NORTH SAN JUAN FIRE PROTECTION DISTRICT

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BOARD OF DIRECTORS
REGULAR MEETING
Tuesday, May 27, 2025
Final

PRESENT: Bruce Boyd; Chair, Samantha Hinrichs; Vice Chair, Rhea Williamson; Treasurer

Staff Present: Fire Chief Tom Browning, Finance and Facilities Manager Lynn McGarva, Operations and personnel Manager Amy Rodriguez
Absent: Tim Tschantz, Pamela Morey.

Community Members : Liz Walsh, Boyd Johnson.

1. **CALL TO ORDER:** The meeting was called to order at 6:03 PM by Chair Bruce Boyd. Roll was taken. A quorum was established.
   The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.
2. **APPROVAL OF April 22, 2025, REGULAR BOARD MEETING AGENDA**
   Prior to approving the agenda, a request was made to move the Auxiliary Report forward to Item 6B to accommodate Sasha St. John, allowing her to present earlier and be excused due to a long day of Auxiliary meetings. The board agreed to the change.
   Motion: Vice Chair Hinrichs moved to approve the agenda as amended.
   Second: Treasurer Williamson
   Vote: Motion carried unanimously
   Aye:3 No: 0 Abstain:0 Absent:2

3. **PUBLIC COMMENT:**

Liz Walsh addressed the Board to express concern regarding confusion about the date of the previous month's board meeting. She noted that meetings are typically held on the fourth Tuesday of the month, but the agenda had listed the meeting on the last (fifth) Tuesday. As a result, she missed the meeting, believing it would take place on the later date. She expressed frustration about the mix-up and requested greater clarity in the future.

Boyd Johnson addressed the Board and read aloud a portion of the Brown Act, specifically referencing the importance of transparency in public meetings. He cited a section of the Act that states public agencies should not control or limit what information the public receives, emphasizing that governmental bodies must conduct their business openly and ensure public access to information.

4. MINUTES:

Draft Minutes of March 25, 2025, Regular Board Meeting

Treasured Rhea Williamson made a motion to approve the minutes of the April 22, 2025, meeting as submitted. The motion was seconded by Vice-Chair Sam Hinrichs.
The motion passed unanimously with a vote of 3-0-0-2.

Aye: 3 Noes: 0 Abstain: 0 Absent: 2

5. **ANNOUNCEMENTS:**

It was announced that an informational meeting would be held on May 12 at the North Columbia Schoolhouse for residents interested in learning more about Firewise Communities. The event featured a presentation by JoAnn Fates, along with other speakers including Sean Ryan, Battalion Chief for the local area with CAL FIRE. The purpose of the meeting was to educate the public on wildfire preparedness and steps to becoming a recognized Firewise Community.

6. REPORTS

A. Board Chair Report – Bruce Boyd

It was reported that **Mother Truckers**, a local business, had been supporting the District through a donation collection helmet placed in their store to raise funds for the firefighters. Unfortunately, the donation helmet was recently stolen. The business inquired whether the Fire Department could provide a replacement or some other secure method to continue the fundraiser. The Board expressed appreciation for the ongoing community support and discussed options for assisting with a replacement.

i. Correspondence

The Board reviewed an email from **Ralph Hogan**, who raised concerns about potential discrepancies in tax revenue received by the North San Juan Fire Protection District. He noted some anomalies and is working to determine whether the District and its taxpayers received the appropriate amount of funding, including any potential historical impacts related to ERAF (Educational Revenue Augmentation Fund).
District Manager Lynn Mcarva noted that she is actively looking into the matter.

B. Auxiliary Report – Sasha St John

Sasha St. John delivered the Auxiliary Report and shared the success of the recent Scotch Broom Breakfast, a long-standing community tradition held on Mother's Day at the Fire Hall at Station 1 in North San Juan. She reported that this year's event raised $1,000 more than the previous year and noted how smoothly it went, with community members arriving in staggered groups throughout the morning. Sasha expressed gratitude for all the volunteers who helped make the event such a success.

