

**Woodside Fire Protection District  
Board of Directors Meeting  
Administration Building  
808 Portola Rd.  
Portola Valley, CA 94028  
January 30, 2024**

The meeting of the Board of Directors was called to order at 7:00pm by Director Miller

**Directors Present:** Miller, Holthaus, Cain

**Directors Absent:** None

**Staff:** Chief Cuschieri, FM Giuliacci, Chief Douthit, Finance Manager Liu, Chief Zabala,  
**Zoom Attendees:** Chief Hird, DFM Hird, Chief Nannini, Capt. Witsoe, FFPM Armanino,

**Other Attendees:** WFPD General Counsel Rubin Cruse (RPLG); Mike Wassermann – Capital Program Management, David McQuilkin, Daniel Warren, Wynn White, Kim Hansen, John Foster, Alexis Dineen, Mike Dineen, Mike Robert, Lea Gottlieb, Renata Jarosz, Lynne, Susanne Chenelle, Jonathan Kaplan, Gamiel Gran

**Public Comment Non-Agendized Topics:** (Written as transcribed)

John Foster – “Thank you to the board. I sent you an email last week, and I just wanted to follow up. I sent it to the members of the board, as well as the Fire Chief and the Fire Marshal. I've been working with a group here in Ladera. We have been finding the proposed ordinance is a topic of great concern in Ladera. And how those regulations are going to affect us, and some of the particularities of Ladera as a community, which we wanted to raise here. As I said, it's been getting a lot of awareness within the community of Ladera. We formed a committee within Ladera to solicit support and coordinate that input from the community, to get input from all the community about issues that we have or concerns that we have about the proposed ordinance. And as part of this community involvement, we've had excellent engagement, very helpful engagement from Marshal Giuliacci. She came out in the community and walked through with us and answered a lot of community questions, which was extremely helpful. And we'd like to thank her for doing that for our community. What we would like to do as part of this community involvement is to request a special meeting of the board, to do a study session where we can collect input from our community. We'd like to request a special meeting where we can bring this community input. We'll coordinate it as part of our committee, bring it to the board and the Fire Marshal, to review concerns that we have about the ordinance. We've been quite active within our group, thinking about what changes we might like to propose to the ordinance or suggest and discuss with the Board and the Fire Marshal. I just want to be clear that we support the goals that the Fire Board is pursuing here, of making our communities as safe as possible from wildfire risks. And we think that the best way to really achieve that goal is to get community cooperation and support, which we think involves community input on the front end, so that everybody is supportive of the resulting ordinance. So, we'd like to request a special meeting. We've spoken with Chief Giuliacci about coordinating all of the input and bringing it to the board no later than February 20th. I think we can probably achieve a date even earlier than that. But we'd like to set a date for that special meeting. And we'd like to also further request that no second reading of the ordinance be held and no vote be held until that special session can be held, and the Ladera community can offer their input. Thank you.”

Wynn White – “Thanks. Yeah. So, I kind of like to echo John's comments a little bit and give you a little bit greater context. So, first of all, I guess, the Ladera community, you know, deeply appreciates

what the Woodside Fire Protection District does and how it, you know, basically keeps our community safe and secure. However, we are very concerned about this proposed defensible space and fuel ordinance as it's currently drafted. Our greatest concern is that the ordinance has been written to enforce defensible space requirements for areas reflective of those designated in wildfire urban interface areas, but not for a community that is on much smaller lots, close to one another, intersected by wide, numerous roads, creating natural firebreaks. It's very different from the rest of the district. The housing density of Ladera is estimated to be 8 to 10 times greater than that of the rest of the district. And given such, what we'd like to request is that the, you know, the Woodside Fire Protection District, to examine the differences of the Ladera neighborhood, and then modify this ordinance, taking into account that Ladera is a much more similar to neighborhood in Menlo Park than it is to one in Woodside or Portola Valley. You know, this ordinance is going to have a disproportionate impact on our community, and we request that this issue be studied, you know, per the comments that John's already made. So, that's all I'd like to make, but again, thank you for your working with the Ladera community in this matter.”

Director Miller thanked Wynn White and responded. He informed the attendees that the Board trusts the expertise of professionals to help decide on the best approach for different areas. Ladera is unique and presents various challenges, such as fire risks and home proximity. The Board defer to experts rather than relying solely on their own judgment as Board Members. Our goal is to adhere to California's fire safety standards and carefully assess why Ladera is different. We're closely monitoring Ladera, especially with new fire mapping processes. There are differing opinions on its risk level, but we recognize the need for thorough evaluation.

Director Cain also stated that moving this ordinance forward in timely manner was of concern.

Wynn White – “Yeah, I think we recognize that. I just think that the Ladera community has kind of gotten late into this process, and we've had a bit of scramble to form a committee to look at this. The more we look at this, we have more concerns we have. And I do feel before this ordinance gets passed, we need to at least examine these issues and the concerns, because I think there's a lot of them that are quite valid.”

