

**FIRE PROTECTION DISTRICT  
BOARD OF DIRECTORS' MEETING**

January 26, 2009  
3111 Woodside Road  
Woodside, CA 94062

Director Berger called the regular meeting of the WFPD Board of Directors to order at 7:00 pm.

**Directors Present:** Cain, Gardner, and Berger

**Staff:** Fire Chief Armando Muela, B/C Kevin Butler, B/C Emil Picchi, Fire Marshall Denise Enea, Captain Steve Slaughter, Captain Rob Lindner, Business Manager Kate Edwards, Administrative Assistant Pamela Van Horn.

**ORAL COMMUNICATIONS** – Fire Chief Muela welcomed two young women to the board meeting. They attended the meeting as an assignment for their economics class.

**CONSENT AGENDA:**

Items 1 – 3 and 6 of the agenda were moved to the consent agenda and unanimously approved.

**REGULAR AGENDA:**

**Item 4: Warrant List November/December 2008.** Board Member Gardner was surprised to see an equipment payment in excess of \$170,000 on the December Warrant List. This was in payment for radio equipment for which we were awarded a grant. However, technicalities delayed the money reaching our account resulting in WFPD fronting the cost of the equipment to receive delivery. An offsetting entry, reflecting receipt of funds from the grant maker, will appear in a subsequent month.

**Item 5: Fiscal Year Spreadsheet.** Mr. Gardner's question generated discussion involving both the Warrant Lists and the Fiscal Year Spreadsheets. Once the board understood the issue and the process to handle it, Board Member Berger moved that both items be approved. Board Member Cain seconded the motion.

**STAFF REPORTS:**

**TRAINING** – Battalion Chief Butler accompanied Battalion Chief Romero on a strike team to provide BC Butler with training/experience he needs to certify as a Strike Team Leader. AC Hot Sticks have been placed on all WFPD rigs. These allow the firefighters

to test for live wires, avoiding the possibility of electrocution. Electrocution is one of the top ten causes for the firefighter deaths. The Hot stick is effective on solar systems only at points beyond the inverter. Firefighter Vince Nannini assembled an Engine Operator's Training Manual to standardize driver training. Some modifications have been made in the current pre-trip inspections required by DMV. The County Training Officers are returning to training basics after a long period of addressing high frequency, high-risk issues dictated by conditions. WFPD currently has seven personnel on probationary status.

**FIRE PREVENTION** – Fire Marshall Denise Enea has been working to get cooperation among Portola Valley, Palo Alto, and Los Trancos Water District, to create a fuel break along the southern portion of the Los Trancos and Vista Verde Road area. A program called LEOSAD, Leave Early or Stay and Defend, from Australia has made its way to the US. It is now being implemented in southern California. The IAFF has looked into the process determining that it is not appropriate everywhere and, to be effective, must include a lot of education and training of the public before they will be prepared to make the decision to “stay” and meet the challenge of “defending.” The immediate consensus is that the WFPD is not an appropriate location for LEOSAD. A clear differentiation between here and even southern California is our fires are fuel fed versus their wind driven fires. Director Berger suggested that we would need to have signed releases from those intending the Stay and Defend releasing the District from responsibility if the residents do not evacuate. Fire Chief Muela suggested that the possibility of LEOSAD in this area is WAY down the road considering how much preparation would be required before such an implementation would be feasible. A Grand Jury has recommended the dissolution of the Los Trancos Water District since it no longer provides water service but does collect approximately \$200,000 a year in taxes. Director Berger asked what was to come of the CERPP container located on the Jacques Littlefield property. No answer was available.

**EMS** – B/C Picchi has been in negotiations with AMR about the upcoming contract period. Director Cain was requested to attend a JPA meeting on February 9 in lieu of Director Berger. The contractual terms are very likely to be a topic at the meeting. The new ambulance has arrived. It has been painted red after having been delivered white. Five to six of the firefighters are transferring contents from the old ambulance to the new. Nothing is being overlooked. Still to be completed are having the brakes certified, conducting the CHP inspection, and application of decals. AMR has not provided nor offered any assistance with the conversion. Our ambulance has been more available for calls during December than as normal. This has been for the benefit of our staff training. Coincidentally, AMR has been short of staff during the same period.

