

**San Miguel Consolidated Fire Protection District  
Regular Meeting of the Board of Directors  
April 25, 2018**

***Minutes***

President Raddatz called the meeting to order at 5:35 pm.

Board Members Present: Directors Ek, Kiel, McKenna, Nelson, Raddatz, Rickards, Vacio

Board Members Absent: None

Staff Present: Fire Chief Brainard, Deputy Chief Marugg and Administrative Assistant Rians

Approval of Agenda: By Board consensus, the Agenda was approved.

The Agenda for the Regular Meeting of April 25, 2018 was posted at District Headquarters on Friday, April 20, 2018, at 5:00 pm.

Pledge of Allegiance: Director McKenna led the Pledge of Allegiance.

Public Communications: None.

**INFORMATIONAL AGENDA ITEMS:**

- a. Fire Chief Brainard presented and Organizational Analysis to the Board of Directors. Topics included Communities served, Call Volume and Responses, Administration, Fire Prevention, Operations, Training, Fleet, and Facilities, then concluded with Future Budget Considerations.

The following questions were asked by each Director and answered by Chief Brainard:

Director Nelson: Are all responses out of Station 15, including medical calls, done by Truck 15?

Chief Brainard: Yes, Truck 15 is the main apparatus run out of Station 15. It responds to Type 1 calls as well as Truck calls. The crews cross-staff other apparatus (Brush Rigs, Light & Air, etc.), and for call responses, "Truck 15" is all responses out of Station 15, whether they're on one of the Ferraras or on the Truck.

Director Nelson: A thought more than a question -- when San Miguel instituted residential sprinklers, the Board at the time lowered mitigation fees to offset costs to homeowners,

contractors and builders. I did not agree with that at the time or now, but it is something that -- long-term – the Board needs to look at inspection and mitigation fees. We are behind the curve and could generate revenue for stations, facilities, and equipment.

Chief Brainard: Agreed. There are currently two sources of revenue pertaining to mitigation fees – one is ‘Mitigation Fees’ assessed and dispersed by the County. We receive approximately \$200,000 from those fees annually, but only budget \$50,000 as the funds are not guaranteed. There is also ‘Fair Share’ fees, currently 20¢ per square foot for certain new construction projects. The Board has the ability to set the policy as to whether or not Fair Share is charged and at what rate.

Director Kiel: We are significantly under the performance standard with 54% for “Effective Fire Force” under Key Performance Goals.

Chief Brainard: It’s a standard that people aspire to meet. Unless you’re a large metropolitan department with 4-person companies in close proximity, it’s a very difficult goal to meet. Even in San Diego, they only meet that goal in the core areas of the city – outlying areas are definitely under the 90% performance goal. With 4-person companies, you only have to place 4 apparatus plus a Battalion Chief to meet the 17 firefighters on scene. We, at 3 persons per apparatus, have to place at least 5 apparatus and some other combination.

Director Kiel: A shortfall in revenue of approximately \$36,000 is discussed within the Fire Prevention Bureau, but the recommendation is to increase the inspectors by 0.5 FTE. It seems like 0.5 FTE would cost more than \$36,000 of lost revenue. What is the cost of the Fire Prevention Bureau? Making a profit should not be a goal of Fire Prevention.

Chief Brainard: It is projected that if we complete 100% of our inspections at the current fee rate, we would only generate another \$36,000. With an aggressive increase of fees, we could get to a point of being cost neutral, and many other agencies within the County and State charge substantially more than San Miguel. For Fiscal Year 2016/2017, the Bureau brought in just under \$250,000, with an expense of approximately \$410,000, totaling a cost between \$160,000 and \$170,000.

President Raddatz then discussed “development fees” and that they do not exist for profit, but to establish an organization to meet the needs of the growth as people develop.

Director Kiel: In the future budget considerations, adding staff and equipment costs a lot of money. I would ask of the Budget Committee to take a longer term look in the next year’s budget to see what expenses we are going to have further down the road and make sure we can pay our bills in the future.

Chief Brainard: I do not see us adding a 4<sup>th</sup> crew member within the next 5 years. The intent of the Organizational Analysis is to show industry standards, but any changes would require a policy decision. I am presenting to you what is needed to optimally run the District.

President Raddatz then discussed the Organizational Analysis as a tool to identify strengths of the organization and areas in which we can better serve the community with some adjustments.

Director Kiel: The report for Station 18 discusses a persistent leak in their apparatus bay. With that, you run the strong risk of mold and I'm sure we haven't done an air clearance and don't know what is going on behind that, but that would certainly be something we need to look at. And a lot of fire stations had cracked walls which is not superficial necessarily because walls don't crack unless there is movement causing the crack so a lot of these reports that you assume are going to be minor might not be so minor. Cracked walls are caused by settlement and settlement could jeopardize the integrity of the structure. We are supposed to be essential emergency service, which I would be surprised if we are. I have notes on things that are assumptions that shouldn't be – will discuss with the Chief later. One fire station needs to be built and another one needs to be rebuilt according to this. At some point we need to know those costs and something the Board needs to be provided information on, so we can plan for the long term.

Director McKenna: Regarding AMR still having staffing challenges. Is Mercy still responding into our area? Do they have the same challenges?

Chief Brainard: Yes, they do still respond in our area and they have the same challenges.

Director McKenna: Although we don't have swift water or heavy rescue, our personnel are trained to support those resources when they come into the District, correct?

