



## **FELTON FIRE PROTECTION DISTRICT**

**131 Kirby Street, Felton CA 95018 831 335-4422**

### **Regular Meeting Minutes**

### **Of The Board of Directors**

**February 12, 2024**

Location: *Felton Fire Station Meeting Room, 131 Kirby St, Felton California*

#### **1.0 Convene Meeting:**

**1.1** Call to Order: Meeting was called to order by Chairperson Jim Anderson at 6:00 p.m.

**1.2** Pledge of Allegiance

**1.3** Roll Call: Directors J. Anderson, N. Crandell, R. Gelini, D. Ladd, M. Shults

Staff: Chief Walters

Absent: L. Dennis

Guests: Don Jarvis, Capt. Samantha Moeller, Capt. Patrick Rosso, Renee Fenker,  
Capt. Ian Jones

**1.4** Approve meeting minutes of the Regular Meeting held on January 8, 2024 and Special Meeting held on January 12, 2024. Regular meeting minutes approved as written on motion by Director Crandell and second by Director Gelini and passed. Special meeting minutes approved as written on motion by Director Crandell and second by Director Ladd and passed.

Ayes: Directors Crandell, Gelini, Ladd and Shults

Noes: none

Abstain: none

Absent: none

**1.5** Considerations of Additions to the Agenda: None.

**1.6** Swearing in of appointed Director Mike Shults. Chief Walter stated that he will complete the official paperwork when Laurie returns.

**2.0 Public Comment:** None.

**3.0 Public Hearing:** None

**4.0 Directors Reports:** Director Anderson reported that the LAFCO fire study is delayed until mid-year as they are still working to make sure it is accurate. He introduced Don Jarvis as the consultant who has been working on this.

Director Crandell reported on research he did as a result of their discussion to replace 2311 with a new Type 1. He found someone in Henderson called Fire Trucks Unlimited that

refurbishes engines for about half of the cost of a new one. He also found there are some government loans available at 4%. Something to discuss more later.

**5.0 Staff Report:** Fire Chief report (included in board packet)

Chief Walters provided a written report in the board package. He provided some additional highlights:

**Staffing:**

- still has both day and night shortages, and there have been calls run with single responders for both day and night.
- per Director Andersons request he placed the second Station Supervisor on hold. He also placed on hold the full-time engineer and firefighter positions pending consideration of PERS buy-out evaluation and determination.
- 1 light-duty engineer has returned to full duty status. 3 personnel are on limited response due to school or other obligations.
- 5 new hires continue in the County Academy and 1 continues in-house training.
- we now are up to 11 new applications; most have resulted from word-of-mouth advertising. Several of them are district residents.

**Apparatus & Equipment:**

- Type 6 construction has started, it should be here sometime in May.
- 2303 finally passed smog.
- Waiting on delivery of our LUCAS CPR machine.

**Station:**

- Clean up continues. Upstairs has been cleaned and reorganized.
- we have restocked sand bag supplies and took delivery of 6 yards of sand. Sand is nearly gone, but we have lots of bags. We remain in contact with the County for supplies as needed.

**Training:**

- as mentioned earlier academy training continues.
- Having some issues in training with Ben Lomond Fire Department and we're re-evaluating the program. Drill turnout is improving with the new standards and expectations in place. There are still a few people with no recent attendance. They will get a warning letter at the end of the quarter. If they don't react or respond to the letter we'll cut them.

- New Driver/Operator evaluation forms have been deployed to standardize the training program. Any officer taking them out does the evaluation. Director Crandell asked about the final certification being done by someone certified by the state? Chief replied no, once they get the DMV license, they're clear to drive fire apparatus. They need 16 hours driver training and to complete the Driver/Operator program or online Target Solutions module. Chief clarified that in order to get a Class B license they would have to go to driving school, but that isn't necessary for our purposes.

#### Prevention:

- CSG is reviewing several plans, mostly residential remodels.
- There is a new dog wash business that's move into the old B of A location. A sports gym is looking to move into the old Vet business next to Quick Stop. That will help fill vacancies in town. There's been a pop-up burger business in the old Cremer building that has been very successful. He understands they're finishing out the lease for Humble Sea and then we'll see what happens after that
- We finally have made good progress on the Knox Box replacements, with about 50% being completed with the new keys. The replaced keys are now on the valley-wide key system.

#### Incident Response:

- Continue to meet demands, but still understaffed. In the board packet there is an incident response report with additional details. Zayante responded twice to cover our calls, both times were for a second incident occurring. We responded four times mutual aid. Overall, it was a quieter month with 62 calls, with 77% of them being medicals.

