

Sonoma County Fire Districts' Association

ZOOM MEETING MINUTES JANUARY 28, 2021

Hosted by the President Steve Akre via ZOOM

1. Meeting was called to order by President Akre at 7:02 pm; with the following members present:

Name	District		Name	District
Steve Akre	Valley of the Moon		Mark Hemmindinger	RAFD
Tatsuo Okaya	Northern Sonoma County		Carol Pigoni	Cloverdale
Rob Stewart	Northern Sonoma County		Jason Nunes	Graton
Frank Treanor	SCFD		Bill Adams	Johnston Thomas
Fred Peterson	Northern Sonoma County		Paul Bernier	Northern Sonoma County
Bob Taylor	Cloverdale		Sean Grinnell	Bodega Bay
Mark Bramfitt	LAFCO		Mike Nicholls	Cazadero
Bonnie Plakos	North Sonoma Coast		Ernie Lovelace	Shell Vista
Mark Heine	SCFD		Charles Lachman	Gold Ridge
Jackie Gardener	North Sonoma Coast			

2. President Akre led the Pledge of Allegiance. President Akre then reiterated his thanks to Former President Treanor for his leadership for the last two years' service; and is honored to be the President for the next two years. He looks forward to continuing Frank's strong work while continuing a strong and united voice for SCFDA. We will not only advocate for fire districts, but we will also advocate for the fire service. "We are challenged and committed to the new measure G", forevermore one of my focus is to align us with other fire service entities, such as county chiefs, Labor Unions and VFC's, to get us to speak with one voice. One recent example was SCFDA, SCFCA, and Fire Service Working Group all wrote letters in favor of Northern Sonoma County's efforts to get an MSR from LAFCO and we support those efforts of coming together in the North. Its an important step for all of us.
3. President Akre asked for a motion or for any revisions to the Agenda, a motion to approve the Agenda was made by Carol Pigoni of Cloverdale, second by Mike Nicholls of Cazadero, the agenda approved with no opposition voiced.
4. President Akre informed the group that due to Chief Grinnell's absence, he did not have a treasurer's report. President Akre reminded the membership that Doug Williams and Mike Nicholls volunteered to audit last year's finances. Doug Williams informed the membership that he and Mike had gone over last years financials and found no irregularities, however they do have a couple of recommends that they will push forward in a document to President Akre and Past President Treanor. President Akre offered his thanks to both Doug and Mike for their work.
5. Committee Reports

- a. FDAC-EBA: President Akre reported that FDAC has a new President in Jim Kominski and currently the Assistant Chief for American Canyon and a Director with South County Fire in Lake County and formerly with Sonoma Valley, and a great advocate for the fire service. One thing to report out for FDAC they will host a fiscal fitness workshop. A great program is planned, go to the website to register. On the EBA front, we have recently opted to enter into a shared services agreement with the intent to consolidate services if it proves to increase efficiency. The EBA and FASIS will also look at offering liability insurance if it makes sense. And finally, the EBA does have a board vacancy, President Akre has the info if your agency is interested.
- b. LAFCO: Mark Bramfitt reported that LAFCO will meet next Tuesday and 2 o'clock and there are three items on the agenda, and they are: Reorganization of SCFD and the dissolution of the Forestville Fire District and annexation of the same to SCFD. We will then enter into the protest period. Assuming that is unsuccessful we should see SCFD's reorganization completed by April or May at the latest; The second item will be the MSR and SOI for North County, a first look for the Commission at this point. Due to a missed deadline the Commission will not be able to amend the SOI's on Wednesday. The MSR covers all of region 6, it proposes that North County expand to all areas except for the City of Healdsburg. The SOI cannot be changed until next month. The last item on the agenda is an opportunity for an Ad Hoc of the Commission, to tell the Commission what they have done so far and to possibly name a third member to replace Supervisor Hopkins seat or to even conclude their work as the ad hoc. Other business, one of our city member's Commissioner Barret, is not seeking re-appointment, Alternate Mark Landman will likely be appointed to the Commission. As a reminder, LAFCO did send out messages to all special districts, seeking applicants for expected vacancies. Mark Bramfitt thanked the membership and asked if there were any questions? Bob Taylor asked Mark if the Ad Hoc was going to meet with FSWG? Mark Bramfitt said the Ad Hoc met with him, the County, Gold Ridge members, and Chief Heine. He was not sure if Chief Heine was the rep for FSWG at the time or not. Mark Bramfitt said that Commissioner Lovelace was on the call and could answer his question. Ernie Lovelace added the Ad Hoc does plan to meet with more members of the FSWG as well as others, but he needs to appoint the third member to replace Supervisor Hopkins. Jason Nunes asked if there would be any re-evaluations of the previous MSR's since we have made some serious upgrades? The Commission has directed Mark Bramfitt to finish the MSR for the North County and then to do the MSR's for the six agencies that have not been completed, which are the VFC's around Petaluma/Rancho Adobe and lastly look at North Coast since we have not checked in for five years. Mark Bramfitt has not been directed to revise any of the MSR's that were completed, however, if any one of those agencies is considering next steps that info would be updated.
- c. Political Activity: Frank Treanor reported that he is still our representative for political activity even though a search is in place to replace him. Not much going on at this time. President Akre reminded everyone that we need a volunteer to replace Frank for this very important job.
- d. FAIRA/FASIS: President Akre told the membership that Carol Pioni had sent in her FASIS report and asked Carol if she had anything more to report. For clarity, Carol reported that her report was only sent to President Akre and Sec/Trea Grinnell, President Akre said he would send out to the group tomorrow. Carol went on to report that FASIS met on November 5th, and most items on the agenda were administrative in nature. Carol did report on some Board position changes, such as Chief Glen Weeks had retired and VP Howard Wood stepped up to become the President and Chief Akre became our new VP for FASIS-Congratulations Chief Akre! Our next meeting will be March 25th. Carol also reported that FASIS is moving ahead with property and liability coverage program and depending on participation and could be up and running on July 1, 2021. And FDAC EBA / FASIS Program could be up and running by July 2022.

