

Page 3, 6

**SOUTHERN INYO FIRE PROTECTION DISTRICT  
APPROVED MINUTES OF THE  
REGULAR BUSINESS MEETING  
OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS  
TUESDAY, OCTOBER 18, 2011**

The Governing Board held a Regular Business Meeting of the Southern Inyo Fire Protection District on Tuesday, October 18, 2011 at 6pm at the Tecopa Community Center, Tecopa Hot Springs, CA.

**Present:** Chairperson James Ramm, Vice Chairperson Robin Flinchum, Member Amy Noel and Member Jon Zellhoefer.

**Staff:** None

**Absent:** Deborah Aitken, Secretary/Treasurer

**Visitors:** Carl Dennet, Robert Zmuda, Billy Eichenbaum, Larry Levy, Frank Esposito, Liberty Fowler, Hawk and Sam Fann, Robert Barbee, Grace

I. There being a quorum present, Chairperson Ramm called the meeting to order at 6:07 P.M.

II. **Confirmation of the Agenda/Reading of the Minutes:** Member Ramm confirmed the agenda

There were no meeting minutes available for approval before the meeting. Member Noel and Member Aitken provided copies of minutes for the recent special meetings and these will be reviewed and approved at the next regular meeting. Former Board Secretary Ryan Muccio was unable to provide minutes for the September 20, 2011, regular board meeting. Members Noel and Aitken will reconstruct those minutes as best they can from personal notes and have them available for the next regular meeting.

III. **Public Comment:** There were no public comments made at this time

IV. **Correspondence:**

Member Flinchum read a letter drafted from SIFPD to Cal Fire asking for assistance in the form of guidance in restructuring SIFPD staff and getting volunteers trained, as well as in seeking funding. Member Zellhoefer made a motion that the letter be sent immediately, Member Ramm seconded. The vote carried 4-0-0

V. **Consent Calendar**

Consent calendar items are considered routine and are acted upon by the board with a single action. Members of the audience wishing to provide public input may request that the Board remove the item from the Consent Calendar.

A. **Transaction Report:** Member Zellhoefer made a motion that the Board postpone discussion of the transaction report until the next regular meeting, as the data was incomplete. Member Noel seconded, the motion carried 4-0-1 (Member Aitken arrived during the vote and abstained)

Member Deborah Aitken arrived

VI. **Board, Office and Committee Reports**

A. **Board Member Reports:**

1. **Chairman's Report:** Member Ramm suggested that a new email address be obtained for the district as soon as possible and that it be a district, rather than personal email account.

2. **Treasurer's Report:** No report was made at this time, again due to lack of sufficient information.

#### B. Fire Chief's Report

Chief Levy was absent but submitted a written report, noting that there had been 5 calls in the past week, with a total of 5 patients treated. EMT Eichenbaum added that there had been more calls since the report was written. Chief Levy stated that he spent a day with Member Flinchum becoming familiar with district office and searching for important accounts information. Chief Levy will be holding a pump operation drill for fire personnel on Saturday, October 22.

#### C. Committee Reports:

1. **Property Tax:** Member Ramm stated there is nothing new to report
2. **Budget:** Budget discussion was deferred to the scheduled agenda item.
3. **Fundraising:** Member Flinchum stated that SIFPD will have a presence at Old West Days this year and will be selling T-Shirts and raffle tickets. T-Shirts will sell for less this year than last year. Member Flinchum stated that Robert Zmuda had offered to haul the accumulated recyclables in the SIFPD bay to Barstow and suggested that the District reimburse him for gas. Member Zellhoefer stated that he travels to Barstow regularly and will begin hauling the recyclables on his way.
4. **Ad Hoc:**
  - a. **PILT Monies:** Member Flinchum stated there is nothing new to report.

#### VII. New Business:

**A. Discuss and consider drafting a motion in support of the Tecopa Post Office:** Member Flinchum proposed that the Board adopt a resolution in support of keeping the Tecopa Post Office open, stressing the health and safety risks posed by possible closure. Member Zellhoefer suggested other important points to add to the letter, including alternative transport routes for the mail. Member Zellhoefer offered to write the resolution and will submit it to all board members via email so that it can be finalized and sent in before the close of public comment period with the USPS. Member Flinchum made a motion that Member Zellhoefer write the letter, Member Noel seconded. The motion carried 5-0-0.

**B. Discuss and consider signing resolution regarding free legal advice from Inyo County Counsel:** Member Flinchum explained that this was a resolution text provided by the county and was necessary in order to take advantage of the ten free hours of legal counsel offered to Special Districts by the county. Secretary/Treasurer Aitken signed the resolution. The motion carried 5-0-0.

