

**Woodside Fire Protection District
Board of Directors Meeting
Administration Building
808 Portola Rd.
Portola Valley, CA 94028
April 30th, 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, Chief Douthit, Chief Nannini, FM Giuliacci, Finance Manager Liu

Zoom Attendees: Chief McKenzie, Chief Hird, Capt. Francisco

Other Attendees: Mike Wasserman *Zoom Attendees:* WFPD General Counsel Rubin Cruse (RPLG); Jane W., Jeanne Gadol, Eric Giuliacci, Rebecca Flynn, Susan McLaughlin, David Cardinal, Greg, Craig Taylor, Karen, John Foster, Wynn White, Karen Vahtra, Daniel Warren, Sarah Gilbert, PJ LH7 Stanford, Jonathan Kaplan, Neil Gonzalez (reporter), Lorrie Duval, Lynne, Gamiel Gran, Debbie Hudson, WPV-Ready, Lynna's iPhone, Len Gotlieb, Heidruntz, John Silver, Kathie Ratcliffe, Judith Mendelson, Louise Emerson, Jeanne Gadol, Kim, Laurie Barber, Eckstein, Alice Chiang

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

There were no public comments made on Non-Agendized Topics.

III. CONSENT AGENDA The Board considered the following consent agenda items:

- C1. Approval of Minutes of the March 26th, 2024, Meeting of the Board of Directors
- C2. Accept Financial Reports March 2024
- C3. Accept Statement of Accounts March 2024
- C4. Accept Warrant List March 2024
- C5. Accept Fiscal Year Spreadsheet 23-24

Director Cain motioned to approve the consent agenda and approve Items C1, C2, C3, C4, and C5 as submitted, 2nd by Director Holthaus. Motion passed 3-0.

IV. REGULAR AGENDA BUSINESS ITEMS

- R1. Receive a presentation from CPM- Mike Wassermann providing a Station 7 and 8 Station Project Update.

Station Update

Station 7

- The updated budget is still sitting at 30.59 million, construction budget is at 28.8 million.
- Waiting for final invoices and currently processing several months of back invoices that were recently submitted by Vance Brown.
- Hoping to close them all out by end of fiscal year.

- Notice of completion was recorded on March 20th and is occupied.
- Working on addressing some lack of compliance with the Americans With Disabilities Act.
- Recently submitted for a permit to the Town to start construction for the monopole, which would replace the Cellular on Wheels (COW).
- PG&E's power situation is seeing positive developments. They have made swift progress in engineering. The new solution involves a pole-mounted transformer, saving valuable space.

Station 8

- Budget is sitting at 1.4 million, with the construction at 7.6 million.
- Notice of completion was reported back on January 10th, 2024.
- Both the Fire District and the Building Department have signed off, still need to complete an Americans With Disabilities Act (ADA) inspection.

Interim Station 7

- Project budget increased slightly to 4.9 million, with the construction at 3.4 million. This reflects an increase of \$300,000.
- The station is 100% closed out.

The program balance is sitting at \$600,000.

The Board thanked Mike Wasserman.

- R2. 2nd Reading: Consider taking the following actions: (1) As introduced on March 26th 2024, and with subsequent corrections made of typographical and clerical errors, adopt Ordinance 24-01 (formerly numbered 23-03), "AN ORDINANCE OF THE WOODSIDE FIRE PROTECTION DISTRICT OF SAN MATEO COUNTY, CALIFORNIA, ESTABLISHING FUEL MITIGATION AND EXTERIOR HAZARD ABATEMENT STANDARDS IN ALL STATE AND LOCAL RESPONSIBILITY AREAS WITHIN THE DISTRICT, REQUIRING DOCUMENTATION OF COMPLIANCE PRIOR TO SALE OF THE PROPERTY, ADOPTING FINDINGS OF FACT, AND DETERMINING THE ORDINANCE IS EXEMPT FROM THE CALIFORNIA ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY ACT," and (2) find that Ordinance 24-01 is exempt from the California Environmental Quality Act for the reasons stated in the ordinance.

Public Comment: Written as transcribed.

