



Long Valley Fire Protection District
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MINUTES OF SPECIAL MEETING
June 4, 2025

Date: Wednesday, June 4, 2025

Time: 7:00 p.m.

Location: 3605 Crowley Lake Drive, Crowley Lake, CA 93546

This Special Meeting was rescheduled from its originally planned date of Wednesday, June 11, 2025.

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

Members Absent: None

Others Present: Fire Chief Scott McGuire, Division Chief Fred Stump, Equipment Manager and Captain Billy Czeschin, Secretary Kathryn Durgin (via Google Meet), Becky Davis, Hap Hazard

Others Absent: None

1. Call to order, roll call, Pledge of Allegiance, and announcements. Commissioner Beatty called the meeting to order at 7:03pm. Commissioner Gordon led all in attendance to the Pledge of Allegiance. No announcements were made.
2. 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. The public did not address the Board on any items.
3. Report and provide direction on the progress of the Sunny Slopes Station 2 project. Commissioner Beatty opened the discussion with staff reports followed by public comment.

Staff Reports: Chief McGuire provided an update, stating that he is still waiting for the county to assign someone to the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) and National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) process. He noted that it has been approximately three weeks since he last received communication from the county. Chief McGuire also reported that Gerry LeFrancios has followed up as well. Chief McGuire shared that he and Gerry are planning on reaching out to the county again via email this

evening. He noted that, unfortunately, the response from the county has been significantly delayed.

Fred Stump added that he had also contacted District Supervisor Rhonda Duggan to request information. He explained that, to his understanding, the two required studies are a biological study and a cultural resource study. He noted that the county was directed two months ago to assign consultants for these studies.

Chief McGuire further reported that Representative Kevin Kiley submitted two separate appropriations requests for the Long Valley Fire Sunny Slopes Station 2 project. He shared that Long Valley Fire ranked at the top of the appropriations submittal list, which places the district in the best possible position for potential funding.

Public Comment: Sunny Slopes resident Hap Hazard shared that District Supervisor Rhonda Duggan attended their Firewise meeting last Saturday and provided additional information. According to Hap, she noted that not only is the department at the top of the appropriations list, but that funding for these types of projects is prioritized based on health and safety criteria, positioning Long Valley Fire as a strong candidate for receiving funding. Hap further reported that the funding request submitted was for over \$4 million to cover the full project. Chief McGuire clarified that while the request did include all components the department proposed for the project, the total request was for \$5.5 million, and the department will be required to provide a 25% match.

4. Approval of the Minutes of the May 19, 2025 Special Meeting. A MOTION WAS MADE BY COMMISSIONER GORDON, SECONDED BY COMMISSIONER MELCHIOR, TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF MAY 19, 2025 SPECIAL MEETING. Motion passed 5-0.
5. Chief's Report.
 - A. Volunteer Report. Chief McGuire provided an update on department activities since the last regular meeting. He shared that year-to-date, the department has responded to 62 calls, with an average of 8.1 personnel responding per call. He reported that the department has responded to 10 calls since the last meeting and provided a brief overview of the types of emergencies addressed. Chief McGuire also shared that the department sent a crew to assist with the Inn Fire. He provided an update on volunteer training, noting that the current focus is on wildland fire preparation.
 - B. Report on Current Fire Department Activities, Assignments, and Schedule for potential Board direction. Chief McGuire reported that a joint training exercise is scheduled for this Saturday, July 7, at the Mammoth Airport, which will include participation from a U.S. Forest Service engine, two CalFire engines, Mammoth Fire, and June Fire.
 - C. Long-Range Planning Discussion.
 - a) Personnel. No news.

