Assistant Training Officer Pete De George, Fleet Manager Billy Czeschin, Volunteer Soibian Spring, Volunteer Dan Gordon, Volunteer John Kokado, Secretary Katie Durgin, Sunny Slopes Resident Hap Hazard, Resident Joey Conti, Matt Berger with Berger Solar Electric present via teleconference.

Others Absent: None

1. Call to order, roll call, Pledge of Allegiance, and announcements. Commissioner Brown announced that he is no longer on the Board of the Local Agency Formation Commission (LAFCO).
2. Opportunity for public to address the Board on non agenda items. Joey Conti announced that there was a member of the community that passed away a couple of months ago. This individual had wanted to give to the Long Valley Fire Protection District. Joey Conti presented a check donation to the department on behalf of the individual who had passed away.
3. Approval of the Minutes of the June 8<sup>th</sup>, 2022 regular meeting. A MOTION WAS MADE BY COMMISSIONER BROWN, SECONDED BY COMMISSIONER SHAW TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE JUNE 8<sup>TH</sup>, 2022 REGULAR MEETING. Motion passed 3-0.
4. Chief's Report.
  - A. Volunteer's Report. Training Officer Scott McGuire reported that the volunteers were present for the Fourth of July event at Crowley Lake. The department has had

about twelve emergency calls since the last regular meeting, three of which came all in one day. The calls consisted of medical aids and fire. One of the fire calls included volunteers responding to a pole that was on fire in Aspen Springs area. One new volunteer has joined the department since last regular meeting.

B. Report on Current Fire Department Activities, Assignments and Schedule for potential Board direction. Twelve calls since last regular meeting.

C. Long Range Planning Discussion.

(a) Personnel. No news.

(b) Airport. Chief Maniaci reported that the district will be reviewing a potential Snow Removal Equipment (SRE) and Airport Rescue and Fire Fighting (ARFF) facility. The building will be roughly 8,000 square feet and is currently in the design phase. Commissioner Brown asked if there would be room for any Long Valley Fire Department equipment at the new facility. Chief Maniaci responded that there will not be the option to have equipment from Long Valley Fire present at the new building. Flights will continue with Advanced Air until September 15<sup>th</sup>.

(c) Geothermal. Chief Maniaci reported that the Casa Diablo IV geothermal plant is yet to be up and running. Division Chief Fred Stump stated that Casa Diablo IV may not be running yet due to an earthquake swarm that took place underneath Shady Rest.

(d) Station Maintenance. Chief Maniaci obtained a quote to replace all lights at the station with LED lights.

(e) Vehicle and Equipment Maintenance. The issues on engine 3281 have been fixed and it is back at the station. Engine 3231 is at currently at Burton's Fire to have a few issues addressed. Fleet Equipment Maintenance Manager Billy Czeschin reported that he is in the process of getting a quote for fixing the paint on 3231. Commissioner Brown asked if an adapter was added on the front end of 3281. Czeschin responded that they did add the adapter. He noted that the new bumper does stick out a little farther, however it includes a hose and nozzle on the front that is very easy to use. Czeschin reported that a new DEF sensor has been installed in 3281. The department also has a spare DEF sensor at the station in case the current one goes out again. The DEF sensor is currently not working on 3232, however Cummins was able to bypass the system to make the engine drivable. Czeschin suggested driving it without a DEF sensor as long as possible in order to save the spare DEF sensor for 3281. Chief Maniaci reported that 3232, 3230, and 3281 have all been pump tested.

(f) Board of Forestry Fire Safe Regulations Discussion and Possible Action. No news.

(g) Self-Contained Breathing Apparatus (SCBA) Service. No news.