John Silver – "Thank you. Excuse me, I'm still sort of catching my breath. I'm (Inaudible). I spent three years in public office, three times mayor (Inaudible). I didn't know this was your administrative headquarters, but I found it. After I first go into the Episcopal Church, (Inaudible). Okay. My name's John Silver. I live at 355 Portola Road. I served 16 years, roughly, on the town council. And after that, just had 13 years in the county planning commission. So, I've had a bit of experience in government. I think this ordinance is way overkill. We live in this area, not just Portola Valley, but the surrounding area. Not through zero risk, for reasonable risk, and this just gets the balance wrong. And I predict, if this ordinance is adopted, I don't know if it's subject to referendum, but I'll find out. And if it is, I promise you, it will be defeated at the ballot box. I promise you. It's not a threat, it's a promise. My local campaigns, my record's 23 to 2, which don't get me into the Hall of Fame, but it's a lot better than 2 to 23. I know what I'm talking about. And my neighbor, Kent Mitchell, was mayor of the town before I was, lives two houses away. I believe

he's written a -- you wouldn't want to call it a treatise, but Kent's a practicing attorney, sharp as a tack. He knows what he's talking about. I think he's written something pretty good about writing this ordinance, just (Inaudible: 15:35), you know, stating why it does it require it, and it needs to be scaled back. I mean, take your time and slow down. I've seen the town do things and get in trouble, because they went too fast, pushed it through, and lost a referendum. That was 21 years ago, and I'll never forget it. It was an unnecessary defeat and a waste of the public's time and money. I think that sums it up. But I really appreciate being heard, and I'm just curious. I don't know -- I don't see nametags here. Who's --"

Director Miller introduced the Board of Directors to John Silver.

John Silver – “Well, listen. Thanks for your service. I know what you do, and it's a thankless job. And you guys are just great. Thank you all. I mean, I couldn't speak more. Having seen service from the fire department elder clients whose lives are saved. One friend was a frequent former (Inaudible) nickname in the department. You saved his life more than one time, and you're fantastic. You're a wonderful asset, and please don't make this mistake. And thanks for hearing what I have to say.

Rebecca Flynn – “Hi. I sent a note, a couple hours ago, with concerns about this ordinance. It's really not ready for prime time. Fire Marshal Giuliacci just sent me a note back with responses and information about my concerns, and I really appreciate her taking the time to do that. Unfortunately, I'm even more alarmed now, because many of her statements are essentially completely contradictory from what's exactly written in the legal language of the ordinance in many situations. And she said; oh, we will put this in the guidelines, the non-existent guidelines, to provide more clarity on what's required and what's not. I mean, if the legal language says you have to remove, you have to create spacing between trees, but the guidelines are going to say; oh, it depends a little bit on whether or not you have, you know, what the fire inspector has said. And no, you don't have to do this. And your screening bushes, you just have to leave a four-foot gap between each ten foot of screening bushes. That's nowhere in the code. Nowhere in this ordinance, that I can find. So, I mean, to have different information being put in the guidelines than is legally in this document, you know, suggests to me that there's a little bit more thought that needs to go into this. And then my second point is also really important. This is a very punitive ordinance. You're not working with the community. You're using this ordinance to have an enormous section just about punishing people who don't have money. Because, you know, the reason why a lot of these places are not cleared out are because people don't have money, they're living on limited incomes. They don't have the money to clear out all the tree stumps that are sitting in front of their homes. They don't have the money to go and thin out all their trees. They don't have the money to, you know, to do all sorts of things that are required in this ordinance. And that money's not magically going to come to them out of thin air. And just simply removing the requirement for people to request an extension for three years would go a long way to making this ordinance more palatable to the community. I mean, that's a simple request, because it can be very humiliating to ask for help, you know, when you do need three years to be able to raise the money to make some of these major changes to your property, to remove all the bushes around your -- right directly on your house, to relandscape, you know, to get new screening bushes growing that are appropriate to this undefined list of vegetation that we have no idea which trees and bushes are allowed and which aren't. So, just simply add a minimum, simply just not requiring people to request a three-year extension, and just allowing people three years to get this work done, as long as they show some progress every year, without having to ask, would go a long way to making this more palatable. So, at a minimum, I would request that you do that if you have to. If you feel it necessary to somehow forge ahead with this tonight, despite the fact that there are so many problems with it. Thank you. I appreciate your listening to me.”

Sarah Gilbert – “Yes. You know, if you stop the screen share, I think it might be better. We could see bigger pictures of people. But, yeah, thank you for hearing my concerns about this. I think it has

