

# MONTECITO FIRE PROTECTION DISTRICT

## Minutes for the Regular Meeting of the Board of Directors

Held at Montecito Fire Protection District, 595 San Ysidro Road, Santa Barbara, CA 93108 on August 24, 2026 at 2:00 p.m.

Director Easton called the meeting to order at 2:00 p.m.

**Present:** Director Easton, Director Lee, Director Copus, and Director Williams was appointed at the meeting. Fire Chief Fallon and District Counsel Mark Manion were also present.

- 1. Public comment: Any person may address the Board at this time on any non-agenda matter that is within the subject matter jurisdiction of the Montecito Fire Protection District. (30 minutes total time allotted for this discussion.)**

There were no public comments at this meeting.

- 2. Candidate Interviews for Appointment of New Director. (Strategic Plan Goal 3)**

- a. Jenelle Williams
- b. Penelope Bianchi
- c. Peter Taffae
- d. Jeff Gittler

Fire Chief Fallon provided background information regarding the Board vacancy and requested that the minutes reflect that the Affidavit of Posting/Notice of Vacancy in Office is on file with District records.

Director Easton thanked the applicants for their interest.

The Board of Directors interviewed Ms. Williams, Mr. Taffae, and Mr. Gittler. Ms. Bianchi was unable to attend the meeting. Director Easton called for public comment.

- 3. Appointment of the New Director.**

Motion to nominate Jeff Gittler as a Board Director made by Director Pennino, seconded by Director Lee.

The Board discussed the strengths of all of the candidates and recognized the time and energy put into the application and interview process. Director Easton called for public comment.

Motion to nominate Jenelle Williams as a Board Director made by Director Copus, seconded by Director Easton.

Motion to appoint Jenelle Williams as a Board Director made by Director Copus, seconded by Director Easton and unanimously passed.

- 4. Administer the Oath of Office to the New Director.**

Administrative Assistant Godlis administered the Oath of Office to Jenelle Williams. The Board took a break at 2:50 p.m. The Board reconvened at 3:01 p.m.

- 5. Assessment of Plan Review Fees Presentation. (Strategic Plan Goal 3)**

Fire Marshal Briner presented the Assessment of Plan Review Fees to the Board. The Board discussed the pros and cons of charging fees for plan review. Motion made by Director Copus to receive and file the report with no further direction from the Board and seconded by Director Williams with three Ayes and two Nays from Director Pennino and Director Lee. The motion carried.

- 6. That the Board of Directors approve Resolution 2026-09, Amending Appendix A "Designated Positions and Disclosure Categories" of the District's Conflict of Interest Code. (Strategic Plan Goal 8)**

Fire Chief Fallon provided a staff report regarding Designated Positions and Disclosure Categories of the District's Conflict of Interest Code. Motion made by Director Copus

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**1. Public comment: Any person may address the Board at this time on any non-agenda matter that is within the subject matter jurisdiction of the Montecito Fire Protection District. (30 minutes total time allotted for this discussion.)**

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**2. Candidate Interviews for Appointment of New Director. (Strategic Plan Goal 3)**

- a. Jenelle Williams
- b. Penelope Bianchi
- c. Peter Taffae
- d. Jeff Gittler

Fire Chief Fallon provided background information regarding the Board vacancy and requested that the minutes reflect that the Affidavit of Posting/Notice of Vacancy in Office is on file with District records.

Director Easton thanked the applicants for their interest.

The Board of Directors interviewed Ms. Williams, Mr. Taffae, and Mr. Gittler. Ms. Bianchi was unable to attend the meeting. Director Easton called for public comment.

**3. Appointment of the New Director.**

Motion to nominate Jeff Gittler as a Board Director made by Director Pennino, seconded by Director Lee.

The Board discussed the strengths of all of the candidates and recognized the time and energy put into the application and interview process. Director Easton called for public comment.

Motion to nominate Jenelle Williams as a Board Director made by Director Copus, seconded by Director Easton.

Motion to appoint Jenelle Williams as a Board Director made by Director Copus, seconded by Director Easton and unanimously passed.

