Overview

In the last Newsletter I noted that we were planning to engage in a new Strategic Planning Process and a Deployment Analysis. I am happy to report that the Board approved funding for both of these initiatives and that the vendors have been selected.

These documents are a very important part of our work. This past December I shared the Vision for our Organization but in order to get to that destination, we need to establish an intentional plan. The Strategic Plan assists with this by providing very specific steps to take. The Deployment Analysis will help us as an agency answer questions with regards to our Station location, apparatus inventory and staffing matrix.

~ Fire Chief Tubbs

“If you keep doin’ what you’re doin’, you’re going to keep getting what you’re getting”

~ Zig Ziglar
Team Rules

At the All Officer meetings, the group developed a set of rules to govern our daily interactions. As a people-based organization, how we interact is critical to our success. SMFD has a number of policies, some of which touch on behavior and it is wise to renew the agency’s attention to behavioral expectations and re-visit the expectations of all.

The officers received input from their crews and returned to share the findings with the All Officers group. The input was used to create a set of Team Rules that was finalized and posted at every fire station. Thank you to all for your contribution and feedback.

OpenGov

The Fire District has entered into an annual agreement with OpenGov, as part of the approved 2015/2016 budget. All of our financial data has been uploaded to the OpenGov site. OpenGov is one of the mechanisms we are deploying to increase transparency in our financial operations. The City of Sausalito has been using this tool for several years with notable success. This tool is also accessible to employees, which will greatly reduce the staff time currently required for budget managers to acquire budget management information. We will soon be providing training to staff on the use of the tool. We are preparing to launch this site publicly with a small marketing campaign.
Station 9 Solar Project

The District drafted a letter to the immediate neighbors around STA 9 notifying them of the upcoming solar project. According to the STA 9 solar project work schedule, the anticipated start date is August 17, 2015. The solar project will last approximately five weeks with the completion date target of September 18, 2015.

The STA 9 solar project is completely financed by other sources which are facilitated by Sunetric thus bearing no financial burden on the District. Additionally, the District bears no burden or liability with any part of this project, but agrees to purchase power from Sol Ed at a discounted rate as stipulated in our contract.

Per SolEd the District is projected to save $6,602 in utility costs in the first year through this solar energy upgrade.

Budget Update

The Board approved the 2015/2016 budget at the June Board Meeting. It was originally planned to bring forward a resolution to adopt the final budget at the July Board meeting, but decided to postpone it due to a budget amendment staff is currently working on. The amended budget include both adjustments on the revenue side (increase), and expenditure side. We have already met with the Personnel Committee regarding the expenditure side and will be meeting with the Finance Committee in the coming month for their recommendation.

The Resolution to adopt the Amended Budget for FY 2015/2016 will be presented at the August 26, 2015 Board meeting.
B/C Sharing Initiative

Recently the Fire Chief met with the Shared Services Committee (Directors Chun, Hilliard and St. John), to present the draft Staff Report detailing the findings and recommendations of the Shared Battalion Chief Initiative. Additionally, the Committee received a copy of the draft Shared Services Agreement. The Committee provided feedback for both documents.

The next steps include a presentation of the Staff Report to the Mill Valley City Council and Southern Marin Fire District Board. Chiefs Welch and Tubbs are targeting the August Board and Council meetings to deliver the Staff Report.

The Agreement will be finalized and presented for Legal & possible LAFCO Review before going before the Elected Bodies.

Strategic Plan

Forrest Craig of Forrest Craig Consulting, Inc., has been hired to conduct our Strategic Planning Process. Mr. Craig uses a Community Driven Stakeholder process that is based on the CPSE model. It is considered a best industry practice used for developing “what’s needed” to deliver on the vision of the organization.

It becomes our roadmap for us to follow as we develop budgets and annual work plans.

There will be an opportunity for input from our community, Board members and our firefighters. We are expecting that during the week of October 12 we will hold several internal stakeholder meetings.

We will keep you posted as the plan evolves and solidifies.

District BBQ

Mark your Calendars!

The DISTRICT BBQ will be held on October 4th from Noon-3:00 pm at the Seminary Soccer Field.

Bring your family! There will be yummy BBQ with all the fixins, beverages fun games, & kids activities.

Who could forget witnessing the swim flipper, crazy outfit race? Hysterical!

Years of Service Awards will be presented at the District BBQ. Thirteen staff members will be receiving awards this year.
Deployment Analysis

We recently solicited for a Request for Qualifications (RFQ) to conduct a Deployment Analysis of Fire and Emergency Services. The submittal date recently closed and a consultant was chosen. We will begin entering into a work scope and financial contract for the Deployment Analysis.

The deployment analysis, using response data and other statistical information, will assess a variety of elements of our services. It will include: 1) location and number of fire stations; 2) apparatus inventory, staffing and deployment; 3) establishment of nationally recognized performance standards and goals; and 4) establishing the foundation for the development of a Standards of Coverage Policy and eventual Agency Accreditation.

Intranet & Google Apps for Government

Chief Tubbs and ASM Kim met with Todd Lando, SMFD Webmaster, to discuss creating a new staff Intranet including comprehensive agency calendars. The vision for the Intranet is to create a one-stop portal for staff to check their email and view the daily events, training, weather, equipment status, official memos and directives.

