



Long Valley Fire Protection District
3605 Crowley Lake Drive • Crowley Lake • California 93546
760.935.4545 / 760.935.4436 (facsimile)
longvalleyfd@gmail.com

MINUTES OF SPECIAL MEETING
February 12th, 2024

Date: Wednesday, February 12th, 2024
Time: 7:00 p.m.
Location: 3605 Crowley Lake Drive, Crowley Lake, CA 93546

Members Present: Dan Gordon, David Melchior, Kim Czeschin, Lorinda Beatty, Ron Day

Members Absent: None

Others Present: Fire Chief Scott McGuire, Division Chief Fred Stump, Paul Zastoupil, Captain Soibian Spring, Hap Hazard, Becky Davis, Rich Booher, Secretary Kathryn Durgin (via Google Meet)

Others Absent: None

1. Call to order, roll call, Pledge of Allegiance, and announcements. The meeting was called to order at 7:00 pm.
2. Election of Board Chair. Commissioner Day initiated the Board discussion. Division Chief Fred Stump commented on the responsibilities of the Board Chair, which include managing meetings, setting time limits for public comments, and ensuring adherence to the agenda. Fred suggested electing a Board Vice Chair and a Chair Pro-Tem to facilitate continued business in the absence of the Chair and Vice Chair. Chief McGuire mentioned that amending the Long Valley Fire Bylaws would be necessary to establish the Chair Pro-Tem position. Commissioner Day expressed his willingness to assume the role of Board Chair but clarified his inability to handle weekly duties related to warrant review and approval. Commissioner Czeschin will continue these responsibilities, and in Commissioner Czeschin's absence, Commissioner Day will step in to cover for her. If additional coverage is required, another Commissioner will be designated to learn the duties and support Commissioner Czeschin. A MOTION WAS MADE BY COMMISSIONER GORDON, SECONDED BY MELCHIOR, TO ELECT COMMISSIONER DAY AS BOARD CHAIR. Motion passed 5-0. A MOTION WAS MADE BY CZESCHIN, SECONDED BY COMMISSIONER GORDON, TO ELECT COMMISSIONER BEATTY AS BOARD VICE CHAIR. Motion passed 5-0.

3. Opportunity for the public to address the Board on items of interest to the public that are not agendized and within the jurisdiction of the Board. Fred Stump announced that Diane Brown sent him the Save the Date notice of the Celebration of Life/Memorial for Commissioner Hank Brown. Fred is working with Chief McGuire to get all fire department staff and volunteers the information. The Celebration of Life will be held on Sunday, June 2nd, from 4 pm to 7 pm at the Sierra Star Golf Course. According to Fred, Diane Brown has requested that if anyone has photos of Hank Brown, please send them to her or Secretary Durgin, who will assemble a video for the Memorial.
4. Discussion on Proposed Fire Station in the Sunny Slopes Area. Commissioner Day opened the discussion with staff reports, followed by public reports.

Staff Reports:

Report from Fire Chief: Chief McGuire presented the Sunny Slopes Station 2 project timeline to the Board, breaking it down into phases: Planning and Development, Design, Pre-Construction, Procurement, Construction, and Occupancy. He noted that this timeline has been a collaborative effort between him, Fred Stump, and Gerry LeFrancois. Chief McGuire walked the Board through the timeline, explaining the deliverables necessary to move the project forward. He emphasized the importance and associated costs of obtaining the Conditional Use Permit (CUP), forming a needs assessment committee, and creating a plan for securing funding. These steps must be accomplished before drafting and submitting a Request for Proposal (RFP) and contracting an architect to move the project forward into the Design Phase. He shared that they are currently in the Planning and Development Phase, working on the CUP process and preparing to go before the Land Development Technical Advisory Committee (LDTAC). The CUP application was submitted to Mono County, and they will know of any CUP application issues in May. The Chief noted that the department will not know if they will be awarded the CUP until September. He suggested delaying spending toward the Design Phase until they know the CUP outcome or identify potential issues in May. The estimated cost for the CUP process is \$20,000, which the Board has already approved. The Chief proposed forming an ad hoc committee including a minimum of two Board members and two members of the public.

Chief McGuire noted that this timeline is very aggressive. He shared that if everything proceeds as planned, it is possible to have the Sunny Slopes Station 2 project approved and ready for county submission by January 2025. He outlined a rough budget estimate of \$250,000 over the next 18 months, emphasizing the need to secure funding sources to achieve this. The initial costs include the Board approved \$20,000 for the CUP process, likely to be completed by the end of fiscal year 23-24, and approximately \$100,000 for the Request for Proposal (RFP) process and hiring an architect during the Design Phase in fiscal year 24-25. Chief anticipated additional initial costs to run around \$100,000 during the subsequent Pre-Construction Phase. To facilitate efficient tracking of the planning process, costs, funding, and overall progress, the Chief proposed establishing an ad hoc committee and possibly utilizing project management software.

