

# Moraga-Orinda Fire Protection District



## BOARD OF DIRECTORS REGULAR BOARD MEETING MINUTES

August 15, 2018

(Approved September 19, 2018)

### 1. **Opening Ceremonies**

The Board of Directors convened in Open Session at 6:00 P.M. on August 15, 2018 at the Sarge Littlehale Community Room, 22 Orinda Way, Orinda, California. President Barber called the meeting to order. Director Jex participated via conference call. Present were the following Directors and Staff:

Director Anderson	Director Jorgens	Gloriann Sasser, Admin Services Director
Director Barber	Dave Winnacker, Fire Chief	Christine Russell, HR Benefits Manager
Director Famulener	Johnathan Holtzman, District Counsel	

### 2. **Public Comment**

There was no comment from the public.

### 3. **Closed Session**

At 6:00 P.M., the Board adjourned into Closed Session. Director Jex left the conference call at 6:40 p.m.

### 4. **Reconvene the Meeting**

President Barber reconvened the regular business meeting of the Moraga-Orinda Fire District Board of Directors at 7:00 p.m. Director Jex was absent. Present were the following Directors and Staff:

Director Anderson	Director Jorgens	Gloriann Sasser, Admin Services Director
Director Barber	Dave Winnacker, Fire Chief	Christine Russell, HR Benefits Manager
Director Famulener	Johnathan Holtzman, District Counsel	Grace Santos, District Clerk

President Barber asked for a moment of silence in honor of all the firefighters currently battling the fires throughout California and the United States.

### 5. **Report of Closed Session Action**

There was no reportable action taken during closed session.

### 6. **Public Comment**

Director Famulener asked for prayers for the injured MOFD firefighter and voiced her appreciation for his service to the District.

### 7. **Consent Agenda**

Motion by Director Famulener and seconded by Director Anderson to approve and file all items on the Consent Agenda – 7.1 Meeting Minutes, 7.2 Monthly Incident Report and 7.3 Monthly Check/Voucher. Said motion carried a 4-0 roll-call vote (Ayes: Anderson, Barber, Famulener and Jorgens; Absent: Jex; Noes: None).

### 8. **Regular Agenda**

#### 8.1 **Resolution 18-15 – A Resolution of the Moraga-Orinda Fire Protection District of Contra Costa County, Amending the District Conflict of Interest Code**

All local government agencies are required by statute to adopt a Conflict of Interest Code that include provisions designating the positions within the agency that will be required to report certain financial interests, the manner of reporting those financial interests, and standards for when the employees will be disqualified from participating in the making of certain decisions.

Conflict of Interest Codes must specifically list positions that make or participate in making decisions for or on behalf of the District. Typically, positions that involve voting on matters, negotiating contracts, or making recommendations on purchases without substantive review must be included in codes.

A primary purpose of the Code is to require disclosure of those types of investments, interests in real property, sources of income and business positions that designated positions may affect in their decision-making.

At a regular Board meeting on September 21, 2016, the Board of Directors adopted Resolution 16-14 – a Resolution of the Moraga-Orinda Fire Protection District of Contra Costa County Adopting a Conflict of Interest Code.

District Council has conducted the required biennial review of the Conflict of Interest Code and has determined to add one position and associated disclosure categories to the list of “Designated Positions” in the Code. In accordance, Section 1 of Resolution 18-15 Amending the District Conflict of Interest Code and Section 2 of the Code have been amended to add one new position of “Emergency Preparedness Coordinator”. Clarifying changes were also made to Sections 1 and 5 of the Code.

Motion by Director Jorgens and seconded by Director Famulener to adopt Resolution 18-15 – A Resolution of the Moraga-Orinda Fire District of Contra Costa County, Amending the District Conflict of Interest Code. Said motion carried a 4-0 roll-call vote (Ayes: Anderson, Barber, Famulener and Jorgens; Absent: Jex; Noes: None).

## **8.2 Emergency Outdoor Warning Systems**

Recent community discussion on NextDoor and other digital community messaging systems has identified a desire for emergency notification in the event of a wildfire. Much of this discussion has centered on the suitability of outdoor warning sirens to wake sleeping residents and alert them of the need for evacuation.

Evacuation orders and implementation are handled by our law enforcement partners. MOFD has worked with Moraga and Orinda PD to develop detailed evacuation polygons to allow for the orderly evacuation of individual neighborhoods. In the event of a fire, the MOFD incident commander will communicate areas to be evacuated with the appropriate police representative who will then activate emergency evacuation notifications. The primary method to do so is through the Contra Costa County Community Warning System (Reverse 9-1-1) resulting in automated phone calls, text messages, media alerts and “weather alert radio” notifications being placed to residents in the selected area. Additional notifications for non-life threatening matters are made on an area-wide basis using Nixle, Nextdoor, Facebook, Twitter and other social media platforms.

Within the MOFD jurisdiction, the Community Warning System is the preferred method as it allows for targeted evacuations of those residents who face the greatest risk. Given the limited number of evacuation routes, attempting a mass evacuation is very likely to result in traffic impacts that will prevent both citizens from departing and first responders from entering the area will expose the population to greater risk.

A recent development that potentially impacts the ability of local government to make emergency notifications is PG&E’s policy to pre-emptively shut down power during high fire threat weather conditions. Combined with the prevalence of VOIP telephone systems and hands free phones, loss of power may effectively eliminate residential telephone services.

Additional concerns have been raised regarding the resiliency of cellular networks and ISP infrastructure in the event of a power outage.

District staff is engaged in conversations with wireless providers to determine the resiliency of local networks, identify critical nodes, and ensure fuels mitigation work has been completed to protect these sites. District staff is also meeting with PG&E to better understand the criteria that will be used to determine in the event that electrical service should be disrupted.

