

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 September 22, 2025 at 2:00 p.m.

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

Present: Director van Duinwyk, Director Lee, Director Dougherty, Director Easton, Director Pennino. Chief Neels and District Counsel Mark Manion were also present.

- 1. Public comment: Anyone may speak to the Board now about any non-agenda issue within the jurisdiction of the Montecito Fire Protection District. (A total of 30 minutes is allotted for this discussion.)**

There were no public comments to report.

- 2. CalPERS Actuary Report Presentation by CalPERS Actuary, David Clement. (Strategic Plan Goal 8)**

Finance and Administrative Manager Nahas introduced David Clement, CalPERS Actuary for Montecito Fire Department. David Clement presented the CalPERS Actuary Report to the Board.

- 3. Report from the Finance Committee. (Strategic Plan Goal 8)**

- a. Consider recommendation to approve July 2025 financial statements.**

Directors Lee and Dougherty provided a report regarding the July 2025 financial statements. Director Lee made a motion to approve the financial statements for July 2025, seconded by Director Easton, and unanimously passed.

- b. Review PARS Post-Employment Benefits Trust statements for June and July 2025.**

Finance and Administrative Manager Nahas provided a report regarding the PARS Post-Employment Benefits Trust statement for June 2025 and July 2025.

- c. Consider recommendation for approval of reserve funds.**

Finance and Administrative Manager Nahas provided a staff report regarding Reserve Policies and recommended increases for FY 2025-26. Motion to approve the recommended reserve target levels for FY 2025-26 made by Director Dougherty, seconded by Director Easton and unanimously passed.

- d. Consider recommendation to approve Resolution 2025-05, Adoption of the Final Budget for the Fiscal Year 2025-26.**

Finance and Administrative Manager Nahas highlighted items in the Final Budget. Fire Chief Neels pointed out a \$120,000 loss due to AMR's contract with Santa Barbara County for emergency medical services. Capital projects are expected to be completed within this fiscal year. Motion to approve Resolution 2025-05, Adoption of the Final Budget for Fiscal Year 2025-26 made by Director Easton, seconded by Director Pennino. 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

4. Consider recommendation for approval of the Annual Employee Reimbursement Disclosure report. (Strategic Plan Goal 8)

Finance and Administrative Manager Nahas provided a staff report regarding the Annual Employee Reimbursement Disclosure report. The Board accepted and filed the report.

5. Consider approval of Resolution 2025-06, Establishing Appropriations Limit under Article XIII B of the State Constitution of the State of California for FY 2025-26. (Strategic Plan Goal 8)

Finance and Administrative Manager Nahas provided a staff report regarding the Appropriations Limit for FY 2024-25. Motion to approve Resolution 2025-06 made by Director Dougherty, seconded by Director Lee. The roll call vote was as follows:

Ayes: S. Dougherty, M. Lee, P. van Duijwyk, S. Easton, J. Pennino

Nays: None

Abstain: None

Absent: None

6. Approval of Minutes of the August 25, 2025 Regular Meeting.

Motion to approve the minutes of the August 25, 2025 Regular meeting made by Director Pennino, seconded by Director Lee, and the motion carried. Director Easton abstained from the vote.

7. Fire Chief's report.

Wildland Fire Specialist Juarez reported on prevention efforts, including vegetation clearing with SoCal Edison, fuel reduction projects, and community preparedness meetings. She noted five residents participating in the Home Hardening Assistance Grants, planning for the 2026 Neighborhood Chipping Program, and the preparation of the Ready, Set, Go pamphlet. Juarez also met with the Santa Barbara City's new Wildland Specialist to share Montecito Fire's Prevention Program.

Fire Chief Neels reported on recent Red Flag Warnings in August and the parking enforcement at Hot Springs trailhead during the Red Flag Warnings.

PIO Atchison is working in collaboration with the Santa Barbara County PIO to issue press releases during Red Flag events.

PIO Atchison will have an article published in the upcoming edition of the Montecito Journal.

Fire Chief Neels provided an update on the progress of the Communication Redundancy project, including vegetation clearing around the Ortega Ridge communication infrastructure. He is working with Verizon and AT&T representatives to establish backup systems for communication.

The department participated in three community fire prevention meetings: Riven Rock, Butterfly Beach Association, and All Saints by the Sea. Chief Neels also updated the Board on the results of the LAFCO election, thanked the community for attending the 9/11 ceremony, and shared a thank you letter from a UCSB doctoral candidate.

8. Board of Director's report.

Director Dougherty reported to the Board regarding the CalPERS webinar he attended on Investment Returns and Employer Impacts.

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

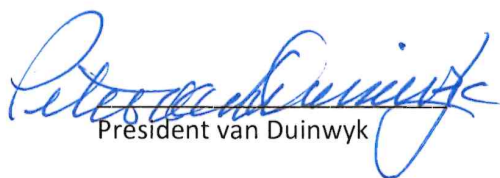
There were no items suggested by the Board to include at the next Board meeting.

The Board adjourned to closed session at 4:04 p.m.

**10. CLOSED SESSION: PUBLIC EMPLOYEE EVALUATION (Government Code section 54957)
Title: Fire Chief**

The Board reported out of closed session at 4:35 p.m. with no reportable action.

Meeting Adjourned at 4:36 p.m.



President van Duinwyk



Secretary Easton