Report from Division Chief: Fred Stump reported that the presented project timeline depends on factors such as the county's application processing speed, the duration of the Conditional Use Permit (CUP) process, and the environmental documentation required by the county. He proposed allocating the recently received Education Revenue Augmentation Fund (ERAF) reimbursement to the Sunny Slopes Station 2 project and making a public statement concerning this allocation. Regarding the \$100,000 from Mono County, Fred is awaiting guidance from Mary Booher, who is serving as a Retired Annuitant for Mono County Administrative Office Special Projects, on the department's obligations for utilizing the funding. He also discussed a cost estimate proposal from Tim Rafferty at Southern California Edison (SCE), which included two payment options tied to the likelihood of additional service users connecting to the new infrastructure. Fred clarified to Tim Rafferty that he doesn't foresee anyone tapping into the new infrastructure, potentially disqualifying the department from the reimbursement payment option. The proposal included the installation of a new pole supporting above-ground wires across Owens Gorge Road, violating the county's undergrounding ordinance. To address this, the CUP application submission was delayed until now to include a waiver for the new pole.

Discussion and Public Comment: The Board discussed the presented information and timeline. Concerning the installation of a new pole from SCE, Hap Hazard raised a concern about the ambiguity of language in differentiating between a new pole and one that replaces an existing pole. Commissioner Beatty emphasized the need for a comprehensive funding plan, suggesting multiple sources, including a potential loan from Mono County. Stressing the importance of having contingency plans, she suggested the department consider various funding avenues since grants might not be available. Commissioner Beatty expressed concern about investing \$200,000 in the project only to see it fall apart, highlighting the potential waste of taxpayer dollars and disappointment for the Sunny Slopes Community. Commissioner Gordon suggested assigning the ad hoc committee to source funding for the project and inquired about the expectations from the Sunny Slopes community. Fred Stump emphasized the advantage of having a shovel-ready project, even if it incurs a budget of \$200,000 or more, as long as it doesn't hinder the district's operations. He supported investing in the project to make it "shovel ready," ensuring readiness once funding sources become available.

Public Reports:

Report from Sunny Slopes Resident Hap Hazard: Hap Hazard presented a report addressing two key issues. Firstly, he mentioned that the previous Board of Commissioners had stipulated that the department would not spend anything out of the budget on the Station 2 project. Hap emphasized that he would explore funding options once he understood the project's total cost, with 8-11 potential sources in mind. He stressed that worrying about funding at this early stage is impractical and that the ad hoc committee could refine the project, providing a more accurate estimate of the total cost. The second issue Hap highlighted traced the project's history since 1994, acknowledging the community's current support for Station 2. Hap stated that he would like to have a more "shovel-ready" project with defined costs before

pursuing solid funding options. Hap stressed the significance of having a shovel-ready project to secure government funding, citing an experience with the successful funding of the Digital 395 project due to its readiness. While acknowledging the availability of private funding sources, Hap emphasized the necessity of being shovel-ready to pursue such options.

Discussion and Conclusions: The Board discussed various aspects of the Station 2 project, including community expectations, funding options, the ad hoc committee, water sources, station design, and station apparatus. Chief McGuire stressed the need for approximately \$250,000 in the next 18 months to advance the project. While acknowledging the importance of a funding plan with multiple sources, he highlighted the Board's approval of \$20,000 earmarked for the Conditional Use Permit (CUP). Chief McGuire suggested holding off on further spending until the CUP is approved, proposing that the \$100,000 from the county be used toward a Request for Proposal (RFP) and design. However, he expressed concerns about potential red flags in the CUP process impacting the use of county funding. He stated that if the CUP application is rejected, there's a risk of losing the \$100,000 unless it rolls over into the next fiscal year. Chief emphasized the need for a clear roadmap for the county on how the \$100,000 will be spent.

Chief McGuire also highlighted the current interest in the Wildland Urban Interface (WUI), presenting grant opportunities such as the Assistance to Firefighter Grant. He proposed designating Station 2 as a WUI facility to enhance funding options. Discussion ensued on grant funding for replacing apparatus older than 2004 standards with WUI apparatus.

Fred mentioned a two-week timeframe to hear from the county regarding the \$100,000, and if not, he would follow up with Mary Booher, aiming to provide updates at the March meeting. In concluding the discussion, Hap proposed appointing an ad hoc committee for the Station 2 project. The Chief requested the Board to designate a representative for the fire district regarding the Sunny Slopes Station 2 project. A MOTION WAS MADE BY COMMISSIONER DAY, SECONDED BY COMMISSIONER BEATTY, FOR COMMISSIONER DAY AND COMMISSIONER GORDON TO BE ON THE SUNNY SLOPES STATION 2 AD HOC COMMITTEE. Motion passed 5-0.

