

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

Minutes of Special Meeting: November 28, 2023, at 3:00pm. Located in the Chester Public Utility District conference room: 251 Chester Airport Road.

Directors Present: Kim Green, Steve Voboril, Arthur Tharpe, Royce Raker and Steve Graffweg,

Directors Absent: None

Guests Present: many

Staff Present: 8+

1. **Call to Order:** Director Voboril called the meeting to order at 3:00pm.
 - a. Director Voboril led the Pledge of Allegiance.
 - b. Roll Call/Attendance: Director Voboril let it be known that all Directors were present.
 - 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. **Workshop – Fire Department**

GM Cox stated that he sees 2 options: Full shut down or transition to Volunteer Dept. He explained the continued expenses either way: insurance, retiree health, utilities, other liabilities. He gave a brief history leading up to the current financial circumstance. Two board members gave presentations and their thoughts for the future of the fire department. Some public comments and brief discussions followed. Chief Balzarini gave a power point presentation on the costs and mandates for having a volunteer department, fitted gear, training etc. More discussions regarding surplusage of equipment and future tax measure possibilities. Some public members voiced their concerns regarding transparency, the lack of information provided regarding Measure D and pleaded for the department to stay open. Some gave ideas and facts to the board to help aid in their decision.

4. **Authorize a Reduction in force in the Classifications of Captain and Firefighter effective 2-28-2024.**

GM Cox thanked the public for attending and offering their feedback. He proposed to the board as stated in the agenda item. Board members Green and Tharpe have stated they will continue to work with Seneca regarding ambulance billing. The Chief has spoken with Nore-Cal EMS and they sympathize with our situation. Director Voboril stated that at the next meeting, propose creating a Citizens Committee if we go for another tax measure.

Director Green made a motion for staff to begin the transition to a volunteer department and give layoff notices to Classifications of Captains and Firefighters effective 2-28-2024.

Director Raker seconded the motion. All in favor, motion carried.

5. **Closed Session:** read verbatim by Director Voboril: Anticipated Litigation: Significant Exposure to Litigation pursuant to paragraph (2) of subdivision (d) of Government Code section 54956.9, one potential case.

6. **Reconvene:** 7:16pm.

7. **Report on Closed:** Director Voboril stated it was informational only.

8. **Comments:**

Directors:

Voboril Proposed a special meeting to discuss a tax measure and a closed session.

Graffweg stated that he asked Shawn McKenzie if he had a backup plan for the ambulance if we fail. He said he had 4 plans. He also stated the Cal Rural Water has lots of services for us if Adam leaves. Adam stated that Cal Rural Water did our water and wastewater rate study.

Staff: none

9. **Adjournment:** Director Raker made a motion to adjourn at 7:26pm. Director Tarpe seconded the motion. All in favor, meeting adjourned.

Clerk to the Board, Cheryl Johnson

Approval of Minutes 