improved over the time. And I know that a number of suggestions have been adopted. I am very happy to see fire resistant vegetation defined in this document now. However, it's not used anywhere in the document. And I think it would be really helpful if it, say, in the definitions of brush and hazardous vegetation, if it's specifically said that hazardous vegetation is not fire-resistant vegetation, so that people could understand that it gives them a much better sense of what is meant by hazardous vegetation, if you do that. Another place that it could be used is under the exceptions, under section five, the roadside vegetation. You could say that fire resistant vegetation is an exception there, and in the first ten feet from a road or five feet from the driveway. Whereas now it just says ground cover, which is pretty restrictive. I can see a whole lot of shrubs would have to be removed, and all-around Portola Valley. Another thing is the one size fits all approach, or two sizes, I guess. To tree management, I feel that this is counterproductive and will lead to significant degradation of our fire-resistant oak woodlands that are near homes. We at Portola Valley Ranch have consulted with fire ecologist, Carol Rice, numerous times. She has told us very clearly that these guidelines have been developed for conifer forests, which are highly flammable. They tend to torch and spew embers and cause the neighboring trees to torch. Whereas, she also stated very clearly that it's very rare for oak trees to torch. And if it does happen, it does not tend to cause a neighboring tree to torch. So, having just specific guidelines that are based on conifers being applied to oak trees will, I feel, really degrade our oak woodlands, which are pretty fire resistant. And if we had separate guidelines for more fire-resistant trees, I think that we could have a lot better compliance and people be much happier with the ordinance, not having to remove so many trees or prune them heavily or remove all the shrubs underneath the trees. And the more ground you open up for sunlight, the more you invite invasive plants. So, and as well as then, you end up degrading the habitat for ground dwelling wildlife by removing the understory. So, those are my concerns. Thank you for consideration of my comments.”

Director Miller expresses gratitude to Sarah for her insightful remarks. Director Miller clarifies that the ordinance does not entail removing trees unless they are dead or dying, emphasizing the importance of preserving mature live trees, particularly oaks. He assures that all trees are treated equally, highlighting that proximity to structures like roofs can pose a concern under the existing ordinance. Director Miller stressed that the removal of mature live trees is not part of the ordinance and would be detrimental.

Dave Cardinal – “Thanks. First, I think we're 100 times better off than we were, let's say, a year ago when something like this was first proposed. Kudos to Fire Marshal Giuliacci, who has bent over backwards to have multiple meetings, talk to everybody in the town, and all the towns, from what I know. I think that's great. You know, as a result, I'm not enough an expert to have any complaints really about the specifics. I do want to echo something that's been said before, which is; it would make me feel a lot better if the guidelines and the species list all were being done at the same time. And it is kind of confusing, and if guidelines are going to make it more clear, then why can't we make it more clear now? Would be my own thought, because otherwise, it's going to be unclear until some unspecified time in the future, which is going to cause, I think, issues. Thank you.”

Director Miller acknowledges Dave's concerns and clarifies that no houses in Portola Valley will be inspected this year, with the initial inspections slated for a distant area. He emphasizes that compliance is not expected upon inspection; rather, it initiates a dialogue. Director Miller anticipates guidelines being finalized soon but notes the complexity of collaboration with various perspectives. He assures that homeowners have time to make necessary adjustments, with potential non-compliance repercussions at least a couple of years away. Director Miller shares his personal preparations, stressing the importance of fire safety measures after witnessing the destructive potential of embers. He highlights the evolving nature of guidelines and expresses reluctance to penalize residents. Director Miller underlines the necessity of safety measures, citing insurance

requirements and the overarching goal of safeguarding lives and property. He emphasizes the communal responsibility in fire prevention and rescue efforts. Despite potential disagreements, Director Miller advocates for proactive measures to enhance safety without excessive government intervention.

Director Holthaus acknowledges David's concerns and affirms that the board has been attentive to community feedback over several months, striving to make appropriate adjustments. They emphasize the complexity of implementing the ordinance due to the unique characteristics of each property. As a gardener myself, I understand the challenges and financial constraints involved in complying with the ordinance's requirements. However, they stress the importance of addressing potential fire hazards such as dry leaves and debris in gutters, acknowledging that while compliance may not be easy, it is essential for improving overall safety in the community.

Craig Taylor – “I wanted to start by saying, that I strongly support the effort, and I hear that from the board as well. Clearly, we live in a WUI and the fire hazard is real. And all the input I'm getting from the residents of at least of our community, is not that they don't want to do anything, but that despite the outreach, I still have a lot of people who say; wow, I didn't even know this was happening. And that's my concern, is that we're generating this sort of allergic reaction to the district. And particularly given that, at least in my personal opinion, I've talked to Kim about this as well, is that, you know, the home hardening is the next thing that's coming up, and in some sense, that seems even more important than this. And if we end up, sort of to echo John Silver's response, if we end up with the public thinking that they want to do a referendum or something. I mean, that seems so crazy to me that we've gotten to that place. So, I appreciate this idea of starting the conversation. I think that's exactly the right message. Unfortunately, the ordinance doesn't send that message. It sends a very punitive message. And within one year, we can fine you and we can basically put a lien on your house. So, you know, I talked to Kim. I totally get where she's coming from. The ordinance doesn't say those things, and I think that's where we're having a lot of difficulty in the community.

