



February 18, 2010

The Advisory Fire Commission met at a regular meeting on Thursday, February 18, 2010, at 7:00 p.m. Vice Chairman Egan called the meeting to order and led the salute to the flag.

**ROLL CALL:**

**Present:** Commissioners: Barry Cunningham – District 4  
Don Delcollo – District 1  
Mike Egan – At Large #1  
Ed Haynes – District 3  
Melvin Chappel (Alternate – District 5)  
Dylan Reinhold (Alternate – District 4)

Interim Fire Chief: John Ross  
Acting Assistant Chief: Henry Warren  
Chief of Admin. Svcs. (Ret.) – Mike George  
On contract  
Acting Chief of Admin. Svcs. Jackie Lorrekovich

**Absent:** Walter Fields – District 5  
Bill Granados – At Large #2

**Vacancy:** District 2 Seat

Vice Chairman Egan informed the members of the Commission that John Kelly (Alternate-District 3) had submitted his resignation effective February 17, 2010.

**SERVICE AWARDS:** Engineer Gil Caravantes was present to receive his 30-year service award.

**PUBLIC COMMENTS:**

Appealing Exterior Hazard Control Division Charges

**APN: 187-011-019 – Youngs Valley Road, Walnut Creek**

Listed Property Owners: Sunny Hills Aquatic Club  
Catherine Gardner  
PO Box 1362  
Alamo, CA 94507

Contact Info. for Mr. Guy Gettle: (925) 705-6050  
Email: [blastandfire@aol.com](mailto:blastandfire@aol.com)

Mr. Gettle was present at this meeting to pursue a complaint against charges for abatement work done by the Fire District's contractor in September 2008 on the above parcel. His complaint centered on his belief that the District had used an incorrect and outdated mailing address for the Aquatic Club and as a result the Club had not received the abatement notices from the Fire District. The Fire District had its contractor perform the required abatement work on the parcel for noncompliance by the property owner with charges in the amount of \$6,153.86. Also disputed is the actual acreage (1.33 acres) billed by the contractor. He believes that it was far too high.

Vice Chair Egan noted that in the event of an error on the part of District staff, the total charges would not be able to be eliminated but there could possibly be a reduction. Commissioner Cunningham recommended to Mr. Gettle that he contact the Acting Fire Marshal to see if factual errors had been made that could be corrected by the Exterior Hazard Division, which would not require action of the Commission. Mr. Gettle presented the Commission with his five page letter w/attachments on this issue. The Recording Secretary noted that she would have the Acting Fire Marshal contact Mr. Gettle on this issue.

#### **PRESENTATION OF PRELIMINARY FY 2010-11 BUDGET:**

Mr. Mike George was present to give an overview of and answer questions regarding the District's Proposed FY 2010-11 budget. The General Fund 7300 Preliminary Budget for FY 2010-11 is \$94,479,673 (\$85,667,020 in realized revenue with an estimated \$8,812,653 coming from fund balance). Mike noted that the District will be forced to engage in service level reductions due to the nearly unprecedented and continuing economic downturn if the District is to remain fiscally solvent. There is no other alternative. Several plans are under consideration to effect this service reduction. It is projected that the fund balance at the end of FY 10-11 will be \$4,596,565. A general discussion of revenue and expenditure items followed.

- Note: Non-County Professional/Specialized Services – Commissioners Chappel and Cunningham questioned the increased cost over last year's budget (from \$404,419 to \$1,206,417). Mike George will look into and advise Commissioners of his findings.

The Commission commended Mike George for his efforts in compiling this extremely difficult budget. Commissioner Cunningham made a motion to adopt the proposed budget as written in the amount of \$94,479,673 with the understanding that the Commission, while not happy with it, accepts the reality of the present day situation. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Haynes. All in favor, motion passed.

#### **CONSENT ITEMS:**

##### **DECEMBER 14, 2009 MEETING MINUTES:**

Commissioner Delcollo made a motion to approve the December 14, 2009 meeting minutes as written. Motion was seconded by Commissioner Chappel. All in favor, motion carried.