5. Board Review/Approval of Payment Warrants since June 8<sup>th</sup> regular meeting. All Board members have reviewed the warrants since last regular meeting. A MOTION WAS MADE BY COMMISSIONER BROWN, SECONDED BY COMMISSIONER SHAW TO APPROVE THE PAYMENT WARRANTS. MOTION PASSED 4-0.
6. Discussion on Possible Hiring of New Fire Chief. Chief Maniaci confirmed that the fire department has not received any Fire Chief applications as of yet. Volunteer Soibian Spring notified the Board that she informed the volunteers at the Long Valley Firefighter Volunteer Association meeting that there has not been any interest in the Fire Chief position. Chief Maniaci reported that he has received interest from one party, but they have yet to follow through.
7. Review Draft of Long Valley Fire Protection District Bylaws. No news. Carry over.
8. Review of Paid Staff Positions, Duties, and Pay Scale. Carry over.
9. Discussion on Proposed Fire Station in Sunny Slopes Area. Commissioner Shaw directed this agenda item discussion to begin with staff presentations from Division Chief Fred Stump followed by acting Fire Chief Vince Maniaci. After each presentation there will be a question-and-answer period allowed. This will be followed by public comment with a time limit of three minutes per comment. After public comment, there will be Board discussion.

Presentation by Division Fire Chief Fred Stump: Stump stated that his presentation will be covering the time period from just before he took over as Fire Chief up until the end of October 2012. Stump reported that there has been deliberate effort on behalf of Long Valley Fire Department concerning building a new fire station in the Sunny Slopes area. Toward the end of Chief John Sweeney serving on the fire department, Fred Stump and John Sweeney had several discussions about what was needed to build a new fire station in the Sunny Slopes area. Sweeney had much knowledge and experience developing fire stations while working for the Mid Valley Fire Station near Fresno prior to being Fire Chief at Long Valley Fire Protection District. Stump stated that three main items are required when developing a new fire station (given that volunteers are already present to staff the station): 1) a building, 2) apparatus, and 3) the funding for operation.

Stump stated that they were aware of the initial building proposals that were presented to the department at the time. However, they found that several changes needed to be made to the initial proposals. Stump reported that during the Birch Fire they found there was a significant need for water. Stump and Chief Maniaci took this under consideration for the new fire station. They made necessary changes for the building to

include room for rescue equipment, a water tanker, and an engine. At the request of Mono County, other changes to the initial proposal included providing crew quarters in case Mono County expanded the paramedic program. After meeting with Mono County planning department concerning the fire station, Stump found out that because the station was along a scenic highway, there were architectural and lighting restrictions that needed to be addressed. There was also a requested addition to create an ADA meeting compliant facility on the lower level of the station.

Long Valley Fire pursued four separate grants to fund the project. Stump met with personnel from the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) concerning funding to build and operate the new facility. The USDA understood the need for a new station, however they responded that their funding mostly goes to fire departments whose stations are in worse condition than Long Valley Fire Department's current operating fire station. Stump pursued looking for ways to increase revenue to the department including mitigation fees, addressing excess Education Revenue Augmentation Fund (ERAF), parcel fees, increasing property tax, and potential property tax from the geothermal plant. Based on his findings, the funding for Long Valley Fire to build and operate a new fire station was unsuccessful. Stump reported that Long Valley Fire did reach out to the Sunny Slopes community members during this time and received great opposition from the community. There were members from the community that threatened legal action if Long Valley Fire moved forward with the project.

In summary, Fred reported that though they did have an apparatus for the station at that time, based on the lack of support and funding to build/operate a new station, the project was not possible.

Question-and-Answer Period: Sunny Slopes resident Hap Hazard commented that the revised design proposals of the new station are far more excessive than what the Sunny Slopes community is asking for. Stump commented that the revisions made to the original proposals were necessary changes based on requests from Mono County at that time. Hap Hazard stated he is willing to speak with Mono County planning department and other necessary personnel to address the updated design structure and bring it to a more manageable cost. Regarding the opposition from the community that Long Valley Fire received, Hap asked if Long Valley Fire has conducted a recent survey of the community's stance on building a fire station. Stump replied that he has not conducted a recent survey. Hap Hazard commented that based on his recent outreach, he has found that there are currently about 75% of the members of the Sunny Slopes community who are in support of the project. Hap Hazard stated that the USDA still has money available, and he believes this is the type of project that they would support. Hap Hazard stated that there will be provided a letter of support from the Water District at the next regularly scheduled meeting.

