



## Nevada County Consolidated Fire District

"Excellence in Emergency Service"

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### **BOARD OF DIRECTORS MINUTES, MAY 19, 2011**

Regular Meeting held in the Conference Room, Station 84,  
10135 Coyote Street, Nevada City, CA

#### **NCCFD DIRECTORS:**

**Present:** Bass (Treasurer), Grueneberg, Hanson (Chairman), Hitchcock, Leonard, Rhodes  
Knox (Vice Chair)

#### **STAFF:**

**Present:** Chief Fike, Board Sec. Bennett, B. C. Ray, DFM McMahan

**Absent:** B. C. Newby, Fin. Mgr. Henthorn, LaBarbera (HR), Long (OSS), Curtis (Dist.  
Counsel)

#### **REGULAR MEETING: 7:00 p.m.**

#### **STANDING ORDERS**

Chairman Hanson called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m., at Station 84, 10135 Coyote Street, Nevada City, which was the time and place scheduled for the Regular Meeting. After the Pledge of Allegiance, Chairman Hanson welcomed everyone in the audience. Asking for and finding no additions or deletions to the agenda, Chairman Hanson moved the meeting on to the Consent Calendar.

#### **CONSENT CALENDAR**

1. Acceptance of Minutes – 03/05/2011 (amended), 04/21/2011
2. Fund Balances and Check History Reports
3. Treasurer's Report
4. Fire Prevention Bureau Report

Director Bass moved to accept the Consent Calendar, with the one correction. Director Rhodes seconded. **MOTION** unanimously carried.

Chairman Hanson asked Secretary Bennett to correct a typo on page 1-3 ("calm" should be changed to "claim").

#### **\*PUBLIC COMMENT ON MATTERS NOT ON AGENDA**

**NONE**

#### **COMMITTEE REPORTS**

##### **Standing Committees**

Finance – Mark Bass, Chair

Operations – Dave Hanson, Chair

Personnel – Bob Rhodes, Chair

Public Relations – Warren Knox, Chair

##### **Ad Hoc Committees**

Board Policy and Procedures – Ralph  
Hitchcock, Chair

Most of the attending committee chairs had nothing new to report. However, Director Hitchcock, Chair of the Board Policy and Procedures Committee did. Director Hitchcock had emailed his committee report two days before the Board meeting and provided the hard copy

**COMMITTEE REPORTS (cont.)**

**Board Policy and Procedures Ad Hoc Committee Report (cont.)**

version for distribution and a copy of which is included with the minutes in the Admin. Minute Binder at the Admin. Office.

Director Hitchcock briefly reviewed the timeline of work by the Committee. Attached to the report is a copy of the email received from District Counsel, Jim Curtis, with is analysis of the Committee's work on updating the District Bylaws and creating the Board Policy and Procedures Manual. Director Hitchcock continued by saying that the Committee wanted to find out the Board's opinion on what direction to go after reviewing the Counsel's analysis. The two options outlined in the Committee Report were:

Option 1: Replace the Bylaws with the Manual, adding all policies in the Bylaws to the Policies and Procedures Manual. The Bylaws would be in the first section of the Manual.

Option 2: Keep the current Bylaws with Addendums updating some parts of the Bylaws. The Manual without those policies which were left in the current Bylaws would be a separate document.

Director Hitchcock summed up, reading the last sentence of the report, "Regardless of the Board's input at this meeting, as the Committee gets nearer to completion, the best option may become obvious.". Director Grueneberg commented that Option 1 looked like the format he had seen at prior organizations, where the first section would be Bylaws, the second the Policy and Procedures and the third Operational Policies and Procedures. After further brief discussion, the Board concurred to have the committee follow Option 1 unless the process leads the committee to a different format and/or the Board changes its position when the committee returns with their work. **NOT FURTHER ACTION** was taken on this action.