## ACCEPT AND FILE REPORTS:

After review, the reports listed below were accepted and filed.

Personnel Report – Reviewed/discussed report of February 10, 2009.

Operating Budget – Reviewed/discussed report of January 13, 2010.

- Accounts 2270, 2281, 2282, 2314, 4900, 4901 and 4956 –Commissioner Haynes expressed concern over the amount of monies being encumbered for these accounts when we are at the half-year point of the budget. Mike George commented that some of these funds can be released if necessary; in fact he expects to release \$450,000 to go toward the fund balance. He did note that some are likely prior year accounts, with the 4000 series accounts all being prior year. He will research these accounts and get back to Commissioner Haynes with his findings.

Fire Prevention Report – Reviewed/discussed December 2009/January 2010 report.

- Commissioner Chappel was impressed with the efforts of the Investigations Unit on their success with juvenile arrests. Congratulations to staff for their diligent work.
- Commissioner Chappel inquired as to whether we charge for annual school inspections. Chief Ross will check into this and respond to the Commissioner.
- Fatality Auto Fire on 12/4/09, 969 Hunsaker Canyon Rd., Lafayette – Commissioner Delcollo knew the victim in this incident, who was from El Sobrante, and he and other community members would like to know cause/conditions of this fire. Chief Ross will send an email summary after checking with the Investigations Unit.
- Vehicle Arson Fires- West County: Chief Ross will provide the Commissioners with a copy of the update that is sent to Supervisor Gioia every two weeks.

Incident Summary Reports – Reviewed/discussed December 2009/January 2010 reports. Additional comments:

- December - Commissioner Cunningham gave special mention to Stations 1, 6, 8, 9, 22, 81 and 83 for meeting or exceeding their turn-out time goal for the month.
- January - Commissioner Cunningham gave special mention to Stations 6, 11 and 81 for meeting or exceeding their turn-out time goal for the month.

Suppression Leave Summary - Reviewed/discussed November/December 2009 reports.

Community & Media Relations – Reviewed/discussed December 2009/January 2010 report. Additional comment:

- The Commissioners applauded Fire Education Coordinator Jojy Smith's accomplishments and contributions during her tenure with the District.

Correspondence – None

Commissioner Cunningham made a motion to accept the file reports as written, seconded by Commissioner Haynes. All in favor, motion carried.

**FIRE CHIEF'S REPORT** – Reviewed/discussed report of February 13, 2010.

**UNFINISHED BUSINESS:**

- Decision on Weed Abatement Charges: APN: 425-061-013-8, El Sobrante  
A motion was made by Commissioner Haynes to uphold the findings of the Acting Fire Marshal as stated in his February 3, 2010 letter of response to Mr. Firas Jandali with his decision being to uphold the abatement charges assessed on the property. Motion was seconded by Commissioner Delcollo. All in favor, motion carried.
- Discussion Item: Appointment of Liaison to Board of Supervisors -  
This issue was tabled from the December 14, 2009 meeting. Vice Chair Egan noted that Commissioner Granados has volunteered to serve in the capacity of Liaison to the Board of Supervisors and is so appointed.

**NEW BUSINESS:**

- Declaration of Surplus Property - Report of February 1, 2010 consists of miscellaneous computer equipment. Commissioner Haynes made a motion to approve the surplus equipment lists as provided, seconded by Commissioner Cunningham. All in favor, motion passed.
- Discussion Item: Draft Bylaws – Vice Chair Egan has appointed Commissioners Cunningham, Granados and Haynes to serve on the Bylaws Committee. The Committee composed a draft Bylaws document for review by the full Commission. Commissioner Haynes emphasized that this is a draft document. Commission members are to review the draft and bring their comments/corrections/recommendations to the April meeting where any amendments will be reviewed and voted on for inclusion in the document. The draft document will then be put to a vote for adoption.