- b) Airport. Chief McGuire reported that all airport inspections have been completed. He shared that he is currently in the process of issuing reinspection notices for those locations that did not pass the initial inspection.
- c) Geothermal. Chief McGuire reported that he has been in communication with the geothermal plant regarding doing the annual summer inspection visit. He shared that he is hoping to coordinate inspections with Mammoth Fire.
- d) Station Maintenance. Chief McGuire reported that he had shared that the station's phone system has been updated and that he is coordinating with Frontier to address the phone lines. He also shared that the department is now connected to the AT&T FirstNet system, which will allow the purchase of iPads at a reduced cost when the department transitions to the First Due platform. He shared that the contract with First Due has been signed, and implementation is currently taking place. Chief McGuire further reported that the antennas on the station roof have been replaced. He also acknowledged John Kokado's efforts on the department website, noting that thanks to his work, the department's website received a 100% rating on its most recent accessibility report. Chief McGuire introduced a potential item he is exploring: installing a radio repeater on Squaw Pass. He explained that this would significantly improve communication coverage in Rock Creek, into the Convict Lake area, and throughout the entire district. He estimated the cost of the repeater at approximately \$10,000 and proposed using an analog system that could be shared with Forest Service partners. Additional discussion was held regarding the details and benefits of this proposal.
- e) Vehicle and Equipment Maintenance. Chief McGuire reported that all the new radios have been installed with the exception of the base radio.
- f) County and Community Updates. Chief McGuire reported that Long Valley Fire recently participated in a tour of the Crowley Lake Dam. He explained that the dam's water flow control mechanism is malfunctioning and is currently under repair. He shared that following approval from the Mono County Board of Supervisors, the Crowley Lake Dam Road is scheduled to remain closed until November. Chief McGuire noted that, in theory, the department may be able to access the road during emergencies, but this will depend on construction progress and site accessibility. He anticipates that, with the road closure, more people will travel to the area only to find it inaccessible and may instead camp in the nearby community. He reported that, in response, a few Sunny Slopes volunteers have requested permission to use vehicle 3225 for evening patrols along dirt roads to monitor for campfires. Chief McGuire also shared that community members in Mammoth have been placing "No Fires" signs along the scenic loop. He emphasized the importance of continued community involvement and proactive volunteer patrols in effectively managing the potential increase in visitors and reducing fire risk in the area.

Public Comment: Sunny Slopes resident Becky Davis asked whether citizens are permitted to approach and inform individuals that open fires are not allowed. Chief McGuire responded that while citizens can take this approach, it may not always be well received by campers. He shared that he instructed the Sunny Slopes volunteer crew that if they plan to conduct patrols, there must always be at least two people in the vehicle for safety. Additional discussion followed regarding the regulations and requirements for having campfires in the area.

Sunny Slopes resident Hap Hazard commented that the Crowley Lake Dam Road closure has raised additional concerns within the community. He noted that several websites continue to promote access to the backside of the lake, which is generating significant traffic along the roadway. He added that both fishermen and campers are still attempting to reach the area. Hap shared that he has advised community members to be mindful that when visitors encounter the closed gate, they may become angry, frustrated, or generally upset as they return through the community. As a result, he cautioned that there may be an increased risk of pedestrian-related incidents and encouraged everyone to remain alert to this possibility.

g) Grants. Chief McGuire reported that the Firewise Communities for which the department serves as fiscal sponsor have received their grant funding from Whitebark Institute as well as the items for the grant. He shared that the department also received grant funding from Whitebark Institute for a Wildland-Urban Interface (WUI) Hose Pack Kit. Chief McGuire reported that he is going to be working on the Staffing for Adequate Fire and Emergency Response (SAFER) grant in the coming weeks. Lastly, he shared that the department did receive grant approval a couple hours ago for the California Office of Traffic Safety (OTS) grant for replacing extrication equipment and tools.

6. Public Hearing and Adoption of Fiscal Year 2025-2026 Budget. Chief McGuire reported that there have been no changes to the budget since it was last presented at the previous regular meeting. He noted that \$30,000 is currently budgeted under the Equipment Maintenance Radios line item. He explained that the original plan was to split this expense between the current and next fiscal years. However, he explained that due to an upcoming price increase from BK Technologies, the department's vendor opted to purchase additional radios in advance. As a result, this line item may be overbudget in 2025 but would leave available reserve funds for 2026. Chief McGuire recommended keeping the full \$30,000 in the Equipment Maintenance Radios budget line item. He explained that, since the department is operating under budget this year, there is flexibility to exceed this line item if necessary. He also noted that retaining these funds would allow the department to move forward with a potential repeater purchase in the future, should the Board choose to pursue it. The Board supported this recommendation. Commissioner Beatty opened the Public Hearing. No public comments were made, and Commissioner Beatty subsequently closed the Public Hearing. No further comments were offered by the Board. A MOTION WAS MADE BY COMMISSIONER BEATTY, SECONDED BY COMMISSIONER DAY, TO APPROVE AND ADOPT THE 2025-2025 FISCAL YEAR

