

Minutes from the September 25th, 2024, Bolinas Fire Protection District Board Meeting at the Bolinas Fire Station.

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

Vice Pres. Torrey asked for unanimous consent to approve the Agenda. Seeing no objections, the Agenda was approved.

PUBLIC EXPRESSION

None.

CHIEF'S REPORT

MERA

Chief Krakauer reported the MERA Gen 2 'cutover' is scheduled for October 3rd, after which our communications will be entirely on the new emergency radio network. The department's new radios and pagers have been programmed. Chief Krakauer thanked Asst. Chief Marcotte, Dir. Martinelli and Inverness Fire Chief Jim Fox for their efforts ensuring volunteer agencies are fully prepared for the transition. Chief Krakauer shared that last night's training included some of the operational changes involved in the new system, and next week firefighters will train on the new pagers.

Chiefs

No update.

MWPA

No update.

Prevention

Chief Krakauer discussed prevention in item 5a.

Roads

Chief Krakauer reported that Marin County DPW is in Bolinas working on pothole repairs along Overlook Drive. The resulting asphalt grindings will be reused to fill in additional potholes on the big mesa which interfere with emergency vehicle access.

Chief Krakauer also noted the ongoing Bolinas Wye Wetlands Restoration Project, which widened and softened the temporary turn from Shoreline Highway at his request. Chief Krakauer believes the new configuration is significantly safer.

Inspections

Chief Krakauer noted that Eleven and the Bolinas Community Center are being scheduled for inspections.

Planning

Chief Krakauer reported that the District received a request for comment from Marin County Planning Division on the Bolinas Eucalyptus Project's proposal for the area known as Zone 5. Chief Krakauer intends to submit the Letter of Support previously approved by the Board of Directors to the County Fire Marshal.

Grants

Chief Krakauer reported that the District has submitted the final reimbursement request to PG&E for the District's grant-funded fuel reduction project along Mesa Road.

Chief Krakauer reported the District continues to await FEMA's decision on our 2024 Assistance to Firefighters grant proposal.

Training

Chief Krakauer reported that training has been focused on the new Gen 2 MERA emergency radio system, SCBAs, fire engineering and EMS.

Volunteers

Chief Krakauer reported the department is currently in discussions with one potential new cadet, one potential resident firefighter, and two new potential volunteers. He also shared that the annual volunteer raffle is coming soon, with letters and tickets expected to go out in mid-October.

Apparatus

Chief Krakauer reported that Engine 285 got all new tires, and that Utility 219 will be getting its annual service as well as two new tires before this winter.

Chief Krakauer shared that he is re-energizing the ad hoc engine replacement committee to discuss specifications and timing for the department's next fire engine purchase. Engine 283 is currently the department's oldest apparatus at nearly 27 years. Chief Krakauer reported the engine is operationally sound but showing signs of age. Chief Krakauer reported the current build and delivery time for a new engine is approximately two years, so the first step will be identifying specifications so the department is prepared to go out to bid. Chief Krakauer noted that Dir. Martinelli is very engaged in this procurement process currently through Marin County Fire. He has also assisted Bolinas with purchasing an engine in the past, and is a great resource.

Disaster Council

No update.

Resource Recovery

Chief Krakauer reported that he and Isaac Taylor have been meeting monthly with BCPUD's Georgia Woods and Belle Wood to discuss Resource Recovery Site planning for operations and finances.

Buildings and Grounds

Chief Krakauer reported that Capt. Smith has been working on several upgrades to fire station interior lighting. The new LED lights will be more efficient and longer lasting.

Chief Krakauer also reported the Community Meeting Room carpets were recently cleaned. Repairs have also been completed on one of the engine bay doors, following a previous accident. New hand railings for the department stairway are being planned.

General Operations/Administration

Chief Krakauer reported a high call volume, with over thirty calls over the past thirty days. According to Chief Krakauer's analysis, the department's overall volume is up approximately 20% over the last twenty years.

Chief Krakauer reported the department recently responded to a fire on Hawthorne which began outdoors and spread to a structure and surrounding trees. Some residents heard

explosions, which were caused by ruptured propane tanks overheated by the fire. One resident was transported to hospital for burns. Engine 285 responded within minutes from the time of dispatch, and together with units from Stinson Beach and Marin County, the fire was knocked down after approximately thirty minutes.

Chief Krakauer reported that Marin County will be hosting a virtual townhall meeting on October 2nd to provide the latest updates on the detected sewage spill in Bolinas leading to the closure of Bolinas Beach.

Chief Krakauer reported that the department is replacing more supply hose on Engine 283.

Chief Krakauer reported that the department received and completed its biannual ladder testing last month.

Chief Krakauer reported the department's new air compressor is in service, and will receive its initial air quality test soon.

Chief Krakauer reported ongoing work related to the station's equipment for the new Gen 2 MERA system.

Chief Krakauer reported a new communication from Octagon Towers, who are developing a new lease proposal. We hope to receive this proposal well before the end of the current lease in September 2025.

