

# Aptos/La Selva Fire Protection District

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FINAL Minutes

## Aptos/La Selva Fire Protection District

### BOARD MEETING

Minutes of September 14, 2017

**MEETING CALLED TO ORDER AT 7:04 PM BY PRESIDENT SPISAK**

#### **1.0 ROLL CALL**

PRESENT: ABENDSCHAN, FOSTER, LUCCHESI, SPISAK

ABSENT: HURLEY

#### 1.1 INTRODUCTIONS:

INTERIM FIRE CHIEF TODD SKRABAK  
INTERIM BOARD SECRETARY SARAH MELTON  
CENTRAL FIRE CHIEF STEVEN HALL  
RON PRINCE, MANAGEMENT PARTNERS LLC

#### **2.0 PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE& OATH OF OFFICE**

#### 2.1 PROCLAMATION OF FIRE PREVENTION WEEK OCTOBER 8-14, 2017

*Note: Item 2.1 was announced later in the meeting, after the conclusion of Item 7.2.*

#### **3.0 COMMUNICATIONS FROM/TO BOARD MEMBERS & PUBLIC**

3.1 ORAL COMMUNICATIONS: Public member Becky Steinbruner thanked the Board for actions taken at the last regular Board Meeting, and asked the Board to reconsider the use of a recruiting agency, as the cost would be higher than keeping the current Interim Chief. Central FPD Fire Chief Hall voiced support of the Aptos/La Selva FPD, and stated that he hoped the Central FPD would be able to aid the District further with future cooperative services.

3.2 WRITTEN COMMUNICATIONS: Written communications included a letter of thanks from the Yosemite & Mariposa County Tourism Bureau for a strike team that had responded to a major wildfire in that area, and a Sentinel letter thanking crews for the recent wildland fire response at Vienna & Haas. Interim Chief Skrabak gave detail to Board Members regarding the fires involved in the letters.

**4.0 CONSENT AGENDA**

- 4.1 MOTION TO ACCEPT AND FILE THE MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING OF AUGUST 10, 2017
- 4.2 MOTION TO ACCEPT AND FILE THE MINUTES OF THE SPECIAL MEETING OF AUGUST 16, 2017
- 4.3 MOTION TO APPROVE CLAIMS DISBURSEMENTS OF AUGUST 1, 2017 THROUGH AUGUST 31, 2017
- 4.4 MOTION TO ACCEPT AND FILE THE EZ ONE GENERAL LEDGER REPORTS FOR THE PRIOR MONTH-END
- 4.5 PUBLIC COMMENT ON CONSENT AGENDA ITEMS: None

**On motion by Director Abendschan, seconded by Director Lucchesi, that Consent Agenda Items 4.1, 4.2, 4.3 and 4.4 be approved as submitted, was approved by the following vote:**

<b>Ayes:</b>	<b>Abendschan, Foster, Lucchesi, Spisak</b>
<b>Noes:</b>	<b>None</b>
<b>Abstain:</b>	<b>None</b>
<b>Absent:</b>	<b>Hurley</b>

**5.0 ITEMS REMOVED FROM CONSENT AGENDA:** None.

**6.0 UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

- 6.1 LAFCO FIRE SERVICE REVIEW/FEASIBILITY STUDY UPDATE AND DISCUSSION

Interim Chief Skrabak gave a brief update on the progress of the Feasibility Study. A Request for Proposals was sent out for an agency to conduct the study. 3 bids were received, and 1 was rejected as it was unable to perform the required study. The two agencies being considered for the study are Emergency Services Consulting International (ESCI) and Citygate Associates, LLC. LAFCO Executive Officer Pat McCormick has reviewed both bids, and has a meeting set for September 15, 2017, to discuss these options with the other involved agencies and make a final decision.

