



# Eastern Plumas Rural Fire Protection District

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## MINUTES

For the Regular Meeting of the Eastern Plumas Rural Fire Protection District's

Board of Directors held at

141 Delleker Rd., Portola, CA 96122 On

January 04, 2021 at 6:00 PM

Board Members: Chairperson Jeanne Graham, Director Lydia Acosta,  
Director Kevin Sankey

1. Meeting was called to order at 6:00 PM
2. **Roll Call:** Director Sankey, Director Acosta, and Chairperson Graham were all present. Director Couto was absent.
3. **Pledge of Allegiance**
4. **Public Comment:** Jose Avalos asked if special counsel was present. Chairperson Graham stated no. Jose then asked who is paying special counsels fees. Chairperson Graham stated that public comment period is for making comments, not asking questions.
5. **Consent Items:**
  - a. Minutes of the Regular Board Meeting November 16, 2020
  - b. Minutes of the Regular Board Meeting December 07, 2020
  - c. Minutes of the Emergency Board Meeting December 08, 2020
  - d. Minutes of the Regular Board Meeting December 19, 2020

Chairperson Graham asked for any public comment. There was none.

Chairperson Graham asked for any Board discussion. There was none.

Chairperson Graham asked for a motion and a second.

Director Sankey made a motion to approve the consent agenda. Chairperson Graham seconded the motion. **Roll Call Vote:** Director Sankey – Aye, Director Acosta – Aye, Chairperson Graham– Aye. The item passes.

### 6. Regular Calendar

- 6.1 **Correspondence.** Secretary Katy Martinez informed the Board that an email was received from Mr. Aaron Doyle asking that future 2021 agendas be sent to him. Katy will place him on the distribution list.
- 6.2 **Budget.** Katy informed the board that the budget balance is \$45,210.23. Outstanding bills amount to \$22,169.01. Expected revenue for January 2021 from property taxes is approximately \$32,000; C Road is \$5,000; Gold Mountain is \$6,000; and the City of Portola is \$6,000. This totals approximately \$52,626.87.

Chairperson Graham asked for any public comment. There was none.

Chairperson Graham asked for any Board discussion. There was none.

- 6.3 **Chief's Report:** Chief Frank informed the Board there were a total of 25 calls in our district and a total of 16 calls in the City of Portola. Chief Frank provided a station update on the Iron Horse Station. The roll-up door malfunctioned and required service. Nevada Overhead Door performed the service and it is now working properly. Chief Frank provided the Board with an update on equipment. Truck 9823 is housed at the Iron Horse station, the breaker popped and the truck was not kept warm. It was checked by Chief Frank and Battalion Chief Brian Attama and everything is in working order.
- 6.4 **Resumption of Training.** Chairperson Graham stated the need to resume firefighter training in order to comply with mandatory training while practicing best COVID practices as well as the need to subscribe to Zoom and possibly purchase video equipment. Chairperson Graham asked for any public comment. Battalion Chief Attama voiced that he and Chief Frank have discussed the need to resume training but he feels the firefighters should be polled to determine how safe they feel about doing so. He feels some firefighters may not want to resume. Chairperson Graham stated that there are training aspects that are mandatory per state law. The department must find a way to comply while also heeding COVID regulations. Battalion Chief Attama expressed that in the past he introduced Target Solutions for online training and firefighter participation was very low. Director Acosta asked if Chief Frank or Battalion Chief Attama have polled the firefighters about resuming training. Chairperson Graham stated that she thinks it needs to be direction not polling because this is not a democracy. Assistant Chief John Fatheree was asked for his input on the need to purchase equipment for virtual training. He recommended that the department utilize equipment already in use by the department. Chief Frank agreed and it was decided to do a couple of trial runs and if additional equipment is found to be necessary, it can be addressed at a later date.

Board discussion ensued.

**Direction:** The Board gave direction to Chief Frank and Battalion Chief Attama to sit down and come up with a plan to safely resume training with a mixture of in-person and online training that can be presented to the Plumas County Public Health Department and OSHA for approval.

Assistant Chief John Fatheree spoke up and asked if he would have any involvement. Chairperson Graham stated that Battalion Chief Attama is our training guy, let's start there getting a plan drawn up and if he has any input he should send an email with his ideas. Jose Avalos then spoke up and asked why EPRFPD isn't reaching out to other fire departments that have continued in-person training for their advice. Chairperson Graham stated that we have reached out to other departments but we have to do what is right for our department. If other departments are taking chances with risk exposure, we will not do the same.

Chairperson Graham asked for a motion and a second.

Director Sankey made a motion to approve that we subscribe to a Zoom platform that suits our needs. Director Acosta seconded the motion. **Roll Call Vote:** Director Sankey – Aye, Director Acosta – Aye, Chairperson Graham – Aye. The item passes.