**4. Administer the Oath of Office to the New Director.**

Administrative Assistant Godlis administered the Oath of Office to Jenelle Williams. The Board took a break at 2:50 p.m. The Board reconvened at 3:01 p.m.

**5. Assessment of Plan Review Fees Presentation. (Strategic Plan Goal 3)**

Fire Marshal Briner presented the Assessment of Plan Review Fees to the Board. The Board discussed the pros and cons of charging fees for plan review. Motion made by Director Copus to receive and file the report with no further direction from the Board and seconded by Director Williams with three Ayes and two Nays from Director Pennino and Director Lee. The motion carried.

**6. That the Board of Directors approve Resolution 2026-09, Amending Appendix A “Designated Positions and Disclosure Categories” of the District’s Conflict of Interest Code. (Strategic Plan Goal 8)**

Fire Chief Fallon provided a staff report regarding Designated Positions and Disclosure Categories of the District’s Conflict of Interest Code. Motion made by Director Copus

seconded by Director Easton, to approve Resolution 2026-09, amending Appendix A “Designated Positions and Disclosure Categories” of the District’s Conflict of Interest Code and to update Appendix B Category 1 fair market value of the interest to \$2000 or more. The Roll Call Vote was as follows:

Ayes: J. Pennino, M. Lee, S. Easton, J. Copus, J. Williams

Nays: None

Abstain: None

Absent: None

**7. That the Board of Directors authorizes the Fire Chief to enter into the License Agreement for the secondary Upstaffing Location between Montecito Fire Protection District and Montecito Water District. (Strategic Plan Goal 1)**

Fire Chief Fallon presented the staff report regarding the License Agreement for the Upstaffing Location between Montecito Fire Protection District and Montecito Water District on East Mountain Drive. Director Lee made a motion to authorize the Fire Chief to enter into a license agreement with Montecito Water District for the upstaffing location, seconded by Director Easton, and unanimously passed.

**8. That the Board of Directors authorizes the Fire Chief to enter into a Professional Service Agreement with Keith Turcot, 5 Bar Engineering, LLC. (Strategic Plan Goal 5)**

Division Chief Hudley provided a staff report regarding an agreement for professional services with Keith Turcot, 5 Bar Engineering, LLC. Motion to authorize the Fire Chief to enter into a Professional Services Agreement with Keith Turcot, 5 Bar Engineering, LLC. including the total compensation not to exceed \$100,000, made by Director Copus, seconded by Director Williams, and unanimously passed.

**9. That the Board of Directors authorize the Fire Chief to create three Engineer positions on Squad 91, effective January 2027. (Strategic Plan Goal 1 and 6)**

Fire Chief Fallon provided a staff report to create three Engineer positions on Squad 91, effective January 2027. Motion to authorize the Fire Chief to create three Engineer positions on Squad 91, effective January 2027, made by Director Lee, seconded by Director Pennino, and unanimously passed.

**10. Approval of Minutes of the July 27, 2026 Regular Meeting.**

Motion to approve the Minutes of the July 27, 2026 Regular meeting made by Director Lee, seconded by Director Copus, and the motion unanimously passed. Pennino and Williams abstained.

**11. Fire Chief’s report.**

Fire Chief Fallon announced that he and Chief Hudley will attend the next Montecito Water District Board meeting to recognize their partnership with the Fire Department.

There will be a Flood Control Community meeting September 14 at Montecito Union School.

Fire Chief Fallon reported that Montecito Fire Department crews have responded to numerous fire assignments throughout the western United States over the past few months. He noted that Nic Elmquist served as Incident Commander, and that Division Chief Hudley, Finance and Administrative Manager Nahas, and Captain Grant completed their task books for incident management team positions.

**12. Board of Director’s report.**

There were no items to report at this meeting.

**13. Suggestions from Directors for items other than regular agenda items to be included for the September 28, 2026, Regular Board meeting.**

The Board will discuss upcoming negotiations on September 28.

Director Copus requested to review the District medical policy as related to Pulse Point.

Meeting Adjourned at 4:19 p.m.

  
President Easton

  
Secretary Lee