- e. FSWG representative Bob Taylor reported Chief Scott Westrope will replace Chief Tony Gosner since he retired. The FSWG listed the remaining fire agencies in the county. 14 Districts, 5 City Departments, and Northbay CSA 40, not including the State/Federal/Tribal partners.

Bob also reported they will begin reviewing of Measure G information as it appears that it is coming back in the near future.

- 5. Program: President Akre apologized that B/C Cyr could not attend tonight but hopes to bring him back in the near future. President Akre then told the membership that we have a small, dedicated group of public providers that have been very active. The focus is transporting agency issues, but with an eye toward all of the first service agencies, transporting or not. Representatives from Sonoma (Akre, Norbaum, Cyr) Santa Rosa (Sutter), Bodega Bay (Grinnell, Herzberg), Petaluma/Rancho Adobe (Schach) and Sonoma County (Heine). We have been working together for years now as evidenced in the EMS ordinance and most recently the group saw a small opportunity to vaccinate Fire/EMS/LE first responders and stood up a clinic with AMR almost overnight. 700 first responders were vaccinated, as well as 2000 LE and dispatchers. So far each agency has had to provide this without knowing if we will get reimbursed or not. Chief Heine and I are approaching the County and the State to get reimbursed. A special thanks to our small agency partners who have helped regardless of reimbursements. We are committed to serve our communities and the greater good.

6. Old Business

- a. Approved meeting minutes of October 22, 2020. Carol Pigoni moved to approve the minutes, Mark Hemmindinger 2nd. President Akre called for the Vote, all approved and none spoke in opposition.

7. New Business

- a. Consider creating a committee to address Proposition 19.

President Akre asked for comments. Frank Treanor explained a little about Prop 19. It gives homeowners the ability to transfer their current tax assessment to a new property as well as sets limits on the number of times a person over 50 with disabilities can make the transfer (1-3). Additional revenue to go to fire agencies and to counties. 75% to go to fire response fund and 15% to county revenue fund. Fire Fund is for staffing, new staffing (not current). Frank thinks we need to do some advance work, such as letters to the county and the state asking for their policies and calculations of funds generated and expenditures.

The goal should be set at 3/0 staffing and continued use of future funds for the same. As we go forward that we need to do something, and it should be well thought out and not knee jerk. Mark Hemmindinger asked 75 + 15 = 90 where does the other 10% go? Frank said it goes to Cal Fire. Fred Peterson asked what organizations have lobbyists that we can listen to and then formulate letters to send off in time with the latest info possible. Frank Treanor suggested Chief Heine because he is part of the Cal Chiefs eboard. Chief Heine offered that FDAC and Cal Chiefs use the same lobbyist and firms that can offer their staff analysts. The measure is convoluted and was not well thought out and the time it was written. Work is needed to clean things up. Chief Plakos said it looks like money only goes to paid departments for more paid staff. Chief Heine said that is correct and Cal Chiefs raised questions since CA is still largely volunteer. Chief Plakos also asked if there was clean up legislation expected, Chief Heine said yes, but they are having some difficulties in getting someone to sign up since they are unsure if they can legislate changes from a measure that was voted on by the public or do we need a new measure? Frank Treanor said cities were excluded from this? Yes they were, Chief Heine answered. A lot of work ahead. President Akre thanked Frank Treanor for bringing this forward.

- b. SCFDA role/responsibility in new county tax measure.


