



Moraga-Orinda Fire District
BOARD OF DIRECTORS
SPECIAL BOARD MEETING/PUBLIC WORKSHOP MINUTES
November 16, 2022
(APPROVED DECEMBER 21, 2022)

1. OPENING CEREMONIES

The Board of Directors convened a teleconference Open Session at 6:00 PM on November 16, 2022, via the Zoom application <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/83722328029>, webinar id: 83722328029 and by phone at 669-900-6833. This meeting was conducted by webinar and teleconference in accordance with AB 361. The meeting was not available for in-person attendance.

President Donner called the meeting to order and requested an attendance roll call. Fire Chief Winnacker led the pledge of allegiance.

President Donner	Director Jex	Gloriann Sasser, Admin. Services Director
Director Baitx	Director Jorgens	Mary Smith, Finance Manager
Director Danziger	Dave Winnacker, Fire Chief	District Counsel, Mariam Morley
		Marcia Holbrook, District Clerk

2. PUBLIC COMMENT - ITEMS NOT ON THE AGENDA (audio 01:39.93)
President Donner opened the public comment.

Jonathan Goodwin, Canyon resident, requested the Board focus on what is best for the District when choosing officers at the December meeting. Mr. Goodwin reiterated his previous public comments about the District providing Board training to the presiding officer.

There were no additional requests to address the Board. President Donner closed public comment.

3. SPECIAL AGENDA

3.1 Single Role EMT and Paramedic Positions (audio 00:04:29.)

Fire Chief Winnacker provided the report. Prior discussions were held regarding increasing staffing in June 2019, July 2019, April 2020, and during the 2022 year. The report provides links to previous staff reports which are also available at www.mofd.org/agendas. The Directors submitted 11 questions in response to the request for specific data from the October 2022 meeting. The answers to those questions are outlined in the report. Fire Chief Winnacker stated that for some questions, sufficient information or time was not available to provide answers since the October meeting. Some answers to the questions lend themselves to a more comprehensive answer in the form of an update to the current Standards of Cover report. The District has two Standards of Cover Reports, one dated 2006 and the other dated 2016-2020.

Fire Chief Winnacker reviewed that the City of Berkeley and South San Francisco are undergoing similar Standards of Cover processes. The City of Berkeley anticipates having a report by mid-December 2022 and South San Francisco on December 9, 2022. The San Ramon Valley Protection Fire District engaged in an internal process but cannot share information for publication at this time. In addition, Staff received new information about unit reliability (time on task), which is the percentage of time units are committed to an incident based on the number of hours assigned versus hours in the year. This new information was received after the publication of the board packet and is available as needed at the directors' request.

Fire Chief Winnacker referenced one of the questions asked by the Directors about different service delivery models. As explained in the staff report, different service delivery models are complex and exceed the expertise available in the District. The engagement of an external expert is required to answer that question. Fire Chief Winnacker commented that attachments C, D, E, and F in the packet include modeling different financial scenarios. Staff will cover the scenarios in detail during the November 16, 2022, regular meeting under agenda item 6.1. Administrative Services Director Sasser was in attendance to answer questions if requested but planned to cover that information during the regular agenda.

President Donner requested information about alternative service delivery models utilizing smaller, more mobile apparatus to speed paramedic responses in limited access areas. Fire Chief Winnacker answered alternative models are squads of two paramedics utilizing an F150 standard-size pickup truck

which is used in Southern California extensively. This method is not standard within the region. The information is unavailable to investigate locally, and outside expertise is required. President Donner asked if the question was about getting firefighters to difficult areas in the District. Fire Chief Winnacker deferred to the Director who submitted the question.