**IT** – B/C Romero reported that the “final” version of the district map is posted on the wall in the hall. We plan to frame it to provide protection and to improve its presentation. The next step is to format the map into a map book for the rigs. A fire at 232 Glenwood on November 25 has raised the awareness the residents of the Woodside Glens neighborhood. A Town Hall meeting was held for the residents to express their concerns to the town and fire district. The area is now interested in getting active with

CERPP. They are beginning to understand that some of the features of the Glens that they have held on to over the years are things that could lead to disaster in the event of a major fire. Access to the area is poor. Vehicles and overgrowth obstruct the roads. BC Romero indicated that, without the frequent passage of garbage trucks, the fire trucks would never make it very far into the Glens area. It was suggested that residents use fire safe methods to clean up their properties, and requesting wildland inspections, if needed.

**OPERATIONS** – The Fire Chief presented a brief report in the absence of BC Ghiorso. Service and repair activity for equipment, buildings, and grounds remains very active. The new radios will be available any day. Reprogramming, testing and implementation will begin as soon as possible after their arrival. Efforts are still being made to claim the entire value of the grant, which exceeded the sale price paid for the radios, while still adhering to the terms of the grant.

**NEW BUSINESS:** In lieu of new business, further discussion of the AMR contract negotiations ensued. With the current contract expiring on June 30, 2009, time is getting short to reach a final agreement. Director Berger has been focusing on increasing the District's annual income for ambulance services beyond the current \$333,000.00, to further reduce the staffing costs borne by WFPD. Income from AMR penalties would only add revenues of approximately \$10,000 a year. AMR will be paying us about \$2300 for our share of the depreciated value of the retired ambulance. Though not directly related to the topic of ambulance finances, mention was made that the recovery expected from the engines being retired later this year is \$47,000 each.

Director Berger advised that he is in possession of the articles and by-laws of the Woodside Portola Valley Protection Foundation, a legal non-profit entity that is entirely independent of the Woodside Fire Protection District.

Plans are underway for an arrangement between WFPD and Belmont San Carlos Fire District to allow Jim Palisi, BSC's Fire Marshall, to back up WFPD Fire Marshall Denise Enea in conducting fire investigations, as needed.

**WRITTEN COMMUNICATION:**

1. The Robinson-Gage delivered a homemade pie with a note thanking the District "for all your hard work in keeping our town safe."
2. Captain Walt Black and his family sent a thank you for the plant sent in memory of his mother.
3. The annual Dexter family holiday photo arrived, showing the now eleven-year-old Julia. Julia was born at station 7.
4. Steve and Rita Balopoulos sent a letter praising the professionalism and compassion exhibited by Troy Taufer as he participated in the rescue and follow up care of their son after a bicycle accident. Troy's actions were independent of his WFPD duties and continued past time of the incident.

5. Jamie Young, of San Mateo County Public Safety Communications, thanked Chief Muela for the use of the meeting facilities at station 19 for her department meeting.
6. The co-founders of CDCE, a Yorba Linda business, sent an open letter to the California Fire, Police and Sheriff Departments thanking them for their efforts “that protected and made our homes and business safe from the devastating fires.”
7. The Auction Committee members of the Menlo Charity Horse Show thanked the department for the donation of a children’s party for 10 at a value of \$1000.
8. Fire Chief Muela received a letter from Dick Morton who, as the Finance Officer of the SMC Critical Incident Stress Management Team, thanked him for financial support of a conference.
9. Bob Webb sent a letter to his “Woodside Fire Family” announcing his inability to “continue my career as a Fire Fighter/Paramedic” and subsequent retirement from the Fire District.
10. Woodside High School thanked Public Education Officer Brown and Fire Chief Muela for presenting the staff with a “reassuring and powerful” safety presentation.

Fire Chief Muela released the staff prior to the commencement of the Closed Session.

**CLOSED SESSION:** The IAFF negotiations, final terms and conditions, were finalized between the Board of Directors and IAFF 2400

**ADJOURNMENT:**

The meeting adjourned at 8:30 pm.

The next meeting will occur on February 23, 2009.

Respectfully submitted,

Patrick Cain