



Southern Marin Fire Protection District  
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## FINANCE COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES

Wednesday, November 17, 2020

### 1. CALL TO ORDER

Meeting was called to order by President Hilliard: 07:30 a.m.

### ROLL CALL

#### In attendance:

**Committee Members:** *Via Zoom Meeting:* President Hilliard and Director Fleming. *In person:* Director Perazzo. There is a quorum.

**Staff:** *Via Zoom Meeting:* Finance Manager Alyssa Schiffmann, and Chief Welch. *In person:* Fire Chief Tubbs, Deputy Chief Peterson, Chief Hilliard, and Clerk of the Board Mariya Weinberg.

### 2. OPEN TIME FOR PUBLIC EXPRESSION:

No public present.

### 3. AGENDA ADJUSTMENTS AND APPROVAL

None

### 4. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

#### 4.a October 21, 2020 Finance Committee Minutes

There were no corrections to the Minutes, but there were two follow-ups for items brought up at the last meeting. First, President Hilliard was not able to get together with Ms. Schiffmann and Chief Tubbs to discuss surplus disposition, due to circumstances beyond her control, so she proposed that they all meet next month. Secondly, President Hilliard asked how it is going with surplus the Unit 1 Dodge 5500 truck, as was approved at the last Finance Committee and also at the Board of Directors meetings? Chief Peterson responded that he is working on this, and hopes to have an update at the next meeting if it was sold, and how much profit or loss had resulted.

*Motion to approve October 21, 2020 Minutes as presented:*

M/S: Perazzo/Hilliard

Eyes: Hilliard, Perazzo

Abstain: Fleming

Noes: None

### 5. REPORTS AND INFORMATION

#### 5.a Finance Report

Ms. Schiffmann highlighted a few things on the report, which is included in the meeting packet. There is not much change since the last report, since the reports are close, time wise. We are at 32% of 35% for the year. There are some items over budget, but no emergencies. Overtime is over budget, but we are still getting OES reimbursements. Once those reimbursement are subtracted, we are on track with this budget line. Budget is a little high for purchase of radios, since one extra one put us over the top. The additional radio purchases were because of a few new rigs needing that equipment. Apparatus repairs have also been

high this month, but there should be insurance reimbursements for some of that cost. Chief Peterson added that an insurance claim for about \$10k, pertaining to Engine 4, was accepted by the insurance company. Chief Peterson is also looking into raising the amount of our deductible, which is currently at \$500, in order to reduce insurance premiums.

Ms. Schiffmann reported that the Balance Sheet (page 16 of the report) shows we are down to \$1M in the Operating Fund, and so we will temporarily transfer funds from reserves to cover, and then move funds back to reserves once the December property taxes come in. Chief Tubbs wanted to know what is the County's tax revenue projection, percentage wise. Ms. Schiffmann said it is about the same 5% increase over last year, and we budgeted just a little under that.

## **6. ACTION ITEMS**

### **6.a Journal Entry Policy**

Chief Tubbs reminded the committee that during the last year's Audit, the Auditor had noted our lack of oversight over the Journal Entries that are routinely made by Ms. Schiffmann, and so the policy was created to address this issue, and to provide accountability. The draft policy is provided in the meeting packet for Finance Committee review and approval, and then will go to the full Board of Directors at the meeting this month. Ms. Schiffmann also mentioned that we are again mid-Audit, so we would expect to have the same finding about Journal Entry oversight on the upcoming Audit report, since the policy is not yet implemented. However, the issue will be addressed before the following Audit. Ms. Schiffmann pointed out that the newly-hired Finance Assistant can review Capital Assets. Journal Entries should still be reviewed before the Finance Committee. President Hilliard was concerned that there were too many Journal Entries made during the past year.

*Motion to approve the new Journal Entry Policy as presented:*

M/S: Perazzo/Hilliard

Eyes: Hilliard, Perazzo, Fleming

Noes: None

### **6.b Fire Prevention Step Adjustment**

Chief Hilliard discussed the status of employment of Fire Prevention Specialist McKenna Ramiro. In 2019 the position of Administrative Assistant to Prevention was created, and Ms. Ramiro joined the department. It was later determined that Prevention department needed a Plans Examiner and also someone to do special projects, such as evacuation maps, fire prevention week, and public education. Ms. Ramiro had the relevant experience, including a plan review background from her work with the City of Sausalito. She was re-classified as a Fire Prevention Specialist, which is a State-recognized classification. Also, based on research which included regional data, the top step salary for this position was set at \$94k. Consequently, the Prevention department started doing step increases to bring Ms. Ramiro's salary up from the top step pay she had in the Administrative Assistant to Prevention position to the Fire Prevention Specialist level pay. At the time that the latest, which is also the first, increase was made, there was an error. Ms. Ramiro was given a 5% increase, instead of the 10% increase. To keep up with the promised salary, her salary should have been raised to \$85k annually. The difference, as calculated annually, is \$4,660. Not positive. The correction needs to be made retroactively, pro-rated based on when the increase originally started on August 6, 2020.

*Motion to approve the Fire Prevention Specialist step increase as presented:*

M/S: Perazzo/Fleming

Eyes: Hilliard, Perazzo, Fleming

Noes: None

### **6.c Updated SMFD Purchasing Policy**

Chief Peterson mention that this policy update is what Staff promised the Board that Staff would provide following the situation with the recent purchase of the Unit 1 Dodge 5500 truck. Although the intent of the existing policy has been for the purchasers to always use the best pricing available, the policy only stated that purchasers would use State Bid or Group Purchasing Power for purchases over \$60k. The policy now spells out at the beginning of the document, that all purchasers are to be good stewards of taxpayers' money, and look for best pricing always. Chief Peterson pointed out the specific instruction on Purchasing Policy 3, on Page 36, Item 3, is to use State Bid on all vehicle purchases, including from \$6,000 to \$60,000, not just those over \$60,000.

President Hilliard asked if there was a threshold dollar amount over which purchases would require approval of the Fire Chief or designee? Her opinion is that there should be a purchasing amount threshold. Chief Tubbs clarified that there is a threshold limit, and in fact there are different thresholds for different type of items, but this is described in a separate Lexipol policy. Ms. Schiffmann pointed out that any big purchase would be approved within the budget process first, and thus subject to Board approval. She gave the example of this year's treadmill purchase. Chief Peterson said that the Purchasing Policy also states that Items 3, 4 and 5 have a requirement to have a Purchase Order that is approved by the purchasing agent and the Fire Chief or Deputy Chief. This covers purchases above \$6k. Chief Tubbs clarified that, as far as the Dodge 5500 purchase, there was nothing within the initial purchase of the vehicle that was outside the policy. The issue was that the Chiefs believed that all the vehicle's component costs were in total under the \$60k limit. In actuality some of the component purchases for this vehicle came from different budget lines, so, altogether, it was over the limit, and also added up to be over budget. Our policy correction now is to make sure costs for all components of a vehicle purchase are to be presented in total for approval.

*Motion to adopt the updated SMFD Purchasing Policy as presented:*

M/S: Perazzo/Fleming

Eyes: Hilliard, Perazzo, Fleming

Noes: None

### **7. CLOSED SESSION – NONE**

### **8. ADJOURNMENT**

Motion to Adjourn:

M/S: Perazzo/Fleming

Eyes: Hilliard, Perazzo, Fleming

Noes: None

Adjourned 7:54 AM.