



Eastern Plumas Rural Fire Protection District

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MINUTES

For the Special Meeting of the Eastern Plumas Rural Fire Protection District's Board of Directors held at 141 Delleker Rd., Portola, CA 96122 On January 15, 2024 at 6:00 PM

Board Members: Vice Chairperson Angelina Sutcliffe, Director Teresa Whitfield,
Director Donna Carpenter and Director Dave Rudolph

1. Call to Order:

- a. Meeting was called to order at 6:00 PM by Vice Chairperson Sutcliffe. All Directors were present.
- b. The Pledge of Allegiance was recited by all.

2. Public Comment

There was none

3. Consent Items:

- a. Minutes of the Regular Board Meeting December 18, 2023.

Elaine Frank provided public comment via Zoom stating that she took exception to a comment made at the last meeting (that was not detailed in the minutes) by Director Whitfield wherein she stated that C Road asked EPRFPD to withdraw from the study group. Elaine wanted it clarified that C Road did not ask EPRFPD to withdraw from the group.

Director Sutcliffe made a motion to approve the minutes. Director Whitfield seconded the motion.

Roll Call Vote: Director Sutcliffe – Aye, Director Whitfield – Aye, Director Carpenter – Aye.

The motion passed.

4. Regular Calendar:

4.1 Discussion and Possible Action: Dave Rudolph – Board Application

John Fatheree, Ashlee Sims and Elaine Frank provided public comment and had questions for Mr. Rudolph. Dave provided a brief description of his qualifications and his desire to serve on the Board.

Board discussion ensued. Director Whitfield made a motion to accept Dave's application. Director Sutcliffe seconded the motion.

Roll Call Vote: Director Sutcliffe – Aye, Director Whitfield – Aye, Director Carpenter – Aye.

The motion passed.

Director Dave Rudolph took the Oath of Office. Welcome back, Dave!

4.2 Department Staff Reports

- a. **Secretary's Report:** Katy informed the Board that Leah Turner who was our Medical Trainer had reached out to NorCal EMS asking for detailed steps that EPRFPD would need to take in order to reestablish operations. This information was shared with the Board. Now that Dave is on the Board and has some knowledge regarding equipment, it was decided that he can attempt to assist with the starting of trucks or evaluating what may be needed in order to start them.

4.3 Update on Budget and Warrants: Katy informed the Board that the warrants from May 11, 2023 through December 31, 2023 totaled \$90,907.81. A tax deposit of \$29,489.32 was received on June 30 and the balance is \$129,373.96.

Daniel Smith had questions and comments regarding district tax income and legal fees. Ashlee Sims commented regarding legal fees and asked if the District had ever considered selling one or more of our buildings.

4.4 Discuss options for future of the District and continuation of District services.

Public Comment: Retired Chief Bob Frank spoke via Zoom and encouraged the District to annex into the new fire district. Ashlee Sims spoke and had questions regarding C Road. Daniel Smith spoke and expressed that he had questions or comments regarding C Road at the last meeting and he felt that his concerns were not addressed, yet Ms. Sims was just allowed to speak on the same topic. Debbie Thompson from C Road was in attendance via Zoom and thanked Elaine Frank for her comments at the start of tonight's meeting clarifying that they had not asked EPRFPD to withdraw from the study group. She further stated that C Road is in a unique situation where they are located on a 3 mile private road, not a county road and their interpretation of the new district formation is that the new district would own their fire station and the land that it sits on. This was one of the reasons why C Road opted not to remain in discussions with the new district. At this time, C Road is being covered by Graeagle Fire. Debbie concurred with Ms. Sims' thoughts on EPRFPD exploring the idea of selling assets to raise funds. Cary Curtis from Gold Mountain spoke and clarified that during the LESSG process; C Road is considered an independent Special District, just as EPRFPD is. If C Road wants to annex into the new Beckwourth Peak District, she recommended that they reach out to Jennifer at LAFCO.

a. Four (4) options outlined by LAFCO: Director Sutcliffe asked either Daniel Smith or Cary Curtis if they know what would become of land that buildings sit on if it is not owned by said district. Discussion ensued. LAFCO would be the entity to answer questions regarding this topic. Director Whitfield made a motion that EPRFPD choose Option #1. Director Rudolph seconded the motion.

Roll Call Vote: Director Sutcliffe – Aye, Director Whitfield – Aye, Director Carpenter – Aye, Director Rudolph – Aye.

The motion passed

Public Comment: Ashlee Sims spoke and pointed out that the Board should wait to vote on this item until after the public has had an opportunity to speak. She wanted the Board to know that they do not have to choose any of the options presented and she could provide the Board with information. John Fatheree, Daniel Smith and others present at the meeting commended the Board for choosing Option #1. Daniel Smith further stated that the Beckwourth Peak District would like to see members of the EPRFPD Board provide future support to the new district where possible. At this time, Vice Chair Angie Sutcliffe called for a new motion and vote.

Director Whitfield made a motion that EPRFPD choose Option #1. Director Sutcliffe seconded the motion.

Roll Call Vote: Director Sutcliffe – Aye, Director Whitfield – Aye, Director Carpenter – Aye, Director Rudolph – Aye

The motion passed

b. What is needed to continue district services: Public Comment: A member of the public commented that the Lake Davis Station is in need of plowing to allow access to the public 911 phone. Director Whitfield recommended that the District continue to post helpful information for the public on our website and continue to recruit volunteers for the new district. Ashlee Sims spoke and asked why the Board is continuing with the agenda if it has been decided to proceed with annexation. It does not make sense to her to continue making decisions about a District that EPRFPD has no control over anymore.

