

**LAKEPORT FIRE PROTECTION DISTRICT
445 NORTH MAIN STREET
LAKEPORT, CA 95453**

REGULAR MEETING MINUTES OF SEPTEMBER 11, 2018

CALL TO ORDER: Chairman Whitehead called the meeting to order at 5:00 p.m.

Pledge of Allegiance:

Roll Call: Chairman Whitehead, Vice Chairman Whipple, Directors Williams, Davidson were present; Director Mills was absent.

CLOSED SESSION: Salaries, Salary Schedules or Fringe Benefits pursuant to Section 54957.6 of the Ralph M. Brown Act.

Represented Employees: Labor Negotiations

The Board went into Closed Session at 5:02 and reconvened to the Regular Meeting @ 5:20 pm.

Action taken from the Closed Session: The Professional Firefighters offered a 10% cut in salaries with a 4-0 staffing level; the District counter offered with a 10% cut, 3-0 staffing and 10 ambulance transport shifts for full time personnel a month; the Professional Firefighters and the Lakeport Fire Protection Board did not come to an agreement; the negotiations ended in an impasse.

PUBLIC HEARING: Scheduled at 5:10 p.m. (The Public Hearing began at 5:22 pm.)

Public Hearing on the adoption of the District's 2018-2019 Final Fiscal Year Budget

Chairman Whitehead opened the Public Hearing on the adoption of the District's 2018-2019 Final Fiscal Year Budget; Chief Hutchison explained the District's financial situation which is reflected in the 2018-2019 Budget; the Chief explained that the District is at a \$355,869.00 deficit & that it was up to the Board if they wanted to use Reserves to close the gap and then the District would be still 186,000.00 to come up with which would require 3 positions to cut; Chairman Whitehead said that there was no money to fix the issues and the only way was to pursue a Ballot Measure; a motion was made by Director Davidson with a second to the motion by Director Williams to adopt the 18-19 Budget and Chief Hutchison was directed to make the necessary personnel cuts; Vice Chairman Whipple added he could not approve this budget with the personnel cuts; the Fiscal Year 18-19 Budget was adopted by a 3 to 1 vote; Ayes: Chairman Whitehead, Directors Davidson and Williams & Noes: Vice Chairman Whipple; absent Director Mills; the motion was passed with a 3 Ayes, 1 Noe vote; 1 absent (Director Mills).

Questions asked from the floor and answered by Chief Hutchison & Directors:

Citizen; Why have the expenses risen?

Chief; Labor costs have gone up and the District is contractually bound and labor costs can't be reduced without negotiations; also insurance tires etc... continue to go up; 23% of the District does not pay Property Taxes which is a structural deficit.

Citizen; How can we get better on improved ambulance transports and revenue?

Chief; The staff was proposed an added 10 shifts a month to help boost ambulance revenue which would be at an overtime wage rate; a staffing module is used for scheduling and the Interfacility/Out of County personnel use a "at will staffing"; also increase costs for ambulance transports arises from using off duty personnel which are paid at an overtime rate of pay.

Chairman Whitehead; We need people to sign up to do the ambulance transports.

Cindy Forbes commented on the casual format of the meeting; her question was how long have the citizens known about this budget shortfall; if she had known earlier the citizens would be able to assist in some way; the community was not kept in the loop.

Director Williams replied that it is the public's responsibility to answer questions regarding the budget; the citizens present did not agree.

Citizen; This was the first time "we" have heard about this financial situation.

The arrival time of ambulance with the new staffing was brought up.

So if there is a car accident and the ambulance is committed to a call and a house is on fire then mutual aid will respond??

Chief: Yes.

Greg Scott mentioned that these issues give energy to get the ballot measure passed.

Chief; The Union and citizens can help with ballot measure.

Citizen; Why was there a delay getting the measure on the ballot and what is the cost.

Chief/Board; The District Board has been working on the ballot measure for 3 months and it takes time; the cost will be approximately \$35,000.00.

Citizens Input:

Dan Peterson Sutter Lakeside Chief Administrator Officer commented that with limited staff the citizens have their life on the line and it is more than just a budget situation but it is a health and "well being" situation; his conscience won't allow him to sit and watch patients await transport in the ER when their lives are on the line; he is very concerned and would like to prevent this from happening and will work with Lakeport Fire; he also would pledge 1,000.00 dollars of his own money to help this not occur.

Chairman Whitehead mentioned the budget can be amended at any time.

Cindy Forbes introduced herself saying she has been an ER nurse and has worked as an EMT for Lakeport Fire; her comment was that this did not happen overnight and when staff is reduced that affects the citizens and other Districts will have to pick up slack and they have their stations and citizens to be responsible for; her comment was that it is a huge mistake cutting staff and if this was occurring the District needed to reach out to the community for money; she mentioned accountability.