Chief Brainard: Our personnel, if they have that training, would not be at the technician level or would have obtained that training on their own. We cannot stand up a team every single day and say, "these 3 individuals are swift water qualified" – We depend on Rescue 12 for their equipment and people. And our Light Rescue can go beyond truck capabilities, but we do not have a Heavy Rescue.

Director McKenna: Are there plans in place to get our personnel SRT trained and able to respond in conjunction with other agencies?

Chief Brainard: That is not in the plan right now, but certainly something we want to do.

Director Kiel: Daily training totals 4,620 hours – is that for everyone?

Chief Brainard: That's training hour per company, so it should technically be multiplied for 3 for our actual manhours, but I did not want to figure to appear inflated.

Director Rickards: As far the turnout issue, everyone has a single set of turnouts. What are you currently doing when you get a fire – are employees having to utilize soiled equipment until the end of shift or what are your procedures?

Chief Brainard: Crews currently do a rinse-down on scene. We have some extra turnouts at Station 15, as well as extractors. We are looking at commercial washing machines, and we have the drying rack downstairs. We are doing everything we can with this budget to get clean PPE on people – 2 hoods, the wipes – until we can get a second set of PPEs.

Director Rickards: How many personnel can be covered with the extra turnouts you have?

Chief Brainard: We can currently cover a first alarm, so at least 4 companies, but we would not be able to cover a second significant working incident.

Director Rickards: With the health issues we see come about around retirement age, I feel a second set of PPEs should be a priority for the Board.

Director Rickards: Are the two training Captains per shift establishing training schedules or is it Chief Marugg? Would a Training Battalion Chief take place of the Captains?

Chief Brainard: We would still need lead captains or FTO's to take lead - prescribe, develop, and implement training. It is currently challenging to have only two Training Captains across three divisions and eight stations.

Director Rickards: For Engine Companies to assist with Fire Prevention inspections, is that something that could be implemented rather easily or is further support needed?

Chief Brainard: We are looking at a tablet-based program that would allow Engine Companies to walk in, input the type of building/business, and the program would provide a list of the 50 most common things to look for. The program would allow a receipt to be printed, but we must establish the software program, training, and if we want to charge for that, we'd have to establish a policy. Crews are currently getting out in the community, stopping in local businesses and introducing themselves and getting familiar.

Director Rickards: Just an observation, for budget development, I'd like to see us prioritize facilities maintenance as a Board. We are starting to look at Fleet, and our replacement Truck company – I don't want us to be caught behind the curve. There is value in seeing where we are deficient, and I'd like to see us prioritize personnel, safety equipment, and the apparatus they're going out on.

Chief Brainard: The specification development committee for the truck had their first official meeting today, so that process is underway.

Director Vacio: Are we getting passthrough fees from AMR for replacement monitors?

Chief Brainard: We increased our reimbursement fund from \$705,000 to \$808,000 and received and \$220,000 in back payments going into the general fund. When we had a critical look at the budget, I had confidence that our monitors would last. If we have a monitor go down, we can have a replacement here from AMR within an hour – they have been extremely generous, but our replacement monitors are a different generation. The challenge is really going to be in July/August/September when we're sending strike teams out. Do not want strike team crews to have less.

Director Vacio: Have you investigated grants?

Chief Brainard: Grants are on our radar, but we want to be cautious with that and not end up "grant poor" 5 years down the road because a grant looks attractive now.

Director Ek: Has anything changed with offload delays?

Chief Brainard: Offload times have gotten longer and offload delays more frequent. It is an ongoing issue.

Director Ek: What type of businesses are refusing access for Fire Prevention inspections? It is a concern for firefighters – that they don't know what they're going into if they respond to one of these businesses.

Chief Brainard: Various businesses and apartment complexes, and business owners have talked to other businesses and spread the knowledge that they can avoid the fees by simply refusing access. It takes up a great amount of time to return to businesses over and over

trying to get access. We believe the number of businesses refusing access is currently around 5%.

Director Ek: The Deputy Fire Marshal is retiring soon – is there a plan after that?

Chief Brainard: Yes, we have already done some interviews and have one Fire Prevention staff remaining. We are looking at possibly outsourcing to the County, but just looking at all our options while still being cost effective.

Director Ek: Are we involved in any sort of college reimbursement?

Chief Brainard: Yes.

Director Nelson: If businesses are open to the public, how can they refuse access?

President Raddatz: In my experience, they usually try and require an appointment, then claim they cannot work around any proposed appointment times.

Director Vacio: If there is a fire there, would they be liable?

Chief Brainard: I believe so.

Director Kiel: Do we have a legal authority to enter these businesses?

Chief Brainard: Not if the owner refuses.

Director Kiel: We can take them to court?

Legal Counsel: There would have to be good cause and it depends on the situation. I believe there are ways to gain access, but it may not be worth the expense.

Director Kiel: Maybe going through the legal process with a couple businesses would set a precedent.

Chief Brainard: Spending a disproportionate amount of time getting into one business further delays completing the other inspections that are not getting completed.

Director Kiel: As a Board member, I'd be willing to vote to charge for those expenses.

President Raddatz: I believe the next step is getting a good Strategic Plan put together, and the Board can look into that within the next Fiscal Year.

All the Board members acknowledged the time and effort put into the Organizational Analysis and appreciated the comprehensive data within it.

**Next Meeting:** The next meeting of the Board of Directors will be a Regular Meeting on Wednesday, May 9, 2018, at 5:30 pm, at District Headquarters.

President Raddatz adjourned the meeting at 7:02 pm.

Prepared and Submitted by:

*Shayna Rians*

Shayna Rians

Administrative Assistant

Board Recording Secretary