BUDGET AS PRESENTED WITH AN OPERATING BUDGET OF \$467,856.25.
Motion passed 5-0.

7. Discussion and action on transfer of funds to Capital Reserve Account.
 - a. Resolution R25-01 Authorizing the Transfer of Funds from the District's Operating Account to the District's Capital Reserve Account

Chief McGuire reported that he and Secretary Durgin recently met with Fetcher Financial Auditor Joanne Berry to clarify the procedures for transferring funds between the district's accounts. He explained that mitigation fees are automatically deposited into the Capital Reserve Account and are classified as restricted funds, meaning they can only be used for capital purchases. However, he shared that the \$500,000 transferred last fiscal year from the Operating Account to the Capital Reserve Account was designated as "committed" funds, not restricted. Chief McGuire clarified that committed funds are allocated by Board decision and can be used for purposes beyond capital expenditures. He shared that these funds may also be transferred back to the Operating Account if needed, with a Board-approved resolution. He further explained that while committed funds may be intended for capital improvements, they remain flexible and can support operating expenses if necessary. He further shared that from an auditing perspective, it would also be acceptable for the department to establish a separate bank account for day-to-day operations, provided it is reconciled with the county and managed through regular Board oversight. He shared that further discussion with the county will be needed to determine the process and requirements for opening such an account.

Secretary Durgin shared that one of her take-aways when looking at a past audit in their discussion with Joanne Berry, is that the funds in the Operating Account are currently considered unassigned. She expressed concern about maintaining a high balance of unassigned funds and agrees with the proposal of setting aside a portion of those funds as committed funds, while retaining flexibility to access them if needed.

Chief McGuire proposed maintaining a balance of approximately \$500,000 to \$600,000 in the Operating Account to cover one year's operating expenses, which according to Chief, combined with anticipated AB8 revenue, would provide roughly two years of available funding. He recommended transferring any excess into the Capital Reserve Account as committed funds. Following Board discussion, the Board agreed to transfer \$500,000 from the Operating Account to the Capital Reserve Account as committed funds. Commissioner Beatty recommended waiting to make the transfer until after July 1, 2025, to ensure the county apports interest on the higher balance at the end of the fiscal year. Secretary Durgin will follow up with Shannon LeGrand at the Mono County Finance Department to confirm the interest timeline and determine the most advantageous time to transfer the funds. Based on this information, the Board will decide whether to proceed with the transfer in the current fiscal year or wait until the next. Chief McGuire made the necessary adjustments to the resolution and read it aloud. A MOTION WAS MADE BY COMMISSIONER MELCHIOR, SECONDED BY COMMISSIONER GORDON, TO APPROVE RESOLUTION 25-01 AS PRESENTED, AUTHORIZING THE TRANSFER OF \$500,000

FROM THE DISTRICT'S OPERATING ACCOUNT TO THE DISTRICT'S CAPITAL RESERVE ACCOUNT. Motion passed 5-0.

