

**MINUTES OF A SPECIAL WORKSHOP MEETING OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS  
OF THE TWENTYNINE PALMS WATER DISTRICT  
72401 HATCH ROAD, TWENTYNINE PALMS, CA 92277**

**FEBRUARY 4, 2013**

**FIRE DEPARTMENT BUSINESS**

Call To Order And Roll Call

President Moore called the meeting to order at 5:30 p.m., 72401 Hatch Road, Twentynine Palms, California. Those responding to roll call were Directors Bo Bourikas, Chancey Chambers, Philip Cisneros, Sam Moore and Roger Shinaver. Also present were Fire Chief Jim Thompson and District Secretary Cindy Fowlkes.

Pledge Of Allegiance

Director Moore led the pledge.

Additions/Deletions To The Agenda

None

Public Comments

None

1. Consideration and Possible Action to Establish a Citizens' Committee Which Would Develop Recommendations for a Potential Special Tax Ballot Measure for Fire Protection and Emergency Medical Services – The Board Will Consider Establishing a Citizens' Committee and Determining the Process for Naming Citizens to that Committee

Legal counsel provided a memorandum regarding the formation of a Citizens' Committee including recruiting options. Chief Thompson recommended the option of advertising, for 2-3 weeks with a deadline of March 15, 2013. Applicants can be considered and chosen at the March 27<sup>th</sup> Board Meeting.

Director Cisneros would like the charter to reflect that the role of the members is to make recommendations to the Board and not interfere with the day to day operations of staff. The Directors will determine the committee size upon receipt of the applications.

Director Cisneros moved to create a Citizens' Committee which would develop recommendations for a potential special tax ballot measure for fire protection and emergency medical services, seconded by Director Shinaver and approved by the following roll call vote:

Ayes: Director Bourikas, Chambers, Cisneros, Moore, and Shinaver  
Noes: None  
Abstain: None  
Absent: None

2. Review, Discussion, and Possible Actions Regarding Draft 5-Year Financial Plan for Fire Department Operations, Potential Sources of Additional Revenue, and Impact of Potential Service Level Reductions

Chief Thompson presented the Board with a draft of a five (5) year budget summary. The assumed percentage increase in expenditures is based on 10-12 years of historical data. Personnel costs are based on current data and expected increased labor costs and PERS contributions. Closing of the Lear Station would result in \$173,000 going back into the fund balance in the first year. The projected savings at the end of the five year plan, with no additional revenue, in 2017/2018 will be approximately \$37,000. Under the line item of Repair and Maintenance, fuel and labor costs for the District mechanic is built in. There is no apparatus reserve included in the draft of the five (5) year plan. The newest engine is a 2007. The typical life of a front line engine is 25-30 years, when running two stations. A front line engine, running one station, is 10-12 years. Engines are typically placed at a reserve status after 14 years.

Director Chambers questioned the use of cell tower funds. Interim General Manager, Ray Kolisz, commented that cell tower funds is a non-water generated revenue. Cell tower revenue (\$110,000) accounts for 2.4% of the district revenue in the general fund. Mr. Kolisz cautioned that Prop 218 is regularly challenged in the courts.

Director Chambers moved to take two (2) years of cell tower revenue and give it to the Fire Department to transition the closure of the Lear Fire Station. The motion was not seconded. Director Moore would like to research the effects of taking the cell tower revenue from the Water District budget.

The affects of a reduction in service was presented. In 2012, Chief Thompson spent an extra 500+ hours covering the duty officer position to save on labor costs. Reserve staff will also drop to 17-18 personnel. If you do not have four (4) personnel responding to all structure fires, you are no longer a recognized fire department and your ISO rating goes up.

Potential sources of additional revenue were discussed. There are nearly 1,000 parcels owned by the federal government. Persuading (BLM) to sale the parcels would in turn generate money by way of a special fire tax. Chief Thompson would also like to look into directing a portion of the general tax levy to the Twentynine palms Fire Department. The Board was in agreement in seeking legal opinion regarding both matters.

Anna O'Hare, of Twentynine Palms, spoke to Agenda Item #2 and questioned if fireman possess specialized skills or if their job duties can be interchangeable.

Councilman Harris, of Twentynine Palms, spoke to Agenda Item #2, and commented on the 29 Band of Mission Indians' previous discussions with the city regarding the setting aside of funds for fire and police protection.

Chief Thompson announced that he and the Interim General Manager, Ray Kolisz, will be meeting with the Tribal Fire Authority tomorrow.

3. Closed Session - Conference With Labor Negotiators - Pursuant to Government Code Section 54957.6

Agency Designated Representatives: Fire Chief Jim Thompson  
Legal Counsel Joseph Sanchez

Employee Organization: Twentynine Palms Professional Fire Fighters  
IAFF Local 4266

Director Shinaver moved to enter closed session at 6:36 p.m., seconded by Director Cisneros and unanimously approved.

The Board returned to open session at 7:49 p.m. Director Moore announced that there was no reportable action.


4. Future Agenda Items and Staff Tasks/Directors' Comments and Reports

The Board unanimously commended staff for their good work.

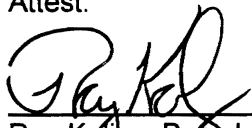
Chief Thompson informed the Board that in light of the present situation, staff is actively looking for employment elsewhere. Chief Thompson recommended placing a hiring freeze for career staff on the next agenda. The Board was in agreement.

5. Adjournment

On motion by Director Shinaver, seconded by Director Chambers and approved by the Board, the meeting was adjourned at 7:50 p.m.

  
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Kerron E. Moore, President  
Board of Directors

Attest:

  
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Ray Kofisz, Board Secretary  
Twentynine Palms Water District

APPROVED FEB 27 2013