So, the things I would recommend in, sort of, being pretty involved in this is, one, I do think it's worth getting the guidelines done, and the species list done before you approve this, so that you can go to people and say; look, here they are. Not here they are, after the fact. I'd also recommend a postal mailing to the entire district. And Kim and I have talked about it and there was one going out, but unfortunately it was going out as part of the chipper program, and it was going out in dribs and drabs. And not everybody has gotten it yet, and yet, potentially, this could get approved tonight. So, again, I think it's going to be one of these things that the district's going to say; oh, by the way, oh we already passed this, you know, last month. Tough luck. And that just feels like such a wrong message. So, I hope you guys will find a way to soften this, and I don't know if it's, you know, giving people the three years to comply or that, you know, we're committed to reviewing the ordinance in three years. But I think my message to you guys is finding a way to soften the impact. And I'm not talking about the impact of doing the work, I'm talking about kind of the political impact, because that's the one I'm worried about. I think that we absolutely need to do this. And Kim and I have talked about this. We know there's a five-year process. I mean, we're not going to magically be a fire safe community next year, and I think we all know that. But giving people an onramp that they feel is a real onramp, I think it's important. So, anyway, thank you for your time. I appreciate it. I appreciate what you guys are doing, and in particular, Kim. I mean, she's really been great and I think we're really lucky to have her. I just hope we can find a way to sort of find some way to get the ordinance delivered in a sort of softer way. Thank you.”

Director Miller expresses gratitude to Craig for raising the issue and acknowledges that not everyone may have received the recent mail regarding the matter. While efforts are made to disseminate information, reaching everyone can be challenging. Director Miller mentions the recent

distribution of mail to the district, aimed at addressing concerns like Craig's, although it may not have reached everyone yet.

Craig Taylor – “Well, I think if you talk to Kim, it ended up going out to the people who were in the chipping program. And I think, like, we were later in the shipping program, so we didn't get them. So, anyway, I think the idea is that despite Kim's going to all the stores and stuff and reaching out, I continue to get, you know, residents telling me; oh, I never heard about this thing. And I'm going; you need to pay attention. So, that's why I suggest the postal mailing as being pretty critical.”

Director Miller acknowledges Craig's concerns about the pace of implementation and agrees that expediting the process is desirable. However, Director Miller emphasizes the importance of prioritizing safety, suggesting that waiting for complete information dissemination might further delay safety measures. While Director Miller expresses interest in seeing the species list, they note that it won't fundamentally alter the ordinance's structure, which is based on established codes. Director Miller underscores the significance of completing the guidelines and assures efforts to expedite them. They commit to revisiting the ordinance in three years, as per past practices, and anticipate minimal enforcement actions in the interim. Director Miller shares their personal efforts in fire safety preparations, indicating a community-wide trend towards compliance.

Dave Cardinal – “I was just applauding. I think your answers are great, by the way. Yours and Randy's. So, you know, I'm fully on board, as I just hope we can get everybody on board. And like you said, the guidelines, it'd be great if they came out sooner rather than later. So, thanks.”

Director Miller expresses agreement with Dave's concerns and commits to taking a more active role in ensuring the prompt development of guidelines to alleviate such concerns. Director Miller highlights the complexity of government ordinances, noting that much of the information received from non-District sources is incorrect due to this complexity. They emphasize the necessity of clear guidelines to simplify understanding and implementation. Director Miller concludes by reiterating their agreement with Dave's sentiment.

Craig Taylor – “Well, can I just say just for the three-year commitment, I think would help me go back to the residents and at least allay some of their concerns. So, if there's some way to formalize that, that would be great. Thank you.”

Fire Marshal Giuliacci explains that there is a code adoption process every three years, during which local ordinances are reviewed. They anticipate initiating a formal review approximately six months prior to this, implying a formal review beginning in two and a half years. Since not all properties will have been inspected by then, they emphasize the importance of starting the review process with residents, allowing for feedback, especially from those who have already undergone home assessments. Fire Marshal Giuliacci underscores the significance of incorporating residents' experiences into the review process for improving the ordinance.