Chief Winnacker reviewed some best practices which included signing up for Nixle and Community Warning System (CWS) alerts. One could set Nixle as an Emergency Bypass contact to enable alerts when the phone is in “Do Not Disturb mode” and to ensure that smart phones are set to receive government alerts under the notifications settings. Residents could purchase an Uninterruptible Power Supply (UPS) to power hands free phone base stations and routers/modems, a weather alert radio for homes or battery powered AM/FM radio to receive notifications and updates in the event of power outages. He also encouraged the community to develop internal neighborhood notification plans, and to clear the defensible space around homes and streets that front properties.

Several local government agencies have installed outdoor emergency notification systems. Older systems are comprised of single function sirens, whose primary purpose is to warn people who are outside to rapidly seek shelter indoors and turn to radio or TV for more information. A 2017 study by the National Institute of Science and Technology (NIST) found that siren efficacy and propagation was negatively affected by high winds and structures. As an example of the siren density required to assure notification, San Francisco uses 109 sites (voice and siren capable) to cover 48 square miles for outdoor warning. The city of Richmond has 17 sites to serve 30 square miles of primarily flat terrain. MOFD serves 42 square miles with 22.3 of these being within Moraga and Orinda proper.

Siren only systems have recently fallen from favor as technology has provided more precise systems for rapidly spreading emergency information. The NIST study found that sirens often result in confusion regarding what to do and require significant outreach campaigns to educate the public in the targeted area.

The Contra Costa County Community Warning System operates sirens throughout the county, primarily in areas near refineries. They have estimated that sirens cost approximately \$50,000 per site to field and \$5,000 in annual maintenance. Additional funding would be required for a sound survey to ensure the siren system was properly located to cover the desired population. Given the paucity of public lands throughout MOFD's jurisdiction, additional work would be required to secure MOUs to locate and maintain sirens on private property.

Chief Winnacker announced that a community meeting to discuss Orinda Evacuation and Warning is scheduled for August 22, 2018 at the Orinda Library Auditorium.

## **9. Committee Reports**

### **9.1 Finance Committee (Directors Anderson and Jorgens)**

There was nothing to report.

### **9.2 Pension Review Ad Hoc Committee (Directors Barber and Jorgens)**

There was nothing to report.

### **9.3 Board of Directors and Fire Chief Roles & Responsibilities and Rules of Procedures Update Ad Hoc Committee (Directors Famulener and Jorgens)**

There was nothing to report.

### **9.4 Audit Ad Hoc Committee (Director Jex)**

There was nothing to report.

### **9.5 Long Range Financial Plan Ad Hoc Committee (Directors Barber and Jex)**

There was nothing to report.

### **9.6 Labor Negotiations Ad Hoc Committee (Directors Anderson and Jorgens)**

There was nothing to report.

## **10. Announcements**

### **10.1 Brief information only reports related to meetings attended by a Director at District expense**

There were no announcements.

### **10.2 Questions and informational comments from Board members and Staff**

Director Famulener announced that the next Contra Costa County Fire Boards and Commissioners meeting is scheduled for September 20, 2018 at the Concord Hilton. Contra Costa Fire Protection District's Chief Carman will be the speaker.

### **10.3 Fire Chief Updates**

Chief Winnacker gave a brief report on the status of the Station 43 construction project.

Chief Winnacker reported that schools at Wagner Ranch and Sleepy Hollow have installed 10,000-gallon water tanks, per the District's request. Personnel will be running a drill to determine how to get water out of the tanks, to understand the process, and to develop a training policy. Chief Winnacker presented at a school board meeting, attended the school open houses, and is working with the schools to make sure he is invited to "back-to-school" nights to present updated site plans and to participate with site emergency councils to ensure the updates reflect that reality. He is working with the school site staff and parents to make sure MOFD has their trust that their kids are safer at the schools in the event of an emergency.

MOFD Captain Lucas Lambert provided a brief update on the out of county mutual aid requests that MOFD personnel is currently assisting with. Captain Lambert recently returned from the Ferguson fire, where he was assigned as the Safety Officer. A number of other MOFD personnel are also currently out on strike teams. He reported that fires this early on in the fire season is uncommon and that the end of July/beginning of August have seen one of the largest and most destructive fires in California history. Captain Lambert commented that the millions of trees affected by the beetle kill are responsible for the deaths of a number of firefighters at the Mendocino and Ferguson fires. The trees are unreliable, dangerous, unpredictable, and have changed the way firefighters do business. No one has written a book on how to fight fires with millions of dead trees, which was his concern as Safety Officer. He thanked all the firefighters around the nation and the world for their assistance with the fires.

Chief Winnacker reported that MOFD currently has five personnel deployed. Based on how things are going now, he anticipates seeing more requests for support until the rains come.

Chief Winnacker gave a brief presentation on the remote sensors, which were purchased through a California Fire Foundation grant. They recently conducted the first field test of the sensor network, and once the live burn ban has been lifted, a live fire test will also be done.

#### **10.4 Communications Received**

Chief Winnacker received several letters from residents reporting violations of the Exterior Hazard Abatement Standards. Staff is following up on complaints and is aggressively moving to have the violations mitigated as quickly as possible.

Chief Winnacker reported that, with PG&E funding, the City of Orinda, PG&E and MOFD conducted a major clearing project along Miner Road, between Camino Pablo and Lombardi Lane.

#### **10.5 Future Agenda Items**

There was nothing to report.

#### **11. Adjournment**

At 8:00 P.M., President Barber called for adjournment of the regular meeting.



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Grace Santos, District Secretary/Clerk