## **6.5 Continue discussion and development of Standard Operational Guidelines, Rules and Regulations, Policies and Procedures.**

Chairperson Graham explained that this has 2 parts, first, the part that Battalion Chief Attama is involved in for the firefighters. The Board has previously been provided suggested changes to the Standard Operating Guidelines, Rules and Regulations and Policies and Procedures.

Chairperson Graham asked for any public comment on the first part of this. There was none.

Chairperson Graham asked for any Board discussion. Discussion ensued.

Battalion Chief Attama spoke up and wanted to clarify that the changes he has been working on have been a collaborative effort between himself, Chief Frank, Assistant Chief John Fatheree, Captain Elaine Frank and from time to time Jose Avalos.

**Direction was given:** Secretary Katy Martinez was directed to place the firefighter portion on the second meeting in February's agenda.

The second part of this agenda item is for the Board. The Board has been discussing draft operational guidelines, policies and procedures at previous meetings.

Chairperson Graham asked for any public comment on the first part of this. There was none.

Chairperson Graham asked for any Board discussion. Discussion ensued.

**Direction was given:** Secretary Katy Martinez was directed to place the Boards portion on the first meeting in February's agenda and to ensure all board members have the draft copies.

## **6.6 New COVID 19 OSHA and County mandates for district employees and facilities.**

Chairperson Graham asked for any public comment. Jose Avalos spoke up and cited CDC guidelines regarding quarantines and people traveling out of state. Chairperson Graham clarified that the information Jose was quoting is old. New guidelines from the Plumas County Health Department are being followed by the department and command staff.

Chairperson Graham asked for Board discussion. Discussion ensued. Chairperson Graham suggested that the Board consider adopting the template guidelines received from Sedgwick. Battalion Chief Attama spoke up stating that if the Board adopts the guidelines, if there are any individual areas that the Board does not like, they would have to follow them. Chairperson Graham asked him what specific areas or items he sees as potential areas of concern. He stated he does not see a problem with any of it, but the Board should review it closely in order to avoid approval of any guidelines the department doesn't want to or can't enforce.

Further discussion ensued.

Direction was given to Battalion Chief Attama and Chief Frank to go over the guidelines with a fine toothed comb and identify any areas of the template that the Board should reconsider and possibly amend at a later date.

Chairperson Graham asked for a motion and a second.

Director Sankey made a motion to accept the Sedgwick template as our policy.

Director Acosta seconded the motion. **Roll Call Vote:** Director Sankey – Aye, Director Acosta – Aye, Chairperson Graham– Aye. The item passes.

**6.7 Engine 9873 Water Pump, report on repairs and request for additional \$2,500 for troubleshooting and repair by Reno Hydraulic.**

Chairperson Graham stated that the Board has previously approved \$10,000 for the repair of the water pump by High Desert of Reno, Nevada. The pump was opened and inspected and found to be in good condition. Seals were replaced and reassembled. Additional troubleshooting revealed that it is either the hydraulic pump or the hydraulic pump motor. We are currently waiting for Reno Hydraulic to have an opening to troubleshoot the hydraulic system and provide an estimate. Chairperson Graham recommends the Board approve an additional \$2,500 so repairs can continue without having to come back to the Board for additional funds if necessary.

Chairperson Graham asked for any public comment. There was none.

Chairperson Graham asked for Board discussion. There was none.

Chairperson Graham asked for a motion and a second.

Director Sankey made a motion to approve the additional \$2,500. Director Acosta seconded the motion. **Roll Call Vote:** Director Sankey – Aye, Director Acosta – Aye, Chairperson Graham– Aye. The item passes.

**6.8 Fire Recovery. The District uses Fire Recovery USA to recover cost on billable calls.**

**1. With the contract change at the end of January, staff needs direction on how to proceed with billing going forward.**

Chairperson Graham asked for any public comment. There was none.

**Direction was given.** Staff was directed to continue billing as they have been.

**2. Update from staff on current claim.** Captain Elaine Frank updated the Board on our current claim through Fire Recovery USA, in the amount of \$11,284. The homeowner is arguing the claim. Our recovery representative asked if the department wants to drop the claim or proceed with collections.

Chairperson Graham asked for Board discussion. Discussion ensued.

**Direction was given.** Staff was directed to advise Fire Recovery USA to proceed with collections.

**6.9 Consider and update Facebook page administrator, and social media styles for best practices and consistency.**

Chairperson Graham stated that currently the District Facebook page has only one administrator. It is good business practice to have more than one administrator. Additionally, in order to ensure that all District internet and social media platforms have the same look and feel and adhere to the District's standards. The public affairs officer and the

information technology director should have administrative passwords and work in conjunction with staff and the fire chief.