She also shared that the wife of one of the District's new firefighters had recently joined the Auxiliary, adding to the group's strength and community connection.

Additionally, Sasha announced that Sharon Beckenback had officially resigned earlier that day during the Auxiliary meeting, after many years of dedicated service to the department. The Board acknowledged Sharon's long-standing contributions with appreciation.

C. Chief's Report –Tom Browning

Before delivering the Chief's Report, **Fire Chief Tom Browning** introduced four new firefighters who recently joined the department:

- **Alisson Rees**
- **Francisco Cebollero**
- **Tammy Noxon**
- **Robert Noxon**

The Board welcomed the new members and expressed appreciation for their commitment to serving the community.

i. **April 2025 Statistics :**
Chief Tom Browning provided a summary of the April 2025, Statistics

ii. **Current Department Activity:**

Fire Chief Tom Browning reported that the department had responded to a number of recent incidents, noting that seven calls had only a single firefighter available to respond. He highlighted the strain this places on the department and the importance of adequate staffing.

Chief Browning also reported on a recent fire in Camptonville. The incident began as a structure fire and quickly spread into a wildland fire. The North San Juan Fire Protection District responded in mutual aid and assisted Camptonville's fire department in containing it.

During the discussion, Treasurer Rhea Williamson noted that the volume of calls so far this year suggests that it could be another record-breaking year for emergency responses, even though it is still early in the year.

Vice Chair Samantha Hinrichs commented on the recent public education session the department provided to students at Grizzly Hill. She praised the presentation as great and age-appropriate, noting that her students expressed concern about the possibility of a fire in their area. Vice Chair Hinrichs highlighted that the session equipped the students with valuable tools for preparedness, resulting in an engaged group that asked thoughtful questions and showed a strong interest in fire safety.

Fire Chief Tom Browning announced an upcoming Captain's promotion scheduled for May 31st. There are three candidates for the position: Bill Scott, Cameron Shay, and Forrest Simpson, all of whom have served as engineers for an extended period. Chief Browning acknowledged their experience and contributions to the department.

D. Treasurer's Report – Presented by Lynn McGarva

i. Financials- January 2025: Funds Summary, Disbursement Detail, Deposit Detail, Cal Card

Treasurer Rhea Williamson presented the financial report to the Board. During the review, District Manager Lynn Mcarva clarified an error in the Funds Summary report. The correct total for current assets is $2,235,126.87, not $2,235,137.17 as previously stated. The Board acknowledged the correction.

Approval of Financials:

- Motion made by Treasurer Rhea Williamson, seconded by Chair Bruce Boyd.
- Motion passed: 3-0-0-2.

ii. Transfer from Mitigation to General Fund

It was presented to the board the transfer of funds from the Mitigation Fund to the General Fund.
Treasurer Rhea Williamson made the motion to approve the transfer, which was seconded by Vice Chair Samantha Hinrichs.
The motion carried with a vote of 3-0-0-2 (3 in favor, 0 opposed, 0 abstentions, 2 absent).

iii. Transfer from Measure Q to General Fund

Transfer funds from Measure Q to the General Fund.
Treasurer Rhea Williamson made the motion to approve the transfer, which was seconded by Vice Chair Samantha Hinrichs.
The motion carried with a vote of 3-0-0-2 (3 in favor, 0 opposed, 0 abstentions, 2 absent).

E. Firefighters Association Report – Sambhava Burke

Sambhava provided an update on the Association's ongoing fundraising efforts, specifically aimed at helping firefighters purchase boots, which can be a costly expense. The goal is to provide economical support to ensure firefighters are well-equipped for their duties.
He also reflected on the recent **Scotch Broom Breakfast**, highlighting its success and the strong community turnout.

Sambhava remarked on the positive cultural shift within the department over the past year, noting how new recruits have brought renewed excitement and camaraderie. He emphasized that the team feels more united, with volunteers consistently arriving early to trainings to connect and build stronger relationships.

