

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

Minutes of Regular Meeting: October 24, 2023, at 5:30pm. Located in the Chester Public Utility District conference room: 251 Chester Airport Road.

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

Directors Absent: none

Guests Present: 21+

Staff Present: 10+

1. **Call to Order:** Director Voboril called the meeting to order at 5:30pm.
 - a. Director Voboril led the Pledge of Allegiance.
 - b. Director Voboril acknowledged all board members in attendance confirming quorum.
 - c. Agenda Approval: Director Graffweg made a motion to accept the agenda as presented. Director Raker seconded. All in favor, motion carried.

2. **Award Presentation: Eddie Mata**

Chief Balzarini introduced Captain Matthew House to present the award. Captain House explained that while on shift, the on-duty ambulance crew were called to respond to a cardiac emergency at the Timber House Restaurant on June 22, 2023. Eddie Mata while he was on shift that day at the restaurant, administered CPR to the patient until the ambulance arrived. Mr. Mata is recognized for his courage, for reacting so quickly. Because of his swift actions, the patient's pulse was regained, and he was eventually breathing on his own. Only 10% of people survive a heart attack per the American Heart Association. Mr. Mata accepted the award and was thanked by the Captain, the Chief and The Board members. Many applauses then photos were taken.

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

4. Meeting Minutes

- a. September 25, 2023 Special Minutes, September 26, 2023 Regular Minutes, October 10 and October 17 2023 Special Minutes.

Director Tharpe made a motion to accept all 4 sets of minutes. Director Green seconded the motion. All in favor, motion carried.

5. September 2023 Financials: GM Cox presented:

- Less than 400K in checking.
- Auditor will clear out receivables that we will never receive from 2017-2019 CFAA agreement.

After a brief discussion, Director Raker made a motion to approve the Financials. Director Tharpe seconded the motion. All in favor, motion carried.

6. General Manager's Report: by Adam Cox

- Mostly been dealing with Fire Department Issues: Plans, Funding, Needs, Personnel issues, lawsuits, PRAs, and Disciplinary issues have taken the bulk of time.
- 3 more claims against the department, not lawsuits yet.
- The new liability insurance states we have to pay the first 25k for each of the lawsuits, which will be 125k, unbudgeted.
- Previous management left the district without liability insurance for 6 months. Now instead of 21K in premiums, we pay 100K+.
- We were sued by 2 employees of which we settled out of court. We started an internal investigation, but then all involved and listed within the suit left our employ.
- The finalized lawsuit is now public document.

7. Fire Chief Report: by Matthew Balzarini (Exhibit A Power Point)

- An over an hour detailed review of the last year was given. See attached Power Point.
- A public member stated that he wished the community would have supported this chief, now knowing what he dealt with.

Recess was taken at 6:55pm. Reconvened at 7:03pm.

- A public member stated that he was on the board, and that they only knew what management told them. He hopes the community supports the fire department; they need to.

8. Utility Operations Manager Report: by Allan Homme

- Homme studying for his D3 cert.
- Pettit studying for his Grade 2 cert.
- Bottini studying for his D2 cert.
- Working on the manhole inserts, 40 of 240 completed.
- Wetland gate installed.
- Excavator in Chico for tract repairs
- The 2009 Ford is at Susanville Ford awaiting parts
- GM Cox stated that State funded radio meter grants are being researched by our engineer. No dates.

9. Local Union Representatives:

a. Local 5317/Chester Professional Firefighter's Association (CFD Safety).

The Local's Secretary, Lane Gomes, as well as the majority of the bargaining unit gave statements in full support of Chief Balzarini and his supervisory decisions. They also stated that the Local's President has used their voices at meeting, in letters and in phone representation without their knowledge. The Local's President's opinion is not shared by the majority. They stated that the antics noted in the Chief's report, committed by previous employees, are appalling and not how fire fighters normally behave. They assured the board and the community members in attendance that that would not happen again and apologized on behalf of the department.

b. Local 39/ Stationary Engineers (CPUD Misc.) no comments.

10. Policy 5010: Board Meeting dates and times:

It was suggested that 3:00pm be the new start time, as the meetings have been going late. GM Cox stated that once we can stream the meetings, more people can attend any time of day. This item was tabled until the December Regular meeting.

11. Move November and December Regular Meetings.

GM Cox asked the board to move November's meeting to the 14th, as not to interfere with Thanksgiving. He asked the board to move December's meeting to the 19th as not to interfere with Christmas. Director Green suggested we also move the time to 3:00pm as a test. Director Raker made a motion to accept both suggestions. Director Green seconded the motion. All in favor, motion carried.

12. Closed Session: Read verbatim from agenda by Director Voboril at 8:02pm.

- a. Public Employee Discipline Section 54957.
- b. Labor Negotiations 5317 Section 54957.6a
- c. Pending Litigation Section 54956.9

13. Reconvene: 8:35pm

14. Report on Closed Session: Informational only, by Director Voboril.

15. Public Comment Non-Agenda Items: none.

16. Correspondence: none.

17. Comments:

- a. **Directors:** Director state he doesn't want to accept the GM and Chiefs resignation. Director Green said she is proud of the Chief and what he presented this evening.
- b. **Staff:** none.

18. Adjournment: 8:37pm, Director Tharpe made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Director Raker seconded the motion. All ayes, meeting adjourned.

Cheryl E Johnson, Clerk to the Board

Approval of Minutes