Director Whitfield made a motion that we continue to serve the District, continue being Firewise and maintain a portal for the public to contact us. Director Sutcliffe seconded the motion.

Roll Call Vote: Director Sutcliffe – Aye, Director Whitfield – Aye, Director Carpenter – Aye, Director Rudolph – Aye.

The motion passed.

4.5 Update from ad hoc committee on contractual negotiations with Beckwourth Fire and Graeagle Fire for past/current/future coverage of the District.

Director Sutcliffe stated that she and Director Whitfield worked together on an email that was sent to Kenny Osburn and Graeagle Fire Department’s admin address asking to arrange a mutually agreeable date and time to meet to discuss compensation. Director Sutcliffe today obtained Ed Ward’s direct email address and will resend the email to him. Once a meeting is arranged, further updates will be provided.

Public Comment: Kenny Osburn thanked the ad hoc committee for choosing Option #1 and for the kind words expressed in the email that was sent. Beckwourth Fire’s regular monthly board meeting will be next week and the matter will be on their agenda for discussion.

4.6 Update on District Fire Stations, equipment and vehicle safety from ad hoc committee.

Director Sutcliffe stated that she and Director Carpenter had not yet been able to meet and start an inventory. She has reached out to Mike Riggs at Sierra Garage and he can look at vehicles that are less than one ton. He knows a mobile mechanic that can possibly help with other vehicles. Heating at both the Delleker and Iron Horse stations has been resolved and the temperatures are at 50-55 degrees. The Lake Davis station has not been accessed yet as there is an issue with the lock. Director Carpenter shared that she has downloaded a program and is ready to start working on inventories. Director Whitfield spoke up and indicated that the turnover binder(s) that Chief Frank prepared were on the table in front of her.

Public Comment: John Fatheree asked if the heat is on at the C Road station. Debbie Thompson from C Road spoke and said that the C Road station is heated and they use Cody McCollum for truck repairs. Jeanne Graham spoke via Zoom and said that there is no need to reinvent the wheel, everything needed is in that turnover binder from Chief Frank. Director Sutcliffe stated that they just now have it and Jeanne responded that the binder has been in the Board’s possession for a long time and Board member communication is needed. Cary Curtis also spoke via Zoom and reiterated that C Road should contact Jennifer with LAFCO because they will need to go through this same process if they choose to annex into the new Beckwourth Peak district. She also suggested that the Board reach out to LAFCO regarding inventory. Ashlee Sims spoke via Zoom and congratulated the Board for finally making a decision.

Board discussion ensued. Now that Dave Rudolph is on the Board and has fire experience, she would like to recuse herself from the inventory ad hoc committee. Director Whitfield made a motion that Director Rudolph and Director Carpenter comprise the inventory ad hoc committee. Director Sutcliffe seconded the motion.

Roll Call Vote: Director Sutcliffe – Aye, Director Whitfield – Aye, Director Carpenter – Aye, Director Rudolph – Aye.

The motion passed.

4.7 Occu-Med California AB-2188:

Board discussion ensued. Director Whitfield made a motion to choose Option #2 with the option of adjusting that as the annexation into the Beckwourth Peak Fire District progresses. Director Sutcliffe seconded the motion.

Roll Call Vote: Director Sutcliffe – Aye, Director Whitfield – Aye, Director Carpenter – Aye, Director Rudolph – Aye.

The motion passed.

4.8 Budget 2024 update:

Director Sutcliffe stated that she had asked that this be on tonight's agenda. Due to the Board's inability to conduct business for 6 months, the budget was unable to be discussed and voted on. Per the Fire Protection District Law of 1987, if there is no budget adopted for that year, then the previous years' budget will roll forward, so that is what the District will operate under for the near future, until the process gets moved along.

Public Comment: Jeanne Graham spoke and cautioned the Board that the budget this year is much less than last year without any monies coming in from wildfires. Ashlee Sims spoke and asked what is going to happen with monies received from C Road if EPRFPD is not providing them with services, will they be refunded? Director Sutcliffe explained that there was no money paid by C Road last year. Debbie Thompson spoke and clarified that the contract fee for last year was not paid in-lieu of repayment for use of the water tender. It wasn't that they did not pay, it's that an agreement was made that they not make a payment in order to settle the past use of the water tender. This year's contract payment has not been made, and now that Graeagle Fire has been serving them for the past 6 months, they have not been without service, she expressed that she thinks it is a "wash", C Road was not left unattended, they had mutual aid. She further stated that while Beckwourth Fire is billing EPRFPD for past coverage, she does not think that is the case with Graeagle Fire, it would just be going forward if she understands correctly.

5. Policies:

Public Comment: None

Board discussion ensued. It was decided to table this item for future follow up, once the annexation proceeds.

6. Closed Session:

6.1 Conference with Legal Counsel:

Public Comment: None. Director Sutcliffe moved the meeting into closed session at 7:27 PM.

7. Report on Closed Session:

Director Sutcliffe called the meeting back into open session at 7:52 PM. There was no action to report on.

Public Comment: None

8. Next scheduled Regular Board Meeting February 19, 2024 at 6:00 PM

Public Comment: None

9. Adjournment

Director Sutliffe made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 7:55 PM.

Director Whitfield seconded the motion.

Roll Call Vote: Director Sutliffe – Aye, Director Whitfield – Aye, Director Carpenter – Aye, Director Rudolph – Aye.

The motion passed.

Meeting was adjourned at 7:55 PM.

ATTEST:

Katy Martinez, Secretary

Angelina Sutliffe, Vice Chairperson

APPROVED AND SIGNED AT EPRFPD'S 02/19/2024 REGULAR BOARD MEETING