

Minutes from the August 27th, 2025, Bolinas Fire Protection District Board Meeting at the Bolinas Fire Station.

Pres. Molesworth called the meeting of the Bolinas Fire Protection District to order at 7:00 P.M. Dir. Dunne and Dir. Martinelli were present. Also present: Chief George Krakauer and Administrative Manager Isaac Taylor. Vice Pres. Torrey and Dir. Pierce were absent.

Pres. Molesworth asked for unanimous consent to approve the Agenda, with the amendment to move item 5b to the beginning of the meeting. Seeing no objections, the Agenda was approved as amended.

PUBLIC EXPRESSION

None.

CHIEF'S REPORT

MEIRA/Chiefs

Chief Krakauer attended the August Chiefs' meeting, and reported on a presentation from Fire Safe Marin on the upcoming Ember Stomp event in San Rafael. There was no MEIRA meeting in August.

MWPA

Chief Krakauer discussed MWPA meetings in item 5c.

Prevention

Chief Krakauer discussed District wildfire preparedness and response in item 5c.

Roads

Chief Krakauer reported that Don Murch has resumed mowing on the Big Mesa and within the BCPUD property at Mesa Rd. and Olema-Bolinas Rd.

Chief Krakauer reported that the BCPUD board approved Ray Moritz' proposal to assess roadside hazardous trees along Mesa Rd. and Olema-Bolinas Rd. Chief Krakauer reported he is seeking updates on PG&E's removal of certain roadside eucalyptus trees in this area, previously planned for June.

Chief Krakauer reported ongoing one-way traffic on Olema-Bolinas Rd. until the second lane of the new Bolinas Wye bridge is opened. The former Bolinas-Fairfax connector road will be removed.

Chief Krakauer reported additional requests from residents on Horseshoe Hill Rd. for installation of speed bumps. Chief Krakauer is coordinating with Marin County Fire Department to seek the best recommendation for ingress, egress, and traffic safety along Horseshoe Hill Rd.

Inspections

Chief Krakauer reported business inspections were completed for BCLT properties at 6 Wharf and 20 Wharf Rd., and the Bolinas Rod & Boat Club is scheduled next.

Planning

Chief Krakauer reported that he is working with Marin County Fire Department on two new developments to ensure adequate access and water sources are included.

Grants

Chief Krakauer reported that the District was awarded a grant from the California Fire Foundation for the purchase of wildland firefighter personal protective equipment. The District is awaiting a decision on one additional similar grant proposal.

Training

Chief Krakauer reported that training continues to be focused on wildland firefighting, but last night took a break to focus on structural firefighting. Krakauer reported that Asst. Chief Marcotte will be holding a 1B apparatus driving class for West Marin volunteer agencies.

Volunteers

Chief Krakauer reported that Firefighter Meg Gould is starting work on the annual volunteer raffle. The District and volunteers are also beginning to plan this year's Fire Safety Day, with a date to be announced soon.

Apparatus

Chief Krakauer reported that Engine 283 is in the shop for an indefinite amount of time, as mechanics attempt to diagnose and repair an issue with the engine losing power. Upon its return, Engine 285 will be going into the shop for its annual service. Ian Johnson has replaced the spark plugs and wires on Utility 232, which is again firing on all eight cylinders. Staff are also working on an electrical wiring issue in Utility 219.

Chief Krakauer reported that the ad hoc Engine Replacement Committee is getting close to finalizing specifications for a new engine purchase.

Disaster Council

No update.

Resource Recovery

Chief Krakauer reported that the site had to be temporarily closed, because a scheduled grind could not be completed due to construction at Bolinas Wye blocking the entrance of heavy equipment. Chief Krakauer is coordinating with CalTrans to expedite entry of the grinder.

Buildings and Grounds

Chief Krakauer reported that Ian Johnson is installing a new television purchased by the volunteers, and we will be replacing the remaining office lights with new LED panels. Solar panels were recently cleaned.

General Operations/Administration

Chief Krakauer reported typical call volume for August.

Chief Krakauer reported that he is awaiting a full debrief on the recent evacuation drill in Stinson Beach, but understands there were again minor issues with emergency alerting. Chief Krakauer reported that some of these issues appear to have been corrected by the recent tsunami event.

Chief Krakauer reported that the underground fuel tank at the former Bo-Gas station is scheduled to be removed after Labor Day, and Bolinas Fire will be assisting with air quality monitoring.

Chief Krakauer reported that he may be asked to provide a letter of support for the Stinson Beach Fire Protection District's new fire station project. Chief Krakauer stated his support for the project, noting the benefits to public safety in Bolinas and Stinson Beach from a modern facility with space to accommodate Stinson Beach Fire's growing department.

Administrative Manager Isaac Taylor reported that the FY2025 operating profit would be transferred to the District's reserve account after its first FY2026 disbursement of property tax is received in November.

Personnel

Chief Krakauer reported that the staff schedule will be shifting beginning September 1. Firefighter Emily Easom has been promoted to Duty Officer, and will be beginning a Paramedic program in September.