Director Danziger inquired about the goal and purpose of a Standards of Cover (SOC) report. Fire Chief Winnacker explained the purpose of the report is to outline the District's service level and ability to cover the District with regard to fire suppression, emergency medical, and other situations. The report consists of an introduction and an overview of the District, a history of what has been done before, and a deployment analysis (where, when, and how calls occur in relation to the location of the fire stations and apparatus). Recommendations are then made on how to reduce deficiencies that are identified. Fire Chief Winnacker discussed the challenges of the benchmarking. As stated by one of the more well-known providers of SOC studies, "a community needs as much fire protection as it can afford." The report breaks down the differences between call receiving and processing, turnout response, and weight of attack. A series of recommendations are provided for changes to procedures relevant to areas where the communication system is subpar, causing delays in response. In addition to the recommendations, there is commentary regarding the fire station locations and possible needs to relocate fire stations or apparatus. Due to geography and the built out nature of the community, the District has few options for station relocation except for station 41.

Director Jorgens commented there are a lot of factors that go into determining the kind of equipment and how that equipment gets deployed. Contra Costa County dynamically places ambulances strategically and does not leave them sitting in the fire stations. The ambulances are placed dynamically based on the probabilities of the ambulances being needed in a particular area. President Donner responded that the Contra Costa County call volume is ten times greater than MOFD's call volume; so it makes sense to stage an ambulance somewhere other than the fire station. President Donner thought that model would not work for our smaller District.

Director Jorgens requested a review of the data and statistics provided in the staff report. Fire Chief Winnacker reviewed the call volumes table provided in the report. Call volume trends had steadily grown until the COVID-19 pandemic, and call volume has yet to return to pre-COVID levels. It is still being determined whether or not there will be a rebound to pre-COVID levels or whether the District will continue to see slow growth over time. Based on year-to-date, the call volume levels match 2014 and 2015 levels.

Fire Chief Winnacker continued to review the ambulance response time data and explained that the Commission on Fire Accreditation International (CFAI) SOC benchmarking used in the 2006 and 2016 Standards of Cover reports used a suburban response density. The District's population density is low, so the District's firefighter ratio per capita is much higher compared to other areas. This ratio is correct. If the same ratio were used as the San Ramon Valley Fire Protection District, the District's response times would be unacceptably high in the outlying parts of the community. Fire Chief Winnacker explained the challenge is the District has outlying areas in the community where it is not possible to have a converging response. A standard per capita ratio is difficult because the District is so spread out.

Fire Chief Winnacker stated the goal (CFAI Superior Service Level) is to reach all medical emergencies within the suburban areas (Moraga and Orinda) within seven minutes (7:00) or all fires and rescues within seven minutes and twenty seconds (7:20), 90% of the time. In 2016, the District achieved that goal 60% percent of the time, with a median response time of five minutes and twenty-two seconds (05:22). The question becomes, what is the appropriate standard for the District? The standard used is seven minutes (07:00). Fire Chief Winnacker noted the slight increase in response times during the COVID-19 pandemic due to the required PPE. Fire Chief Winnacker summarized that the response times are stable.

Engine 90th percentile response times 2014-present:

Year	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
	8.63	9.47	9.35	9.52	9.07	9.72	9.68	9.79	9.82

Ambulance 90th percentile response times 2014-present:

Year	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019**	2020	2021	2022
M41	7.46	8.42	7.85	8.01	9.32	9.17	10.17	9.68	9.65

M44*	9.06	9.56	11.13	10.82	8.14	XX	XX	XX	XX
M45**	10.23	9.45	11.56	12.38	9.94	10.12	10.12	11.77	10.62

*M44 moved to station 45 in 2019. **M45 assumes primary response duty in 2019.

Director Jorgens noted that during part of 2014 and 2015, the District had the extra staffing, and the response times did not change when the extra staffing went away. The quality of service did not improve with two variables: the District reduced Staff, and the District had many more calls. Director Jorgens deduced from looking at the District relative to San Ramon and Albany, the District had an average of two calls a day which is 10% of Contra Costa County's calls. The question becomes, if the District increased staffing, it would not make a difference in the District's response times because the District is very well staffed, based on how much time the District is available and sitting in the station. The amount of time that the District is ready to respond is in the high 80s and the standard states that a District would need to be down in the 65s (often) before determining that the District is under Staff. If the District is fully staffed, that leads to believe the response times can absorb the number of calls that have increased and do not seem to vary based on the current staffing.

