WEST POINT FIRE PROTECTION DISTRICT

BOARD OF DIRECTORS REGULAR MEETING MINUTES

April 9th, 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, Director Dorrie Klith, Chief Michael Downs, Chaplain Bruce Forrest, Clerk Bronwynne Wolf and community member Bryan Payne.

ABSENT: Assistant Chief Terry Miller

Public Comment:

a. None to report.

Announcements from West Point Fire Protection District Partners:

a. Partner reports – Chaplain Bruce Forrest's services were required on three occasions this past month.

Consent Agenda—

Chair Marsili noted that Steve Schoenthaler's name was included in the minutes despite him not attending and requested a correction. She also noted that the training budget is nearing its limit, and raised concerns about potential budget overruns.

1. The following items were motioned for approval by Director Adams with the aforementioned correction to the minutes, seconded by Director Klith and passed with 4 votes.

    a. Approve regular meeting minutes from March 12th, 2024
    b. Acknowledge receipt and review of financial statements for March 2024
    c. Approve monthly expenses for March 2024

New Business:

a. Appoint New WPFPD Board Member: Marsili, Action

Chair Marsili discussed the one application received for the Board Member vacancy belonged to Brian Payne. After no objections, his swearing-in was scheduled for the next meeting.

Chair Marsili motioned to appoint Bryan Payne as West Point Fire Protection District's newest director, seconded by Director Adams and passed with 4 votes.

b. New Policy & Procedures Manual: Downs, Action

Chief Downs introduced the manual, emphasizing its' necessity for updating the department's policies, which had not been revised since 2020. He noted that having a current manual is crucial for minimizing liability and ensuring compliance with regulations. Chief Downs expressed that the updated manual would provide a clear framework for the department's operations and help protect the district against potential legal issues. Chair Marsili asked for clarification regarding meal breaks, the language pertaining to administrative duties- particularly when referencing the Board Clerk who is an independent contractor, as well as the section on remote appearances. It was brought up that it is not only pertinent for the board members to familiarize themselves with the policy manual, but hard copies of the manual should be distributed to each employee of the district along with a form to sign acknowledging that they have read and understood the policies. Moving forward, Chief Downs plans to implement Lexipol, which provides a full library of customizable, state-specific fire service policies that are updated in response to new state and federal laws and court decisions. He noted that the goal is to finalize the integration and updates by December, ensuring that the department adheres to best practices and regulatory requirements.

Chair Marsili motioned to approve the new policy and procedures manual, seconded by Director Adams and passed with 4 votes.

c. Competitive Bid for Architect/Engineer for New Station: Downs, Action

Chief Downs opened the discussion by outlining the need to hire an architect and engineer for the new fire station project, emphasizing the importance of obtaining formal bids to ensure transparency and fiscal responsibility. The estimated cost for building the new fire station is around $1.3 million. The board discussed potential funding sources, including Measure A, and the implications of using reserve funds for architectural plans and construction. He reported that three bids were received, with each architect being provided with a detailed scope of work, including building plans and remodel specifications. The bid from Dennis Dong, approximately $120,000, excluded several key services, raising concerns about potential future costs. Aspen Street submitted a more comprehensive proposal for around $220,000, including all necessary surveys and coordination with local agencies; they also conducted an on-site visit and have a strong reputation for working with fire departments. The third bid from Weatherby Reynolds and Fritson, at approximately $180,000, lacked service detail and was accompanied by weaker communication, prompting concerns about reliability. Chair Marsili recommended implementing a scoring system to objectively evaluate the bids, stressing the need for documented justification if the higher bid was selected. The Directors agreed; discussion ensued regarding developing a scoring sheet, and noted the importance of documenting both the scoring process and final rationale to maintain accountability. The board agreed to table the decision until a special meeting could be held to finalize the scoring system and conduct a thorough evaluation. A special meeting was scheduled for Monday, April 14, 2025 at 4:00 P.M. to finalize decisions regarding the architect and engineer bids. Members will score the bids based on a scoring sheet to ensure a transparent and justified selection process. Chief Downs will notify the bidders of the delay and the board's intention to proceed with a more structured review. He reiterated the need for professionalism and due diligence, noting that the chosen architect would play a critical role in facilitating future contractor bids and the overall success of the project. The board affirmed its commitment to a transparent, well-documented selection process that ensures the department's needs are met effectively.

No action taken.

d. Creation of New Org Key: Downs, Action

Chief Downs relayed that this agenda item is now obsolete based upon information gathered earlier in the week. No action necessary.

e. Schedule 15 Budget for New Org Key: Downs, Action

Chief Downs relayed that this agenda item is now obsolete based upon information gathered earlier in the week. No action necessary.

f. Authorization for Fund Allocation and Transfers: Downs, Action

Chief Downs emphasized the need for a clear authorization process for fund allocation and transfers to manage costs effectively. The board discussed establishing a threshold for fund transfers that would require prior approval, ensuring transparency and accountability in financial management. Chair Marsili raised concerns regarding the necessity and process of the proposed allocation and transfers. Additionally, the board acknowledged the importance of adhering to regulations concerning Measure A funds, agreeing to table the final decision on fund allocation until a special meeting scheduled for May 14th, 2025 at 4:00 P.M.

No action taken.

Reports, Director, and Staff Comments:

Fire Chief Report/Announcements:

Chief Downs reported that the EMT training program is set to begin next month with a departmental goal of staffing two EMT's per shift. He addressed maintenance challenges, specifically the malfunctioning bay door at the fire station, which has been out of service for two weeks. Chief Downs indicated that the department plans to attempt repairs in-house to manage costs effectively.

Furthermore, he announced the successful onboarding of two new firefighters. Overall, Chief Downs' report underscored the department's commitment to community engagement, personnel development through targeted training, and proactive maintenance efforts to enhance operational efficiency.

Board Member Announcements: none to report.

Adjournment: meeting was adjourned at 7:32 P.M.