Chairperson Graham asked for any public comment. Jose Avalos asked who is the public affairs officer and he was told it is Wayne Moore.

Chairperson Graham asked for Board discussion. Discussion ensued.

Chairperson Graham asked Assistant Chief Fatheree to please share the Facebook password with the secretary. He explained that the way that the Facebook page was originally setup required that the password be the same as his own personal Facebook page's password. He would have to invite Wayne Moore and Jim Graham to take over administrative duties. The Board is unsure if Wayne Moore has a Facebook page and will inquire and get back to him on how to proceed. Battalion Chief Attama spoke up and suggested that the department may choose to create a new Facebook account under another email address. That will also be considered.

**Direction was given.** Secretary was advised to place this item on one of the February 2021 agendas.

**6.10 Grants. The District currently has three grants that need to be tracked.**

- a. The District has contracted with Mountain Girl Grants to apply for a regional hose grant where the District is the lead agency.
- b. Self-Contained Breathing Apparatus (SCBA) Grant. The District has contracted with Mountain Girl Grants to be co-applicants on a regional SCBA Grant, with Beckwourth Fire being the lead agency.
- c. Wildland Safety Grant. The District has been awarded a Wildland Safety Grant. It is now in the ordering of equipment stage.

Chairperson Graham stated that she would like to address the hose grant and the SCBA grant as one item and the Wildland grant separately. An email was received today from Mountain Girl Grants stating that the hose and SCBA grant application period has opened and she is ready to submit them.

Chairperson Graham asked for any public comment on either the hose grant or the SCBA grant. There was none.

Chairperson Graham asked Assistant Chief Fatheree if he had any other information regarding the grant application process. He stated that he spoke with Jamie this morning and answered a few questions for her and asked if he is still point person working on grants. He was told that yes, he is.

### **Wildland Safety Grant.**

Chairperson Graham asked for public comment. There was none.

Chairperson Graham stated that she went through the LN Curtis order and didn't see helmet shrouds. Battalion Chief Attama was asked for clarification whether shrouds are included with helmets or do they need to be ordered separately. It was confirmed that shrouds need to be ordered separately and he accidentally missed them. He will go back and place them on the order and he believes they can be ready within 2 weeks. Chief Frank was asked for any input. He stated his preference that dual purpose boots be ordered rather than strictly wildland boots. He spoke with Dan Bria today and he said that we can order the boots that we need right now and order the additional boots at a later date. Discussion ensued regarding dual purpose boots versus wildland boots and whether or not paying for and receiving boots in specific sizes now and ordering and paying for additional boots now, but requesting and receiving other specific sized boots at a future date would comply with the strict grant requirements. The need to strictly adhere to the grant requirements was agreed by all. Battalion Chief Attama gave a detailed description of the differences between dual purpose and wildland boots. The department has never before issued wildland boots to firefighters. Chairperson Graham expressed the possibility that firefighters who are issued wildland boots or dual purpose boots be required to agree to a one year commitment to the department. It was clarified that if a firefighter issued boots committed to a year with the department and completed that year, the boots would not need to be equipment returned upon separation from the department in the future. If the one year commitment was not met, the firefighter would be required to repay the department for them. This would be the same as the commitment required for classes paid for by the department and there is a form that firefighters would sign.

**Direction was given.** Battalion Chief Attama was directed to poll all of the firefighters that are receiving boots as to their preference; dual purpose or wildland boots. Inform the firefighters that boot issuance will require a one year commitment to the department and add the helmet shrouds to the LN Curtis order. Secretary will place this item on the February 01, 2020 agenda.

***Director Sankey asked for a brief recess. Chairperson Graham called for a 5 minute recess at 7:26.***

***Chairperson Graham called the meeting back into session at 7:31.***

#### **6.11 Update and direction on status of previously approved Cal Card application.**

Chairperson Graham informed the Board that the Cal Card application was submitted on December 23, 2020 and approved on December 31, 2020. Cards should be received soon.

Chairperson Graham asked for any public comment. Assistant Chief Fatheree asked what credit limit was approved. Chairperson Graham did not have that figure at hand.

Chairperson Graham asked for any Board Discussion. There was none.

#### **6.12 Update and direction on five-year Audit.**

Chairperson Graham asked for public comment. There was none.

Secretary Katy Martinez informed the Board that she was hoping to return from the holidays to an email from the auditor, but there wasn't one. She sent an email asking for an update.

**Direction was given.** Secretary to stay on top of this and update the Board.

#### **6.13 Update from Chief Frank on previously approved Scott Self Contained Breathing Apparatus, including expected delivery date from LN Curtis.**

Chairperson Graham asked for any public comment. There was none.

