



Meeting Minutes

San Mateo Consolidated Fire Department Board of Directors Regular Meeting Monday, March 14, 2022 – 1:00 P.M. Zoom Video Teleconference

1. OPENING

The meeting was called to order at 1:00 pm by Board Chair Goethals.

1.3. Roll Call

Board Members Present: Goethals, Lieberman & Awasthi

Board Members Absent: None

2. AGENDA CHANGES

There were no agenda changes.

3. PUBLIC COMMENT

None

4. CONSENT

Board Member Lieberman made a motion to approve the Consent calendar, which was seconded by Board Member Awasthi. The Acting Board Secretary took a roll call vote, and the Consent calendar items were approved 3-0.

5. NEW BUSINESS

Item 5.1 - Adopt a resolution approving the purchase of Self-Contained Breathing Apparatus' (SCBA) units and related equipment and authorizing the Fire Chief to sign the purchase agreement.

Chief Thrasher provided an overview for the recommendation to purchase SCBA units. A portion of the purchase is being made through the Assistance to Firefighters Grant (AFG) which is in partnership with Central County Fire Department (CCFD). In order to replace all our SCBA's and to meet industry standards, an additional \$725,000 is required to complete the purchase. Board Member Lieberman expressed his thanks for obtaining grant funds to assist with the purchase.

Board Chair Goethals asked if there was any public comment on this item, which there were none. Board Member Lieberman made a motion to adopt the resolution, which was seconded by Board Member Awasthi. The Acting Board Secretary took a roll call vote, and the resolution was approved 3-0.

Item 5.2 - Consideration of a resolution authorizing Continued Use of Remotely Teleconferenced Meetings.

Board members discussed preferences of location for future meetings. Board Member Lieberman stated that Belmont plans to return in-person beginning April. Unless anything changes due to COVID, he agreed it would be appropriate, but would be agreeable to other board member preferences. Board Member Awasthi stated that after detailed evaluations, Foster City went to a hybrid meeting format on March 7. She is in support of a hybrid arrangement to which Board Chair Goethals agreed. Legal

Counsel Ross stated we can facilitate a hybrid meeting where the Board can meet in person and take public comment on Zoom. Board agreed to move forward with a hybrid model and continue to allow public participation through Zoom due to the ongoing conditions of COVID. Additional action will be taken at the next Board meeting.

Board Chair Goethals asked if there was any public comment on this item, which there were none. Board Chair Goethals made a motion to adopt the resolution, which was seconded by Board Member Awasthi. The Acting Board Secretary took a roll call vote, and the resolution was approved 3-0.

6. FIRE BOARD RETREAT/STUDY SESSION

Item 6.1 Discuss San Mateo Consolidated Fire Department's current state, goals, and recommended organizational changes.

Chief Kent Thrasher provided a presentation covering the MRG Assessment, Command Staff reorganization, restructuring of the Training model, JPA Agreement review, and overtime assessment. He stated that the items discussed are informative for future action.

Chief Thrasher gave an MRG Assessment overview:

- Produced by SMFD retired Fire Chief Brian Kelly to determine the current state of the organization.
- Results raised concerns amongst staff on all levels. Corrective actions for increased and improved communications will take place.

Chief Thrasher explained a Command Staff reorganization:

- In 2020, a reorganization plan that consisted of Division Chief's created compaction and overlap.
- Recommendation to the Board includes eliminating the Division Chief's and correct the overlap with the return of Deputy Chief and Administrative Battalion Chiefs.

Board Member Lieberman asked about department interest in the positions of Deputy Fire Chief and Battalion Chief within the Administrative Division. Chief Thrasher responded the position of battalion chief is interchangeable across the divisions. The deputy chief of admin and CRR position would typically have a fire prevention background. In the future, we would like to pull the fire marshal duties away from that position once funding is available.

Chief Thrasher gave a background on the current Training Division:

- Current model includes agreement with Central County Fire Department (CCFD) which ends on June 30, 2022.
- Concerns include staffing, additional funding, department specific training, and lack of control.
- Recommendation to bring division in-house to cover internal training needs, include additional positions, and will remain budget neutral. Staff report will be included in April's meeting.

Board Member Lieberman asked if the changes would lead to better training and remain close to budget neutral. Chief Thrasher responded that the level of training will increase. Only downside is ending the great relationship with CCFD and San Bruno. Chief Thrasher stated the relationship will remain strong and we will provide EMS management support for up to a year.

Chief Thrasher explained the JPA Agreement:

- Entered initial agreement September 11, 2018 and should be reviewed on a regular basis.
- Recommendations considered for updating include the CAO duties, the inter-agency fee offsets, and the addition of new members language.

Board Chair Goethals stated that the organization works by bringing the three cities together and are not interested in charging each other nominal fees. We save money by acting as one organization and one fire department. Board Chair Goethals and Board Member Awasthi agreed to codify the topic to keep our success moving forward. Board Member Lieberman stated he is in favor for increased efficiency but would like to discuss further with his City Manager. On the topic of the COA, Board members agreed there is not a need to further define the role at this moment. Board Member Awasthi thanked CAO

Corbett for his role for the department. Regarding new member language, we should require specific due diligence of perspective new members.

Chief Thrasher gave an overtime assessment overview:

- Overtime analysis was part of the MRG Assessment by Brian Kelly
- Discussion included organizational health, generational differences, generators of overtime, and COVID impacts.
- We will continue to monitor, focus on full staffing, and anticipate bringing final recommendation by July 2022.

Board Chair Goethals asked if there was any public comment on this item, which there were none.

Regarding the MRG Assessment, Board Member Lieberman stated it identified a number of important observations and recommended this be repeated a year from now to understand progress moving forward. Participation in the report was appreciated. Board Member Awasthi doesn't disagree with another assessment in a year but would question if whether there is a need and if this is a common practice in other JPA's. Generally speaking, some companies would perform surveys. Board Chair stated this was a good process and we should check in to see

Board Member Awasthi is in support of Chief Thrasher's diligence in finding a delicate balance between overtime and hiring full time employees.

7. ADJOURNMENT

The Board was reminded the next meeting will take place April 13, 2022, and the meeting was adjourned.

8. CLOSED SESSION

The Fire Board went into Closed Session at 2:25 p.m. Report out from Closed Session will be made at the next Board meeting.