Fire Chief Winnacker described the unit hour utilization (UHU), otherwise known as either the time-on-task, which is the amount of time the units are committed, or unit reliability, which is the amount of time units are not committed and available for calls. Medic 41 is currently at 12.44%, 12.45% in 2021, 11% in 2020, and 14% in 2019. Medic 45 combined with the Engine 45 is currently at 10.5% and historically in the 10-11% range. Director Jorgens stated since the times do not vary, and the District has not seen a change in the response times with the increased call volume, that shows that the District is handling that extra volume because it has not caused the response times to slow. It also did not seem to matter when the District had more or fewer people as the response times stayed the same, which is the objective.

Director Danziger asked if Medic 41 receives the calls and responds to calls for the North Orinda area. Fire Chief Winnacker answered no. Medic 45 and Medic 41 are both first-out ambulances; whichever unit is closest responds to the call. The District uses AVL (automatic vehicle location) to make that determination. Director Jorgens asked if the Lafayette ambulances would be the fastest for North Orinda calls. Fire Chief Winnacker answered not for ambulance response but for an engine due to an auto aid agreement which includes boundary drop. This only applies to engines and the District only utilizes a ConFire AMR ambulance only when the District has no units available due to the EOA for EMS transport.

President Donner commented that back when there was misinformation about the District possibly consolidating with ConFire, he had received approximately 150 emails and approximately 275-300 additional emails from Orinda and Moraga constituents' supporting increasing the staffing levels. Increasing staffing levels is an insurance policy. If the District has an engine out-of-service and there is either a structure fire or another critical car accident, it would serve the community to staff station 45 with medics. President Donner asked if any of the other Directors had received any emails. Director Jorgens responded that he had received many emails, and all the Directors got the same emails because the emails were generated by a computer program from the Union's website.

Director Jorgens noted that the District has 15 times the calls for ambulances than for fires. If the objective is to ensure good ambulance response times and to have ambulances available, we would not want to send ambulances to fires because they would not be available for ambulance calls. The question remains whether the staffing should be paramedics or firefighter-paramedics, which is why we are waiting for the City of Berkeley and South San Francisco SOC reports. The SOC should provide their logic about how they thought through that question of paramedics or firefighter-paramedics. Information from Contra Costa County, which has paramedic-only ambulances data, is also pending. Director Jorgens concluded that the Directors and the public need that data to answer the questions. The written public comment received from Jonathan Goodwin made good points for consideration and addressed some of the SOC issues and equipment.

President Donner opened the public workshop and public comment.

District Clerk Holbrook confirmed that one written public comment was received from Jonathan Goodwin on November 14, 2022. The comment was forwarded to the directors and posted on the District's website.

Matt Swindle, city unknown resident, expressed appreciation and support for Fire Chief Winnacker and the Board.

Marc Evans, Orinda resident, commented that emails are not a quantifiable record and votes for a director are quantifiable.

Jonathan Goodwin, Canyon resident, commented on the situation's complexity and recommended a committee be formed to dissect the variables and prepare a report for the Directors. Mr. Goodwin suggested inviting the Fire or Operations Chief from one of the agencies that have recently completed a SOC report.

Vince Wells, Local 1230 Union President, reviewed the history of the staffing, and before the economic downturn, the District had two permanently staffed ambulances. Because of the economics and the concern about fire district funding, the District reduced one of the ambulances and made it a cross-staffed ambulance. Mr. Wells defined that a cross-staffed ambulance means the crew will be either on the engine or the ambulance. This reduction was a degradation of service. Before the reduction, both the engine and ambulance were fully staffed. Mr. Wells stated that L1230 is asking that the staffing be returned now that the funding has been restored. The District has done a lot to secure funding by creating a Pension Stabilization Trust Fund, the OPEB Fund, which has paid down the unfunded liability and increased the reserves significantly. Mr. Wells asked for a reevaluation of that situation. Restoring the staffing is an enhancement of service, and it is affordable.

