

**Woodside Fire Protection District
Board of Directors Meeting
Administration Building
808 Portola Rd.
Portola Valley, CA 94028
June 25, 2024**

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

Directors Present: Miller, Holthaus, Cain

Directors Absent: None

Staff: Chief Cuschieri, Chief Zabala, Finance Manager Liu, Chief McKenzie,

Zoom Attendees: Chief M. Hird, Chief Nannini, Captain C. O'Leary

Other Attendees: *Zoom Attendees:* WFPD General Counsel Rubin Cruse (RPLG); John Foster

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

After inviting public comment, 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 May 28, 2024, Meeting of the Board of Directors
- C2. Accept Financial Reports May 2024
- C3. Accept Statement of Accounts May 2024
- C4. Accept Warrant List May 2024
- C5. Accept Fiscal Year Spreadsheet 23-24

After inviting public comment, no public comments were made.

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. Approval of the WOODSIDE FIRE PROTECTION DISTRICT'S PRELIMINARY BUDGET FOR THE FISCAL YEAR 2024-2025

After inviting public comment, no public comments were made.

Director Holthaus inquired about the workers' compensation program, its history, the reasons for the increase in claims, and potential strategies to reduce injuries.

Chief Cuschieri informed the Board that around 2015, there was a significant increase in workers' compensation costs. Initially, they were covered by State Fund Workers Compensation Insurance. Chief Dan Ghiorso advocated for a change, leading to a switch to SDRMA, which contracted with Intercare, following Sedgwick. Various companies have merged over time. SDRMA currently helps achieve better rates, and through Target Solutions, they provide training to prevent injuries. Despite efforts, injuries still occur due to the nature of fire service work. The wellness committee and other programs aim to reduce injuries. SDRMA offers a self-insured workers' comp program and will

eliminate their third-party administrator from July 1st, potentially lowering costs. Research is being conducted to find better rates, but no changes can be made until April 2025 due to current policy constraints. Currently, there are 12 open workers' comp cases.

Director Miller commented that the budget increased by \$3 million, which isn't ideal but expected. Last year, there were no funds for a repayment station, but this year, nearly a million of the increase is due to new debt on the fire station. He checked, and the revenue also increased similarly, so the budget appears balanced for now. However, predicting future budgets is challenging as revenue typically rises with the tax base, though occasionally state financial issues have affected it. It's important to note higher spending now includes \$1 million in extra debt service for recent construction, and they are about to purchase the neighboring house, impacting cash flow. Tracy's accounting assumes the cash is spent, and the numbers seem correct. Estimating next year's expenses is difficult due to the new station and its unknown operational and maintenance costs.

After further discussion, Director Holthaus motioned to approve item R1. The WOODSIDE FIRE PROTECTION DISTRICT'S PRELIMINARY BUDGET FOR THE FISCAL YEAR 2024-2025 as submitted, 2nd by Director Cain. Motion passed 3-0.

R2. Adopt Resolution 24-05 A RESOLUTION OF THE WOODSIDE FIRE PROTECTION DISTRICT CALLING FOR AN ELECTION TO BE HELD ON NOVEMBER 5, 2024 FOR THE ELECTION OF TWO MEMBERS OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS

After inviting public comment, no public comments were made.

Director Holthaus motioned to approve item R2. Adopt Resolution 24-05 A RESOLUTION OF THE WOODSIDE FIRE PROTECTION DISTRICT CALLING FOR AN ELECTION TO BE HELD ON NOVEMBER 5, 2024 FOR THE ELECTION OF TWO MEMBERS OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS as submitted, 2nd by Director Cain. Motion passed 3-0.

R3. Consider taking the following actions: (1) Adopt Resolution 24-06 A RESOLUTION OF THE WOODSIDE FIRE PROTECTION DISTRICT RATIFYING THE FIRE MARSHAL'S SIGNATURE ON A CONTRACT WITH SAN MATEO COUNTY FOR ENHANCED FIRE PROTECTION SERVICES IN THE COMMUNITIES OF LOS TRANCOS WOODS AND VISTA VERDE NEIGHBORHOODS AND FINDING THE CONTRACT IS EXEMPT FROM THE CALIFORNIA ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY ACT and (2) find that the Contract is exempt from the California Environmental Quality Act ("CEQA") under the following categorical exemptions: CEQA Guidelines section 15307 (actions by regulatory agencies for protection of natural resources), and CEQA Guidelines section 15308 (actions by regulatory agencies for protection of the environment).

After inviting public comment, no public comments were made.

Chief Cuschieri explained that years ago, the Los Trancos and Vista Verde Water Districts transitioned to Cal Water but retained funding of about \$300,000 annually. This money is used for enhancing the district, focusing on fuel management, home hardening, and vegetation management. The funds are managed through the county, and they are now formalizing this arrangement.

General Counsel Rubin Cruse: (Transcribed as recorded)

"I just wanted to echo the chief's comments. That is correct. It's basically a pot of money, primarily a pot of money to provide incentives for private homeowners to do fuel mitigations on the property. There are also some additional provisions in there for the district to do some fuel mitigation

management along some particular roads that benefit these particular areas. And so, it's been around for a while, and this is a new contract, and it's mostly cleaned up to continue this program that has existed, as I understand it, for several years. We wanted to make sure that we complied with the public contract code, having the district make the findings that it's in the public interest to enter into this contract and, of course, make the appropriate CEQA findings as well. I'm happy to answer any additional questions.”