#### Administrative:

- Attended 14 meetings this month, lots of weather meetings and the usual other committees. The Fire Council meeting main topic was Zayante's challenges financially. Chief Ayers attended the Training Officers meeting for us. Sam is participating in the County EMS meetings.
- Have met with staff on SAFER grants, working on the two full-time personnel. We've submitted for e-tools on another grant. We're also looking at a grant to replace 25 sets of turnouts.
- Met with Scotts Valley to discuss management options with them. Will be meeting with Cal Fire on Wednesday to discuss management options with them.
- Resolved some issues with paperwork on hazardous materials on site. Made some corrections after our inspection and are now compliant.
- 5th Tuesday dinner was attended. Firefighter Kelso did an excellent job on the meal. Director Shults was able to attend. Directors Anderson and Crandell were unable to attend.



Director Crandell asked about headway on the 2 SAFER grants and what the timeline is? Chief replied it would be a year from now. It won't have any impact on us for this fiscal year.

Director Crandell also asked about the CSG fees and if they are revenue neutral at \$137 per hour? Chief replied that we bill \$150 per hour and make the difference.

Director Crandell asked about the mention of issues with Ben Lomon training, what kind? Chief replied that there are scheduling and coordination issues. He'd like to see more out of the Training Officer. He'd like lesson plans and Tuesday drill plans by Friday in front of the drill, not texted on Tuesday morning. There are some communication problems, we've seen that before with other agencies so it's a repeat.

## **6.0 Unfinished Business:**

### **6.1 Election of District Officers for 2024**

Director Crandell nominated Jim Anderson for Chairperson; Director Gellini seconded. Director Ladd nominated Norm Crandell for Vice Chairperson; Director Shults seconded. All members were in favor of the nominations made.

### **6.2 PERS/CEPPT Report – Director Anderson (included in board packet)**

Director Anderson stated the Chief is here until the 26<sup>th</sup>, due to the 960 hour requirement. His benefits from the City of Santa Cruz are substantial enough that we can't take it on. Our PERS exposure is a million and a half to 2 million. The actuarials couldn't give a hard number when we met with them. We would need to deal with the contract people and submit a resolution to leave our agreement. They would give a better number and then we decide to go forward or not. They mentioned it would probably trigger an audit. If an audit finds any issue with employees, we would have to pay both sides of contributions. Chief Walters clarified and restated some of the conversation during the meeting with PERS actuarials. Discussion followed regarding PERS Classis and PEPPRA members and how they each impact the district's unfunded liability.

Director Anderson introduced Don Jarvis, who has agreed to help us with some planning and financial direction. Don offered further explanation on unfunded liability related to fluctuations on investments of PERS and how that impacts costs. He clarified that additional PEPPRA employees wouldn't increase unfunded liability due to the contribution percentages being more equitable, but hiring a Classic employee would. He explained more how the formulas work. Director Crandell mentioned our budgeted amounts planned to pay down the unfunded liability and contribute to CEPPT. More discussion followed regarding fire departments expenses everywhere continue to increase, but revenues do not.

Some discussion on what additional property tax bond might do to help. Director Crandell also suggested reviewing medical insurance costs and getting more in line with what others pay.

Chief Walters noted that these things can't be done overnight, but should be covered by making the 5-year and 10-year plans. The two immediate issues are dealing with staffing for responses and then longer-term challenge for us as an agency/ District is where to be in 10 years.

Don Jarvis stated since the Chief is done in April, the districts only choice at this late point is another 960 to give another 6 months to figure out what to do in the longer run. We need to decide tonight how to fix the immediate need, say with the 3 employee hires, then figure out longer term and whether to get out of PERS as an option. There are 4 major issues he sees. Immediate is the Fire Chief and the staffing issue. Longer term is PERS buy-out potential and long-range funding solutions. While working on the immediate needs he suggests 2 ad-hoc committees: one for Fire Chief recruiting to look at pay, job descriptions and permanent long-term Chief. Two other people on a committee regarding sending a letter from the Board to all other County agencies seeking to potentially buy Fire Chief services and meeting with them. Hopefully one of these tracks would work out since there's only another 6 months to make a decision. Jarvis also suggested that Chief Walters bring 3 names to the board of people he thinks could potentially be the next interim. Chief Walters will try to provide at least 2 or 3 names.

Director Crandell suggested we vote on giving our current Chief 3 employees as previously discussed with whatever benefits, so at least the station is staffed. Chief stated that he provided information in the board packets showing all of the roll-up costs. Director Crandell suggested a flat amount of \$1,000 for benefits to better plan in budgeting. He also suggested having a special meeting if the Chief is able to provide interim Chief names sooner than the next board meeting. He also asked if anyone else has names they should submit them. More discussion followed.

Director Crandell made a motion to have \$1,000 per month for new employee benefits. Discussion followed. Director Crandell amended his motion to \$1,050 per month for benefits. Director Gelini seconded and it was approved unanimously.