Presentation from Acting Fire Chief Maniaci: Chief Maniaci stated that the project to build a station in the Sunny Slopes area is included on the Long Valley Fire Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) and will continue to be. Chief Maniaci stated the water issues concerning building the station were formally resolved back in 2019. Chief Maniaci advised that building a new station in the area will help with the Insurance Services

Office (ISO) rating, however it will not affect the high severity zone rating. The high severity zone rating is what is driving the increase in insurance costs. Given this rating, building a new station in the Sunny Slopes area may not help residents to obtain homeowners insurance. Chief Maniaci stated that he lives 3.2 miles from the current Long Valley Fire station and is unable to get homeowners insurance due to being in a high severity zone.

Chief Maniaci highlighted several items that need to be considered in moving forward with this project. He stated that it costs roughly \$32,000 to maintain and operate the current fire station. If Long Valley Fire moves forward with this project, the cost for Long Valley Fire to operate both facilities could estimate around \$60,000. Chief Maniaci noted that in 2019, the community of Sunny Slopes requested to have a Fire Safe Council created. Long Valley Fire was in favor of creating the Fire Safe Council and agreed to sponsor it. Since then, the Fire Safe Council has yet to be created and resolved. At that time of sponsoring the Fire Safe Council, discussion was made regarding building a new fire station, however, no one from the community came forward to pursue the project.

Question-and-Answer Period: Hap Hazard asked what the Board considers a continuous volunteer presence in the Sunny Slopes community should be. Currently there are two volunteers from the Sunny Slopes area that are active on the department. Commissioner Shaw and Chief Maniaci agreed that there should be a minimum of six volunteers that are committed, active in the department, and are willing to respond to calls within the district. Volunteer Soibian Spring asked if based on the closures of Casa Diablo I and II (CD I and II) geothermal plants, the department will be receiving a decrease in revenue because those plants are on private property. Stump responded that there could be negative revenue impacts from the closures of the CD I and II. Stump advised the Board of Commissioners to use caution in moving forward with building a new fire station given these potential revenue impacts.

Public Comment Period: Commissioner Shaw opened a period for public comment. Hap Hazard noted that given the new fire station will be smaller than the current Long Valley Fire station, the cost estimation to maintain and operate the new fire station should be less. Chief Maniaci agreed, however, though it may be less, it is still a large cost that must be considered. Volunteer Dan Gordon commented that if there is enough support in the Sunny Slopes community, then there should be enough support to staff the volunteers for the new fire station. Gordon believes that the first step is to staff the volunteers and then consider moving forward with building the fire station. Training Officer Scott McGuire commented that on average it takes roughly 400 hours of training for an individual to begin to become an engineer. If the Board decides to move forward with this project, the training of the volunteers who would staff the new station needs to begin as soon as possible. He added that if there are not volunteers present within the Sunny Slopes community to respond to calls, the response time will not be any quicker, in turn will not protect the community any better than what Long Valley Fire is already doing. Hap Hazard closed by stating that the support of the community has changed since this project was last pursued. There is significant support from the Sunny Slopes community now than there was years ago. He believes this project will

not only benefit the community, but the entire district. He clarified that he is not expecting the fire station to be built as soon as possible, but that he is committed to the process and necessary discussions with the Board of Commissioners to get this project going.

Board of Commissioner Discussion: Commissioner Shaw opened a period for Board discussion. Commissioner Brown commented that the cost estimation Chief Maniaci put forth to operate and maintain the new station does not include cost of insurance coverage. Currently every year, an increase in insurance coverage costs is expected for the fire department which must be considered if moving forward with this project. Commissioner Day and Commissioner Czeschin both concur with Commissioner Brown. Commissioner Shaw stated that it is imperative that the department has volunteers who are committed from the Sunny Slopes area before they consider building a new fire station. Commissioner Shaw would like to have a survey conducted from the Sunny Slopes community that shows a minimum of 65% of the residents in favor of the project. She would like to have a committee consisting of at least three Sunny Slopes residents (not including volunteer fire fighters) to participate in discussions at the Long Valley Fire regularly scheduled meetings. The committee needs to be willing to assist in locking funding for the project as well as help apply for grants. Commissioner Shaw stated simply that the department does not have the money to build a new station and run the current district successfully. In summary, the concerns that the Board has in moving forward with the project are the costs involved in building the fire station, maintaining and operating it, and staffing once it is built. Commissioner Day commented that unless we have volunteers to staff the station, we are wasting public money building one if it cannot be used. It was resolved that the Board would like to see tangible community support to move forward with this project.