Fire Marshal Giuliacci begins by discussing concerns from residents receiving non-renewal notices from insurance companies, noting the vague reasons provided such as historical fires and vegetation density in the area. They recount a case where a resident was inaccurately assessed due to misrepresentation by the insurance company, highlighting the broader impact on the community's insurance status. Fire Marshal Giuliacci emphasizes the collective impact on neighborhoods rather than individual homes, expressing concern for those left without insurance coverage. They mention ongoing discussions at the state level regarding insurance laws but emphasize the current challenges faced by residents. Fire Marshal Giuliacci then delves into the ordinance's adoption, explaining its origins as a statewide model and the local adaptations made to fit Woodside's context. They stress the importance of the fire department's expertise in hazard assessment and decision-making to enhance

home survivability, particularly through home hardening measures. The discussion extends to the role of defensible space in preventing fire spread and facilitating firefighter access, as well as the limitations of available resources during large-scale fires. Giuliacci underscores the need for homes to withstand fires independently and outlines the ordinance's aim to mitigate risks for both residents and insurers.

District Counsel Rubin Cruse with Renne Public Law Group – “Just to provide information for the board and also the community. When the board will be considering the guidelines, the board can also, at that time, adopt a formal policy, saying that it will review the ordinance on whatever timeframe that the board wants to. If it says we want to review in three years, we will do that. And that can all be, of course, basically, laid down in writing as a policy of the board when it comes back to consider adoption of the guidelines.”

Sarah Gilbert – “Just very briefly. I just wanted to reiterate what others have said, that I think it's really important to get those guidelines out there, because when we talk to you, we talk to Kim, hear what's said, it sounds quite reasonable. When you read the ordinance, it doesn't sound very reasonable, really. And there's things in there that actually seem to conflict, within the ordinance. And so, I'm just afraid that people will panic as soon as that's passed, and some will start doing some drastic things to their property before they get the guidelines, which has the more reasonable take. So, if you could do those simultaneously, I think it would help a lot. That's it.”

Fire Marshal Giuliacci provides a timeline update, informing everyone that the ordinance guidelines will be presented for approval at the next board meeting in May. They explain that the guidelines are currently undergoing review by other committees to incorporate their expertise and input. Fire Marshal Giuliacci emphasizes that the guidelines will be a living document, subject to continuous improvement and adaptation based on feedback and evolving needs. They stress the importance of resident input in refining the guidelines to enhance understanding and interpretation of the ordinance.

Karen Vahtra – “Yeah. I had sent you in a letter, a lot of details in terms of the legal document. I'm a little concerned that if you make a legal document that's not really that accurate, that it's still a legal document. And I can see people coming to you, saying, you know, and having a lot of extra reviews. So, perhaps that if things come up during the next year that are challenging, that you could have a, you know, make perhaps a minor update of the ordinance and not wait those three years. And then my other real question is on the driveways. I think the California state kind of did a sloppy job on driveways, because to me, when I read that, it sounds like a suburban driveway. And we have 300-ft driveways here, 100-ft driveways. And I just can't imagine that it has to be all irrigated vegetation. So, that particular one just -- that's how I read the read the ordinance. I don't think everything from the state is perfect. So, I guess I would prefer to see the actual legal document. I'm not a lawyer, but I've been around enough of them, I guess. I'd actually see the legal document approved to be clear. I just feel like that's a better way to approach it. Not that the guidelines, to me, are something more that you would give to a homeowner, but I'm just seeing conflicts coming up because I'm sure there's going to be conflicts coming up. You know, there's going to be some angry homeowner and, you know, then you get into this war; oh, the guidelines says this, and then you're going to have a lot of reviews. So, as much as possible, that you could clean up the actual words from the state, that's just what I'm recommending I would feel better about.”

Wynn White – “So, first of all, I just want to acknowledge and thank, you know, the fire marshal, along with the district, working with the Ladera community, to making a number of changes to the Ordinance 24-01. You know, we continue to have, you know, a number of concerns, about various aspects of the ordinance. Its cost of implementation, its enforcement. We also are being realistic and recognize the ordinance is meant to significantly improve our fire preparedness safety and, you know, ultimately, our community safety. And so, I guess the realistic part of some of the discussions I had

