

REGULAR MEETING OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS OF THE  
MONTECITO FIRE PROTECTION DISTRICT

Held at Fire District Headquarters, 595 San Ysidro Road, May 18, 2009. The meeting was called to order by President Jensen at 8:33 am. Present were Director Jensen, Director Venable, and Director Newquist. Others present at the meeting: J. Badaracco, L. Bass, E. Hvolboll, K. King, C. Lim, T. McElwee, S. Pfister, P. Purguy, G. Ventura, and K. Wallace.

1. Kathy King of the Montecito Union School PTA announced that MERRAG has been awarded the Golden Oak Award, which is the highest award possible for community service. This is the first time any person or group outside of the school has been given this award. It will be presented on June 4, 2009 at Montecito Union School.

Chief Wallace announced that John Badaracco had been an employee for the District for 5 years, and presented him with a 5 year anniversary pin.

2. Director Venable asked to change the wording in item 6 from “guarantees” funding for future benefits to “which provides for funding” for future benefits. On a motion made by Director Newquist, seconded by Director Jensen, the minutes of the April 20, 2009 Regular Meeting were unanimously approved as amended.

3. Director Venable asked to change ...the meeting was called to order by ‘President’ Venable”, to “...Director” Venable. Director Jensen asked to change ... Director Jensen was “absent” to “arrived after the meeting was called to order”. On a motion made by Director Newquist, seconded by Director Venable, the minutes of the May 11, 2009 Special Meeting were approved as amended.

4. After a brief explanation of income and payments relating to repair at Station 2 and hazard abatement, which included a request from the Board that future payments include where the abatement occurred, the warrants and claims for the month of April 2009 were unanimously approved on a motion made by Director Venable and seconded by Director Jensen.

5. Chief Wallace advised that the Annual Officer and Staff Workshop has been held in a number of locations in the past. One of the advantages to holding them at the Circle Bar B is that cell phones and computers don't work there, which has proven to be a distraction in the past. The District can reach us for emergencies, but holding it there allows for all of the officers and staff to be in one place at the same time with minimal distractions.

All meals are provided, so it allows for a relaxed discussion of the day's work after the official day's agenda. He added that the on duty battalion chief does return back to the District after dinner. The overtime coverage would be necessary regardless of the location to allow for all officers to attend.

The value of holding an annual workshop is that it provides an opportunity to discuss the planning/doctrine of the fire service on an annual basis.

Two topics of discussion at this year's workshop included a review of the Tea Fire, and planning for Chief Langhorne's retirement.

Director Venable felt the workshop was well done and stated that the report clearly outlines the benefit of the workshop. He asked to include a review the planning for Chief Langhorne's transition process at a future board meeting.

Director Newquist advised that he wanted to focus on this because he was concerned with the public's perception of the workshop. He sees that it is invaluable for the planning of the District, but questioned why we aren't using

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local establishments. He stated that he was disappointed that he wasn't aware of the meeting, but Chief Wallace advised that the Board would have been notified of the workshop at the March meeting, but it was cancelled.

Chief Wallace advised that he will provide a cost analysis comparing the Circle Bar B to local vendors at a future meeting.

The Board took no action.

6. Chief Wallace advised that the air conditioner has been repaired and is now working. When we determined that it needed additional repair after the initial installation, the vendor developed health issues which delayed the work, and shipment of specialized equipment to repair the system that was ordered was delayed because of the economy.

The Board took no action.

7. Chief Wallace reviewed the Jesusita fire, including a timeline of the incident and the District's response. He added that the cause has been determined to be power tools, but it is still under investigation. He provided the Board with a copy of the Incident closeout report.

The Board took no action.

8. Director Newquist advised that he received a call from Larry Bickford, who was close to the fire when it began who reported that his timeline of the fire and response conflicted with the reports that were provided at the meeting. Mr. Bickford also reported that he did not get a response to his calls the evening that the fire began.

Director Newquist stated that the average person doesn't understand fire management, and many people have questioned the availability of air resources. Chief Wallace advised that while air resources are an important tool to fighting wildfires, a fire can burn through retardant that is dropped by air tankers. Retardant is used to cool a fire and slow it down, but hand crews are necessary to remove the fuel and ultimately control the fire.

Director Newquist pointed out that of all the large wildland fires in Santa Barbara County, most were human caused. If this was caused by clearing brush, having a fire extinguisher on hand would have helped. Director Venable suggested we provide education to the community about safe brush removal and hazard abatement.

The Board took no action.

### 9. Fire Chief's Report

Chief Wallace reported on several issues including: Special State Election on May 19; The possibility of Prop 1A being shifted to the State, which will take 8% out of our 08/09 Fiscal Budget; Mammoth FPD presentation; Progress on Station 3 appraisals; Montecito Rotary honoring Chief McElwee; Parade to honor firefighters on May 26<sup>th</sup>.

10. There were no items requested for the June regular Board meeting.

11. Director Jensen adjourned the meeting at 9:25 am.