- 6.2 EMERGENCY SERVICES MASTER PLAN UPDATE AND DISCUSSION

Interim Chief Skrabak gave an update on the status of the Master Plan. District team members met with Sam Mazza of Citygate, LLC to review the draft of the Master Plan. Each team member discussed information in the report and made recommendations for changes. Per Mr. Mazza, the final edits and finished report should be available for presentation to the Board by the next regular Board Meeting in October. The Board could also opt to review this plan in a dedicated study session or Special Meeting, if that is preferred. Public member Gary Weekly asked if the District was still within the \$75k budget set for the plan. Interim Chief Skrabak stated that the information was not readily available at this meeting, but could be researched and provided. Public member Mark Fontes

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asked when the public might be able to comment on the proposed plan. Interim Chief Skrabak stated that the public was welcome to attend and make comments regarding this plan at the scheduled study session. Director Abendschan stated that he expects a lively discussion on the details of the plan, and asked Central Fire Chief Hall about the Standards of Coverage (SOC) report that Citygate, LLC was performing for them. Fire Chief Hall stated that the Central SOC report is expected to be complete within the next two weeks.

### 6.3 UPDATE ON PERMANENT FIRE CHIEF RECRUITING PROCESS

Interim Chief Skrabak reported that the bidding period had closed for Fire Chief recruitment agencies. Eight bids were received; however, three of the bids were received a day after the deadline. The bids will be opened and available for review by the Board at the next regular Board Meeting in October. Public member Gary Weekly stated that he agreed with earlier comments by Ms. Steinbruner, and preferred that the District work within the agency to find a replacement Chief, rather than opt for an outside recruitment agency. He also asked that an agreement with Central FPD be considered in lieu of outside recruitment. Public member Mark Fontes agreed, and stated that a Fire Chief chosen from the outside may not have internal info on the current Master Plan.

### 6.4 UPDATE AND DISCUSSION ON CREATION OF AN AD HOC COMMUNICATIONS COMMITTEE

President Spisak gave an update on the Ad Hoc Communications Committee progress. 5 community members have volunteered so far to participate in the committee. In the interest of fairness, the community members will be selected by random lottery from the list of volunteers, after which an initial meeting date will be set. Community members can still submit interest for this position through the month of September 2017. Administrative Assistant Sarah Melton will add the deadline for this submittal to the District website.

## **7.0 NEW BUSINESS**

### 7.1 MOTION TO APPROVE ADDITIONAL STAFF FOR FIRE PREVENTION

Interim Chief Skrabak reviewed his staff report, outlining the need for more help in Fire Prevention. His recommendation was to hire a part-time inspector, at a reduced cost to the District, to help with various prevention tasks including inspections and data entry.

Fire Marshal Dirksen agreed, and stated that the Prevention staffing is an ongoing concern. He supports both part-time help as well as a revival of the Cooperative Prevention Program (CPP) with Central Fire. He stated that the part-time help could begin as early as the following Monday, if approved, and could work 2 days a week to help alleviate the work load. Director Abendschan asked how soon CPP would be able to be reinstated, and how long-term the program was intending to be. Fire Chief Hall stated that the CPP could be ready to assist within a matter of weeks, for at least the short-term.

After continued discussion of staffing needs and options between Directors, Fire Marshal Dirksen, Interim Chief Skrabak, Fire Chief Hall and input from three public members, it was agreed that a motion would be made as listed, and more long-term staffing solutions would be agendized and

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discussed at the next regular board meeting, when current Prevention Bureau job descriptions and a detailed outline of the proposed CPP plan could be made available to Directors for review.

**On motion by Director Foster, seconded by Director Lucchesi, that Agenda Item 7.1, to “Approve Additional Staff for Fire Prevention”, be approved as submitted, was approved by the following vote:**

<b>Ayes:</b>	<b>Abendschan, Foster, Lucchesi, Spisak</b>
<b>Noes:</b>	<b>None</b>
<b>Abstain:</b>	<b>None</b>
<b>Absent:</b>	<b>Hurley</b>

**7.2 DISCUSSION AND APPROPRIATE MOTION REGARDING MANAGEMENT PARTNERS CONTRACT FOR INTERIM FIRE CHIEF SERVICES**

President Spisak reported that he had met with 1 qualified individual, Ron Prince from Management Partners, as a prospective Interim Fire Chief for the District. Mr. Prince shared his experience with the Board, including 35 years experience in the fire service, serving as Chief for 4 departments, including Santa Cruz City Fire Department, and as a Fire Marshal in Arizona. He has been reading the more current Minutes and recent actions of Aptos/La Selva FPD, to have a better view of the details of the District. Director Foster asked if Mr. Prince was now local to the area. As of 2008, Mr. Prince had returned from Santa Barbara, and lives within Santa Cruz County. Public Member Gary Weekly asked questions about the promotional process and duty coverage, which were answered by Interim Chief Skrabak.