earlier today is that we also recognize that the board, tonight, probably intends to approve, vote to approve the ordinance. And so, given such, I'd like to ask of the district, that a few different things. One is on the further education, the outreach. I can't recall who made this very similar comment. I think it was Craig there. You know, a lot of people that are still asking me; hey, what is this ordinance? What's it all about? Even though we've had it in our published newsletter, as well as our list server. And I know fire marshal has been tabling down at, you know, local businesses nearby. But there's a lot of people that still don't know a lot about this. So, we'll continue to do our part, we'll continue to communicate through our community channels, but I think whatever you can do to help further educate and outreach to inform homeowners as to what the newer ordinance entails and how to comply, it's going to go a long way. I think also another point is, there has been mention of identifying grants and that sort of thing. So, I think the request is to help identify some of these funding sources. You know, you've mentioned that the district has been looking to identify various different grants. And so, wherever these can be sourced or if there are programs, either individual residents or, you know, even, you know, maybe the LCA can potentially, you know, apply for on behalf of the community. You know, we'd like to have the district's assistance to help identify some of those. And if they're applicable, you know, and help those individuals which may qualify for them to help secure the funding. Because, you know, one of the principal concerns here is the cost of the changes that'll be required. And I'm not going to go into it. I had made a number of notes about the draft guidelines, but I think this has been beaten, you know, quite a few times all night long. But we really do need to see the guidelines. And the sooner we can get the guidelines, the better for everybody. And then, lastly, I do want to concur and agree with Craig's recommendation about having this three-year revisit, because I think that would also go a long ways in terms of helping people get on board and be more supportive of the ordinance. So, again, you know, I want to thank you for, you know, listening to the community, the concerns and incorporating, you know, a number of our recommendations into the ordinance. Thank you very much."

Daniel Warren – "I serve on the board of the Ladera Community Association, along with Wynn, and I've been engaging on the defensible space topic now for a few months. I appreciate the efforts of the fire department to protect our lives and properties, and I know this draft ordinance is being discussed for the right reasons. I'm very grateful for the amount of discussion we've had with Fire Marshal Giuliani and her efforts to engage on the topic. I'm going to echo many of the comments already made tonight, but I hope to provide a few other new angles on improving our collective fire resistance and safety will be a long process, and this is just one step. It's important work and we will need to make changes to adapt to the growing risk of wildfires. We understand this. However, we still have substantial reservations with the specific implementation details here. Although, we agree on the direction and roughly the end goal. I feel the board plans to pass this ordinance tonight, over the legitimate concerns of the community members it serves, and I just want to leave you with a few thoughts before you do it. Okay. So, first, we encourage you to be more proactive in education outreach before passing this law, threatening severe consequences. Making this draft advisory, instead of compulsory, while continuing to work on the guidelines and doing the first round of inspections, will encourage greater participation instead of resistance. Send fliers to mailboxes. I didn't get one yet. I haven't heard from anyone that has. Get email addresses for everyone individually, so that it doesn't go into their spam folders along with the rest of our listserv emails. And then do the individual inspections. Teach people the what and the why. As this ordinance is written, requesting an inspection is calling the cops on yourself. I can't recommend that to our community. That means that people that would voluntarily do 80 to 90% of the work, but might have reservations about the last 10 to 20%, will end up doing nothing. For example, people don't want to cut down the trees that have their trunks and many branches within 5 to 10ft of the house or roof, which we were told would be required, and it seems like you guys kind of reiterated it tonight. That makes us collectively less safe if people don't do the work that they would have otherwise do. I have spoken to many neighbors and most have no idea this is coming, despite all what we've tried to do to get their knowledge. With the dire consequences for disagreement and no path to an independent review short of litigation, this is going

to create unintended consequences for many people in the district. I know you are saying Ladera is not up next, but 2000 people in the district -- 2000 parcels are. So, item number two. This mandated work will be unaffordable to many people. Instead of passing the law now, instead line up grant money for funding and find volunteers or negotiate rates with landscaping and tree companies. Find the money to help take the sting out of the costs, notwithstanding the loss of enjoyment and property values that will come from this transformation. If Moran, Woodside, and Los Trancos can find the money, I urge you to find the grants for everyone in the district before mandating work, or help us figure out how to do it. Point us in the right direction and we can work on it as well. Forcing people to humiliate themselves by turning over all their financial details to prove they can't pay, and hope that the fire board will agree, is unnecessarily cruel. If people can't afford it in one year without any grants, some like they can't afford in three years either. They definitely won't be able to afford the more important and more expensive home hardening that's coming next. Also, please give everyone the three years you are willing to give people that can't afford it, since it'll be a challenge to find the right experts to make the changes in a beneficial matter. You don't want this to be a haphazard, quick, get it done within a year kind of move. Third item. Please work on the guidelines document and public view, and encourage participation within the community. I asked for the document directly and was told, no, it's only going to specific communities. This document is referenced by the ordinance in multiple places, but it's totally backwards to pass the law without the details of implementation. Work with us all to make it fit our risks, our local plant options, and the variety of reasons the landscaping has ended up the way it has. Much of it has been with very careful consideration for other factors and at significant cost. After this document is ready, then it's more appropriate to pass them together. You expect it to be ready next month, then wait until next month to pass the ordinance. Or as suggested earlier, make it all advisory until the first round of inspections has completed, and keep working on the guidelines as a living document, as suggested. Even though it's not explicitly written that way anywhere. And then the fourth and my final topic. Please leave the opportunities for continued refinement of this law and process, and formalize the opportunity to be updating it frequently. It has been suggested to us that the ordinance applying uniformly to the whole district, without regard for individual parcel risk, seems to be overstepping the legal authority granted by the statutes listed, and this concern has been too hastily dismissed. As this process gets going, please plan to update it to better fit the specifics of each neighborhood and individual parcel. We want to be partners in this journey and help educate our community and find ways to improve the fire safety without causing many detrimental effects. For example, potential issues of safety, security, privacy, property values, ecosystems and habitats, plants and tree health, beauty and enjoyment, sentimentality, hillside retention, obvious financial challenges, resources, availability of the people to do the work, the shade and climate consequences, and foundation support for all the trees that are too close to houses. But we need to feel that there's a path to do it together. So, in summary, please don't pass the ordinance tonight. Take just a little more time to get it right and to bring the community along. Thank you for your consideration and your continued efforts to keep us all safe.”

