

# Sonoma County Fire Districts' Association

## Virtual Meeting Minutes from September 22, 2022

### 1. Call to Order

President Akre called the meeting to order at 7:06 and thanked everyone for being here.

The following members were in attendance.

Name	District		Name	District
Steve Akre	Sonoma Valley			
Fred Peterson	Northern Sonoma County			
Sean Grinnell	SCFD			
Paul Barry	Cazadero			
Charlie Lachman	Gold Ridge			
Michael Gadoua	Rancho Adobe			
Mark Hemmendinger	Rancho Adobe			
Bonnie Plakos	North Sonoma Coast			
Chris Tachouet	Gold Ridge			
Marshal Tuberville	Northern Sonoma County			
Daymon Doss	Kenwood			
Jason Nunes	Graton			
Tony Gossner	Rancho Adobe			
Marti Campbell	North Sonoma Coast			
Matt Atkinson	Sonoma Valley			
Doug Williams	SMART			
Jackie Gardener	North Sonoma Coast			

### 2. Amend/Approve the Agenda

President Akre asked for approval or changes to the agenda. VP Peterson and Director Hemmendinger will present a “teaser” for next months “in-person” meeting.

A motion to approve the agenda with the addition of a short presentation was made by Director Hemmendinger, 2<sup>nd</sup> by VP Peterson, approved by all, none were opposed.

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3. Treasurer Report

Sec/Tres Grinnell reported the current balance is \$6,967.38.

4. Committee Reports

a. FDAC / FDAC EBA / FAIRA / FASIS

President Akre said we did not get written reports FDAC or FASIS, but he wanted report that Sean Grinnell was re-elected to the FASIS BOD representing Sonoma County Fire District. Another open board spot became available on the FASIS Board and Assistant Chief Jim Comiski from American Canyon, and South Lake County Fire District is on the Board as well. The consolidation of FDAC EBA and FASIS continues to move ahead. FASIS and LOX our excess coverage over \$750k, both JPA's (you should have seen the flyer) are providing the training First Responders Resiliency coming soon. This is a great program for trying to get out in front of PTSD with pre-emptive training. Please encourage your folks to attend this great training. Director Lachman asked if this is Susan Farren's team-yes it is and he had good things to say about his experiences via Gold Ridge FPD.

b. LAFCO

A written report was posted to the website. President Akre added that his organization and Kenwood have entered into an agreement to provide staffing only that begins on September 28<sup>th</sup>. We will go through a similar process that Glen Ellen did with Valley Of the Moon a couple years ago. Director Doss thanked President Akre for Sonoma Valley coming to their aid and we look forward to the next nine months and getting to know you better. Director Lachman said Gold Ridge is looking forward to getting there SOI off the ground with LAFCO soon. Director Hemmindinger added (as a LAFCO commissioner) we have been waiting for documentation from Gold Ridge and there was no hold up with LAFCO. We hope to discuss this out our next meeting. President Akre congratulated Northern Sonoma County on there successful annexation of Fitch Mountain and other areas. VP Peterson added that we are not at the finish line just yet, we need to complete the public protest period in October and hopefully the commission will vote on it in November.

c. Political Action

A link was posted to most recent FDAC report.

d. FSWG

i. Regular Report

ii. County funded programs: Lexipol, Upstaffing and REDCOM Fees

President Akre reported that we do not have much of an update on county funder programs. A thank you to all the districts that expressed an interest in staying with Lexipol. Sonoma Valley will fill the county role insofar as being the single billing point. They will pay and then invoice each agency. This will allow us to monitor and track the costs of Lexipol. Upstaffing has no more funds and we are completely reliant on D-Risk and the state for upstaffing resources. We are not able to submit for up to two task forces or strike teams. This is very important to us. We will continue to press the county. REDCOM fees are contractual until 23/24 Fiscal year. We are still struggling to have a meaningful relationship with the CAO's office.

e. Measure G 2.0

The next big thing is the sales tax, this has been the focus of the FSWG for the past few months. Barry from the political action company the county hired originally has provided us with some valuable information. The opportunity to go to the voters in November of 2024 with a signature driving initiative. This takes it out of the County's hand, and we put into someone else's hands. If things stay the same, this

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only requires a 50% + 1 to pass. If we go this route, we will need more money up front or effort. Most of us feel we can get this vote.

There is a group that has qualified for the ballot that would force the 2/3 requirement for all new taxes. The tricky part is their initiative is retroactive to when they started collecting signatures. This item would be a constitutional amendment. Barry says this will generate a lot of opposition. We have not met the past two weeks, but we will meet next week and we will have our attorney Bill Adams. A critical component of this that we did not have before was labor, and labor is with us on this effort. Advocacy will be very important for the next initiative and labor's ability to use funds will be important to our future efforts.