**C. Update and discussion on Bright Source Energy Project:** Member Flinchum stated that both Bright Source and the California Energy Commission had contacted the District asking for input on the upcoming solar project and identifying the impact on the District. Meetings are coming up soon and the District should have a presence. Member Zellhoefer volunteered to be the District's liason with Bright Source and ask them to make a presentation to the board. The motion passed 5-0-1 (Member Zellhoefer abstained).

**D. Discuss and consider proposal by Brad Goans regarding board member training:** Mr. Goans was not present at the meeting and so the item was deferred until January, when there will be a change in board members. Member Zellhoefer made the motion, Member Ramm seconded. The motion carried 5-0-0.

**E. Discuss and consider appropriation of reserve funds or reallocation of budget items to meet immediate training needs:** The Board members agreed that there is an immediate need for training as we currently have only one certified EMT to respond to calls. He is responding with support of drivers and lifters, but can not continue to carry the load alone. Chief Levy, in a written report, suggested appropriating the needed funds from Site Improvements, as work on the new Fire Station is not as crucial

as training staff and will have to be postponed while the District gets caught up and restructures its personnel. Member Noel suggested that we appropriate \$8,000 from line item #5630 from the working budget to be spent on sending two volunteers to the Unitek EMT boot camp. Member Flinchum seconded the motion. The motion carried 5-0-0.

Further discussion was held and Member Zellhoefer suggested that the trainees selected to go be required to sign an agreement with the District. After much discussion, Member Flinchum made a motion that candidates be required to sign an agreement to serve SIFPD for two years in the capacity of EMT and that if they leave the District before that time is up for frivolous reasons, to be determined by the board, they agree to pay back the tuition expense, prorated according to time spent serving with SIFPD. Member Zellhoefer seconded. The motion carried 5-0-0.

**F. Discuss and consider sending volunteer(s) to EMT boot camp, selection of candidates and timing:** Chief Levy's written recommendation was to send Carl Dennet and Rose Colon, Carl in November and Rose in December. Discussion was held regarding what other volunteers might be available. Liberty Fowler said she was interested in attending the boot camp. Board members asked Carl Dennet some questions regarding his intentions to remain in the area and whether he was willing to make the two year commitment and he said that he was. Motion to send Carl Dennet to Unitek was carried 5-0-0. Member Zellhoefer made a motion that we send Liberty Fowler to Unitek, the motion received no second. Other board members suggested the Liberty begin volunteering as an ambulance driver and get familiar with the Districts operations so that she can be considered as a candidate in the future.

Rose Colon was not present at the meeting. Angie Sinohui was proposed as a candidate for Unitek. Carl Dennet and EMT Eichenbaum spoke strongly on her behalf as a strong candidate. Angie Sinohui arrived at the meeting in time for the discussion and stated she would be willing to sign the agreement and addressed briefly her reasons for recent separations from the District. The motion to send Angie Sinohui to Unitek was carried 5-0-0.

**G. Discuss creation of new job descriptions for District employees:** Member Noel distributed work in progress Job Descriptions for a Fire Chief and General Manager position. There was discussion on both positions and the General Manager job description was altered to stand as the Temporary General Manager's job description, reflecting immediate administrative priorities. The motion to adopt the temporary job description at a rate of pay of \$13/hour for up to 40 hours a week until the business of the District office is caught up was made, seconded and carried 5-0-0.

**H. Discuss and consider appointed representative to ICVFA meetings regarding the Inyo County SAFER grant:** Member Flinchum stated that this was her item and it had become redundant, since it was already incorporated in the temporary job description.

**I. Discuss and consider action on conversion to narrow band frequency:** This item was postponed until the next regular meeting.

## VII. Closed Session

- A. Update on Previous Employee Matters
- B. Discussion on Hiring Interim Employee

## IX. Report on Closed Session:

The board reconvened in Open Session and reported that Carl Dennet had been hired as the temporary General Manager and would start work the following day.

## X. Good of the Order:

Board members expressed a general agreement that things were finally moving forward and there was a sense of progress.


## XII. Suggested Agenda Items for Next Meeting

Recognition of former Chief Postle's work for the District  
Revisit the discussion on the new Fire Station  
Conversion to narrow band frequency  
Revisit the hydrant by the school  
Continue discussions of permanent job descriptions

**XIII. Adjournment:** There being no further business. Member Zellhoefer made a motion that the October 18, 2011, Regular Meeting be adjourned at 10:14 PM. Member Noel seconded the motion. The motion carried 5-0-0.

Minutes submitted by Robin Flinchum, District Board Vice Chairperson

I, James Ramm, and I, Robin Flinchum, hereby certify that the foregoing is a true and correct copy of the Regular Minutes of the October 18, 2011, Regular meeting of the Board of Directors of the Southern Inyo Fire Protection District.

  
James Ramm, Chairperson

  
Robin Flinchum, Vice Chairperson