Jane W – “I also want to say that I appreciate, greatly appreciate the amount of work that has been done so far for our safety and protection. But I would prefer it if the guidelines were written and then incorporated into the ordinance, so that it's clear what people need to do and by when. I'm personally more concerned with the fact that a number of people in the area still have eucalyptus and eucalyptus groves, and if they went up in, you know, in fact, any of the flammable five, that would be the greatest risk to the majority of Portola Valley and Woodside, because they cause so much destruction, so quickly. I'd like to second Rebecca Flynn's comments that were sent via email, and verbally this evening. I also wondered which committees the guidelines were with at the moment, whether they were with conservation committees or environmental committees, because I do think that if we went with the ordinance as it is now, a lot of destruction would occur for the habitats of the wildlife and the flora and fauna that we have, because a lot of people don't even know what plants they have in their backyards. They don't know what the natives are. And yes, by all means, get rid of all the inflammable non-natives, but we do need to keep some of the native habitats so that our wildlife can

continue. If I cleared every native plant in our yard, I would just be left with the dusky footed wood rat nest, and then there would be nowhere for them to forage or build their nests out of. So, I can't condone concrete and hardcore everywhere, because these animals need to live and so do the insects. But, anyway, that's my personal bugbear, the wildlife in the environment, but thank you again for all that you're doing, but I do hope that you don't pass the ordinance this evening."

Fire Marshal Giuliacci stated that the drafts of the ordinance guidelines have been shared with the Conservation Committee and Wildfire Preparedness Committee of Portola Valley. These committees are currently reviewing the drafts, providing comments, feedback, and recommendations. The purpose is to collaboratively create guidelines that will aid residents in interpreting the ordinance effectively.

Jane W. asked if any outside environmental agencies looked at the ordinance.

Fire Marshal Giuliacci clarifies that the ordinance does not mandate specific actions regarding healthy living trees on properties. Recommendations for tree maintenance, such as pruning or thinning, are typically determined by the health of the specific species and are left to property owners to address with the guidance of arborists or experts. The ordinance emphasizes the importance of preserving certain ecological features and scenic trees, but it does not dictate specific tree management practices. Fire Marshal Giuliacci underscores the need for the guidelines to provide accurate recommendations in line with the ordinance's objectives.

Director Holthaus expresses their interest in the guidelines and seeks clarification on how they may impact the urgency of passing the ordinance. They suggest that having more clarity or extension of the timeline for the guidelines could be beneficial.

Fire Marshal Giuliacci references the Supreme Court ruling of *Kugler versus Yocum* from 1968, highlighting that it is consistent with established law for the board to authorize fire code officials to create guidelines. These guidelines can be submitted to the board for review and approval separately from the adoption of the ordinance. Giuliacci emphasizes that while the guidelines are not a requirement, they are being developed as a courtesy to assist homeowners in interpreting the ordinance. The aim is to make the regulations more understandable and accessible, as legal language can be complex and challenging to interpret.

Director Miller explains there is perspective on the relationship between ordinances and guidelines, drawing a comparison to how government laws typically function with statutes and accompanying guidelines. They express their belief that the ordinances themselves are unlikely to change, with guidelines serving as tools for interpretation. Director Miller anticipates the need for clarifications and expects the guidelines to evolve over time. They stress the importance of understanding that enforcement cannot occur until guidelines are established, reiterating the intention to give residents ample time for compliance. Director Miller emphasizes the importance of getting the guidelines right for their area while cautioning against attempts to alter the ordinance itself, as it was developed by fire scientists at the state level. They advocate for focusing efforts on refining local guidelines rather than seeking changes to the ordinance itself. Director Miller further expresses their belief that the process has reached a point where continued discussions may become counterproductive and delay progress. They acknowledge the significant changes made to the ordinance over the past six months based on community input. Director Miller emphasizes the need to move forward and implement the ordinance, recognizing that there will always be unintended consequences to address. They express a desire to mitigate financial burdens on residents and seek alternative funding sources to support compliance efforts. While Director Miller is personally prepared to proceed, they also acknowledge the importance of consensus within the community and are open to delaying the process if necessary. However, they assert their belief that the basic ordinance is unlikely to change significantly.