Chief Frank informed the Board that he spoke with Dan Bria at LN Curtis today and was told that the other department should be finished with them this week and he will deliver them to us within the next two weeks. The department will then be invoiced as normal.

#### **6.14 Discussion and direction to Chief Frank to Surplus Equipment Rescue Truck 9851, Rescue Truck 9851, which is no longer needed as a rescue vehicle, including options to sell or retrofit it into a service vehicle.**

**Recommendation:** Turn Truck 9851 into a service vehicle, approving a not to exceed amount of \$5,000 to retrofit Truck 9851 into a service vehicle.

Chairperson Graham asked for public comment. Assistant Chief Fatheree stated that he does not feel the department needs to add to or retrofit any vehicles at this time due to budget constraints. Jose Avalos also voiced his objection to spending money on a vehicle with high mileage.

Chairperson Graham asked for any Board discussion. Discussion ensued. The need for a retrofitted vehicle, the cost involved with the retrofit, the possible future cost of motor replacement or rebuild, the possibility of money to be made from sending the vehicle out on fires were all discussed. Chief Frank then voiced that the vehicle could possibly be sold for \$3,000 to \$7,000, most likely the lower estimate. Battalion Chief Attama and Jose Avalos again spoke up objecting to retrofitting the vehicle. Chairperson Graham reminded them that public comment on this subject is closed and their opinions are noted. Board discussion continued with input from Chief Frank. Director Sankey recommended that due to the age of the vehicle, the cost to retrofit it and the potential cost of replacing the motor, that the department liquidates the asset. Director Acosta stated that she would like more time to think about it. Chairperson Graham asked that the item be placed on the February 01, 2021 agenda for further discussion.

**6.15 Turnover – Portola to Beckwourth, discussion and direction regarding Automated External Defibrillators (AEDs)**

**Recommendation:** Leave the AED's in the Portola businesses. Provide direction on how the batteries will be replaced as required and annual checks done.

Chairperson Graham asked for any public comment. Jose Avalos asked a question regarding certification. Chairperson Graham reminded him that public comment is not for asking questions. There was no further public comment.

Chairperson Graham stated that she spoke with Daniel Smith on the Beckwourth Fire Board and Beckwourth Fire will be returning the AED that has been in their chief's vehicle that has been on loan. Beckwourth Fire will be taking over the battery expense for the 2 AED's in Portola businesses. Chairperson Graham recommends that the department do the same contract that we do with Sierra Valley and the Sheriff's Office, keeping accountability and annual checks the same across the board. Currently what we have is that the Sheriff's Office and Sierra Valley maintain their units and do inspections every 90 days. Costs associated with batteries are their responsibility as well.

Chairperson Graham asked for any Board discussion. There was none.

**Direction was given.** Staff is directed to draw up the contract and Chairperson Graham will contact Daniel Smith and inform him of the Board's decision.

**7. Old Business**

Chairperson Graham reminded everyone of the Brown Act Training at the Regular Board Meeting on January 18, 2021. The training is mandatory for all Board members and all staff who are involved in preparing Board agendas.

Chairperson Graham asked for public comment. Jose Avalos asked who will be providing Brown Act training to future Board members. Chairperson Graham explained that as was discussed at a previous meeting, Meyers Nave will be providing training.

**8. New Business**

Chairperson Graham stated that the next Regular Meeting is scheduled for January 18, 2021 at 6PM. Brown Act training will be conducted first and Regular Board Meeting business will be conducted at the conclusion of training. Any staff or Board member that would like an item on the agenda for January 18, 2021 needs to have it submitted to the secretary no later than January 08, 2021. Agenda items must have a couple of sentences regarding what it is about.

**Chairperson Graham asked for public comment.** Assistant Chief Fatheree asked if access to the Delleker Station office would be addressed tonight. Chairperson Graham advised that did not make it onto tonight's agenda. Jose Avalos asked that Board contact information be sent to him. Chairperson Graham instructed him to email the secretary and she will get him what he needs.

**Direction was given.** Secretary is to place this item on the agenda for January 18, 2021.

Chairperson Graham asked for any Board discussion. There was none.



9. **Adjournment**

Chairperson Graham asked for a motion and a second.

Director Acosta made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Director Sankey seconded the motion. **Roll Call Vote:** Director Sankey – Aye, Director Acosta – Aye, Chairperson Graham– Aye. The item passes.

Meeting was adjourned at 7:52 PM.

ATTEST:



Katy Martinez, Secretary



Jeanne Graham, Chairperson

03/01/2021

APPROVED AND SIGNED AT EPRFPD'S ~~02/15/2021~~ REGULAR MONTHLY BOARD MEETING

