

## MONTECITO FIRE PROTECTION DISTRICT

### Minutes for the Regular Meeting of the Board of Directors

Held at Montecito Fire Protection District, 595 San Ysidro Road, Santa Barbara, CA 93108 on October 28, 2024 at 2:00 p.m.

Director Lee called the meeting to order at 2:02 p.m.

**Present:** Director Lee, Director Easton, Director Dougherty, Director Powell. Chief Neels and District Counsel Mark Manion were also present.

**Absent:** Director van Duinwyk

1. **Public comment: Any person may address the Board at this time on any non-agenda matter that is within the subject matter jurisdiction of the Montecito Fire Protection District. (30 minutes total time allotted for this discussion.)**

There were no public comments to report at this meeting.

2. **Receive presentation from PARS/PFM Asset Management representatives, Angela Tang and Dennis Mullins, regarding the District's post-retirement benefits trust investments plans. (Strategic Plan Goal 8)**

- a. **Staff report presented by Accountant Nahas.**

Accountant Nahas provided an overview of the District's trust accounts for OPEB and Pension and introduced the presenters, Angela Tang from PARS and Dennis Mullins of PFM Asset Management. Ms. Tang reviewed the fund activity and balances, and Mr. Mullins reviewed the investment performance for the past year. Mr. Mullins confirmed that all funds are held at US Bank and he advised maintaining the current investment strategy which includes 30% equity and 70% fixed income.

3. **Report from the Finance Committee. (Strategic Plan Goal 8)**

- a. **Consider recommendation for approval of July, August and September 2024 financial statements.**

Accountant Nahas presented the July, August, and September 2024 financial statements which showed no unusual revenue or expense activity, with primary costs being operational. Director Lee informed the Board that the Finance Committee also reviewed the financials and asked clarifying questions of Accountant Nahas.

Motion to approve the financial statements for July, August and September 2024 made by Director Lee, seconded by Director Easton, and unanimously passed.

- b. **Review PARS Post-Employment Benefits Trust statement for July and August 2024.**

Accountant Nahas provided a staff report regarding PARS Post-Employment Benefits Trust statement for July and August 2024.

4. **Review Independent Accountant's Report on Applying Agreed-Upon Procedures for the CalOES California Fire Assistance Agreement Salary Surveys and Reimbursement Claims. (Strategic Plan Goal 8)**

- a. **Staff report presented by Accountant Nahas.**

Accountant Nahas reported that the District was selected for a CalOES audit under the California Fire Assistance Agreement (CFAA) for 2020. Accountant Nahas reported that there were minor findings related to pay increases, and no further action is required. The Board accepted and filed the Independent Accountant's Report.

**5. That the Board of Directors authorize the Fire Chief to enter into a Professional Services Agreement with Underwood Management Resources, Inc. in the amount of \$75,000. (Strategic Plan Goal 5)**

**a. Staff report presented by Fire Chief Neels.**

Chief Neels provided a staff report regarding an agreement for professional services with Underwood Management Resources, Inc. for assistance with various improvement projects.

Motion to authorize the Fire Chief to enter into a Professional Services Agreement with Underwood Management Resources, Inc, in an amount not to exceed \$75,000.00 made by Director Powell, seconded by Director Easton. The motion passed unanimously.

**6. That the Board of Directors approve and authorize the President to execute Side Letter Agreement amending Sections 1, 12.1 and 30 of the Memorandum of Understanding between the Members of Staff and the Montecito Fire Protection District adding the Finance and Administrative Manager position and removing the Accountant Position. (Strategic Plan Goal 6)**

**a. Staff report presented by Fire Chief Neels.**

Chief Neels provided a staff report regarding a change of title and compensation for the Accountant position. Chief Neels recommended the change of title to Finance and Administrative Manager with corresponding adjustments to the compensation.

Motion to approve and authorize the President to execute Side Letter Agreement amending Sections 1, 12.1 and 30 of the Memorandum of Understanding between the Members of Staff and the Montecito Fire Protection District adding the Finance and Administrative Manager position and removing the Accountant Position made by Director Dougherty, seconded by Director Easton and motion carried. Director Powell voted nay.

**7. Approval of Minutes of the September 23, 2024 Regular Meeting.**

Motion to approve the minutes of the September 23, 2024 Regular Meeting made by Director Powell, seconded by Director Easton, and unanimously passed.

**8. Fire Chief's report.**

Fire Chief Neels presented the Quarterly Operations Report, highlighting response data, training, major incidents, Mutual Aid, personnel updates, and community engagement. Public Information Officer Atchison reported on improvements to the District's AM 1610 radio station. Chief Neels noted that Wildland Fire Specialists removed 50 tons of vegetation in the past month and shared that the District hosted a Winter Weather Outlook meeting with the National Weather Service and local partners. He also announced Coral Godlis as the new Administrative Assistant for the Montecito Fire Department, starting November 1, 2024.

**9. Board of Director's report.**

There were no items to report at this meeting.

**10. Suggestions from Directors for items other than regular agenda items to be included for the November 25, 2024 Regular Board meeting.**

Director Dougherty presented a proposal to study Montecito Community Emergency Communications. Item will be added to the November Agenda.


Regular meeting closed at 4:23 p.m.

**11. CLOSED SESSION: Public Employee Discipline/Dismissal/Release (Government Code section 54957)**

Director Lee called Closed Session to order at 4:30 p.m.

The Board reported out of closed session at 5:17 p.m. with no reportable action.  
Meeting Adjourned at 5:17 p.m.

  
President Peter van Duinwyk

  
Secretary Sylvia Easton