



West Plainfield Fire Protection District

24901 County Road 95, Davis, CA 95616

(530) 756-0212

MINUTES BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS – SPECIAL MEETING June 05, 2024, at 8:00 PM

Held in Person at:
Fire Station
24901 County Road 95
Davis, CA 95616

Held by Zoom: <https://us06web.zoom.us/j/98831083439>
One tap mobile – +16699006833,98831083439#
Dial by your location – (669) 900-6833 US (San Jose)
Meeting ID: 988 3108 3439

1. Call the Meeting to Order and Establish Quorum (President McMullen)

The meeting was called to order at 8:00 PM by President McMullen

Clerk of the Board, Kytiana Sayer-Peterson, called role and confirmed that a quorum was present.

Present Were:

Commissioners: James McMullen, Emily Amy, Beth Stiles, Warren Roos, and John Lindsey

Staff: Firefighter Jon Lee, Captain Patrick Fish, Fire Captain Dave Osborn, Firefighter Jason Gallagher

Public: Fire Chief Dan Tafoya of Yolo Fire Protection District, Fire Chief Marcus Klinkhammer of Willow Oak, Fire Chief Jack Snyder of Winters, West Plainfield Fire Protection District Resident and Property Owner Duane Chamberlain, And West Plainfield Fire Protection District Property Owner Ken Breckenridge

Via Zoom: Fire Captain Tom Stiles

2. Public Comment

Dan Tafoya, Yolo Fire Protection District Chief, had spoken to Assistant Chief Stiles and Chief Rita, and intended to speak to President McMullen about the board's actions that have impacted other districts regarding CPI increase. Fire Chief Dan Tafoya indicates that Assistant Chief Stiles and Chief Rita had expressed to the board that it would be political suicide for Fire Chiefs. Fire Chief Dan Tafoya does not see any reasoning to implement it so early, as holding off 1-2 years would give other districts a chance to participate. Fire Chief Dan Tafoya asserts that this is a huge conversation and issue to the extent that they started with 5% and dropped to 3% based on feedback from constituents. After WPF

started the process, Yolo County District felt forced to implement a 5 year wait on engagement with CPI increase to satiate constituents. This adoption, spread like wildfire, and has affected winters fire department, Chief Shneiders group, and Madison fire department. Many customers and farmers are shared between the districts. The damage has been done, needing to go through recovery. Fire Chief Dan Tafoya inquires of the board, what has been determined in the budgeting that necessitates such an increase to be in place rapidly and what are the determining factors to consider implementation of the increase emergent. Fire Chief Dan Tafoya's understanding is that it would generate \$6,200.00 revenue for a revenue gap of \$5,500.00. Does not see why this is necessary given the positive relationship thus far with the other districts. Yolo County Fire would never have been conducted in the same way as West Plainfield Fire Protection District and does expect same courtesy. Fire Chief Dan Tafoya asserts that it was a very bad choice to move forward at this time. Ballots will not be sent out for 2 weeks. He continues to say that this is a particularly important thing to landowners, and that shutting down now is a great idea. Districts may have to do it someday if they pass, however, they will have to postpone as long as possible for their district and have not touched for 10-15 years. If it does come and bring a huge increase, Yolo County will have to come to constituents and district. In the lens of a landowner, they would be upset as they have come to the board about these concerns in the past.

President McMullen thanks for presentation and for coming down and speaking to the Board. President McMullen asks if the board would like to address presenter, Fire Chief Dan Tafoya, with questions.

Commissioner Lindsey inquires with Fire Chief Dan Tafoya about the process for gearing up for 218 Ballot.

Fire Chief Dan Tafoya confirms that they are two weeks away from putting ballots out.

Commissioner Lindsey questions of Fire Chief Dan Tafoya if the 218 will pass or not.

Fire Chief Dan Tafoya felt confident at that time, given the assurance that there would be a pause on CPI Increase. The increase going away would make the passage of 218 in the district a lot easier, states Fire Chief Dan Tafoya.

