

WEST POINT FIRE PROTECTION DISTRICT



BOARD OF DIRECTORS REGULAR MEETING MINUTES

March 12th, 2025

Chair Julia Marsili called the meeting to order at 6:00 P.M. at the West Point Fire Station, 195 Spink Rd West Point, Ca 95255.

PRESENT: Chair Julia Marsili, Director John Hesketh, Director Tim Adams, Chief Michael Downs, Assistant Chief Terry Miller, Chaplain Bruce Forrest, and Clerk Bronwynne Wolf.

ABSENT: Director Dorrie Klith

Public Comment:

- a. One member of the public, Brian Payne, was present. The chair acknowledged receiving his application for director and informed the board that the county had confirmed the application's submission.

Announcements from West Point Fire Protection District Partners:

- a. **Partner reports** – Chaplain Bruce Forrest's services were not required this past month.

Consent Agenda—

1. Director Hesketh pulled two items for discussion: the capital equipment payment for the truck, noting that the next payment would be the final one, completing the truck's payment, and the status of the helipad agreement, which requires renewal. It was clarified that there is no fee associated with the renewal, as it is primarily a formal process for liability purposes to ensure proper permissions are in place.
2. The following items were motioned for approval by Director Adams, seconded by Director Hesketh and passed with 3 votes.
 - a. Approve regular meeting minutes from February 12th, 2024
 - b. Acknowledge receipt and review of financial statements for February 2024
 - c. Approve monthly expenses for February 2024

New Business:

- a. **LZ Extension Memorandum: Downs, Action**

Chief Downs presented the renewal agreement from the Calaveras County Water District regarding the fire district's use of the landing site (LZ). This is a formality with the water district to ensure the continued use of the property.



Director Adams motioned to approve the renewal agreement with C.C.W.D., seconded by Director Hesketh and passed with 3 votes.

b. Constituent Property Tax Reimbursement: Miller, Action

Assistant Chief Miller reported that a constituent's parcel had not been removed from the tax roll as previously thought. This constituent is due a \$258.50 reimbursement. Constituent's with undeveloped parcels adjacent to their main residence qualify for an exemption from the district's special taxes.

Director Adams motioned to approve the reimbursement of \$258.50, seconded by Chair Marsili and passed with 3 votes.

c. Prevention: Inspection & Fee Schedule: Miller, Action

The board reviewed Assistant Chief Miller's ordinance proposal aimed at establishing fees for fire inspection, planning, permits, and prevention services provided by the department. This will enable the department to generate income for the services it offers. Chief Downs and Assistant Chief Miller also discussed the importance of having formalized authority for fire code enforcement, which would allow the department to conduct inspections, ensure compliance, and take action where necessary, including filing complaints and imposing fines. This process will also allow the department to gather pre-fire plans for buildings, improving response capabilities. Although inspections will primarily focus on businesses, there may be limited involvement with new residential construction, particularly with fire sprinkler systems. The initiative is expected to improve community safety and increase local control over inspections and fee collection.

No action necessary.

Reports, Director, and Staff Comments:

Fire Chief Report/Announcements:

Chief Downs informed the board of the passing of firefighter George Manos, of Murphy's Fire Protection District, who tragically died from a stroke while working on the Palisades fire hazard mitigation efforts in Los Angeles.

The Chief also addressed two recent vehicle-related incidents. One involved a firefighter causing \$500 in damage to the gas station's brick wall, while another captain backed into the station's garage door. The latter incident occurred earlier in the week, immediately after having the garage door serviced for a separate issue. Downs noted issues with the initial service performed by the repair company, which spent four hours on-site without resolving the problem. Downs suggested that instead of investing in costly repairs, the garage door could be walled off and repurposed, given plans for a future station remodel.

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Downs announced that one of the firefighter's had accepted a position with Cal Fire and will be leaving the department. He mentioned that interviews are scheduled for next week to fill the open position, with several applicants, including a reserve firefighter from Sac Metro.

In financial matters, Downs reported that the department received \$99,698.76 in fourth-quarter Measure A funds. These funds, generated by a 1% sales tax in the county, are allocated for staffing (70%) and equipment or building maintenance (30%). The Chief explained that the primary use of the 70% allocation would be to stabilize staffing costs. The 30% would be directed towards planning a new building to accommodate office space, bedrooms for staff, and community areas. He noted that the department is working to carefully manage the funds and avoid redistribution to other departments. The originally anticipated state fees were significantly higher than expected. The final amount to be deducted from the funds is approximately \$20,000 for the entire county, which will be divided among the districts. This amount will be deducted from the next installment.

Downs also provided an update on plans to improve the department's communication infrastructure, including the installation of a repeater on Blue Mountain. The county has allocated \$90,000 for the project, which will address issues with radio coverage in the area, an ongoing concern due to inadequate radio equipment. Downs indicated that the project is expected to be fully funded by the county, with minimal cost to the department. Columbia Communications, which already contracts with other repeaters in the county, will handle the contracting process. To ensure the grant funds are utilized, the department plans to purchase the necessary equipment by April. Installation will occur once the snow has melted, likely in the spring.

The department has been granted approval to offer an EMT Basic (EMTB) class through Mountain Counties, which will begin next month. The Chief is working with Mountain Counties to ensure the class meets national standards. In addition, there are plans to offer an Advanced EMT program, which would benefit the community. The EMT class will be offered to both department personnel and the public at a cost of \$500, covering expenses such as books.

The Chief encountered a setback with the bidding process for the new fire station. One of the proposed architectural and engineering firms withdrew due to a conflict with another firm. Despite this, the Chief is continuing to pursue bids from other firms and aims to present three competitive proposals. A special meeting may be called to expedite the approval process once the bids are received.

The department has also secured a new, larger ice machine, replacing the previous smaller one. The new machine will ensure sufficient ice supply for operational needs and personal use.

Additionally, three high school cadets have started their training with the department. They are subject to strict guidelines regarding their duties, but their involvement is a positive development.

The district should also be receiving a water enhancement fee deposit of \$14,000 soon.

Board Member Announcements: Clerk Wolf reminded the board that the required annual Form 700's are due to the county by April 1st.

Chair Marsili mentioned that a few members of her team recently attended a two-day CAL FIRE home hardening training in Oroville. The training qualifies participants as home inspectors based

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on CAL FIRE standards and covers all necessary fire safety requirements. It could be a valuable opportunity for some of the firefighters to attend.

A reminder for board members: sexual harassment and ethics training must be completed online. The Chief will provide the necessary information to ensure compliance.

Adjournment: meeting was adjourned at 6:45 P.M.