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PALOMAR MOUNTAIN VOLUNTEER FIRE DEPARTMENT

Minutes of the monthly meeting of The Board of Directors Saturday, June 4, 2016

The meeting was called to order at 9:04 A.M. by President Leininger.

Board members present: Suzann Leininger, Mike Pique, Keith Ronchetti, Glenn Borland; absent: Dave Robarts.

John Lesac, Linda Fortney, Jim Walls, Yvonne Vaucher, and Tricia Lucia present.

All stood for the Pledge of Allegiance.

Public Comment:

Jim Walls asked for an update on station coverage as it affects human safety and property insurance. Suzann recounted her April 14 meeting with Supervisor Horn's Senior Policy Advisor Chris Champine (who has since left). She presented him with actual data on the number of Palomar Mountain visitors, residents' demographic profile, and response time from CAL Fire station 70 in Rincon. The outcome was a promise of a CAL Fire Captain to be stationed here 40 hours per week. It's not really enough and Suzann urges residents to write or call the Supervisor asking for more. Linda Fortney asked what standard of coverage does the County Fire Authority guarantee in exchange for the 50-year ground lease. Weren't they to provide staffing, not just equipment and supplies? Suzann said it's gotten to the point that she feels the county is failing: we are one of eight often-empty stations. It's not CAL Fire's fault: they're just the contractor.

Captain Johnson clarified that the new Captain position is "administrative", to oversee supplies, equipment, training, and Incident Command, not to jump alone into a fire engine and roll out. Suzann says the Board, not the Chief or Captain, is the political liaison with the county. The Board is the lessor of the grounds to the county under the 50-year lease and is capable of holding the county to its side of the agreement.

Tricia Lucia commented that her concern is not so much for the visitors at the Christian Conference Center or the motorcyclists but our residents. It will be tragic not to have medical emergency and fire coverage up here. Suzann says her intent when emphasizing our visitors over our residents is that, despite our small call volume, emergencies up here are "low occurrence but high consequence" because of our isolation and distance from a CAL Fire station, and thereby set us apart from the other stations' Reserve staffing problems. Long-term, getting Palomar reclassified under State of California rather than Federal Direct Protection Area (DPA) may be helpful in improving both medical and structure protection coverage.

Linda Fortney asked about the "finding houses" problem that was brought up at last month's PMPO meeting: that the map books in the vehicles no longer listed people's names and addresses. Suzann said the books now only have addresses, not names. Captain Johnson remarked that "some people don't want to be found", and noted that the maps lack an overview and are often hard to interpret. That's why the crew do orientation and mentorship with the De Luz crews whenever they are up.

Yvonne Vaucher asked if we'd have any problems if the county agreed to staff us. Yes, said Captain Johnson, because the reserves have an average retention time of only two years, and are committed only to 72 hours per month. We have only 56 reserves now to cover both Palomar and De Luz. They're paid only a token amount that barely covers commuting costs, and even that is taxable.

Linda Fortney and Jim Walls said their family is again offering to host a Firefighter Appreciation meal, but it's unclear who would come and when it should be. This will be the 20th year. Suzann said the Board would discuss with Captain Johnson and make a suggestion. Mike Pique brought up the idea of a lunch, after the Sunday noon Annual Meeting.

Minutes: Corrections and additions by Mike Pique were made to Secretary Robarts' minutes from the 5/07/2016 board meeting. The minutes were approved with these changes, which Mike Pique will send to Keith Ronchetti for web posting.

Financial Report: Keith Ronchetti reported no major changes. (The report has been included as part of these minutes.) He has filed for reimbursement of \$6851.43 from the SRA chipping grant. The report was approved.

Captain's Report: Captain Johnson went over his written report, (included as part of these minutes). He says our Type 2 is in service, as is our water tender after being weighed. The station fuel tank is being removed as we are now supplied by the county yard on State Park Road. We saw 5 calls in May; the "structure fire" in Crestline was in a chimney, nothing more. Fire clearance defensible space inspections will start soon, performed jointly by us, Rincon, and maybe Valley Center so all can get familiar with the area. USFS Station 36, near the Observatory, is now open 9:30 AM to 6:00 PM. When we are otherwise unstaffed, De Luz sends crew up to cover us. The report was approved.

CERT Report: None this month.

By-Law Revision: not sure how and when to start.

Grants: Suzann has talked to Kathleen Edwards, whom we hired to manage the SRA Palomar Divide Fuel Break work. Both the Observatory and the Board have now signed a permission agreement for the clearing on the grounds.

New Business:

Board Vacancy: The Board approved appointment of Cliff Kellogg to fill the position vacated by Dave Robarts resignation. Three positions will be elected at the September annual meeting: Keith has agreed to run again but Suzann intends not to. John Lesac is Nominations Chair: nominations close two weeks before the election.

Fire Safe Council: Yvonne Vaucher says the FSC is interested in locating and mapping "last resort" evacuation routes from Birch Hill and Crestline. Alan Serry has noted the importance of involving CERT, the sheriff, CAL Fire, and the USFS. The next Fire Safe Council event is Wildland-Urban Interface training day, Saturday June 18.

Community Center Report: John Lesac asks Board endorsement of the CCPM offer to host monthly "movie nights" at the station, probably the evenings of the monthly Board meetings. The annual license for these showings costs \$575 so the CCPM wants support from the Board before approaching CAL Fire and then paying for the license. The Board is agreeable but the new Chief will decide.

Adjournment: 10:45 A.M. 6/04/2016

The next meeting is scheduled for 7/02/2016 at 9:00 A.M.

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