10. Update on Education Revenue Augmentation Fund (ERAF). No news. Carry over.
11. Discussion on Solar Panel Installation at the Fire Station. Matthew Berger from Berger Solar Electric presented on the solar panel proposals provided to the Board. Matthew Berger highlighted that the equipment they use is manufactured by a company called Sun Power. The reason they use this manufacturer is because they are the strongest out there with a 40-year useful lifespan. Matthew continued with his presentation explaining the technology and engineering of the solar panels. Berger Solar Electric provided two proposals for Long Valley Fire: one for solar panels to be installed on the roof, and a separate proposal for solar panels to be installed on the ground. Commissioner Brown asked Matthew which installation he recommends for the fire station. Matthew responded by going through the benefits and costs of both the ground and roof mount. He highlighted that the ground mount requires more equipment, trenching, and wire that contribute to increased costs. The benefit with the ground mount is that there will be more energy production per panel because they include the capability to dictate which direction the panels are facing. The roof mount will be less expensive overall. Though the energy production levels for the roof mount may be less, they are still close to the energy levels of the ground mount. Matthew Berger confirmed that the solar panels would not be installed in the area where the station roof was leaking. Commissioner Day commented that after much

research and discussion, the upper roof installation would be the best decision for the fire station. The Board agreed with this decision. Matthew explained there is very little general maintenance. Berger Solar Electric can monitor the panels remotely. If there were any maintenance issues, Berger Solar Electric would be the ones who would maintain or fix the panels. In terms of snow load, if there is an excessive amount of snow accumulation, Matthew did suggest someone climbing to the roof to clear snow. Long Valley Fire does need approval from the Department of Water and Power (DWP) to move forward with solar panel installation. Commissioner Day commented that he believes the biggest benefit to having solar panels at the station is the overall savings the fire department can have over the lifespan of the panels. Commissioner Shaw thanked Matthew Berger on behalf of the Board for his presentation. The Board will keep this as a recurring agenda item until a decision is made.

12. Secretary to the Board's Report. Secretary Durgin reported that she received the Local Agency Biennial Notice stating every agency within the county not covered by the county's conflict of interest code is to review its code and notify the County Board of Supervisors of any amendments. Secretary Durgin asked the Board if Long Valley Fire has its own conflict of interest code or if we are covered by the county. Fred Stump explained that districts can utilize the county conflict of interest code or provide its own. However, the county does not arbitrarily cover the district. Secretary Durgin will follow up with Scheereen Dedman, the Clerk of the Board of Supervisors, and report to the Board at the next regular meeting. Secretary Durgin reported that she attended an elections webinar for the upcoming elections. Secretary Durgin will be sending out information to the Board members whose terms end this year and are up for election.
13. Review correspondence received since the last regular meeting. Chief Maniaci reported correspondence from Verizon Wireless. Verizon is updating Long Valley Fire cellular plan to be government rated.
14. Review and adjust current FY budget line items as necessary and accept. Carry over.
15. New Business. No new business.
16. Call for Agenda items for next regular meeting. Discussion on Possible Hiring of New Fire Chief; Review Draft of Long Valley Fire Protection District Bylaws; Update on ERAF; Discussion on Solar Panel Installation at the Fire Station; Discussion on Proposed Fire Station in Sunny Slopes Area; Review of Paid Staff Positions, Duties, and Pay Scale.
17. Adjournment. A motion was made by Commissioner Brown, seconded by Commissioner Shaw, to adjourn the meeting and reconvene in regular session on August 10<sup>th</sup>, 2022 at 7:00 p.m. at the Long Valley Fire Station, 3605 Crowley Lake Drive, Crowley Lake, California. The motion passed 4-0.

Secretary to the Board