This new Intranet will provide important information to staff for daily planning plus links to staffing, training and policy software. It will also be accessible from any computer through the Internet, smartphone compatible and federal government security compliant.

To help facilitate the creation of the new Intranet, it was advised that the District begin using Google Apps for Government (Google Government), a cloud-based platform for several reasons including a higher degree of efficiency, reliability and cost savings.

EFFICIENCY

Employees can access their work files from any computer, anywhere through the Internet. Currently, staff documents/files reside on the District’s server at STA 9 where they travel via fiber optics from STA 9 to the outlying fire stations. There are latent connectivity issues with the fiber data transfer resulting in staff frustration from the work slow-down or stoppage.

The target date to roll out the new Intranet and Google Apps platform is September 1st. Staff training will be provided during the week of August 24-28.
ISO Rating

At the July Marin County Fire Chiefs Meeting, Phil Steele with the Insurance Services Office (ISO) did a presentation to the Fire Chiefs and informed them of the re-rates that would be occurring in Marin County. Southern Marin Fire was one agency identified due for a review of their ISO ratings.

The Southern Marin Fire District was last rated in 2000 and received a Classification of 3. The City of Sausalito was last rated in 2003 and received a Classification Rating of 5. The highest Classification Rating a Community can receive is Class 1, which recently the City of Mill Valley achieved.

ISO ratings impact insurance premiums, however they typically only impact commercial properties insurance premiums. The value to residential properties is that with better Classification Ratings comes improved competition by increasing the number of Residential Insurance Providers. While the Classification Rating does not translate directly into improved premiums like it does with Commercial Property, increased competition can result in lower rates for the homeowner.

ENGINE 4 Update

The new engine is scheduled to start building on August 26. It will be done and ready for inspection on October 1 at the Pierce factory. Thank you to committee members, BC Pasquale, Capt. Mike Martinez, Eng. Pete Falk, ENG/PM Brandon Treat and Eng. Adam Vollmer for all your hard work!
Annual Open House

The District’s Annual Open House will be held on Sunday, October 11th from Noon until 3:00 pm.

Come meet the Southern Marin Fire Department, get a station tour and view the equipment. Staff and volunteers will be on hand to answer your questions and show you around. Educational & Information materials will be available at all stations. Demonstrations are planned at all fire station.

STA 1: 333 Johnson Street, Sausalito * STA 4: 309 Poplar Street, Tam Valley & STA 9: 308 Reed Boulevard, Straw-

Strike Team Diary

On the morning of July 23rd at 0230 hrs. Strike Team 2141C was deployed. The Strike Team members were Captain Paterson, ENG/PM Moran, Eng. Coleman and Eng. Stone. They were assigned to the Wragg Fire where they performed mop up, maintained control lines and had structure protection duties for about 3 days. On July 27th, the Strike Team was re-assigned to the Lowell incident in Grass Valley where the crew was tasked with controlling a 100 acre spot fire that had jumped the contingency line. The Strike Team worked together putting in 4000' of hose with lateral P lines to maintain and extinguish the spot fire. The Team stayed at the Lowell fire for 3-4 days where they continued to mop up and hold control lines. On July 30th, the Strike Team was re-assigned to the Rocky fire in Lake County near Clear Lake and stayed at that incident until August 6th.

The Team was fortunate enough to work some very active divisions and were part of several firing operations. The Rocky fire was very dynamic in regards to winds changing direction and incredible fire growth and fire behavior we witnessed. On one afternoon, the fire being driven by fuel, topography and wind doubled in size from 24,000 to 48,000 acres in less than 24 hrs.

The Strike Team crew worked hard when needed and maintained situational awareness all times. No injuries were reported and moral was great throughout the entire deployment. As always, the crews were proud to be able to assist in the efforts to save life and property.

Thank you to all members of Strike Team 2141C and ALL Strike Team members.

You Make the District Proud!
Liza Andre

I was born in the hot metropolis of Burien, Washington (just south of the Sea-Tac airport)... to too young parents (and I was their third!) who were living up there after my dad attended the University of Oregon School of Architecture.

We moved back to Sausalito when I was two, lived a couple blocks off of Caledonia street until I was six when we left for five years in North Africa (my dad was a Peace Corps Director).

Returning to live in Mill Valley at the age of 12 and going to Mill Valley Middle School was a cultural shock and probably scarred me for life...

I was an Oregon Duck (University of Oregon) for my college years, back in the dark ages when you could graduate in four years.

Steve and I just celebrated our 25th wedding anniversary and have two amazing young adult children (Silas and Hannah – several of you know Silas who manages Marin Diving Center and few of you know Hannah from Marin SAR and Crossfit North Marin).

I get outside as much as I can (trail running and hiking) and enjoy staying close to home after years of world travel in my previous job as a Corporate Events Manager (though it wasn’t too awful being wined and dined at five star resorts around the world!).

Stop by and say hi any time!

Suggestions? Did the newsletter not cover a subject you were interested in? Do you want more information on a subject in this newsletter? Drop me an email. ~ Chris