

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

AUGUST 5, 2015

FIRE DEPARTMENT BUSINESS

Call to Order and Roll Call

President Moore called the meeting to order at 5:00 p.m., 72401 Hatch Road, Twentynine Palms, California. Those responding to roll call were Directors Chancey Chambers, Carol Giannini, Suzi Horn, Sam Moore, and Roger Shinaver. Also present were Fire Chief Jim Thompson and District Secretary Cindy Fowlkes. Financial Consultant Cindy Byerrum was absent.

Additions/Deletions to the Agenda

None

Public Comments

Chief Jock Johnson, of Morongo Valley, spoke in favor of restructuring the fire department and keeping local control. Chief Johnson asked the Board to consider giving him 30 days to review the Twentynine Palms Fire Department budget and make recommendations.

James Townsend, of Twentynine Palms, spoke in favor of local control.

1. Presentation on Fire Department Annexation Proposal by Division Chief John Chamberlin of the San Bernardino County Fire District

Chief Chamberlin provided the Board and public with a PowerPoint presentation outlining the services of San Bernardino County Fire. The following highlights some of those points:

- Advanced life support services to all incorporated communities served
- 165 personnel staffed daily, both paramedic and EMT
- 24 personnel are ambulance specific
- State of the art CAD system
- Regionalized service delivery model
- Paid Call Firefighter program with locally trained personnel living within 20 minutes of a station
- Fire Explorer program
- Fire units provide same level of support and medications as ambulances with all patients receiving an ALS assessment
- 47.7% of the calls required ALS (advanced life support)
- \$2,079,137 for total costs of providing a 3 person ALS paramedic engine
- The parcel based tax saw no increase in fiscal year 2015/2016, though a potential 3% is allowable
- There would be a fiscal savings of \$53,000 for capital replacement buildups transferred to the service zone for regional replacement
- Properties will be assessed a flat rate for fire protection services earmarked for the Twentynine Palms region
- Current firefighters will be required to pass a physical and background before being offered a position within the city and nearby area

Glen Freshour, of Twentynine Palms, questioned the average amount a resident pays for fire protection.

Ed Vallerand, of Twentynine Palms, questioned the budget proposal by County Fire and was in favor of local control.

James Townsend, of Twentynine Palms, questioned the fire tax for Country Fire services in Yucca Valley.

2. Consideration and Possible Action to Initiate the LAFCO Application Procedure for Annexation of Fire Protection Services to San Bernardino County Fire District

Chief Thompson introduced County Fire Chief Hartwig, Kathleen Rollings-McDonald with LAFCO, and County Deputy Chief Jim Johnstone. Chief Thompson presented the Board with a history of the Department including fire tax measures and provided a PowerPoint presentation with the following highlights:

- The Fire Department does not have a sustainable revenue service, attempts to pass a tax increase have failed
- July 1, 2016, the department will face deficit spending or a reduction in staffing levels ultimately resulting in insolvency if a sustainable revenue source isn't found
- Counties and cities have general fund sources such as sales tax, transient occupancy tax, and vehicle license fees to provide services whereas the District is restricted to a voter approved special tax
- \$1.2 million is the current Fire Department budget with \$728,000 going to salaries
- Current service level model has 2 career officers and 3 volunteer firefighters
- ISO requires that 4 firefighters must respond on the initial alarm or a class 10 rating (less than the minimum recognized protection) will result

Randy Leazer, of Twentynine Palms, sought clarification of the unfunded liabilities of the Fire Department.

Ed Vallerand, of Twentynine Palms, wanted more information regarding the County's funding mechanisms and suggested more dialogue.

Cheryl Woodard, of Twentynine Palms, asked the Chief to consider the proposal of the Morongo Valley Fire Chief and to consider the fiscal impact on a disadvantage community.

Glen Freshour, of Twentynine Palms, was not in favor of civil servant salaries and in favor of volunteer staffing.

Jim Brakebill, of Twentynine Palms, questioned fire fees and coverage within the community and surrounding areas.

Jim Harris, of Twentynine Palms, was in favor of the citizens petitioning their council members for help with the Fire Department

Larry Briggs, of Twentynine Palms, was not in favor of another committee, wanted the Board to make a decision.

Kathleen McDonald of LAFCO clarified that revenues from the Water District can only be used for water activity. There is a protest period, noticed in the local newspaper, during the LAFCO application process.

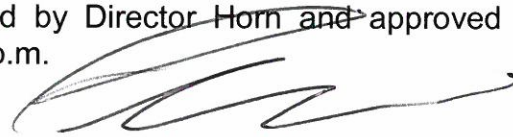
Barbara Philips, of Twentynine Palms, questioned if services through County Fire can be negotiated.

Frank Luckino, City Manager of Twentynine Palms, spoke about the all-volunteer Blythe fire department. The department is strongly supported by the community and will be celebrating 100 years of volunteer service.

After discussion, Director Chambers moved to initiate the LAFCO application procedure for annexation of fire protection services to San Bernardino County Fire District and request the Twentynine Palms City Council consent to the annexation and direct staff to work with City and County Fire staff to prepare the LAFCO annexation application and bring it to the Board of Directors for consideration and approval, seconded by Director Horn and approved by the following roll call vote:

Ayes: Directors Chambers, Horn, Moore, and Shinaver
Noes: Director Giannini
Abstain: None
Absent: None

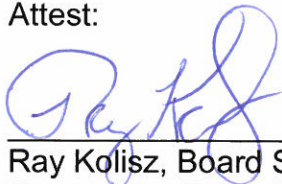
3. Future Agenda Items and Staff Tasks/Directors' Comments and Reports
Director Giannini would like Chief Thompson to accommodate Morongo Valley Fire Chief Jock Johnson's request for information.
4. Adjournment
On motion by Director Shinaver seconded by Director Horn and approved by the Board, the meeting was adjourned at 8:01 p.m.



Kerron E. Moore, President
Board of Directors

Chancey Chambers, Vice President

Attest:



Ray Kolisz, Board Secretary
Twentynine Palms Water District

APPROVED AUG 26 2015