Interim Chief Skrabak also stated that while he was honored to be chosen by the Board as Interim Chief for the past month, he feels that another person may be more suitable at this time, due to pending litigation and his membership in the Chief Officers Association. The current litigation results in him receiving a compartmentalized amount of information that makes it difficult to perform in that position, at this time. He stated that working with either Management Partners and Mr. Prince or a shared services option would both be preferable, at least until legal matters can be concluded. Director Abendschan thanked Interim Chief Skrabak, and Director Lucchesi agreed with his statement regarding this decision.

Public member Gary Weekly asked about the process of selecting Management Partners, and if other proposals were received. President Spisak stated that Mr. Prince was recommended by Director Lucchesi, initially, but that other candidates were considered as well.

Further discussion of hiring practices, promotional opportunities and staffing options were discussed between Directors and members of the public before motion was made to approve the contract with Management Partners.

**On motion by Director Abendschan, seconded by Director Lucchesi, that Agenda Item 7.2, to “Approve Contract with Management Partners for Interim Fire Chief Services”, be approved as submitted, was approved by the following vote:**

**Ayes: Abendschan, Foster, Lucchesi, Spisak**  
**Noes: None**  
**Abstain: None**  
**Absent: Hurley**

**2.1 PROCLAMATION OF FIRE PREVENTION WEEK OCTOBER 8-14, 2017**

President Spisak announced that Fire Prevention Week will be observed the week of October 8, 2017 through October 14, 2017. The District will hold their annual Open House event shortly after on Sunday, October 15, 2017. Administrative Assistant Sarah Melton gave a brief overview of the Open House event, including planned participants, demonstrations and activities. A press release for the event will be released within the next few weeks.

**8.0 STANDING REPORTS**

**8.1 BOARD OVERSIGHT INQUIRY: None.**

**8.2 DISCUSSION OF DISTRICT-WIDE EXTERNAL COMMUNICATIONS TO THE COMMUNITY**

Director Foster asked for input from the public on recent changes to improve communications. Public member Jim Kerr stated that the District has made great improvements thus far. He suggested changing the text on the website regarding the date of when agendas will be posted on our website to the minimum Brown Act deadlines, rather than the average stated goal of “a week before the meeting”, so there is not an expectation of earlier agendas. He also suggested that the District offer an option for agendas to be emailed directly via a group email list, as they become available. Administrative Assistant Melton stated that a button could be placed on the website to submit emails to this list as early as the following Monday, so that the list could be in place by the time the next Agenda is prepared. Mr. Kerr also suggested that Directors keep regular drop-in hours, either at the Administrative Office or another set location, so that members of the public can address their concerns with them directly. Director Foster suggested rotating the duty for these drop-in hours, and said that the Board could discuss what hours Directors could be available for these public to meet with them regarding their concerns.

**8.3 FIRE CHIEF’S REPORT – Interim Fire Chief Skrabak reviewed his Staff Report. He thanked Administrative Assistant Melton for assistance in assembling the Board Packets, as well as other work during the last month. The four current Probationary Firefighters are doing well, and often exceeding expectations in their training. The Administrative Assistant hiring process is almost complete, and a meeting will be scheduled shortly to select a final candidate for the position. The Acting Captain Task Book has been updated, in time for two employees who are currently pursuing promotion to the Captain rank. He thanked Captain Will Wingert for his input into updating the task books and work on developing a comprehensive training program for succession.**

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- 8.4 DIVISION CHIEF OF OPERATIONS REPORT: Division Chief Cullen reported that the demo engine is getting final modifications in Modesto, including radio installation. DC Cullen hopes to have the engine in service by mid-October. The Apparatus Committee met regarding engine specifications, some of which will need to be re-written. The grant submitted to Monterey Bay Air Pollution Control District (MBAPCD) to replace the old Water Tender was not approved, although the funds for the Water Tender were already included in the current budget.