Anthony Stephens, Local 1230 Union Vice President, commented that some presentations were missing information when comparing the Moraga-Orinda Fire District to other agencies that provide similar services. Another significant difference between the MOFD communities versus other communities is that there are no hospitals in the MOFD area. The District does not have some of the same luxuries or relationships with the local hospitals where the ambulance might be able to break away to respond to another call. Restoring the staffing is an insurance policy and enhancement to service. The North Orinda area has been identified as one of the highest fire hazards in the State of California. Mr. Stephens supported putting the ambulance back in service in Orinda with firefighter paramedics.

Director Danziger stated that the Board has been discussing the staffing issue for three and a half years. The District had the staffing at station 45 before 2014, and the response times were better. Staffing the ambulance at station 45 is a better model for the community. It is safer for the residents and firefighters. The District does not want a situation where there is an event; both ambulances are out, and it takes too long for an ambulance to respond. Whichever the model, single-role or firefighter paramedic, the community deserves and will pay for the service. Director Danziger believed the District could afford either model. Director Danziger supported making a decision but did not think the Board could vote on the item and only provide direction. Director Danziger noted that whatever direction the Board gave to Staff would take a couple of months as recruiting is very difficult and could take two years. Director Danziger proposed moving forward.

Director Jex reviewed that one of the reasons the previous predecessors cut the two positions was that the District could not afford to maintain the positions and meet the District's financial obligations. Director Jex completed an analysis, and the District reserves dropped to an unacceptable level in eight of the nine years. (inaudible). President Donner requested Director Jex to repeat his statement. Director Jex restated the reserves have yet to reach the 50% minimum level of being a financially healthy District. The District has \$18M in capital expenditures in the next five years and concluded disastrous results regarding reducing and eliminating the reserves in the next five years. In two of the years, the District had negative reserves.

Director Jex had additional questions on the assumptions used in the long-range financial forecasts (LRFF) and expressed the importance of understanding the economics, affordability, and implications. The balance sheet information is needed and critical when reviewing the information. In the 2019-2022 financial statements, indications of volatility dramatically increased in the deferred outflows and inflows. The deferred inflows and outflows on the disclosed balance sheet go from \$13M for one period to \$21M in 2021. Director Jex proclaimed several financial issues arose based on his analysis which showed \$25M in one of those years that need to be answered. The answers would require expert assistance, particularly on the pension issue.

President Donner asked if his analysis reviewed the firefighter paramedic or single-role models. Director Jex answered that he looked at all nine and analyzed all the models. The risks are a decrease in the reserves. Director Jex explained one analysis showed adding another \$1.5M, and the other issue focused on CCCERA's recent reduction in the discount rate. When CCCERA reduces the discount rate, the costs are dramatic, and the unfunded pension liability of \$25M moves up to about \$60M. The District

is required to fund the unfunded pension liability. Director Jex opposed making any recommendations to incur additional costs until these issues can be addressed.

Daniel Elbanna: L1230 Representative, commented on the expenditures outlined in attachment D, Current Staffing Levels, and pointed out that throughout all the years listed in the LRFF, the District is spending \$500K towards the Home Hardening Grant program. Mr. Elbanna commented that the District continues to fund the OPEB fund and that the pension stabilization fund drops to \$1M and then jumps to almost \$5M in 2028. The Pension Stabilization Fund is designed to offset increases in pension costs. Mr. Elbanna opined there is a ton of money going to these funds, and the District is not locked into running a deficit or running down the General reserves. Mr. Elbanna added that the standard for general reserves is two months (about 17%), not 50%, and the District's reserves are just below that amount. Mr. Elbanna supported adding the six firefighters.