Director Miller responded there is still a month before the Board reviews the proposal and another month before they vote on it. He recommended using this time to understand the process better. He stated everyone can learn together, perhaps through simpler means than a formal meeting, about the specific changes suggested for our area compared to the broader California ordinance. Initially, he had concerns when he first read the proposal, but as he went through it, he realized some of his assumptions were incorrect. He stated the District's main aim is to ensure the safety of our District so that we can all endure future events and maintain house insurance. This requires significant cleanup efforts, which is a common goal across California, especially for those living in areas with dense vegetation. While residents each own individual lots, the collective effort is essential to make our community fire-safe. This might encourage insurance companies to provide coverage. It's a significant adjustment, but necessary for our safety.

Kim Hansen – “Thank you. I live in Woodside, and I really didn't know much about this ordinance. It just kind of came on my radar. The portion of the ordinance that I specifically am concerned about is the section eight, point of sale, that requires documentation to be provided by a home seller. I'm assuming that you've seen -- I'm a Woodside homeowner and a realtor. I'm assuming you've seen the defensible space, documents that buyers and sellers have to agree to in a real estate transaction. currently, the defensible space compliance portion of a real estate transaction is negotiable as to who pays for the cost of being compliant, if it's the buyer or the seller. And currently, it doesn't have to be done before close of escrow. I'm super concerned that by requiring a seller, especially an elderly seller or someone who's divorcing or downsizing or is financially constrained, my concern is that a point of

sale requirement is going to really hurt the seller, who is selling to get the money. And there are some sellers who just don't have the ability to do that. So, that's my big concern about this ordinance. The other thing. You know, as a Woodside homeowner, we have utilized the defensible space program and the matching funds through the town of Woodside. And while we are super grateful for the \$3,000 that we can apply for and use, last year with the storms in the spring, we had tree removal bills in the tens of thousands of dollars. So, my problem is putting this down as a point of sale requirement, because I feel like the problem isn't -- it's not broken at this point.”

Director Miller responded by explaining the state implemented the requirement for high and very high zones to ensure compliance. While it may seem burdensome, it serves a purpose. He recognizes that these new ordinances do place burdens on homeowners.

Fire Marshal Giuliacci clarified to Kim that the fuel mitigation ordinance for resale is not something the District is adopting. It's already Assembly Bill 38, passed by the state of California, specifically for high and very high severity zones in the Wildland-Urban Interface (WUI). This requirement applies only to certain properties and is mandated by state law, not by the District.

Daniel Warren – “My name is Daniel Warren. I serve on the board of the Ladera Community Association. I'm here to talk a little bit about the draft defensible space ordinance 2303 that everybody's been talking about so far. I want to start by saying that, I appreciate all the work that you all do to keep our community safe and help us thrive. We've had positive experiences so far with Fire Marshal Giuliacci. She's been very engaged, and we plan to have, continue to have good relations. We've shared a lot of feedback with her as a community, both written and verbal. I want to back up what John and Wynn have said so far, and what I anticipate some of the other people are going to say. We want to make sure that the ordinance fits our community and ensure it is appropriate for all of the different landscapes that exist in your jurisdiction. We want it to match the intended enforcement instead of being broader than needed. Probably being one-size-fits-all doesn't actually work for all of the varied landscapes in the jurisdiction. As requested, we'd like a special study session meeting to review the concerns we have about the ordinance. Ideally, after we've had a chance to hand over a red line version, that has some of our feedback, in a format that it's easier to digest where the specific concerns are. I would say we feel we have -- the ordinance that's written doesn't quite fit our community very well, and it's going to get a lot of pushback. We're working hard within the community and with the Portola Valley Wildfire Preparedness Committee to have the ordinance tweaked to fit us, and that will help our community get on board and help keep us all safer, and get everybody to do the mitigations that are appropriate. I feel there are factors besides wildfire, that are also valid risks that need to be weighed. But the ordinance feels very heavy handed right now, and really is focused, seems focused on the areas that are in high and very high fire severity risk zones. But as far as we can tell, Ladera is not currently in those zones. So, it seems like a lot of the comments that seem focused on those zones don't necessarily apply to our area. We want to make the community safer for wildfire, but not at the expense of many other factors that need consideration as well. Those factors could include our safety, our security, privacy, property values, the ecosystem, beauty and enjoyment, sentimentality, hillside retention, the cost of doing it, resource availability, the timing, etc.. Thank you. And we hope to work together to keep the community safe. We want to be allies to educate our community and to encourage all of the safety improvements that will be appropriate. Thanks.”

Director Miller thanked Daniel for his thoughtful comments.

