

The Palomar Mountain Community Fire Association

Minutes of the monthly meeting of The Board of Directors, February 3, 2024.

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 was Cliff Kellogg. CAL FIRE Captain Dean Kowalski, Yvonne Vaucher, Rosie Lopresti, and Elizabeth Getzoff joined our Zoom teleconference.

Pledge: Robert led us in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Public Comment: None offered.

Minutes: The minutes from the 01/06/2024 board meeting were approved.

Financial Report: Keith Ronchetti's written report (available at palomar-fire.org) showed a balance of \$88,988.28, with an additional \$1220.29 held for CERT. The report was approved.

County Fire Advisory (CFA) Board, Cliff Kellogg: Met on January 8. Got an update on the county ambulance program. County is increasing the fees, now that the transport is by a public entity. Rate had been \$2500, going up to \$3395 plus mileage plus treatment; for public events, a standby fee per hour. Land has been donated for a new county fire station at Borrego Springs. The crews will stay in their current station, which will receive improvements, until the new station is built. SDG&E has given \$60,000 to the county Fire Safety Council for treating key evacuation roads with long-persistent fire retardant. An example is a five-mile stretch of Wildcat Canyon road.

At that meeting, Cliff again brought up the need for Station 79 to be plowed when there is snow. He was told by Marc Regier, Assistant Director for County Fire, that he would check with the County Road department to make sure it happens. Captain Kowalski said the real concern for snow is public access when needing assistance. The rigs themselves can usually get out, but many of our crew do not drive heavy snow-capable vehicles so cannot get in and out of the station.

Station 79 Report: Captain Kowalski reported that a few burn permit applications have been received. We need to make the community more aware of permitted burns so people do not call the station or 911. Station 70 at Rincon is to be rebuilt, with major construction soon. We do not know where their ambulance, Medic 70, will go in the meantime. Our staffing is very difficult, with a lot of required overtime. We are missing two of our three officially allocated paramedics. We are running vacancies half of the week. Our original plan about how our ambulance will be used is being questioned. What happens when we do a full patient transport to Temecula or Palomar Medical in Escondido? Those cause our crew to be gone for many hours and make it difficult to keep Station 79 covered.

Community Emergency Response Team (CERT): Bill Leininger is away, no report.

Palomar Mountain Fire Safe Council (FSC), Yvonne Vaucher: We will be hosting the Last Chance Survival Simulation workshop on February 17; we need to get the word out. Dana Barre and Cindy Petrich are back as our USFS Palomar District rangers. Robert Carlyle has sent maps of Pedley Valley and the Carpenter & Mendenhall properties, needed for our CEQA, which will be done by Davey Resources. Our CWPP (community wildfire protection plan) needs redoing every five years and that is now. Yvonne will be away in March as usual. She went to a Lakeside “How to update your CWPP” workshop and it looks not too bad. The PMFSC Board logged about 800 volunteer hours last year, which are credited at \$28 per hour for grant purposes. We are trying to find out if TOT (tourist occupancy tax) funds could be used for road improvements as “community improvements”. Mike Appelton thinks probably not. Our website is palomarfiresafecouncil.org. The FSC written report will be posted at palomar-fire.org. Next meeting 9 AM February 24.

Community Center of Palomar Mountain (CCPM): Rosie Lopresti says the CCPM board was asked about a request to reserve the community center for a Super bowl gathering. The board tried to meet but could not reach quorum, with only one response. Much discussion about permits and credentials needed for “private” versus “public” events. Rosie said that even a “knitting club” meeting at the Center would need to get insurance. Elizabeth Getzoff will look into how other rural San Diego community centers handle their permits and insurance. The CCPM has Directors and Officers insurance and buys one-day liability coverage as needed.

Board Insurance: Robert Carlyle says we finally have a quote on its way, for Directors and Officers insurance separate from liability coverage (because the county covers that). The board approved paying about \$750.

Disposal of Surplus Equipment: Robert took our (seldom used) snow blower down for carburetor maintenance. He will buy it from the PMVFD. We are going to ask \$400 for the Honda generator.

Palomar Mountain Planning Organization (PMPO): The next PMPO board meeting will be at 10 AM February 24, 2024, following a Fire Safe Council meeting that begins at 9 AM. The next PMPO Annual General Meeting will be on May 25, 2024.

Adjournment: 10:24 AM 02/03/2024. The next PMCFA meeting is Saturday March 2, 2024 at 9 AM, at the Community Center. We expect to have Zoom call-ins available.

Michael Pique, Secretary

Minutes approved by PMCFA Board March 2, 2024.