Additionally, Sambhava brought up the need for a newsletter to improve communication with the community and highlight the department's activities and presence. It was discussed that creating a Google Drive folder could be a useful tool, allowing department members to contribute and share articles easily.

F. Fire Safe Council /FireWise Coalition/Ridge FireWise Communities Report – Sam Hinrichs

No report

G. NCFA Report – Tim Tschantz

No Report

7. OLD BUSINESS

A. Hydrant Committee Update – Chief Browning:
Discussion ongoing. No formal updates at this time.

B. Electric Vehicle Charging Station, at Sation 1

It was reported that the installation of an Electric Vehicle Charging Station at Station 1 would not require the department to match any costs, nor would the department be responsible for installation or capital outlay expenses. The charging station is expected to generate revenue, as users will pay for the service. The Board discussed potential locations for the station, taking into consideration planned future remodeling of Station 1 to ensure optimal placement.

8. NEW BUSINESS

A. Resolution 2025-02 Collection of Special Tax (Measure Q)
The resolution was approved with Chair Bruce Boyd, Vice Chair Samantha Hinrichs, and Treasurer Rhea Williamson voting in favor. The motion passed with a vote of 3-0-0-2 (3 in favor, 0 opposed, 0 abstentions, 2 absent).

B. Resolution 2025-03 Authorizing Nevada County Auditor Controller to Collect Special Taxes
The Board reviewed Resolution 2025-03, which authorizes the Nevada County Auditor-Controller to collect special taxes on behalf of the District. The resolution was approved with Treasurer Rhea Williamson, Vice Chair Samantha Hinrichs, and Chair Bruce Boyd voting in favor. The motion passed with a vote of 3-0-0-2 (3 in favor, 0 opposed, 0 abstentions, 2 absent).

C. Authorization to Surplus Firefighting Equipment
Fire Chief Tom Browning presented a letter from Cameron Shay, the firefighter responsible for distributing uniforms and equipment. The letter detailed a list of older equipment that no longer meets state or federal performance standards due to having passed its expiration date. Although the equipment remains in good condition, it is unsuitable for active use. The proposal included donating this surplus equipment to fire departments in Mexico.

During the discussion, it was questioned whether the District already has a specific recipient fire department in mind for the donation or if the District could partner with an organization that handles shipping logistics and costs. The Board considered options for coordinating the donation process.

D. Capital Improvement
Fire Chief Tom Browning presented a PowerPoint slideshow detailing the District's current assets. The presentation included information on all fire stations with their addresses, and each vehicle owned by the department, specifying the year, make, and mileage.

Chief Browning also outlined several potential capital improvement options for consideration, including:

Acquiring additional vehicles, such as a small water tender and a rescue vehicle equipped to carry water. This would enhance the department's ability to respond effectively to vehicle accidents and fires, as well as medical calls, without needing to return to the station to switch vehicles.

Expanding the bay at Station 3, which would provide better protection for vehicles and more comfortable space for personnel.

Remodeling Station 1 and the Fire Hall to improve facilities and operational efficiency.

The presentation aimed to guide discussions on how best to allocate department funds to support future needs.

At **8:09 PM**, the meeting recessed, and all attendees walked outside to view the bay area of Station 3. This walkthrough was intended to provide a better understanding of the proposed remodel and help the Board consider its potential benefits. The meeting reconvened at **8:19 PM** and then proceeded to closed session.

E. CLOSED SESSION: Pursuant to Section 54967 of the Brown Act: Public Employee Performance Evaluations: District Operations and Personnel Manager / Board Secretary

F. Return from closed session

The Board returned from closed session at 8:37 PM. It was reported that Amy Rodriguez has performed satisfactorily in her role. While still navigating a learning curve, her contributions to the department have been positive and appreciated.

9. NEXT MEETING: June 24, 2025, at 6:00 PM.

10. ADJOURNMENT: Meeting adjourned at 8:38 PM.

Amy Rodriguez
Amy Rodriguez, Board Secretary