Director Holthaus motioned to approve item R3. Consider taking the following actions: (1) Adopt Resolution 24-06 A RESOLUTION OF THE WOODSIDE FIRE PROTECTION DISTRICT RATIFYING THE FIRE MARSHAL’S SIGNATURE ON A CONTRACT WITH SAN MATEO COUNTY FOR ENHANCED FIRE PROTECTION SERVICES IN THE COMMUNITIES OF LOS TRANCOS WOODS AND VISTA VERDE NEIGHBORHOODS AND FINDING THE CONTRACT IS EXEMPT FROM THE CALIFORNIA ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY ACT and (2) find that the Contract is exempt from the California Environmental Quality Act (“CEQA”) under the following categorical exemptions: CEQA Guidelines section 15307 (actions by regulatory agencies for protection of natural resources), and CEQA Guidelines section 15308 (actions by regulatory agencies for protection of the environment), as submitted, 2nd by Director Cain. Motion passed 3-0.

V. STAFF REPORTS

There was a short discussion on the N5 smoke sensors.

VI. FIRE CHIEF’S REPORT

District Updates

- July 1st we held our employee and family open house at Station 7. Approximately 160 people were in attendance. It was a great event. Once again I would like to thank Mrs. Elianne Popell for her generous donation in hosting the event. Also, a special thank you to all of our department members that helped in making this special get-together happen.
- On June 3rd Woodside units helped assist at an 8-Alarm structure fire that occurred at 2700 Middlefield Road, which is in the Menlo Park Fire District. The fire started in a large 6-story wood frame building that was under construction. Utilizing our mutual aid system, Woodside Fire sent Battalion 2, Engines 7, 8, 19, and Water Tender 108 to assist in this defensive fire operation. In total, 26 fire engines, 7 truck companies, and 10 additional engines were requested from Santa Clara County. Because of this, the County reached its maximum drawdown of resources. Coverage for our District was initiated through the Dispatch Center where we had units covering our District from the central and north parts of the County. Also being that this was going to be an extended event, we took the initiative to hire back personnel to up-staff a Battalion Chief and reserve fire engine which remained in effect for about 7 hours. All crews and equipment returned home safely from the event. An after-action review is being completed for review of the incident.

Station Updates

- Station 7- Earlier this month we conducted our final punch list walk through and have resolved all the remaining items. We are waiting for our final inspection with the Town and to receive our final invoices from Vance Brown.
- T-Mobile will be submitting updated plans to the Town for relocation of ground mounted infrastructure. The project team indicates about 6 months until the monopole is up and running. At which time the COW will be removed.

Recognition

- I would like to mention that Selena Brown was honored at the San Mateo County First Responders Public Safety Night last week. She was nominated by Woodside Fire for all the work she has contributed to the District over the last 22 years. Congratulations to Selena.

San Mateo County Updates

- Dissolution of Fire Net 6. As of September 1st, 2024, the Fire Net 6 Radio JPA which includes Woodside Fire, Menlo Park, Redwood City/San Carlos, San Mateo County and Coastside Fire, will be dissolved. This will allocate all our joint south zone radio infrastructure into the ALS JPA. This in turn will create a more streamlined ability to maintain and control the county's radio system.

State Updates

- Fire season is here for the state- as of today there are 2,429 wildfires that have burned throughout the state resulting in 95,562 acres burned and 50 structures either destroyed or damaged.
- On the early morning of June 17th, we, and San Mateo County, were called to provide an OES Mutual Strike Team for deployment to the "Point Fire" in Sonoma County. Our Woodside Battalion Chief Keenan Hird deployed to the event to assist as a Strike Team Leader where he spent a few days with the team. They were then redirected to a new incident called the "Sites Fire" in Colusa County. Chief Hird returned home after being out for 6 days.
- As of June 18th, the US Senate passed the Fire Grants and Safety Act Bill (S.870). This bill will prevent the termination of the Assistance to Firefighters Grant known as the AFG program. Now passed, this bill will authorize \$750 million for AFG and SAFER Grants for 2024-2028. Our goal will be to submit for any grants we can qualify for.

3117 Property Purchase Agreement Update

- Today I was sent the Certificate of Acceptance and Grant Deed forms to review. These have now been signed and with a closing taking place by the end of the week.

VII. REPORT ON WRITTEN COMMUNICATIONS

A letter thanking Pub Ed Officer Brown for her assistance at a teen CERT Drill.

Director Pat Cain informed the Board that he will resign as a Director of the Woodside Fire Protection District, effective at the end of this meeting.

Director Cain gave a brief history of his many decades of service and introduced John Foster to the Board.

Director Miller, Director Holthaus, and Chief Cuschieri expressed their gratitude for Director Cain's service.

VIII. REQUESTS FOR ITEMS ON FUTURE AGENDAS

There were no requests for items on future agendas.

IX. CLOSED SESSION

There were no closed session items.

Adjournment: The meeting was adjourned at 7:46 P.M.

The next scheduled regular meeting will be held July 30th, at 7:00 P.M at the WFPD Administration Building, 808 Portola Rd. Portola Valley, CA 94028.

Respectfully Submitted,

Tom Cuschieri – Board Secretary

DRAFT