**OLD BUSINESS**

**NONE**

**NEW BUSINESS**

**Discussion and possible action concerning bids received for a DHS-Assistance to Firefighters Grant-Funded Mobile Live Fire Training Unit, with Possible Adoption of Resolution R11-04, Approving the Use of DHS-AFG Grant No. EMW-2010-FO-08781 Funds, Accepting the Bid From the Winning Bidder for the Purchase of a Mobile Live Fire Training Unit, and Designating an Agent to Sign Bid Documents on Behalf of the District.**

Chief Fike distributed a staff report, a copy of which is attached to these minutes in the Admin. Office Minute Binder, giving the background of the grant award from the Department of Homeland Security's Assistance to Firefighters Grant for 2010. Having won the award, to purchase training props, B.C. David Ray had requested bids for the largest training prop, a Duel Mobile Class "A" Live Fire Trailer with a Mobile SCBA, Confined Space, Rapid Intervention Crew, and Rappel Tower. Three manufacturers were sent the RFPs, with all submitting bids. After review of the bid requirements and overall costs, the chiefs recommended that the bid be awarded to FireBlast 451 Inc., Corona, CA in the amount not to exceed \$173,162.50.

A detailed discussion by the Board over the details of the specifications and the comparison of the bids followed. Chief Ray provided brochures with pictures of the different products and brands. He also answered questions regarding safety provisions to prevent accidents and/or fatalities during training with theses trailers. Chief Ray explained the history of the technology

**NEW BUSINESS (cont.)**

**DHS-AFG Funded Training Props; Resolution R11-04 (cont.)**

of these props and what safety features are now required. He reminded the Board that, if he had a specific problem with the lowest bidder, that the Grant Program allowed him to go with a higher bidder. Though Chief Ray expressed some reservations with FireBlast451 Inc. due to one complaint from a fire department in North Carolina, he felt that his concerns were addressed when he visited FireBlast's facilities.

Director Grueneberg commented that he had worked with FireBlast451 when they were used as an expert witness and that he thought they were very good. Chairman Hanson commented that he thought that Chief Ray should go with the one he thinks would be best. Chief Ray added that Sierra College had approved his site plan at the Training Center including for the vent props.

Director Grueneberg moved to adopt Resolution R11-04, Approving the use of DHS-AFG Grant No. EMW-2010-Fo-08781 Funds, Accepting the Bid from the Winning Bidder for the Purchase of a Mobile Live Fire Training Unit, and Designating Chief Fike as the Agent to Sign Bid Documents on Behalf of the District. Director Leonard seconded. **MOTION** unanimously carried after a roll call vote.

Chief Ray thanked the Board and stated that he would order the props the next day and that his goal was to get them set-up before the next winter's snow.

**Discussion and Possible Action Concerning Refinancing the Station 84 Building Lease, with the Possible Adoption of Resolution R11-05, Approving the Refinance of the Station 84 Municipal Lease & Option Agreement and Designating an Agent to Sign Refinancing Lease Documents on Behalf of the District.**

Chief Fike reviewed the Staff Report that was included in the Board Packet for this item. Because of the scarcity of development fees anticipated to continue for the next two to five years, Staff considered refinancing the lease on the Station 84 building in an attempt to lower the annual payment obligation. The Staff Report outlined the details of the refinance, as proposed by First Municipal Leasing Corp. The refinance proposal was included in the attached Resolution R11-05 as "Exhibit A". By adding 5 years to the loan, it will cost about \$30,000 more in interest but will cut the semi-annual payments in half.

Director Rhodes asked questions, reconfirming the extra cost in interest, and that it would be adding about \$3,000 a year to the cost of the lease. He continued by saying that he agreed with that decreasing the annual payments would be worth the added cost over the long run. He wondered why the term "lease" was being used. Chairman Hanson responded that it had to do with being a government entity. Chief Fike added that he was surprised that we were limited to ten years but had confirmed with different resources that this was a new restriction passed in the last couple of years, though he was unable to find a specific reference in law.

Director Leonard wanted to confirm that the District would have to provide \$100,000 down to initiate this. Chief Fike said that the finance manager thought it would be fine to take it out of reserves, though he had trepidations about that. The next step would be possibly to discuss how we might replenish our reserves, maybe selling one of the undeveloped District properties.