Susanne Chenette – “Thank you all so much. I just had three quick points. I think they have all been covered, but I just want to (Inaudible) my support for (Inaudible). My second point is that I really think we need to be careful about losing all of our (Inaudible) for a variety of reasons, including (Inaudible).”

Director Miller thanked Susanne for her comments, although it was mostly inaudible. He encouraged everyone to collaborate with Fire Marshal Giuliacci regarding safety concerns. Board members won't override fire staff on safety issues, nor will they make drastic changes to state fire codes. He stressed the importance of working with district staff to address concerns together.

**Regular Agenda: (Audio recording available only)**

**Consent Agenda:** Director Cain motioned to move items 1 to 5 from the regular agenda to the consent agenda and approve them as submitted, 2<sup>nd</sup> by Director Holthaus. Motion passed 3-0.

**Item 6:** Yearly Reorganization of the Board of Directors

- a. Election of Board President
- b. Election of Board Vice President

After a short discussion Director Holthaus made a motion to reorganize the Board of Directors and have Director Miller as President and Director Cain as Vice President, 2<sup>nd</sup> by Director Cain. Motion passed 3-0.

**Item 7:** Contract Amendment #4 between Woodside Fire Protection District and CJW Architecture to extend contract services for Fire Station 8 until March 31, 2024.

**Item 8:** Contract Amendment #8 between Woodside Fire Protection District and CJW Architecture to extend contract services for Fire Station 7 until June 30th, 2024.

Director Cain made a motion to approve Amendment #8 between Woodside Fire Protection District and CJW Architecture to extend contract services for Fire Station 7 until June 30th, 2024, 2<sup>nd</sup> by Director Holthaus. Motion passed 3-0.

**Item 9:** CPM – Mike Wasserman to Provide Station 7 and Station 8 Project Update

**Program Budget Update**

- Station 7 – VBI has confirmed that the remaining funds will cover all known construction costs. Contingencies have been transferred back to the Program Budget.
- Station 8 – VBI has confirmed that the remaining funds should cover all known construction costs. Contingencies have already been transferred back to the Program Budget. Contingency no longer needed per VBI. Balance transferred to IH7 Project contingency.
- Interim Station 7 Removal -Updated Budget  
Received ROM construction estimate from VBI of \$337k  
Project Budget available \$519k
- Overall Estimated Program Budget Balance +/- \$530k  
Includes T-Mobile's reimbursement for underground infrastructure of \$178k

**Interim Station 7- Removal Schedule**

- SLAC and Pacific Mobile are negotiating a potential deal for purchasing all of the trailers.
- Demo Permit plans have been by SLAC and the County.
- Station 7 is now scheduled to be ready to move-in on February 19<sup>th</sup>.
- District move to be completed by February 23<sup>rd</sup>.
- VBI off site demo has to be completed prior to the County Permit expiring on March 29<sup>th</sup>. This work will need to be performed regardless of SLAC retaining the facility.

- All leased items (trailers, conex, and generator) are on track to end February 28<sup>th</sup>.

### **Station 7 – Project Schedule Update**

- Construction scheduled to be completed by February 16<sup>th</sup> (extended 5-weeks).
  - District move dates scheduled for February 19<sup>th</sup> – 23<sup>rd</sup>.
  - Interior finishes, casework, and appliances are complete.
  - AT&T phone and fiber lines installed.
  - PG&E power and gas is complete.
  - Cellular On Wheel (COW) relocation is complete.
  - Turn-out lockers have been installed.
  - Furniture delivery and installation to begin on Feb 9<sup>th</sup>.
    - Bedside tables and the Lobby furniture ship on 2/15. Delivery takes about 1 week.
    - Library seating selection in progress.
  - Rain is impacting exterior work but working through the challenges.
  - Site work and landscaping in progress.
  - Interior Punch Walk was on January 23<sup>rd</sup>. Corrections to complete by February 19<sup>th</sup>.

### **Station 7 Project Schedule and Impact Concerns**

- ❖ Generator Delay
  - Cummins has revised their estimated delivery date to the end of February.
  - The temporary generator is in parking spaces by future generator location.
- ❖ Elevator Delay
  - The phone lines for the elevators have impacted the schedule but have been resolved now.
  - KONE has indicated that the State Elevator Inspector may not approve installation with the temporary generator. However, inspections have been requested. If the inspector won't allow, this will delay occupancy until a permanent generator is installed.
  - VBI and their sub-contractor are working to resolve the issue since the temporary and permanent generators are nearly identical in specs.

### **T-Mobile Updates**

- ❖ The COW was relocated to the front of the Station in the parking lot. It will remain there until the new mono-pole is installed and operational.
- ❖ The new mono-pole will take at least 1 to 2 years for new PG&E service. T-Mobile is exploring extending the existing temporary power feed to the new mono-pole so that the COW can be removed once the new mono-pole is installed.
- ❖ T-Mobile is coordinating with PG&E for new electrical service. They have verbally stated that they will allow the separate electrical service meter for the mono-pole. Power to come from Cedar Lane. Team is working on determining the location for the pad mounted transformer.
- ❖ T-Mobile working with the Town for new mono-pole Building Permit submittal.
  - Planning Commission approved the project at the 12/13/23 meeting.
  - T-Mobile is getting close to having CD's for Building Department submission.