5. Approval of the January 10th, 2024, meeting minutes. A MOTION WAS MADE BY COMMISSIONER BEATTY, SECONDED BY COMMISSIONER DAY, TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE JANUARY 10TH, 2024, REGULAR MEETING. Motion passed 5-0.
6. Chief's Report.
 - A. Volunteer Report. Chief McGuire provided an update on recent activities within the department since the last regular meeting. He reported eight calls since the last regular meeting and five volunteer training sessions. Volunteer training covers extrication, radio use, medical assessments, and trauma assessments. The volunteer

firefighter roster has decreased from 25 to 23 members. Chief McGuire is awaiting an update from legal counsel Tim Sanford, who is expected to retire in June 2024. Chief McGuire reported that the department has been offered a donation of 20 moderately used self-contained breathing apparatus (SCBA) packs and bottles. The donor has requested a release of liability, and Chief McGuire recommends accepting the gear for training purposes only without putting it into active service. He suggests taking ten packs for Long Valley Fire and making the remaining ten available to other fire departments. Furthermore, Chief McGuire reported that the Gary Sinise Foundation, which previously donated \$75,000 worth of extrication tools, provided the department with shirts, hats, and banners.

- B. Report on Current Fire Department Activities, Assignments, and Schedule for potential Board direction. Chief McGuire provided an update, stating that the Assistance to Firefighters Grant (AFG) application deadline is in June, and he intends to apply for funding to replace specific firefighting apparatus. Notably, he aims to replace reserve units 3232 and 3225 with a Type 6 wildland apparatus and plans to replace unit 3280. Chief McGuire highlighted that AFG grants do not cover building funding.

Chief McGuire also addressed challenges related to inspections and permits. He discussed a rule stating that CalFire should conduct defensible space inspections when a house is sold, but currently, they are not responding to realtors. Chief McGuire shared an instance of a property in escrow awaiting a defensible space inspection, where Long Valley Fire might step in, but a liability issue exists. To address this, Mammoth Fire has offered to send an inspector, with the inspection fee deducted from the escrow payment.

Chief McGuire reported on long-range planning, mentioning an Airport Rescue and Firefighting (ARFF) training at Mammoth Airport. Both Long Valley Fire and Mammoth Fire will attend this eight-hour course. Additionally, he informed the Board about West Valley Search and Rescue staying at the station on March 1st. Regarding communication systems, Chief McGuire is awaiting a quote and update on the California Radio Interoperability System (CRIS). He emphasized the importance of establishing a reliable radio system owned by Long Valley Fire through the Federal Communications Commission (FCC), independent of the county system, in case issues arise with CRIS, ensuring the department's operational continuity.

- C. Long-Range Planning Discussion.

(a) Personnel. Chief McGuire reported that volunteer Douglas Brooks had completed the Emergency Medical Technician (EMT) refresher training and recertification.

(b) Airport. Chief McGuire reported that there is still a need for the department to establish a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the Airport and the Town of Mammoth Lakes. He informed the Board that Captain Soibian Spring, the Mammoth Airport Operations Manager, is the designated point of contact for the MOU.

(c) Geothermal. No news.

(d) Station Maintenance. No news.

(e) Vehicle and Equipment Maintenance. Chief McGuire reported that mechanic Rigo Lemus Briviesca is currently working on the California State required Basic Inspection of Terminals (BITS) for department vehicles.

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

7. Board review/approval of payment warrants since the last meeting. A MOTION WAS MADE BY COMMISSIONER CZESCHIN, SECONDED BY COMMISSIONER DAY TO APPROVE PAYMENT WARRANTS SINCE LAST REGULAR MEETING. Motion passed 4 with 1 abstention. Following a discussion with Commissioner Beatty, Secretary Durgin proposed creating a monthly disbursement listing of all expenditures, which she plans to share with the Board alongside the Expenditures Summary and Budget Balance Sheet before each meeting. This consolidated document aims to provide a comprehensive overview of monthly expenses for the Board's review before approving warrants at meetings. Commissioner Beatty supported this idea, emphasizing the benefits of a high-level warrants summary. Additionally, Commissioner Beatty suggested a solution to address late notices caused by county processing timelines, proposing to double up on one payment each month to stay ahead. Commissioner Beatty noted that she verified with the Mono County Treasurer that doubling up on one payment is acceptable, provided the warrant states it is a prepayment.
8. R24-03 Resolution in Honor, Recognition, and Appreciation of Board Commissioner Sharon Shaw for Her Years of Valuable Service. Commissioner Melchior read the resolution aloud. The Board of Commissioners approved Resolution R24-03. Motion passed 5-0.
9. R24-04 Resolution in Honor, Recognition, and Appreciation of Board Commissioner Tom Beveridge for His Years of Valuable Service. Commissioner Melchior read the resolution aloud. The Board of Commissioners approved Resolution R24-04. Motion passed 5-0.
10. Discussion and revision to volunteer year-end stipend requirements. Chief McGuire briefly described the original purpose of the volunteer year-end stipend requirements, highlighting that the stipend compensation was initially dependent upon the Chief's discretion. However, he expressed disagreement with this approach, stating that relying on the Fire Chief for volunteer compensation discretion compromises the leadership role. Chief McGuire emphasized that using the year-end stipend to encourage participation among volunteer firefighters in a voluntary fire department is ineffective. Instead, he suggested increasing the probationary period for volunteers as a better means of encouraging long-term participation. Commissioner Beatty and Captain Siobian Spring supported the idea that the Chief's discretion should not determine the year-end stipend compensation. Commissioner Melchior added that firefighters volunteer to serve the community, not for financial gain. The Board discussed qualifications for volunteers to receive the stipend, with Captain Spring asserting that it should not be used as a