Don Jarvis stated that through this conversation tonight, the Chief has been approved to hire these 3 people, 1 supervisor and 2 firefighters. Chief Walters then restated that we will then have a total of 4 full-time paid employees on the books and those are the costs in the packets.

Director Crandell asked the Chief if the budget will still cover this, in other words we won't be in the red? Chief replied these costs will only affect the partial year until July 1 and then we roll into the next fiscal year. With Laurie not able to make the meeting he can't tell exactly where regular pay is right now. He will crunch some



numbers and get back to them. Either way we'll take a hit on the health care due to the added costs. He stated this is still his recommendation because we need to be able to run calls.

Director Ladd asked if any current staff applied for the positions. Chief replied he took one application for supervisor which is then Ian. He held off on the other 2 positions until the board gave the green light. He described how the supervisors schedules will work and what days, based on what they work out. This timing is beneficial as Ian was close to the 960 hour limit also.

Director Crandell asked about the expenses for the ambulance and if we could ask the Auxiliary to help with those costs. Chief explained we've been using the \$53,000 budgeted for the pick-up we're not going to purchase to buy equipment for the ambulance. Roaring Camp cut a check for \$5,000 toward the LUCAS device also. He doesn't anticipate spending close to the \$55,000 in the budget though. Ian added information regarding costs for radio and cradlepoint equipment. Director Crandell asked if the ambulance will create revenue even without full ALS staff. Chief stated we renegotiated the contract with AMR to increase the rate from \$125 per hour to \$250. There are still a lot of parts to work out and it will take some time. Chief added this won't be a huge revenue generator, but there is potential in the future for it to increase.

Renee Fenker suggested contacting Mr. Locatelli regarding donations. He was very generous in the past and donated to finish funding our purchase of the stokes

#### **6.3 Felton Fire Hats – Director Ladd**

Board members had some discussion and suggestions regarding design. Director Ladd will bring options and prices to the next meeting.

#### **6.4 Day Shift Staffing – Chief Walters**

Chief Walters clarified that we've addressed the staffing and he's been directed to hire 2 daytime firefighters, fully benefited. Board members agreed.

#### **6.5 Station Supervisor Appointment – Chief Walters**

Chief Walters clarified that we previously addressed the supervisor position and he is approved to hire the second supervisor. Board members also agreed.

#### **6.6 Shared Services update – Chief Walters**

Chief Walters will work on the letter to all agencies. He reported he had a meeting with the Scotts Valley Fire Chief and was pleasantly surprised with the new Chief's interest. They have their board meeting tonight also and he will be bringing it up to them. Director Anderson asked about Boulder Creek. Chief said he heard back from them and they have no interest. Director Anderson said he will work with the Chief on the letter to send out.

### **7.0 New Business:**

None.

**8.0 Approve paid vendor claims for the month of January 2024:** Chief Walters stated there were no vendor claims to review. We were unable to pull those, so Laurie will have them all for us next meeting

**9.0 Closed Session: None**

**10.0 Set date for the next meeting:** The next Regular Meeting will be held on **Monday, March 04, 2024 at 6:00 P.M.** The meeting will be in person at the Felton Fire Station. Director Anderson asked if there were any other items. Don Jarvis asked for some accountability, and if the board decided to move forward with looking at the job specs and compensation package for the permanent Fire Chief and head down that road. Board members discussed the committees that Jarvis suggested earlier in the meeting. After discussion it was decided the committee for Shared Services & Benefits would be Directors Anderson and Crandell. The committee for Long-term Planning & the "forever Chief" would be Directors Shults and Ladd.

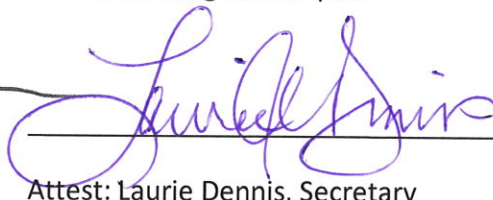
Chief Walters pointed out 1 other potential high dollar item is 2311 that's 22 years old. We've discussed refurbishment consideration, especially due everyone to having a hard time getting new engines. It's a 3 year wait list, that is why it's important to discuss now. Captain Jones expressed concerns regarding refurbishment, emissions requirements and the current and ongoing issues with 2311.

Captain Moeller asked if there is a back up plan for leadership. The squad has a lot of uncertainty and what they were told months ago hasn't moved much. Directors Crandell and Anderson tried to reassure that they are working on that. It's a primary reason to have these special committees to focus on.

**11.0 Adjourn:** Director Anderson moved to adjourn the meeting at 8:02 p.m.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Jim Anderson", written over a horizontal line.

Jim Anderson, Chairperson

A handwritten signature in purple ink, appearing to read "Laurie Dennis", written over a horizontal line.

Attest: Laurie Dennis, Secretary