Commissioner Lindsey replied that it is likely all districts are seeing what the West Plainfield Fire Protection District had been seeing in terms of inflation of costs. Recognizes that he understands the sensitivity and that it is important to him that the district retains a good relationship. Commissioner Lindsey expresses gratitude for the presenter to come because this is an extremely important consideration for potentially large constituents of the district. Commissioner Lindsey appreciated that he was provided input for what is on the mind of potentially large constituents within our district. Commissioner Lindsey stated that within boards can be isolating, appreciates the input to gain perspective outside of what has been brought to the board during his short term thus far.

Fire Chief Dan Tafoya adds to the public comment that constituents are a big part of relationship for those voting on balloted measures. Fire Chief Dan Tafoya expressed hurt that the two districts have both served as fellow rural fire protection districts. Having endured the trials of getting the 218 in place, they should understand the difficulties faced by another fellow rural fire protection district and are on the same page.

Commissioner Roos inquires of Fire Chief Dan Tafoya how many residents and residencies are served within the Yolo County Fire Protection District.

1,300 residents and around 300-400 homes.

Commissioner Roos surmises that the West Plainfield Fire Protection District serves around 1,000 residents and close to three hundred homes and in serving less residents would be lower in income.

Fire Chief Dan Tafoya challenges the board in the assumption that they are operating with less revenue than other districts, and states that they are one of the 'richest' districts in the county. Fire Chief Dan Tafoya states that the Yolo County Fire Protection District is working with around one-third of the operating revenue of West Plainfield Fire Protection District.

Commissioner Roos follows his statement asserting that the district is in trouble with financial operations from his experience on the Budget and Benefits Committee of the Board.

Commissioner Roos follows with additional comments on the 218. Commissioner Roos begins that originally though that the 218 was a great idea and has not pivoted to believe that it is a terrible idea because as all are in the same boat, it should be a collective effort. Additionally, Commissioner Roos calls leaders of each district to act, to bring a meeting to the County as first responders in rural areas that provide mutual aid. Commissioner Roos expresses frustration in 'diving for dollars' and obtaining funds to operate. Commissioner Roos asks of the group if it is fair to assume that all districts are enduring financial constraints? The problem derives at a higher level and Commissioner Roos proposes that representatives from each district pursue advocacy for County funding before disputing among the districts. Additionally proposed, the representatives can remind them of efforts on behalf of the fire protection districts and speak comparable to the covalent Sheriffs Departments that are more well-funded. Is it fair to say that financial constraints are shared among all the districts? Finally, Roos determines that the district took quick action as they were in a position of need to utilize the additional revenue.

Fire Chief Dan Tafoya speaks towards enduring extreme financial constraints for a long time, and the efforts to pursue funding that is earmarked for emergency services personnel. It is give and take because if 218 is passed it is funding that the district needs, have received small amounts but more is necessitated more. The district is constantly looking at ways to bring in larger sources of funding/ revenue. Fire Chief Dan Tafoya does not think it is the right time to refute or advocate within the board of supervisors as they are working with the districts, things could change on an annual basis and as such is not considered stable funding. Fire Chief Dan Tafoya proposes waiting until the other districts get their 218.

President McMullen thanks Fire Chief Dan Tafoya for his comments.

Duane Chamberlain, West Plainfield Fire Protection District Resident/Property Owner, and 5th District Supervisor, recalls paying an additional 20,000 a year and would not appreciate accruing this same expense again. Chamberlain states that he would like to support the

fire department and reflects on examples of WPFDF showcasing excellence in comparison to other protection agencies, however, he cannot keep paying more and more. Chamberlain also warns district to be careful buying new machinery. Many problems with this hardware.

Ken Breckenridge, West Plainfield Fire Protection District Property Owner, owns around 588 acres within the district. Breckenridge asserts that the West Plainfield Fire Protection District has always asked for more money than others district. Breckenridge states that he has never had a call to the property, and that paying more for residential is not right. There are currently no houses on the property and no calls. The increase last year brought taxes up 3263.62 and Breckenridge speaks in opposition to wanting to increase the taxes more, someone needs to budget and accounting better. Every crop is down and cannot continue to pay. Breckenridge continues that the district and department have sustained thus far without these increases and continued taking care of others. Breckenridge asserts that someone is not doing something right.