Director Jorgens stated it would benefit the District to learn from other agencies' research and thought processes and supported delaying the decision until the SOCs are developed by the other agencies. The decision is the largest financial decision made in the last six years. The last time the Board increased staffing was in 2008 (from 17 to 19) for ten years of service, less than a third of the time the District has been in operation. The District faced the worst recession it had had in a long time. Currently, the economy has mass lay-offs (Facebook 11,000 people, and Amazon 10,000 people). Director Jorgens said he was not saying the District should or should not have an ambulance at station 45 but has yet to hear any discussion about how to staff that ambulance and what kind of staffing. The studies from the City of Berkeley and South San Francisco and a MOFD SOC will show the best way to accomplish that objective. Director Jorgens proposed getting the data to make an informed decision.

Director Jex voiced that the Pension Stabilization Fund accumulated funds to fund the Unfunded Pension Liability that the District is obligated to support. The Pension Stabilization Fund ensures that the pensions will be there when the firefighters retire. One of the issues is that CCCERA recently reduced their targeted rate of what they anticipate will be on the pension plan. In our 2020 audit, in the disclosure, the unfunded pension liability states that a one percent drop, which has occurred with CCCERA, goes up to \$54M. The District could have a \$54M unfunded pension liability, and some of the analysis states that it will double. Director Jorgens commented this happened in 2010-2011 when it doubled when the CCCERA Rate to Return went down.

At 6:58 PM, Fire Chief Winnacker posted a chat message stating it was time to stop the special meeting and start the regular meeting at 7:00 PM. At 7:00 PM, Fire Chief Winnacker interjected that the Regular Board meeting is set to begin at 7:00 PM.

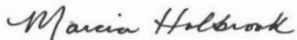
Director Danziger acknowledged the comments and points made by President Donner, Directors Jex, and Jorgens to wait to get the pending information. Director Danziger was in favor of moving on and addressing this again at a later date.

President Donner closed the public workshop and public comment.

No further discussion by the Board.

4. ADJOURNMENT

At 7:02 PM, President Jorgens motioned and seconded by Director Jex to adjourn the meeting. Said motion carried a 5-0 roll call vote (Ayes: Baitx, Danziger, Jex, Jorgens, and Donner; Noes: None; Absent: None; Abstain: None).


District Secretary/District Clerk

11/16/22 Special and Regular
Recording CHAT Messages

01:07:13 Fire Chief Winnacker: Directors- we have to stop this special meeting and start the regular meeting at 7:00

02:02:04 Jonathan Goodwin: Please pull item 5.2.

02:35:00 Vince Wells, President IAFF Local 1230: When is public comment available

02:51:09 Fire Chief Winnacker: No motion has been made.

03:03:20 Fire Chief Winnacker: Public comment is required on the motion

03:10:42 Ann Walgenbach: Thank you Chief!

From: jonathan@
To: Holbrook, Marcia
Subject: District Staffing Level
Date: Monday, November 14, 2022 8:45:44 AM

Good Morning, Ms. Holbrook.

Please forward this memo to the District's current directors, to incoming directors and to senior staff.

*Thanks very much.
~Jonathan Goodwin,
Canyon, Calif.*

MEMORANDUM

To: The MOFD Board & Senior Staff
From: Jonathan Goodwin, Canyon, Calif.
Re: Comments on Possible Modification of MOFD Staffing

I have more to say than 3 minutes could contain, therefore I send you this, my response to the staff report for the Special Meeting scheduled for November 16th, 2022. While the report covers its intended scope of information, it fails to offer the full underlying knowledge directors need to make a good decision on this matter because it lacks an alternatives analysis along with a relevant analysis of call data. And it might be fair to note that such a comprehensive document could be considered beyond what can reasonably be expected from a report concerning a single Board meeting agenda item. This is all to say, adjustment of the staffing level should be based upon a deeper understanding of the standards of coverage, and this a specialized matter, not benefited by partial analysis.