George Keiffer shared with the Board information on getting assistance from FEMA, Cal Fire grants that are available and he mentioned hiring a grant writer would be something to consider; these may be ways to keep people employed.

Gwenth Jones is a 45 year resident and asked if the District had an outside audit.

Chief Hutchison responded the 16-17 Audit is posted on the District's web site.

Funding comes from – 1st Property Tax, 1% and that can't be changed since it is a State law, 2nd in areas outside the city limits the tax measure which has not gone up since 1992 and 3rd ambulance revenues.

AGENDA, CLAIMS AND MINUTES: The September 11, 2018 agenda and claims were approved as submitted; the minutes of the Regular Meeting on Aug. 14, 2018 and Special Meeting on Aug. 28, 2018 were approved as submitted.

PETTY CASH CLAIMS: There were no Petty Cash Claims submitted.

CORRESPONDENCE: The Administrative Assistant shared with the Board a Record Bee an article where Chief Hutchison and the District's Directors expressed their gratitude to everyone who supported the District during the River Fire; two Record Bee Articles were also shared which informed the community on the potential staff cuts due to the 18-19 budget shortfall.

CHIEF'S REPORT: Chief Hutchison reported that he has been busy with meetings; the District has some recent significant 911 calls and fires and that the Budget has been his main focus.

ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT'S REPORT: The Administrative assistant reported she completed the SB 523 form for the Dept. of Health Care Services and the transport services data information for the GEMT Program; the IGT 18-19 paperwork (Intergovernmental Transfer Program) has been completed; thankyou's were sent out to all the businesses; citizens and staff that helped with food donations, cooking and purchasing during the River Fire; the Direct Charges were completed and submitted to the County; she went to Upper Lake and got some information on applying for FEMA; (Lake Co. has their application in for public assistance); the Konocti Vista Casino with the help of Danielle Johnson donated to the District Firefighters a new refrigerator; an Ambulance/Fire Report which is required annually was recently completed and submitted to the auditor; proclamations were given to retiring Director, Gerry Mills and Lakeport Fire Firefighters, District and support staff also receive a proclamation recognizing them for their efforts during the River Fire.

BOARD OF DIRECTOR'S REPORT: Director Williams mentioned he contacted Brad Onarato at Congressman Thompson's office; availability and the process of acquiring federal assistance is being pursued.

VOLUNTEER FIREFIGHTER'S REPORT: There was no report from the Volunteer Firefighters.

OLD BUSINESS:

Report, discussion and possible action on the District placing a County Direct Charge increase measure on the ballot for voter approval: Director Davidson and Vice Chairman Whipple reported that they met with City Manager Margaret Silveira, Chief Rasmussen and the City Staff; the staff at City of Lakeport was helpful in sharing their knowledge on ballot measures; they recommended hiring FM3 to do a polling to see the communities support and the cost would be approximately \$25,000.00 to do the polling; the entire ballot measure process could cost up to \$60,000.00; Teamsters may be able to get the County to waive the fees; the City offered their help to the District during this time; National Night Out will be next week and that would be an opportunity to educate the citizens about the upcoming measure; Vice Chairman Whipple mentioned the District needs to be on the City Agenda to speak on behalf of the upcoming ballot measure.

NEW BUSINESS

Interviewing of the 3 applicants for the vacant Board of Director's position: background, skills, abilities, talents, connections, networks and passion for being a Director of Lakeport Fire:

Chairman Whitehead introduced the 3 Board applicants and began interviews.

Cheryl Pick introduced herself; she explained to the Board she is a 51 year native Lake County resident, an accountant, business owner (First Pick Builders); she has ideas on increasing the District's revenues and stated the need to have our Firefighters and ambulance meet the communities needs is a priority; Vice Chairman Whipple asked if she had been on any other Boards; she has been involved with the Clearlake Riviera Golf Club, Konocti Youth Soccer League, Konocti Parent/Volunteer Youth Board; Chairman Whitehead asked how long she would plan to be a Board member and she replied about 3 years; she mentioned on topics that came before the Board she would educate herself on the issue, would be open minded and flexible.

Gary Hill introduced himself; he mentioned he has close ties with the County; he works in the grape industry and manages 40-50 employees; he is a retired peace officer; served as a Deputy Sheriff, Chief Criminal investigator and was a Lake Co. District Attorney; when asked how long he could serve he replied as long as he is in good health; he understand the plight of control burning and the frustration it causes to get a program started; Director Davidson asked if he would have time to spend as a Board Member and yes he would have the time and also has previous experience campaigning which would assist the Board as they move forward with the Ballot Measure.