Isaac Taylor reported that AT&T is phasing out its copper telephone lines, and the department is in the process of moving its one remaining copper line to CALNET under AT&T's contract with the state of California. The service is expected to be significantly less expensive, and we anticipate the telephone line will eventually be moved on to our existing fiberoptic connection.

Isaac Taylor noted that a previously-shared banking issue involving mailed deposits has been resolved through the implementation of mobile deposit.

Personnel

Chief Krakauer shared that Firefighter Easom has returned from her wedding trip, and we are glad to have her back.

GENERAL BUSINESS

Action Item #1 – Approve Marin Wildfire Prevention Authority Amended and Restated Joint Exercise of Powers Agreement

MSC Martinelli/Dunne (unan.) to Approve Marin Wildfire Prevention Authority Amended and Restated Joint Exercise of Powers Agreement.

Administrative Manager Isaac Taylor introduced the amended and restated JPA, summarizing three major updates. First, language regarding membership has been revised to provide a process for agencies to leave or join the JPA. Second, a change to the Advisory Technical Committee, changing it to an ad hoc group. Finally, there is a removal of the 2% abatement fee for member agencies' defensible space funding. Abatement will now be managed locally.

Discussion Item #1 – Wildfire Preparedness and Response

Chief Krakauer reported that permitting is complete for an expanded MWPA West Marin Evacuation Route fuel reduction project. Last year the project included only County roads. This year Bolinas requested additional dirt roads to ensure safe ingress and egress. The project will focus on thinning vegetation within 10 feet of the roadway. Work may begin as soon as November or December 2024. Vice Pres. Torrey asked who would be paying for the evacuation route work, and Chief Krakauer noted it is an MWPA-funded core project. Vice Pres. Torrey also inquired about public notice, and Chief Krakauer reported that MWPA is in communication with the District about this, and is putting together public notice materials.

Chief Krakauer reported work is complete on the PG&E grant-funded fuel reduction project in the eucalyptus grove at Mesa Road and Olema-Bolinas Road. Work included removal of accumulated ground litter and removal of dead and downed trees up to 12 inches in diameter. Chief Krakauer extended big thanks to the Tamalpais Fire Crews who performed the work, MWPA staff for assistance with permitting and training, Isaac Taylor who secured the grant, and Mia Monroe for working alongside Panorama Environmental, Inc. to ensure appropriate environmental and biological precautions were taken. Chief Krakauer reported the area looks drastically better, and is more resilient to wildfire.

Chief Krakauer reported the final department Chipper Day is scheduled for this Friday, September 27th, and is full. One MWPA Chipper event will occur the week of October 21st, and residents can sign up at chipperday.com/marin.

Chief Krakauer reported that defensible space evaluators completed their inspections in Bolinas last month. Next year there will be a new focus on inspections of vacant lots, and making grant funding available to vacant lot owners. Dir. Dunne asked about enforcement of defensible space inspections. Chief Krakauer responded that the focus continues to be on education and voluntary compliance, although the District and other agencies continue to look into potential enforcement strategies.

Chief Krakauer reported that Marin County Office of Emergency Management has recently conducted a study on sirens and emergency alerting. OEM director Steven Torrence plans to review findings at upcoming MWPA and Fire Chiefs' meetings. Chief Krakauer will share these findings with the Board once he receives them, as this is a topic the District has been engaged in. Last year, the District purchased a mobile Long-Range Acoustic Device (LRAD) after doing testing ourselves and participating in testing at other departments around the county.

Rob Gailey gave comments to the Board and Chief Krakauer about fire hazard concerns related to vacant lots and unpermitted structures or encampments. Dir. Martinelli shared that this is a nationwide problem affecting many cities and localities, and solutions are being sought at many levels, including by firefighter unions at the legislative level. Chief Krakauer reiterated that there will be a new focus on inspections of vacant lots in 2025. Vice Pres. Torrey thanked Rob for sharing his concerns.

CONSENT CALENDAR

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

Isaac Taylor summarized the annual statement of investment policy in the Consent Calendar, noting no changes in the policy since last year. Currently the District has less than 20% of surplus funds invested in California CLASS, with the remainder in the County Investment Pool.

BOARD MEMBER REPORT

No update.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Human Resources Advisory Committee – Vice Pres. Torrey reported a meeting in August to discuss the Fire Chief’s annual performance evaluation.

Finance Advisory Committee – No update.

Operations Working Group – Chief Krakauer noted the group will be exploring meetings soon to begin discussions on fire engine replacement.

PERSONNEL MATTERS

None.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

None.

GOOD OF THE ORDER

Isaac Taylor thanked Vice Pres. Torrey for chairing tonight’s meeting.

Vice Pres. Torrey thanked Ian Johnson for his many years of invaluable volunteer technical support.

ADJOURNMENT

Vice Pres. Torrey asked for unanimous consent to adjourn the meeting. Seeing no objections, the meeting adjourned at 8:18 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,

Isaac Taylor
Administrative Manager

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