When discussion ended, Director Hitchcock moved to adopt Resolution R11-05, Approving the Refinance of the Station 84 Municipal Lease & Option Agreement and Designating Chief Fike as the Agent to Sign Refinancing Lease Documents on Behalf of the District. Director Rhodes seconded. **MOTION** unanimously carried after a roll call vote.

**CHIEF'S MONTHLY REPORT**

Chairman Hanson, responding to the "Meeting with District Auditor" item in the Chief's Report, directed Secretary Bennett to prepare a letter for his signature to Auditor Jim Robeson asking Mr. Robeson where their promised follow-up letter was as it was due in time for this board meeting.

Chief Fike added to his report on the Firewise Communities award to the Fire Safe Council of Nevada County (FSC) that only eight awards were given nationwide and that FSC was the only one in California to receive the award.

The chief also discussed the anticipated increase in danger posed by the winter's snowfall at the Yuba River and that there would be more media coverage on this danger. There is great concern about the upcoming Memorial Day weekend, should the weather become warm. Director Leonard volunteered to take photos, of the upcoming Swiftwater Refresher Training, to submit to the local media to include in their warning articles. The chief continued to elaborate on the dangerous rock at the Yuba that has been responsible for almost half a dozen fatalities over the years.

Lastly, Chief Fike reported that the District had received a letter notifying us that the ROP Fire Program, that we had sponsored for several years, would be vacating the use of Station 87 for multiple reasons.

**\*BOARD DISCUSSION**

Director Rhodes reported, referring to page 1-14 of the April meeting minutes, that he was surprised by the report by the auditor referring to health benefits for retirees. He stated that he had not heard of it before and was concerned by what the auditor was proposing that we needed to do from an unfunded liability standpoint. Therefore, he called HR Administrator Lisa LaBarbera to find out more about it.

HRA LaBarbera explained that this benefit was included in all of the NCCFD employees' memorandum of understandings (MOUs) and reapproved every year. The District has agreed to pay up to \$108 per month toward a retiree's health premium. The District currently has one retiree who qualifies for it, but who dropped it after 3 months because the health plan premiums were simply too expensive. This has happened before and will probably continue to happen as the health plan premiums continue to rise.

Chief Fike explained that a retiree is currently allowed to continue on the District's health plan, but has to pay the balance of the portion of the premium not covered by the District. With a current premium of \$1,400 per month, the retiree would have to pay about \$1,200 out of pocket to stay on the plan. The retirees can't afford this and drop out of the plan.

Director Rhodes continued by saying that since the District is now required to set aside a large amount toward the potential future costs of this program, he wanted to suggest that the District eliminate this benefit in future negotiations. He stated that HRA LaBarbera had heard discussions about it and that she did not feel dropping this expensive, unused retiree benefit would be very controversial. Chief Fike confirmed that this has come up before during negotiations and has been discussed as something to give up. Chief Fike also reported that HRA LaBarbera has been spending hours looking for Health Savings Plans.

Chairman Hanson thanked Director Rhodes for catching this item.

**\*BOARD DISCUSSION (cont.)**

**DRAFT**

Director Grueneberg asked if anyone could get copies of the city of Grass Valley and the Nevada City's budgets. Chairman Hanson thought they could be found online. Eng. Howell confirmed that the Grass Valley city's budget was back online after updates were required due to the reassessment of properties in Grass Valley.

There was **NO FURTHER ACTION** or Board discussion. Chairman Hanson then took the meeting into Closed Session.

**CLOSED SESSION**

*Pursuant to CA Gov Code 54957*

**Public Employee Personnel Matter**

**REPORT OUT OF CLOSED SESSION AND ADJOURNMENT**

The Board met in Closed Session pursuant to Government Code Section 54957 to meet with Chief Fike regarding a Public Employee Personnel Matter. Chairman Hanson reported that the chief provided the Board with information only and that no action had been taken.

There were no more closed sessions or further Board discussion. The next Regular Board meeting was confirmed for Thursday, June 23, 2011 at 7:00 p.m. at 10135 Coyote Street, Nevada City. The meeting adjourned at 8:30 p.m.

Attest:

Approved by:

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Darlene E. Bennett  
District and Board Secretary

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David S. Hanson  
Chairman of the Board