

Chester Public Utility District
PO Box 503
251 Chester Airport Rd.
Chester, Ca. 96020
530-258-2171

Minutes of Special Meeting: November 23, 2021 at 3:00pm. Located in the Chester Public Utility District conference room: 251 Chester Airport Road.

Directors Present: Steve Graffweg, Steve Voboril, Royce Raker,

Directors Absent: Blake Mathews & Steve Trotter

Conference Call: Zero amount of public called in.

Guests Present: 0

Staff Present: 4 CPUD/CFD employees and volunteers.

1. **Call to Order:** Director Voboril called the meeting to order at 3:00pm.
 - a. Director Voboril led the Pledge of Allegiance.
 - b. Agenda Approval: Director Graffweg made a motion to accept Agenda. Director Raker seconded. All in favor, motion carried.

2. **Public Comment Agenda Items:** none

3. **EMS Scheduling:** Director Voboril asked about the lapse in coverage for the ambulance. Captain Dean stated that the ALS contract hasn't been violated. The shortage in Medics is due to EMSA being down on applicants caused by courses being shut down for COVID protocols. Also, our wage is not worth Per Diems to travel here. He listed Per Diem Paramedic hourly wage examples: CFD \$15.73. Pen. Fire \$16.67. Reno \$23.29. Lassen \$25.29. Butte \$28.14. Seneca EMTs range \$17.52 to \$23.06. The issue last week was due to people being on approved vacation and their coverage becoming ill. He then reminded the board that the Org. Chart states we have 4 medic positions in the budget, so we need to hire to avoid our current medics from being burnt out or working in an unsafe capacity for being tired. Director Raker asked what a possible solution might be. Captain Dean stated that our full-time benefits and salary package is attractive. He said that Peninsula Fire guarantees their Per Diems a minimum number of days. Director Voboril stated that there has been 30 days with no service this year. Director Raker stated that it is hard to get folks off the mountain. He stated that the hospital has grants to help get medics educated with 2-3-year commitment. Captain Dean expressed the need for an ALS 24-7 policy. We had 8 or 9 Force over days this month. Fire Fighter/Paramedic Turner stated that it is cheaper for the district for a Per Diem to cover, rather than pay him overtime to hold-over. Fire Fighter/EMT Johnson stated that he paid 100% of his medic training and education. Dean stated that he advertises with Nor-Cal and SSV. Lack of an employee pool is not just a Chester problem, its everywhere. Johnson stated that the board has voted down money saving opportunities during the current negotiations. Director Voboril stated that maybe if we can't afford to staff an ambulance 24/7 that maybe we need to give it up. Turner stated that layoff threats happen every year.

Director Raker stated he wants to stay on the board to see the 198 Main Street project through. Dean stated that they have rented out the apartment and have moved apparatus down there for a better response coverage for that end of town. We need more volunteers. Director Voboril stated that if the new tax assessment passes, that it will be 2 years before those funds are collected.

Director Graffweg stated that we should be paying per diems more than the full-time staff. Director Voboril stated that we need to push of mandatory hold-over until next meeting when a policy can be agreed upon. The policy will include a cap of hold over hours for the safety of the staff. Johnson asked if the district would add to policy that the district cover any lost vacation costs, (reservations, flights etc.) if they get held over and miss their approved scheduled vacation.

Director Raker made a motion to raise the Per Diem rate to \$20.00 per hour with a 4-day minimum. Director Graffweg seconded the motion. All in favor, motion carried.

Dean reiterated that they need a clearer picture from the board, as there has been a hiring freeze, threat to lay off, complaint of too much Overtime and now the current issue is that the board isn't happy with the reduced staffing. We need to be set up for success.

Director Raker made a motion to have mandatory hold overs until next Tuesday's Special meeting. Director Graffweg seconded the motion. All in favor, motion carried.

Raker leaves meeting @ 4:08pm

Dean stated that the Chief report will show mandatory hold-over days from now on. Director Graffweg stated benefits are expensive. Director Voboril stated may take a hit on the tax base. Dean expressed that the tax measure is a must.

4. Comments:

Directors: none

Staff: Turner gave the example of hold-over not working if the guy that is supposed to say has gotten sick during his shift.

5. Adjournment: Director Graffweg made motion to adjourn the meeting at 4:20pm. Director Voboril seconded the motion. All in favor, meeting adjourned.

Clerk to the Board, Cheryl E. Johnson
Approval of Minutes 