This fire season has been extremely busy, with multiple Division Chiefs and crews deployed on Strike Teams. The State system is currently in draw-down mode, with many Districts (including ours) putting in extra coverage to neighboring areas in the CalFire coverage area. DC Cullen gave a brief overview of 2 local fire responses, on Cox Road and Paseo Bonito.

The joint firefighter and firefighter/paramedic recruitment process was successful, with approximately 80 candidates applying. The list was narrowed down to a select list of qualified firefighter/paramedics to choose from as the need becomes available, with the only cost to the District being backflow coverage costs for those members participating in the recruitment interview and testing processes.

Director Lucchesi inquired as to whether the current Water Tender could wait to be replaced for another year, to give the District time to re-apply for the MBAPCD grant next year. DC Cullen stated that the need to replace the Water Tender was urgent enough to warrant replacing this year, but that the grant could be considered for future apparatus needs.

- 8.5 DIVISION CHIEF OF PREVENTION REPORT

Fire Marshal Dirksen thanked Administrative Assistant Melton for assistance with Prevention data entry and other help with the Prevention Bureau in recent months. He reviewed the LE100 program progress, stating that the 3 CalFire inspectors and Inspector Dan Frost helped to greatly increase the inspections completed, to almost double the prior year (approximately 1,300 inspections complete). Public member Mark Fontes asked for a definition of “compliance” when conducting inspections, and expressed concern for a lack of compliance in clearance issues along Mar Monte Avenue. Public member Paul Vitali also voiced compliance concerns, and recommended stricter fines for non-compliant parcels. Captain Wingert offered to work with Mr. Fontes on the Mar Monte compliance issue. A lengthy discussion of Prevention Bureau compliance and coverage continued, until President Spisak stated that the time for discussion was over the limit for this topic, and would have to be discussed at a later time.

- 8.6 REPORT FROM FIREFIGHTERS’ LOCAL 3535: Local 3535 Vice President Will Wingert thanked President Spisak for the idea of the Ad-Hoc committee, and said that progress is already being made. He also thanked Fire Chief Hall for his input, and stated that Local 3535 supports the CPP effort, asking that Fire Chief Hall reach out to them if there is anything the Local 3535 can do to help this process forward. Captain Wingert stated that he knew of Mr. Prince by reputation, that he was integral in the formation of the Emergency Medical Services Integration Authority and Surf Rescue programs in the County, and he looks forward to working with him in the future. He also stated that while they are not necessarily looking to consolidate, Local 3535 would like a consolidation study done, to explore this option further. He asked the Board what the Union could be doing to help them move forward.

8.7 REPORT FROM CHIEF OFFICERS' ASSOCIATION: None.

**9.0 CLOSED SESSION: 9:58 PM**

9.1 Public Comment on Closed Session Agenda Items: None.

9.2 Public Employee Performance Evaluation (GC §54957)  
• Interim Fire Chief

9.3 Public Employee Employment (GC §54957)  
• Interim Fire Chief

9.4 CONFERENCE WITH LEGAL COUNSEL – ANTICIPATED LITIGATION  
Significant exposure to litigation in accordance with § 54956.9(d)(2)  
One (1) Case

9.5 PUBLIC EMPLOYEE APPOINTMENT – OPEN (§ 54957)  
Title: Interim Fire Chief

**10.0 RETURN TO OPEN SESSION 11:05PM**

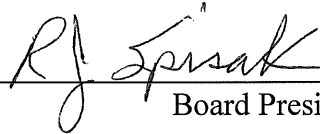
10.1 No comments from the public. President Spisak reported the board met with legal counsel and discussed items 9.2 through 9.5, no action taken.

**11.0 ADJOURN MEETING 11:10PM**



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Secretary to the Board



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Board President