President Akre asked who requested this agenda item. VP Peterson said he, Mark Hemmindinger and a few other directors thought this was an important and relevant subject for the SCFDA to get involved. He said that though he hesitated to say “a seat at the table”, if fire districts provide the majority of fire/ems response in the county we should be allowed input in this process. He took offense at the quote in the PD from one of the Supervisors making the claim that Measure G didn’t pass because the fire service failed to take leadership. The truth is that the BOS/CAO original plan to promote and fund this measure fell apart before it began and there was no plan B. If we are allowed to be involved in the process of formulating the tax measure, I believe we will step up and provide leadership, outreach and financial support for its passage. With the suggestion that this measure is intended for the November ballot time is not our friend. I propose that we write a letter to the BOS requesting that our organization be allowed input in the drafting of this measure. Mark Hemmindinger said he also brought this up to Fred after the press article a couple weeks ago, I felt it was time for us to take some leadership, up to including the creation of a PAC. To create a cohesive message. As you know not all of us had the same message. Even our own labor group who had the most to gain took a neutral stance on the measure. We need to take an early and active role in this if the county is going to take it up again. Frank Treanor said a also agreed and said he had assume the FSWG was going to take leadership and that did not happened and supported the idea of the PAC. A single and similar message is very important. Chief Heine agreed and said he believes this group needs a strong voice on this tax measure and any others that might come to pass. Time is not our friend. This is not on the Supervisors Agenda yet to be placed on the ballot and there is a lot of work needs to get done quickly. We are pushing hard to get them to move this or not to, we need to know soon. Steve and I will keep working with the Ad Hoc to move this along and I think this group needs a strong support position to move this along as well as involvement. VP Peterson added the SCFDA is willing to step forward and to help write the ordinance. Lets not wait, we should be driving this added Chief Heine. VP Peterson added that funding is needed via the PAC. Charles Lachman added that at our next meeting someone should give an overview of the previous version. President Akre said we can provide an overview and re-send the previous info used; the SCFDA and SCFDA are two associations that should lead this effort. Please think about who might be interested to serve on an ad hoc committee. Chief Heine added, measures like this should be bring us all together. We will work to better our communication efforts and we will work hard to bring us all together.

c. Consider a future meeting to discuss the new FASIS Programs.

President Akre asked who asked for this item and no one stepped up. President Akre suggested that FASIS provide a speaker to explain the new programs expected in the future.

President Akre asked Sec/Tress Sean Grinnell if he had a financial report, unfortunately due to the circumstances, no report tonight.

8. Good of the Order. President Akre asked if anyone had any items for the good of the order. VP Fred Peterson went back to the tax measure item and asked if we could send out the previous tax information soon. Furthermore, he asked, prior to our next meeting can we find out who is interested in the tax measure ad hoc committee in hopes that some work could be done and the ad hoc could have actionable items that could be brought before the membership and redirected or acted upon. Geographic representation would be great. Mark Hemmindinger said he is willing to participate. President Akre said he is willing to send info out well ahead of the next meeting and to solicit volunteers to help with the ad hoc. Chief Mark Heine told the membership that the EOA expires in 2022 and County EMS will be releasing an RFP for the same EOA area and SCFD is going to bid on that contract to provide for that service. We are looking at two parallel tracks to bid that area-one is to bid it completely in-house and the other is to seek out an ambulance company to serve as a sub-contractor to SCFD to provide the service on the street with us to administer it. Last Thursday SCFD issued its own RFQ seeking that subcontractor. We will be pursuing that bid when the bid is released. President Akre thanked Chief Heine for his foresight and the leadership provided by SCFD and himself for offering a better EMS system. VP Fred Peterson said the County has set aside 25 million for vegetation



management (from PG&E settlement). Northern Sonoma County has already stated and has several robust projects in the works and several shovel ready plans. They will present there ideas soon. One hope is to create a pool of wildland only firefighters and set aside 100k for equipment and training will be offered to all. President Akre mentioned the efforts of Sonoma County Fire District and his own Sonoma Valley Fire District's toward fire impact fees with the County Supervisors, and it has been agendized for March 23rd meeting. It is a really important funding source for equipment and other capitol needs. It can also be used as a template for other districts. The second item is to let him know if the membership has any ideas for special program offerings.

9. Next Meeting was announced as February 25, 2021. It will be our monthly update meeting and it will be on Zoom. Future meetings planed are March 25th and April 22nd, with Zoom being that format.
10. Motion to Adjourn made by Mike Nicholls, 2nd by VP Fred Peterson. President Akre called for the vote, all were in favor, none were opposed.

Minutes prepared by Sean Grinnell.

Minutes Approved on _____

SCFDA President Chief Steve Akre _____