Chief Gossner asked if the initiative was the CBRT 21-004281 the taxpayer protection and government accountability act? President Akre was not sure of the number, but it sounds like it. Chief Gossner received some info from CSDA-He will forward the info President Akre. I think all of us need to push this forward to try and stop it. Chief Tuberville added-District costs will continue to go up. The need for more funds to maintain what we have are going to go up. November 23/24 is going to come quick, keep in touch with your FSWG rep and be united to keep this moving in our direction. President Akre added we are not looking at 50 million anymore, but we are looking at more like 60 million. It is important that each district and department keep the reps informed of needs. We are trying to capture as many needs as possible. In general, it's not going to be perfect but let's not let perfect be the enemy of doing some really great things in improving fire services in the county. VP Peterson added we all remember the deficiencies of Measure G, I would ask that we should have a process to engage everyone early. The last time the county dictated what would happen. How do you propose to engage people, making it grass roots but at least you have consensus and people have equity in it, build it from the ground up. President Akre added with the county not being involved, we will need a governance model, something like the REDCOM JPA-could we add this responsibility? The 2<sup>nd</sup> part we did a much better job with Measure 2.0. There is more need with the fire service has more needs than available funds. The second attempt was better and the third will be event better in so many ways. Chief Tuberville said this is brand new- breaking news-nothing has been predetermined. Director Lachman please refresh us-who does not belong to REDCOM-A) Cloverdale Fire Dist and Rohnert Park and Chief Tuberville added the Cloverdale ambulance is not a member either. Many more ideas were discussed/mildly debated.

f. Ad Hoc Funding & Attendance

Chief Akre spoke in general terms about by-laws and future voting by members and future funding that we will need for our initiative and other needs.

5. Program:

None

6. Old Business

a. Approve Past Minutes-July 28, 2022.

President Akre asked for a motion to approve the minutes of July 22, 2022. Sec/Tres Grinnell asked for corrections to the 3 highlighted areas-I could not hear who had 2<sup>nd</sup>ed the motions. VP Peterson agreed to be the person. Director Hemmendinger moved to approve the minutes as corrected (VP Peterson to be the 2<sup>nd</sup>), 2<sup>nd</sup> by Director Gardener, approved by all, none were opposed.

b. EMS EOA/RFP Update:

President Akre reported that he was the EMS Committee Chair. There is a noticeable shift with the RFP. They are now willing to work with us, and concerns that ensured a level playing field for all applicants. The concerns have been addressed. The RFP will be heard on October 18, and then it will be sent to the State.

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All public providers are in agreement on the RFP. The state is expected to return the RFP much quicker this time.

c. Sonoma County Vegetation Management/PG&E Settlement Funds update – VP Peterson/Chief Tuberville

Chief Tuberville said there have been no significant updates. The current Sonoma County Vegetation management program utilizes PG&E settlement funds from 2017 and 2019, at some point those funds will run out. If you'll remember, the grants were announced around mid-December and due in early January, the same cycle is going to happen this year. CSA 41, every parcel outside of an incorporated city is in CS 41. In the CLE report was a Berkley group tasked with looking at the PG&E funds coming in, building a program from ongoing vegetation management, funds for matching fund grants, shaded fuel breaks. Develop a funding stream. The County is only exploring options like using CSA 41 again and not committed to it and not talking to fire districts. VP Peterson added, the county is considering asking LAFCO for some help and I think we need to be proactive with the county. They are doing just like they have before, they want the control. As things develop, we will keep you informed and we can address the issue collaboratively, we do know what we are doing, lets engage and create a program to work for the whole county.

d. October Presentation-VP Peterson & Director Hemmendinger-

VP Peterson said the timing of this is good as it dovetails well with moving forward with any tax initiative. I looked at Mark's outline today and it's like a white paper that we can use to help with our efforts to show the need for a proposed tax measure. Director Hemmendinger agreed with VP Peterson and added it also helps with the veg management issues. The presentation is intended to look at our history from 10,000 feet and will try to encourage and engage those in attendance at our next meeting to discuss our future as an association. Are we going to have a roll in the future of the county fire service or are we going to become a morbid organization that has an occasional dinner? So its intended to give us perspective, what has been done, what had not been done and what we could do in moving forward and what we can do to become more proactive. In '83 fire service funding was \$5.2 million-43% county funding, last year the cost was about \$55 million, and the county was chipping in 10%. Prop tax and parcel taxes taking on the shift and the taxpayer taking on the burden. Recent changes for next year with county funding SCY/BDB and Gold Ridge/CSA-40, it goes to about 15% county funding. We will hope to provide future direction for the association. We need to be more proactive instead of passive. The one piece of info I am missing, is the time we formed. President Akre added, we have some great resources-Doug Williams and Bill Adams. Doug Williams added that we came into being around the Prop 13 era. Districts started meeting once a month for some time. A lot of people that came from the State Organizations said we had one of the most vocal groups. Director Campbell-is FSWG concerned that the sales tax-if we win, that funding will result in the county remove current funding. Director Hemmendinger said that language was included in the current county contracts with SCY and Gold Ridge. President Akre also said that it is likely the county will remove some funding in lieu of new funding like a sales tax, but that language was based on past numbers. We should also consider if it's our initiative or the county's, what will the impact be? Good question.

Director Lachman said sales tax revenue is more volatile that parcel taxes are. We need to make sure we do not over promise, like SMART. We need a steady stream of revenue.

7. New Business

a. None

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8. Good of the Order

-Director Hemmindinger told the group that Rancho is planning to interview three candidates around the second week of October, with hopes to introduce a new chief before the end of the year. And with great thanks to Tony Gossner who made a big impact on Rancho Adobe as well-Thank you!

- Sec/Tres Grinnell congratulated Chief Marshall Tuberville on his award-Fire Chief of the Year.

-VP Peterson said Fall Colors is back again on the 30<sup>th</sup>

-President Akre said Sonoma Valley has a few events, they are Vintage Festival on Saturday the 8<sup>th</sup>, and the Glen Ellen Village Fair on October 9<sup>th</sup>.

9. Next Meeting, In person, October 27, 2022, SCY to host.

10. Close

President Akre adjourned the meeting at 8:43pm

Minutes approved on \_\_\_\_\_

By \_\_\_\_\_