

The Palomar Mountain Community Fire Association

Minutes of the monthly meeting of The Board of Directors, November 2, 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, Michael Pique, Tom Mendenhall, Keith Ronchetti. Also present in person were Yvonne Vaucher, Jim Hamerly, Cliff Kellogg, and CAL FIRE Captain Dean Kowalski. Elizabeth Getzoff joined our Zoom teleconference. Rosie Lopresti attempted to join but we had connection problems.

Pledge: Robert led us in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Public Comment: Jim Hamerly asked about the causes of fires on Palomar Mountain. Captain Kowalski said the recent Conifer Road fire was from a mulch pile that self-ignited. The fire in the state park was from a chainsaw. It is common that fires are caused by use of power tools in dry vegetation. Cliff Kellogg says the 2006 Crestline fire started in a shed without electricity.

Minutes: No minutes were up for review; August's had been approved, September was the Annual General Meeting, and we skipped October because of Robert Carlyle's burn injuries.

Financial Report: Keith Ronchetti's written report (available at palomar-fire.org) showed a balance of \$90,689.14, with an additional \$1220.29 held for CERT. We paid \$1394 for our Directors and Officers insurance. The report was approved.

County Fire Advisory (CFA) Board. Cliff Kellogg says the next meeting is this Monday (November 4). Several county stations are getting upgrades or expansions.

Station 79 Report: Captain Kowalski says that staffing has been difficult. Especially, we cannot get enough paramedics. There are several factors, including lower pay from CAL FIRE than from other departments, and the stresses on personnel hours of operating the ambulances added to their medical and firefighting duties. For example, lots of time is now spent conducting monthly medication inventories. Nationwide shortages of IV fluid & medications has hit us too. He has handed off the DSI (defensible space inspections) to one of his engineers. The county's reactivation of the Station 79 underground water tanks is proceeding slowly. Work has been stalled by many snags, including exposing thin-wall electrical conduit that will need replacement. He says that our county facilities group has a plan to fix the CCPM building roof leak. Cliff Kellogg suggests that the PMCFA sell our disused water pump (driven by a Kohler Command PRO 27 engine), now in the pump house.

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

Palomar Mountain Fire Safe Council (PMFSC): Yvonne Vaucher. We have \$50,375 of which \$9600 is unrestricted. The PMFSC held its Annual General Meeting on October 26: Elizabeth Getzoff replaced outgoing board member John Lucia, and Miriam Munoz joined the board as member-at-large. We are hosting our fourth and last dumpster of the season today. We received our CCI CAL FIRE advance for roadside improvements in Pedley Valley and Bailey areas. Our August "Coulter Pine" fund-raising letter (sent to all Palomar Mountain post office boxes) has brought in \$500. US Forest service projects underway include Penny Pines cut & pile, 72 acres; Observatory camp ground, 13 acres; Aguanga 160 acres. Our residential fire insurance costs might or might not be reduced if we could be certified by the "National Community Fire Wise" program. Possibly, some private insurance companies might end up requiring it. Elizabeth Getzoff will look into the program. The FSC of San Diego county has a two-step program for home assessment followed by chipping. Palomar residents who qualify can apply for this next March. Our CAL FIRE road improvement project is still waiting for CEQA approval in Sacramento; now in archeological review. We will need landowner consent: Cecelia Borland will revise the form we used previously and send it to Robert Carlyle. Funding of \$250,000 is available for "Dead and Dying Tree" removal within 150 feet of a habitable structure, through the Resource Conservation District. Stan Hill from the RCD will discuss this in a meeting on November 23 at 11:30, following the PMFSC and PMPO meetings. Next PMFSC meeting 9 AM November 23; in person at the CCPM and by Zoom. No December meeting.

Community Center of Palomar Mountain (CCPM): Robert Carlyle, Chair. The Labor Day weekend "Mountain Hoedown" is our only annual event. He would welcome more people to join the CCPM Board to help arrange additional events. Cliff Kellogg suggests adopting and publicizing a procedure for reserving the building. Also to post an after-event clean-up checklist. Robert will hold a CCPM Board meeting on December 7, immediately following the PMCFCA meeting.

Board Insurance: We now have it, no details available.

Palomar Mountain Planning Organization (PMPO): The next PMPO Board meeting will be Saturday November 23, at 10 AM immediately following the PMFSC meeting.

Adjournment: 10:20 AM 11/03/2024. The next PMCFCA meeting will be 9 AM December 7 at the Community Center. We expect to have Zoom call-ins available.

Michael Pique, Secretary

Minutes approved by PMCFCA Board 12/07/2024