### **Station 8 – Schedule Update**

- ❖ New electrical service meter (PG&E) is now scheduled for mid-February.
- ❖ Final punch list backcheck has been completed and final few remaining items are being addressed.
- ❖ Replacement of section of storm drain outlet line to be completed soon.
- ❖ Notice of Completion has been filed and recorded.
- ❖ Town Closeout and Approvals
  - Encroachment permit for replacement storm drain line has been approved.

- Final inspections from the Town have been requested.
- Town has reviewed and approved final plan set.
- Irrigation audit reports, notarized recorded copy of the landscape maintenance agreement, and final landscaping plan have been submitted.

### **Staff Reports:**

Congratulations were given to FF Scott Lory and FF Zack Martin on them successfully graduating from the Fire Academy.

### **Fire Chief's Report:**

#### **Winter Weather District Updates –**

So far to date the District has seemed to have a mild winter weather pattern that is occurring. This could change starting tomorrow and over the next few days when they are anticipating some storms that will bring in a few inches of rain. Obviously, this is much different than last year where we had an absorbent amount of rain which triggered a variety of different calls and issues within the District. Because of last year's epic winter weather our policy and guideline team has been working on a Winter Weather Event Preparedness and Response Policy. This policy is similar to our Fire Weather and Red Flag Warning policy that we use for our operational contingency plans. These policies will help support the needs of the District prior to any floods or flood warnings, High Winds, and any other winter weather conditions that may arise especially since these forecast warnings can come days in advance. The policy supports three different levels of contingencies based on weather potentials, which includes staffing adjustments, notification and messaging updates, opening our DOC, CERT activations, and resource polling. This policy is in draft form and should be finalized next month.

Also, in anticipation of this week's storms We have decided to upstaff our Patrol unit to help with the anticipated call volume. Also, as of today our OES area operational coordinator has advised that additional coverage for this storm event will be covered by OES.

### **The District Updates**

#### **Grant Applications-**

- Assistance to Firefighters Grant (AFG) process opened on January 29th and closes on March 8th. Currently we are evaluating the process to see what we should submit for.
- Measure K Grant Funding- Fire Chiefs Ari Delay, Ray Iverson, and I worked on a Measure "K" grant submittal to the County. The grant is asking for 6.7 million dollars to help with upgrading our County radio system which is made up of 42 radio sites within the county. We are looking for assistance with upgrading technology, security, and hardening of infrastructures.

### **Promotions**

- Since our last meeting we had some promotions that occurred from within the District. Battalion Chief Eric Zabala was promoted to Deputy Fire Chief.
- Captain Robert Douthit was promoted to Battalion Chief taking over Eric's position on the "A" shift.
- FFPM Beau Witsoe was promoted to Captain. Both Eric, Robert, and Beau started in their new positions at the beginning of January.
- In Fire Prevention we have a new Fire Inspector 2 that filled Kim's vacant position. I'd like to welcome David Perrone to the District. David started the first week of January. He also lives here in the District.
- Our two newest recruits finished the Fire academy on December 9th and they are now online. They are probationary FFPM's Zach Martin and Scott Lory.

- Our intentions are to do a badge pinning ceremony shortly after we move into the new fire station.

### **Fire Chiefs Planning Session**

- Early this month Deputy Chief Zabala and I attended the County Fire Chiefs planning session in Monterey. On the agenda were multiple issues and goals that we as a county would like to achieve for the year. Some of the major topics discussed were:
- Fixing issues with the new County Dispatch program and looking into a consultant to help identify the issues.
- EMS/Transport study- looking into hiring a consultant to evaluate the value of the EMS system and how it is operated. This would help us in deciding if Fire as a County would like to pursue taking over transport.
- Dissolution of Fire Net Six
- Policy discussion- review of county policies and procedures
- New SMCO Fire Chiefs Website

I was elected to be a liaison for the County Chiefs for two groups and will participate on the County Emergency Medical Care Committee and the Fire Safe Council Committee. I have also taken over as the treasurer for the County Fire Chiefs.

### **WRITTEN COMMUNICATIONS:**

Letter from resident thanking the Fire District for their response on an incident.

**Adjournment:** The meeting was adjourned at 7:52P.M.

The next scheduled meeting will be held February 27<sup>th</sup>, at 7:00 P.M at the WFPD Administration Building, 808 Portola Rd. Portola Valley, CA 94028.

Respectfully Submitted,

Pat Cain – Board Secretary