For example, two repeated arguments for staffing a dedicated ambulance at Station 45 provide emotional impetus, but no clarity as to specific action. Engine Company 45 could have just as easily been committed to a vehicle accident or have been away for training instead of transporting a patient in Medic 45, and their engine would have been equally unavailable to go to that fire call in Sleepy Hollow. In such a case, would the argument today be that we need two engine companies at Station 45 along with the reserve ambulance? There is no clarity here about whether more medics are needed or more firefighters plus a second engine, etc. Likewise, the argument that more safety personnel means that the community is safer offers no guidance for how many personnel should be hired. Again, if Engine 45 is committed to a call, even if there were a dedicated ambulance at the station, that engine would be equally unavailable in that circumstance as it was for the aforementioned incident.

And then there are various financial questions. Is it appropriate to increase the District's annual financial obligations by ~%5 without increasing revenues to balance that out simply because you can and because it makes you feel safer? History shows that the District can afford higher staffing when the economy is up, but not when it is down. What is the consequence of the this yo-yo effect? And parenthetically, when the economy goes down, and the chief is responsible for submitting a balanced budget to the Board in the face of fallen revenues, typically hiring is frozen and the staffing is reduced by attrition because this is an expedient way to save money. However, if a new class of paramedic-only staff is introduced, this will make the chief's balancing act more cumbersome and reduce the cost savings as paramedic-only staff are slowly replaced by firefighter/paramedics working

overtime. In sum, matters such as these should be mapped out for the Board's consideration prior to making a decision to increase staffing.

Stepping back for a moment, it struck me, in the chief's report, that the northern end of District is vulnerable to fire or medical emergency if Engine Companies 45 & 43 are both engaged with other matters. (And this parallels the medical transport vulnerabilities in the southern end if Medic 41 and M42 or Engine 42 are both out on calls.) A very simple thing other agencies would do is move resources around to cover vacated stations in order to even out response capabilities. In other words, rather than encumbering the District with the cost of increased staffing, if the northern end was needing more fire or medical coverage, then another station could move their apparatus to a vacated station for the needed period of time. But MOFD has tied her shoestrings together and hobbled herself in this regard.

In years past, Station 44--being located in the center of the District--was the logical place where a Type 1 Engine or a reserve ambulance could come from to cover other stations as needed. But nowadays, Station 44 has neither a Type 1 Engine nor a reserve ambulance, owing, I'm guessing, to it being where the District domiciles her too-big-for-this-district ladder truck. If that truck were sent to cover North Orinda, it would be constrained by narrow, twisted streets because its size is incompatible with some portion of the roadway infrastructure there. In fact, my supposition is that if the District could view this situation in a politically unbiased manner, people may recognize that it would be cheaper, more practical and safer to dump the ladder truck and put a quint at both ends of the District so that a quint at Station 41 could cover Ascot Drive, SMC and the new--possibly four story--buildings the Town of Moraga is contemplating approving, and a quint at Station 45 could cover the freeway, San Pablo Dam Road, etc. *(NB: These sorts of operational considerations are absent from Stephen Healy's 2016 Standards of Cover[age] report.)*

My point, as perhaps has been made clear, is this. The business of deciding how to distribute District resources among our five stations in order to avoid sacrificing either financial efficiency or safety is a complex matter. I believe the MOFD Board would benefit, first, by reading Berkeley Fire's and Valley Fire's upcoming reports on their own similar matters when these reports become available and, second, by discussing whether or not to seek professional advice in this regard. Needless to say, such decisions are best made with all deliberate care, not haste.

Lastly, if you're wondering, I have no opinion as to whether or not Medic 45 should be fully staffed because I have seen no call data analysis to suggest that this is or is not needed. Have you seen any such data?