punishment for lack of attendance. She believes that the original issues prompting stipend requirements have been resolved, and any future concerns can be addressed through the culture of honor among volunteers rather than tying compensation to encouraging participation. A MOTION WAS MADE BY COMMISSIONER CZESCHIN, SECONDED BY COMMISSIONER MELCHIOR, TO REMOVE THE VOLUNTEER YEAR-END STIPEND THRESHOLD QUALIFICATION FOR VOLUNTEERS TO RECEIVE COMPENSATION. ALL VOLUNTEERS WILL RECEIVE A YEAR-END STIPEND FOR CALLS AND TRAINING ATTENDANCE MINUS THEIR LONG VALLEY FIRE ASSOCIATION ANNUAL DUES. Motion passed 5-0.

11. Discussion and action on California Special Districts Association (CSDA) membership. Commissioner Beatty highlighted the significant benefits of the California Special Districts Association (CSDA) for special districts, providing valuable resources such as webinar training for special district staff, volunteer firefighters, Board member ethics training, and sessions on the Brown Act and California law. The association also offers live webinars and conferences for Board members and staff. Commissioner Beatty mentioned that the district's operating budget determines the annual dues and expressed a desire to authorize the district to invest in a CSDA membership. Discussion was made by the Board. A MOTION WAS MADE BY COMMISSIONER GORDON, SECONDED BY COMMISSIONER MELCHIOR, TO APPROVE PURCHASING A CSDA MEMBERSHIP FOR THE CURRENT CALENDAR YEAR. Motion passed 5-0.
12. Secretary to the Board's Report. Secretary Durgin informed the Board that she sent Board members and Chief a pay schedule in response to the previous discussion about quarterly time sheet submissions during the last regular meeting. After speaking with Mono County finance and researching, she could not obtain a clear answer regarding the legality of quarterly timesheet submissions. In response, she created a monthly pay schedule to provide clarity for those submitting timesheets. Secretary Durgin mentioned that a minor adjustment is needed on the pay schedule, and she will resend the corrected version to the Board. Additionally, she reported on upcoming agenda items, stating that the first draft of the 2024-2025 budget will be presented at the April Board Meeting, with the second budget review in May and the budget public hearing and adoption in June.
13. Review correspondence received since the last regular meeting. Secretary Durgin reported correspondence received from Frontier that the department has been past due on invoices since November. She spoke with a representative today, and they informed her that our account had switched to paperless billing; however, the department has not received any invoices since then. She stated that Frontier sent the department an invoice today covering all months still owed. She will include this invoice in the current week's warrant to be paid promptly, and starting in March, the department will be back to regular paper billing.
14. Review and adjust current FY budget line items as necessary and accept. Chief McGuire commented that currently, as the Conditional Use Permit (CUP) application is processed, fees will come out of Special District Expenses (#214). He noted the initial cost for the CUP application will be \$695; after that, the department will pay for staff time. He

inquired how the Board would like to handle those fees, whether pulling directly from the \$20,000 set aside in the Capital Account for Sunny Slopes Station 2 or transferring funds into the Operating Account. The Board agreed to wait until the March meeting to see what kind of costs the CUP process incurs; until then, any fees that do come in will be taken out of Special District Expenses (#214).

15. New Business. Commissioner Melchior requested the department website to include a link to propane safety for snow conditions.
16. Call for Agenda items for the next regular meeting. Staff report on the progress of Sunny Slopes Station 2 project; Discussion and action on MOU between the Airport and Town of Mammoth Lakes.
17. Adjournment. A motion was made by Commissioner Day, seconded by Commissioner Melchior, to adjourn the meeting and reconvene in regular session on March 13th, 2024, at 7:00 pm at the Long Valley Fire Station, 3605 Crowley Lake Drive, Crowley Lake, California. Motion passed 5-0.

Katie Durgin
Secretary to the Board
Long Valley Fire Protection District