Comments:

- Article III, Item #4, 2<sup>nd</sup> Sentence - Commissioner Chappel questioned the verbiage: *“Alternate members do not **participate or** vote in the regular or special meetings unless they are replacing an absent, seated Commissioner.”* Commissioner Chappel questioned the inclusion of “participate or” in this sentence. Since Alternate members do participate in meetings he recommends this wording be deleted from the sentence.
- Article III, Item #4, 3<sup>rd</sup> Sentence – *“However, the Commission Chair may acknowledge comments from an Alternate at the discretion of the Chair.”* Commissioner Chappel suggested this entire sentence be deleted.
- Article IV, Item #11, 1<sup>st</sup> Sentence – *“Ensure that the Contra Costa County Fire Protection District has the necessary equipment and facilities to meet the fire protection objectives as per the State Health and Safety Code with respect to the cost of fire insurance for the community.”* Commissioner Chappel questions the use of the word “Ensure”. Vice Chair Egan asked Commissioner Chappel to please bring his recommendations to the April meeting.

- Article IV, Item #6 - "Meet jointly with the Board of Supervisors and provide advice to the Board as needed." Commissioner Delcollo feels this sentence should be restructured. He was asked to bring his suggested change to the April meeting.

### **COMMISSIONER COMMENTS:**

Commissioner Haynes: Commented that his Alternate, John Kelly, had resigned his appointment as he felt he was not being effective in that role. He conveyed Mr. Kelly's thanks to everyone. Commissioner Haynes also took the opportunity to express his concerns over the ineffectiveness of the Commission's committees. He noted that District staff does not ask for input relevant to these committee issues: Apparatus & Equipment, Budget, Personnel, and Property & Annexation. He feels the Commission members are being under utilized and it has been a concern of his for some time.

Commissioner Delcollo: He attended the District's presentation to the City of San Pablo City Council on February 16<sup>th</sup>. He observed that the presentation was very well received by the audience.

#### Commissioner Chappel (Alternate):

- Noted that he had attended the January deconstructive training held at the old Central Sanitary facility in Walnut Creek. Felt that this training exercise was very impressive. He extended his thanks to Captain Sparky Ericson and his crew and Captain Troy Skillman for the opportunity to observe the exercise.
- Commented on LAFCO activity and his concerns regarding any potential consolidations and resultant impact to the District budget.

#### Commissioner Cunningham:

- Commented on a recent apartment house structure fire at Detroit/Laguna in Concord. Engine 6 and Quint 6 were first on scene and he extends his compliments for the excellent work shown by them.

*(As told to Commissioner Cunningham by Commissioner Granados):*

- Attended the January 5 Board of Supervisors Meeting and was pleased to hear Interim Chief Ross speak on the joint efforts of the District's Labor/Management Budget Committee.
- Attended the February 2<sup>nd</sup> Board meeting where the Commission's 2009 Annual Report was accepted.
- Fire Chief Selection Process – Is serving on the review committee that processed applications and the candidates have been reduced to seven (from 14) as of this date. Oral interviews are scheduled for March 10<sup>th</sup>. He understands that the top five will be accepted for a final interview by the Board of Supervisors.

#### Commissioner Egan –

- Referenced a recent newspaper article regarding a pending IRS investigative audit of personal use of state-owned or leased vehicles. He wanted to make sure that we would not have a similar situation here. Chief Ross will look into this issue.

- Terminal vacation pay at retirement issue was discussed by the group. CCERA is expected to make changes to the existing way that this is being computed.
- Thanks to crew of Engine 4 for participating in the Operation Homecoming for an Army Captain that returned home from Iraq recently.

Commissioner Reinhold (Alternate): None

**NEXT MEETING DATE AND TIME:** Commissioner Delcollo made a motion to adjourn the meeting, seconded by Commissioner Cunningham, to:

Next Regular Meeting: Monday, April 12, 2010, 7:00 p.m.

All in favor, motion passed. Meeting adjourned at 9:35 p.m.

  
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Vicki Wisner, Recording Secretary