

PALOMAR MOUNTAIN VOLUNTEER FIRE DEPARTMENT

Minutes of the Annual General Meeting

Sunday, September 1, 2019

The meeting was called to order at noon by Board President Cliff Kellogg.

Board members present: Glenn Borland, Cliff Kellogg, Michael Pique, Keith Ronchetti. About 17 community members were in attendance including Cecelia Borland, Sharon Dall, Yvonne Vaucher, Brian Wagner, Walt Johnston, Rosemary Johnston, James Walls, Suzann Leininger, Bill Leininger, Rosie Lopresti, Jack Weisgerber, John Lesac, Jeanine Barrows, and Susie Kellogg. Cal Fire Engineer Alex Rodriguez was present.

All stood for the Pledge of Allegiance.

Public comments: None offered. Cliff Kellogg announced that Susie's father, Forest McKinley, died in early August. He was one of the founders of our Volunteer Fire Department.

Approval of last annual meeting minutes: The minutes of the September 2, 2018, Annual General Meeting were approved with corrections by Keith Ronchetti and Cliff Kellogg.

Financial Report: Keith Ronchetti reported on the current financial status of the Department as submitted in his written report, available on our palomar-fire.org web site. Notable expenses were property tax assessment and bonds payment, Chief Williamson's December 2018 retirement party, and 1 dumpster day (\$610). The report was approved.

Station 79 Report: Captain Kowalski was away so Engineer Rodriguez reported. We are today staffed with crew of four, including one driver. The new building is still waiting for the county to issue a request for bids. No visible change in traffic accidents from the new speed limits: "nobody but out-of-towners reads the signs". Cliff Kellogg says the building construction got a new project manager. The Mount Laguna station remodel (\$1.5 million) received no bids, so the county might combine Palomar construction with Mount Laguna and Sunshine Summit upgrades for a package bid. Rosemary Johnston asked if there were any possibilities of housing weekday construction workers on the mountain to reduce travel time and expenses.

Cliff says Chief Mecham is looking for funds to staff Palomar with three on-duty firefighters so we would have a second driver. Chief Mecham is also working on an apprentice 'ride along' training program, especially for military, and perhaps even allowing volunteer drivers.

Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) report: CERT Program Manager Bill Leininger says September begins with National Preparedness Week; each week, CERT will put out a reminder covering some important topic. The big CERT project is the "California for All" grant for CERT improvements. We are hoping for a new radio set and a trailer to consolidate CERT emergency gear.

Fire Safe Council (FSC) Report: Yvonne Vaucher said the FSC has \$3911 in the bank and has received a new 2019 SDG&E \$2500 education grant. We have about \$9000 in restricted grant funds to pay for chipping and dumpsters this season. We are working with SD County Fire and CALfire on building wildfire-resistant communities and setting our priorities. For example, what kind of alert system would work to tell visitors to evacuate and where to go? Defensible space and structure hardening is a new priority - there will be a county program for retrofitting ember-resistant vents. The Defensible Space Inspections (DSI) reached almost 100% on Palomar this summer. We need to clear and widen our private roads: if the engines can't get through, they won't come. Cecelia Borland is coordinating road-clearing permission from private owners. We want improved permanent road signage, along with CERT portable emergency signage. We want to supply residents with "I've Evacuated" signs they can set out as they depart.

The US Forest Service plans for 2020 are Fry Creek fuel reduction (pile and broadcast burning); finish from Canfield Road west to the State Park; reduce crown density of Penny Pines above the East Grade Road. They are looking for way to fuel-reduce along Conifer Road: the USFS now has Jeff Valley (immediately east of Conifer Road) next to go through NEPA clearance and hope to begin work in summer 2020.

Our PMFSC chainsaw workshop, taught by Tim Gray, was held on November 17 at the USFS station near the Palomar Observatory. Our WUI (Wildland-Urban Interface) workshop was held last week; it was well-attended by Palomar residents and Valley Center FSC/CERT. We learned about fire behavior, the importance of early evacuation, and the importance of hardening houses to embers. In emergencies, the firefighting crew rates engine access, water supply, occupancy, and defensible space. We need attendee feedback, especially how better to customize the workshop for Palomar's situation.

Sharon Dall says that Kathy Lande drove up the Nate Harrison grade last week, and said it was terribly overgrown. Glenn Borland noted that the portion of the road within the State Park is particularly bad.

Community Center of Palomar Mountain (CCPM) report:

Rosie Lopresti said about 75 people came to yesterday's picnic at the US Forest Service Crestline Picnic Ground! Thanks go to the whole community including CERT and the PMVFD. Expenses were about \$330-350 and we made \$111. Our community center annual meeting will be held today after the fire department annual general meeting.

Board Elections:

Nominations Committee Chair Cecelia Borland said that two nominations for the two open board positions have been received: Keith Ronchetti and Michael Pique. Both were seconded, accepted their nominations, and were voted in by unanimous show of hands from the community members and the board.

Adjournment of general meeting 12:53 PM

A brief meeting of the PMVFD Board members was held to elect officer positions. It was agreed that this would be as follows:

President: Cliff Kellogg

V.P.: Glenn Borland

Treasurer: Keith Ronchetti

Secretary: Michael Pique

Member-at-large: Robert Carlyle

Next board meeting October 5, 2019.

Next Annual General Meeting September 6, 2020

Adjournment of board meeting 12:56 PM

Minutes approved at Annual General Meeting September 6, 2020.