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 December 23, 2024 at 2:00 p.m.

Director van Duinwyk called the meeting to order at 2:02 p.m.

Present: Director van Duinwyk, Director Lee, Director Easton, Director Dougherty, Director Pennino. Chief Neels 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 to report at this meeting.

2. **Administer Oath of Office for newly elected Directors: Sylvia Easton, Michael Lee, Joseph Pennino.**

   Administrative Assistant Godlis administered the Oath of Office to newly elected Directors: Sylvia Easton, Michael Lee, and Joseph Pennino.

3. **Election of Board Officers (President, Vice President, Secretary) for 2025.**

   Director Lee nominated Director van Duinwyk as President, seconded by Director Pennino, and unanimously passed.

   Director Dougherty nominated Director Lee as Vice President, seconded by Director Easton, and unanimously passed.

   Director Pennino nominated Director Easton as Secretary, seconded by Director Dougherty, and unanimously passed.

4. **Appointment of Board Labor Negotiators for 2025.**

   Director van Duinwyk nominated Director van Duinwyk and Director Lee as Labor Negotiators, seconded by Director Easton. There were no further nominations, and unanimously passed.

5. **Appointment of Board Real Property Negotiators for 2025.**

   Director van Duinwyk nominated Director Dougherty and Director van Duinwyk as Real Property Negotiators, seconded by Director Pennino. There were no further nominations, and unanimously passed.

6. **Appointment of Committee members.**

   a. **Finance Committee**

      Director Lee nominated Director Dougherty and Director Lee as Finance Committee members, seconded by Director Pennino. There were no further nominations, and unanimously passed.

   b. **Strategic Planning Committee**

      Director Lee nominated Director Easton and Director Pennino as Strategic Planning Committee members, seconded by Director Pennino. There were no further nominations, and unanimously passed.

c. Personnel Committee

Director Lee nominated Director Dougherty and Director Pennino as Personnel Committee members, seconded by Director Easton. There were no further nominations, and unanimously passed.

7. Adopt Resolution 2024-09 determining time and place of regular board meetings.

The motion to designate 2:00 p.m. on the fourth Monday of each month at the Montecito Fire Protection District Station 91, as the time and place of its regular meeting made by Director van Duinwyk, seconded by Director Lee. The roll call vote was as follows:

Ayes: S. Dougherty, M. Lee, P. van Duinwyk, S. Easton, J. Pennino
Nays: None
Abstain: None
Absent: None

8. Adopt Resolution 2024-10 increasing Director's Compensation.

The motion to adopt Resolution 2024-10 increasing Director's compensation made by Director Dougherty, seconded by Director Easton. The roll call vote was as follows:

Ayes: S. Dougherty, M. Lee, P. van Duinwyk, S. Easton, J. Pennino
Nays: None
Abstain: None
Absent: None

9. Adopt Resolution 2024-11 regarding the inventory of District lands and air space.

The motion to adopt Resolution 2024-11 regarding the inventory of District lands and air space made by Director Lee, seconded by Director Easton. The roll call vote was as follows:

Ayes: S. Dougherty, M. Lee, P. van Duinwyk, S. Easton, J. Pennino
Nays: None
Abstain: None
Absent: None

10. Report from the Finance Committee. (Strategic Plan Goal 8)

a. Consider the recommendation to approve October and November 2024 financial statements.

Director Lee and Director van Duinwyk provided a report regarding the October and November 2024 financial statements. Director Easton made a motion to approve the financial statements for October and November 2024, seconded by Director Lee, and unanimously passed.

b. Review PARS Post-Employment Benefits Trust statements for September and October 2024.

Finance and Administrative Manager Nahas provided a report regarding PARS Post-Employment Benefits Trust statement for September and October 2024.

11. Approval of the Publicly Available Pay Schedule, effective January 1, 2025, as required by CalPERS. (Strategic Plan Goal 8)

Motion to approve the Publicly Available Pay Schedule, effective January 1, 2025, as required by CalPERS made by Director Easton, seconded by Director Lee, and unanimously passed.

12. Authorize the Fire Chief to develop a request for proposal to complete a community communication resiliency study (Strategic Plan Goal 2)

Chief Neels presented a Staff Report regarding the issues surrounding community communications during emergencies, particularly challenges caused by outages with commercial wireless providers and compromised access to 911 services. Chief Neels requested the Board's direction to engage with a communication consultant to review and make recommendations to improve the existing communication systems. The proposed timeline for the consultant selection process will begin with a formal request for proposal. Additionally, staff are reviewing community survey feedback and data to guide potential improvements. The Board emphasized the importance of receiving actionable recommendations.

Motion to approve Chief Neels to develop a Request for Proposal to engage with consultants for a community communication resilience study made by Director Lee, seconded by Director Easton, and unanimously passed.

13. Approval of Minutes of the November 25, 2024 Regular Meeting.

Motion to approve the minutes of the November 25, 2024 Regular meeting made by Director Dougherty, seconded by Director Pennino, and unanimously passed.

14. Approval of Minutes of the November 25, 2024 Special Meeting.

Motion to approve the minutes of the November 25, 2024 Special meeting made by Director Lee, seconded by Director Easton, and unanimously passed.

15. Fire Chief's report.

Chief Neels thanked the Board for attending Chief Ederer's retirement and acknowledged the MFA for organizing the event. Chief Neels reported that personnel have returned from the Franklin Fire in Malibu. Chief Neels highlighted the Home Hardening Grant Program, which is currently accepting applications. Chief Neels shared that Montecito Fire Department hosted Mercury Insurance representatives for a field visit and a review of fire prevention efforts in Montecito.

Chief Neels announced the four upcoming promotions effective January 1, 2025. Anthony Hudley will be promoted to Division Chief, Shaun Davis will be promoted to Battalion Chief, David Johnson will be promoted to Captain, and Andy Rupp will be promoted to Engineer. The promotion ceremony will be held on February 5, 2025, and the community and families are invited to join in the celebration.

16. Board of Director's report.

There were no items to report at this meeting.

17. Suggestions from Directors for items other than regular agenda items to be included for the January 27, 2025 Regular Board meeting.

There were no additional suggestions at this meeting.

Meeting Adjourned at 3:21 p.m.

President van Duinwyk

Secretary Easton