Director Holthaus expresses their belief that the ongoing meetings and community feedback have reached a point of diminishing returns. While they acknowledge the importance of late comments, they highlight the significant changes made based on community input and the commitment to continue incorporating feedback. Holthaus believes it's time to initiate the process, with opportunities for review and adjustment in the future as necessary. They advocate for taking the first step forward in implementing the ordinance.

Director Holthaus made a motion to (1) adopt Ordinance 24-01 (formerly numbered 23-03), entitled "AN ORDINANCE OF THE WOODSIDE FIRE PROTECTION DISTRICT OF SAN MATEO COUNTY, CALIFORNIA, ESTABLISHING FUEL MITIGATION AND EXTERIOR HAZARD ABATEMENT STANDARDS IN ALL STATE AND LOCAL RESPONSIBILITY AREAS WITHIN THE DISTRICT, REQUIRING DOCUMENTATION OF COMPLIANCE PRIOR TO SALE OF THE PROPERTY, ADOPTING FINDINGS OF FACT, AND DETERMINING THE ORDINANCE IS EXEMPT FROM THE CALIFORNIA ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY ACT," as introduced on March 26th 2024 and with subsequent corrections made of typographical and clerical errors as submitted by staff, and (2) find that Ordinance 24-01 is exempt from the California Environmental Quality Act for the reasons stated in the ordinance, 2nd by Director Cain. Motion passed 3-0.

V. STAFF REPORTS

Director Miller appreciated the Staff Reports. He thought the CERT training summary was very good and enjoyed the photos and community involvement. As well he is looking forward to reading about the new sensor possibilities.

Fire Marshal Giuliacci announces the completion of mapping efforts and expresses hope for implementation around July. They plan to share a dashboard showcasing the capabilities of sensors, enabling access to real-time data on humidity levels, wind, dew points, and other weather conditions. Fire Marshal Giuliacci anticipates that the sensors will provide valuable information for monitoring fire risk and improving safety measures.

VI. FIRE CHIEF'S REPORT

• District Updates

- Fire Family Open House scheduled for June 1st at the new fire station, with invites to be sent out this week.
- Badge pinning ceremony planned for later in June.
- South Zone training division to conduct a week of training in Huddart Park next week, in collaboration with Redwood City and Menlo Park.
- Cal Fire to provide (4) Type 3 fire engines and two hand crews for wildland season, benefiting the SRA and MTZ.
- Redefinition of Med 2 job description in collaboration with Redwood City Fire to streamline EMS responsibilities.
- Firefighter Paramedic Chris O'Leary appointed as Training Captain, starting May 6th, rotating on a 2-year basis.
- SMC Fire Chiefs Association selects AP Triton for evaluation of County EMS system, aiming to complete in 4 months.
- Dissolution process of Fire Net 6 South Zone radio group ongoing, to be completed by September 2024, integrating into ALS JPA's radio system.

VII. REPORT ON WRITTEN COMMUNICATIONS

There were no written communications.

VIII. REQUESTS FOR ITEMS ON FUTURE AGENDAS

IX. CLOSED SESSION

CS1. PUBLIC EMPLOYMENT
(Government Code section 54957)

Title: Firefighter Paramedic

CS2. CONFERENCE WITH REAL PROPERTY NEGOTIATORS
(Government Code section 54956.8)

Property: 3117 Woodside Road, Town of Woodside, California

District Negotiator: Fire Chief Tom Cuschieri

Negotiating Parties: Owned by the Estate of Shirley Bayerle and administered by Jim Coffman

Under Negotiation: Instructions to negotiator will concern price and terms of payment

Adjournment: The public portion of the meeting was adjourned at 8:21 P.M. and the Board entered closed session.

Upon returning from closed session, there were no reportable actions from the closed sessions to report. The meeting was adjourned at 8:58 p.m.

The next scheduled meeting will be held May 28th, at 7:00 P.M at the WFPD Administration Building, 808 Portola Rd. Portola Valley, CA 94028.

Respectfully Submitted,

Tom Cuschieri – Board Secretary