Chief Krakauer reported one new firefighter, Sydney Knudsen, who is a Marin County Fire Department seasonal firefighter and Inverness volunteer firefighter. She will be working one day per week in Bolinas.

GENERAL BUSINESS

Discussion Item #1 – District Financial Planning Study

Chief Krakauer provided some background to introduce the discussion. For the last several years, the District has been attempting to increase staffing, while bringing employee compensation closer to a competitive level. The District has also built a healthy reserve over the last two decades, primarily for engine replacement. Looking to the near future, the District sees additional need to hire new full-time staff, as well as the purchase of at least one new fire engine. Therefore, the District is interested in conducting a financial study to project future income and expenses, to determine when an updated parcel tax measure may be necessary to support operating costs. Administrative Manager Isaac Taylor met Dmitry Semenov of Ridgeline Municipal Strategies at the CSDA Annual Conference in 2022, and invited him to meet with the Finance Advisory Committee to discuss the idea of a financial study. The meeting was very informative, and Dmitry shared similar work his firm completed for other agencies.

Dir. Dunne shared his thoughts and concerns about the potential study, highlighting the relatively small percentage of income tied to the District's parcel tax, and the high degree of uncertainty in forecasting general property tax income tied to the broader housing market. Chief Krakauer shared his concerns around recruiting qualified professional firefighters, and his feeling that personnel expenses may inevitably exceed the District's income and personnel budget. Pres. Molesworth agreed with Dir. Dunne that the uncertainty of a financial projection may not justify the cost of a financial study at this time. She suggested that the District may be better served by a financial advisor and communications consultant, to formulate investment and financing strategies and study the feasibility of an eventual tax measure initiative. Additional discussion did not lead to consensus on moving forward with the proposed study at this time. There was agreement to continue meetings of the Finance Advisory Committee to discuss potential strategies.

Pres. Molesworth thanked Isaac Taylor for setting up the meeting with Ridgeline, and thanked Mr. Semenov for his time and insights.

Discussion Item #2 – Potential Addition to AT&T Cellular Tower

Chief Krakauer summarized preliminary discussions with Octagon Towers, LLC, who is the current assignee for the AT&T cellular tower lease. Octagon approached the District last year with a proposal to add a second carrier (T-Mobile) and negotiate a new lease. The current lease expires at the end of September 2027. The District requested information from Octagon, including measurements of current total RF emissions, estimated total RF emissions with an additional carrier, and design details for the expanded tower. The District has received two reports: a simulation of RF emissions for the new equipment only, and more recently a report of actual RF readings. The District has again requested an estimate of cumulative RF and tower design information. Once these items are received and reviewed, Chief Krakauer indicated he would bring the proposal to the full board for consideration.

Board members discussed the necessity of negotiating a new lease prior to expiration in 2027, and a resident gave public comment in support of adding T-Mobile service, and the importance of cellular service.

Discussion Item #3 – District Wildfire Preparedness and Response

Chief Krakauer reported meeting with the new NPS Prescribed Fire & Fuels Battalion Chief Tom Edwards to discuss a prior joint fuel break project near Schipper Lane. The District hopes to collaborate with NPS in the future to maintain this project.

Chief Krakauer reported two remaining Chipper Day events in Bolinas, available for online signup at chipperday.com/marin

Chief Krakauer reported continuing planning for a Marin Wildfire fuel reduction project downtown between Wharf Rd. and Altura on the Little Mesa. Right to Enter forms are being obtained from property owners.

Chief Krakauer reported on ongoing Marin Wildfire coastal zone meetings every two weeks to coordinate project work.

Chief Krakauer shared that Ember Stomp 2025, the wildfire education and preparedness event sponsored by Fire Safe Marin, will be held September 6th at the Marin Fairgrounds.

Chief Krakauer reported that 300 annual defensible space evaluations were completed last week in Bolinas. He is awaiting data on this year's evaluations, which he plans to analyze and compare with previous years.

Chief Krakauer discussed the recent public hearing on the Draft Marin County Forest Health and Fire Resilience Public Works Plan with Marin Wildfire Planning and Program Manager Anne Crealock. The Public Works Plan is drafted to specifically comply with California Coastal Commission requirements. The PWP is meant to provide a single document establishing a framework for comprehensive planning, reviewing, and permitting of activities that would otherwise trigger the need for individual coastal development permits. The PWP will be up for approval by the Marin County Board of Supervisors

CONSENT CALENDAR

MSC Martinelli/Dunne (unan.) to approve the Consent Calendar.

Pres. Molesworth noted that item 6e in the Consent Calendar is simply a ratification of the settlement agreement already executed between the District and Chief Krakauer.

BOARD MEMBER REPORTS

None.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Human Resources Advisory Committee – No update.

Finance Advisory Committee – Updates were provided in item 5a.

Operations Working Group – No update.

PERSONNEL MATTERS

None.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

None.

GOOD OF THE ORDER

None.

ADJOURNMENT

Pres. Molesworth asked for unanimous consent to adjourn the meeting. Seeing no objections, the meeting adjourned at 8:29 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,

Isaac Taylor
Administrative Manager

Note: Minutes of all Board meetings are available for review on the District's website.