

The Palomar Mountain Community Fire Association

Minutes of the monthly meeting of The Board of Directors, May 6, 2023.

The meeting was called to order at 9:00 A.M. by President Robert Carlyle. Board members present in person at the Community Center (Station 79 grounds): Robert Carlyle, Tom Mendenhall, Michael Pique, Keith Ronchetti, Mark Thompson. Also present in person were Lafe Ball, Yvonne Vaucher, Rosie Lopresti, Jack Weisgerber, Cecelia Borland, Bill Leininger, and CAL FIRE Captain Dean Kowalski. No one joined our Zoom teleconference.

Pledge: Robert led us in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Public Comment: None offered.

Minutes: The minutes from the 04/01/2023 board meeting were approved. Because of heavy snow, there was no March meeting.

Financial Report: Keith Ronchetti's written report (available at palomar-fire.org) showed a balance of \$88,198.69 (plus \$2253.71 held for CERT). No recent income or expenses. We still need to update the signature authorizations on our bank account. The report was approved.

Station 79 Report: Captain Kowalski said "we had an extraordinary winter". The crews had to walk and carry people out of the snows during the blizzard. Much work now needs to be done cleaning up around station 79 with many branches downed and now grass is sprouting. The county is still talking about an inter-agency agreement to get the fire stations plowed. The county road department thinks they need to clear only the front of the building. The county Reserve Firefighter Program is starting to be renewed; we now have our first reservist in years, John Combass. The defensible space inspections (DSI) will begin as soon as the role of the new dedicated DSI inspectors is clarified. As of July 2021, real estate sales need DSI inspections. Those are not done by our Station 79 crew but by special inspectors from CALFIRE who must be called from the fire prevention office. We are moving into fire season of course; always the "worst possible in history." Robert Carlyle asked whether the South Grade speed limits have decreased the motorcycle accidents. Captain Kowalski said that, oddly, our call load slowly increases despite that. We hope an ambulance is in our future.

County Fire Advisory (CFA) Board, Cliff Kellogg: No report, Cliff was out-of-state.

Community Emergency Response Team (CERT): Bill Leininger makes three points:
1. Look at the defensible space inspections as helping your house fight the fire. Don't wait until the fire starts to clear your property. Information on the new real estate inspections is at the CERT table outside.
2. The county agricultural pass has been created so that owners of farm businesses can get trained, then get back onto their property as soon as possible after a wildfire.
3. SDG&E annual safety fairs will be held

soon in Ramona and at Valley Center Bates Nut Farm. One point of these is to help people needing reliable electricity for their home medical devices. Lafe Ball says SDG&E is offering a subsidy on home generators, including some fueled by propane.

Palomar Mountain Fire Safe Council (FSC) Yvonne Vaucher: The council has about \$4000 in unrestricted funds. We have submitted a CCI grant application for about \$165,000 to pay for chipping and tree clearing. The San Diego Regional Fire Foundation (SDRFF) grant has ended, Yvonne submitted a new application April 18. We don't know the status of the regional Resource Conservation District's Healthy Forest Initiative phase 2. The US Forest Service will be clearing the area east of Birch Hill and the "Penny Pines" area above the East Grade Road. Some county procedures have made it impossible for us to pay our contractors without lengthy delays. We have suffered through intervals of six weeks at a time not being able to do work. We do have some chipping and dumpster funds now; we will need a lot as people clean up after the blizzard and windstorms. Cecelia says the dumpster today is already full; she will get another one. Some of the debris is from collapsed outbuildings. Robert Carlyle and Michael Pique attended the Julian "Last Chance Fire Survival" workshop in Julian, with enthusiastic reviews. Yvonne hopes we can schedule one for Palomar & Valley Center this fall. The FSC written report will be posted at palomar-fire.org.

Community Center of Palomar Mountain (CCPM): Rosie Lopresti reminded us that she and Jack Weisgerber are not seeking CCPM Board reelection for 2023-24. She and Jack and their son Frankie brought brooms & mops and gave the Center a good cleaning. They also mounted upstairs many of the wooden plaques that used to be in the equipment bay. Jack says "Look at those plaques and all the names and how people turned out. We need to get new residents to participate." Yvonne asks only half in jest: why is everyone here over 70? Jack and Rosie are still struggling to buy liability insurance for the CCPM Board after nine months now. As a stopgap, they purchased one day's insurance to cover the event later today. Lafe will look at how to mount the New York Fire Department flag on the wall downstairs.

Board Insurance: Robert Carlyle has, at last, obtained the necessary two bids for the Class A fire insurance the PMVFD/PMCFA needs to carry. The second bid was for about \$15,000 per year, half of the first bid. Much of the cost is the state wildfire area surcharge of about \$13,000. Robert has arranged that the bill will go directly to the county; we will not have to pay it and be reimbursed. We also need a Board Officers policy. We have one quote for \$1076 and are waiting for a second.

Palomar Mountain Planning Organization (PMPO) Michael Pique (Secretary): next board meeting is today, following this meeting. The Annual General Meeting and Pancake Breakfast will be held Saturday 05/27/2023 (Memorial Day weekend). Breakfast from 8 to 10 AM; meeting starts at 10.

Adjournment: 10:10 AM 05/06/2023. The next PMCFA meeting is Saturday June 3, 2023, at 9 AM, at the Community Center. We expect to have Zoom call-ins available.

- Michael Pique, Secretary. Minutes approved by PMCFA Board 06/03/2023.