8. Discussion and possible action on managing district funds. Chief McGuire raised the question of whether the department should establish a separate bank account for day-to-day operations. He outlined several potential benefits and challenges of doing so and recommended that he and Secretary Durgin consult with the county to understand the specific requirements and procedures involved. Commissioner Beatty shared that she manages this type of system with her other districts and noted that, once everything is set up in QuickBooks, the processing is relatively straightforward. Secretary Durgin added that she intends to begin using QuickBooks for expense tracking regardless of whether a separate bank account is opened, so the additional workload may not be significant if the Board chooses to move forward with this option. Chief McGuire suggested that this process may take time and recommended that Secretary Durgin first become fully established in QuickBooks before proceeding with the potential setting up of a separate bank account.
9. Discussion and possible action concerning the dedication of a portion of Highway 395 to former Captain Vidar Anderson. Division Chief Fred Stump reported that he had asked District Supervisor Rhonda Duggan to reach out to contacts in Assembly Member Tangipa's office, as she had previously indicated she had a relationship with members of the Assembly Member's Chief of Staff. Fred explained that his own attempts to contact their office had gone unanswered, so he requested Supervisor Duggan's assistance in making that connection. Fred further noted that at this point in the legislative session, the deadline to introduce new bills has passed, meaning progress on this endeavor will likely be delayed until the next legislative cycle. He also shared that Supervisor Duggan had experienced limited responsiveness from the State Senator's office. Fred recommended keeping this item on the agenda for now in case there are future updates and suggested revisiting the effort in September. No further comments were made.
10. Discussion and possible action on refurbishment of the Memorial Garden. Chief McGuire expressed appreciation for the progress made on the Memorial Garden, reporting that, thanks to Fred Stump's efforts and pushing it forward, significant cleanup work has been completed. Chief McGuire presented a quote of \$18,000 for the next phase of improvements, which includes replacing the railroad ties, leveling the garden, installing the flag, and completing additional cleanup work. He noted that once these updates are finished, the department can move forward with discussions regarding perennial plantings and other landscaping enhancements. Fred Stump also suggested using the fire station wall as a location to mount memorial plaques and provided a description of the types of plaques that could be installed. A MOTION WAS MADE BY COMMISSIONER DAY, SECONDED BY COMMISSIONER GORDON, TO APPROVE THE EXPENDITURE OF \$18,000 AS PRESENTED FOR THE MEMORIAL GARDEN REFURBISHMENT. Motion passed 5-0.

Public comment: Hap Hazard offered a suggestion regarding the available fire station wall intended for recognition. He recommended that the Memorial Garden remain dedicated solely to memorial purposes but encouraged the Board to consider using the wall to recognize every Fire Chief who has served since the department's founding. Hap emphasized that each Fire Chief has led the department through challenging times and that it would be fitting to formally acknowledge their service as part of the department's ongoing history.

11. Board review/approval of payment warrants since the last meeting. A MOTION WAS MADE BY COMMISSIONER DAY, SECONDED BY COMMISSIONER GORDON TO APPROVE PAYMENT WARRANTS SINCE LAST REGULAR BOARD MEETING. Motion passed 5-0.
12. Board Secretary Report. Secretary Durgin provided an update on her activities since the last regular meeting. She reported that payroll will be processed the week of June 17, not the upcoming week. Beginning next month, she will also begin calculating the Volunteer Length of Service Award (VFLSA) and plans to submit those numbers accordingly. Secretary Durgin noted that she is still waiting to hear back from Ben Romo regarding the Workers' Compensation report and the incorrect classification issue. She also shared that she will be in Crowley from July 23 to July 27 to work on records inventory. Additionally, she reported that the Property Tax Administration (PTA) fee, which typically averages around \$9,000, has not yet been applied to the 320 Operating Account but is expected to be processed by the end of this week.
13. Review correspondence received since the last regular meeting. No correspondence to report.
14. Review and adjust current fiscal year budget line items as necessary and accept. Chief McGuire noted that with the approval of the \$18,000 for the Memorial Garden, along with an outstanding invoice, the Station Maintenance line item (200) may exceed its budget. However, he stated that he does not believe it is necessary to reallocate budget funds at this time, as the end of the fiscal year is approaching.
15. New business and Board member reports. No new business and no Board member reports.
16. Call for Agenda items for the next regular meeting. Staff report on the progress of the Sunny Slopes Station 2 project; Discussion and possible action concerning the dedication of a portion of Highway 395 to former Captain Vidar Anderson; Discussion and possible action on managing district funds.
17. Adjournment. A motion was made by Commissioner Beatty, seconded by Commissioner Czeschin, to adjourn the meeting and reconvene for regular session on July 9, 2025 at 7:00pm 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