Greg Scott introduced himself and mentioned the need to protect life and property; he has 35 years of experience; has been a Battalion Chief and was able to get Fire Departments to communicate better and work as a team; he has managed emergency disasters and a background in disaster management; he has worked on budgets and has had to close stations due to financial conditions; is a volunteer at the Police Department and is dedicated to serve; Director Davidson asked if he has time to dedicate to the Lakeport Fire Board with his other responsibilities and he replied he does have time.

Report, discussion and possible action on Resolution 1819-04; a Resolution establishing an Official Delegate for Cal PERS Determination of Disability; Chief Hutchison reported Resolution 1819-04 is a standard Resolution in determining an industrial disability with the Cal PERS retirement system; a motion was made by Vice Chairman Whipple with a second to the motion by Director Williams to approve Resolution 1819-04; the motion was passed by the 4 Board Members present: Chairman Whitehead, Vice Chairman Whipple, Directors Davidson and Williams; Director Mills was absent.

Report, discussion and possible action on Resolution 1819-05; a Resolution to determine Cal PERS industrial safety disability by the Official Delegate; Chief Hutchison reported that Resolution 1819-05 is a Resolution to determine Cal PERs industrial safety disability by an official delegate; the Chief explained one of the Full time employees has been determined eligible for an industrial disability and a Resolution is necessary to have on file; a motion was made by Director Davidson with a second to the motion by Director Williams to approve Resolution 1819-05; the motion was passed by the 4 Board Members present: Chairman Whitehead, Vice Chairman Whipple, Directors Davidson and Williams; Director Mills was absent.

Report, discussion and possible action on Resolution 1819-06; Resolution 1819-06 is to move unanticipated revenue (anonymous donation of \$1,000.00) from the misc. revenue account to the communications expenditure account(12.00) for the purchase/installation of a telephone answering machine system; Chief Hutchison reported an anonymous donation was made in the amount of 1,000.00; Resolution 1819-06 to move from the Revenue account to the Expense Account to purchase/install a telephone answering machine system; a motion was made by Director Davidson with a second to the motion by Vice Chairman Whipple to approve Resolution 1819-06; the motion was passed by the 4 Board Members present: Chairman Whitehead, Vice Chairman Whipple, Directors Davidson and Williams; Director Mills was absent.

Report, discussion and possible action on the effects/status of the Ranch and River Fires which began on July 27, 2018; Chief Hutchison reported the River Fire is at 100% containment

and the Ranch Fire is at 98% containment; the District will seek funding through FEMA for the balance of costs not covered by the State of Calif. Forestry and Fire Protection.

Report, discussion and possible action on reducing the Directors meeting stipend from \$100.00 to \$50.00 a meeting due to the Districts financial situation; Chairman Whitehead discussed with the Board members to reduce the stipend to Board Members due to the Districts financial situation; Director Davidson felt the 100.00 a meeting should be reduced to zero; a motion was made by Vice Chairman Whipple with a second to the motion by Director Davidson; the motion was passed by the 4 Board Members present: Chairman Whitehead, Vice Chairman Whipple, Directors Davidson and Williams; Director Mills was absent.

OTHER BUSINESS: A \$60.00 donation was made by a citizen in the audience; Dan Peterson asked if the budget reflected the decrease in personnel which will also decrease revenue; Chief Hutchison said yes that was reflected in the budget; Chairman Whitehead also added the individual in charge of the transport program retired so that revenue has decreased and that responsibility needs to be filled.

AGENDA ITEMS FOR NEXT MEETING:

- a) Report, discussion and possible action on the District placing a County Direct Charge increase measure on the ballot for voter approval.
- b) Report and discussion on the 18-19 Budget.
- c) Closed Session; Represented employees; Labor Negotiations
- d) Discussion, possible appointment and Oath of Office to the new District Board Member filling the vacant position of retired Board member, Gerry Mills.

CLOSED SESSION:

Salaries, Salary Schedules or Fringe Benefits pursuant to Section §54962(A) of the Ralph M. Brown Act.

Board discussion and possible action on the 3 applications submitted to fill the vacant position on Lakeport Fire Protection District's Board.

Chairman Whitehead adjourned to a Closed Session at 7:00 and reconvened the Regular Meeting at 7:10 pm.

ACTION TAKEN FROM THE CLOSED SESSION: The Board made two applicant selections to forward to the Board of Supervisors for final selection: Gary Hill and Cheryl Pick.

ADJOURNMENT: The meeting was adjourned at 7:12 pm.

Chairman, John Whitehead



Respectfully submitted



Linda K. Buckner

Administrative Assistant/EMT