President McMullen thanks Ken Breckenridge for his comments and asks if anyone else would like to speak during the public comment period.

Assistant Chief Stiles Contacted Blake Garland with the Willow Fire Protection District who wanted to express concern of the depressed prices of the agriculture commodities this year and how it will affect those landowners. Blake Garland questions and urged the Board not to use SCI for reporting next year, because it is better suited to know what is changing in the district, and that the expenditure is something unnecessary.

President McMullen asks if there are questions of Assistant Chief Stiles.

Commissioner Lindsey What is the impact of not outsourcing the report or alternative to using SCI.

Assistant Chief Stiles replies that the district would have to do the report in-house, which is additional workload and time on staff. Would be happy to look at a report at a different time to comparably review expenses and provide reasoning as to why expenses are allocated where they are.

Fire Chief Rita reads email from Bob Eoff for the submitted written comments. Email text is below:

“Subject: special meeting to consider COLA

Message: I farm seven hundred acres in the district. I learned on the street (no notice from you that a special meeting is being held to consider the COLA. SEICIAL MEETING? At 8 PM? Flying under the radar?? The initial assessment was extremely high for farm ground. We are subsidizing everyone else. We farmers ensure our crops and in the 40 years I have owned the property, never a fire.. I find it poor planning on your part, if a COLA is passed. W. Plainfield's assessment was the highest in the rural county. I PROTEST THE COLA.”

Chief Rita responded to that letter stating that tonight's meeting is part of the process and that he was welcome to attend the district has not yet set the official public hearing to review official numbers and how the district is moving ahead.

President McMullen declares, with no further discussion, the conclusion of the public comment period.

3. West Plainfield Fire Protection District Fire, Fire Protection and Emergency Response Services Assessment

a. Discussion / Action – Authorized Assessment Rate; Amount to be Levied

Here tonight to discuss whether the board may want to consider changes to last month's adoption of the resolution 24-01 that set the maximum assessment rate, increased it by the CPI, and levied at the increased rate. The three options before the Board tonight are: (1) to do nothing or leave as is, (2) sign different resolution to not increase the Maximum assessment rate by this year's CPI and continue to levy at last year's assessment rate, (3) or increase assessment rate to the maximum by CPI but levy to last fiscal year's rate.

President McMullen opens the floor for discussion on this item.

Commissioner Amy understanding that in setting rate the district will be taking to community for comment, and depending on comment district could change what it was set to be.

Chief Rita confirms that the Board can make changes after the official public comment meeting and before levying and assessment.

President McMullen opens the floor for discussion or a motion on the item.

Commissioner Roos articulates that the West Plainfield Fire Protection District needs to be sensitive to other districts and should consider them even if it means enduring additional financial hardship.

Commissioner Stiles addresses Fire Chief Dan Tafoya stating that the West Plainfield Fire Protection District fortunately has multiple women operating on the board and requests of all to be sure to address all genders when referring to or addressing the board.

Commissioner Stiles also speaks towards the 218 asserting that it was first passed in '96 and speaks in opposition to not supporting in the past. The district board of the past did not pass they decided not to go through it as they did not want to increase their rate. Costs have gone up almost 50%. Had the West Plainfield Fire Protection District, similarly to other districts, done their due diligence, they would have been assessed four times to raise costs appropriately to work with a moderate budget. When presented with the opportunity to gain funding to address the district, they were advantageous of the opportunity. Costs have been raised so that the district can survive. There is no other funding available currently. Commissioner Stiles speaks in support of moving forward with raising costs as all expenses have risen significantly.

President McMullen opens the floor for further comments on this item.

Commissioner Amy received more information on this topic, but initially did not understand the difference between assessment rate and levy rate. Commissioner Amy would still like to see assessment rate increase but maintain the levy rate. Hate to lose money for the budget. Commissioner Amy inquires how other districts would feel, would it be more promising to not have higher levy rates with an increase in assessment rate.

Fire Chief Dan Tafoya identifies that the districts are trying to pass 218's right now, and CPI is a huge part of conversation being had. Proceeding with an increase by the CPI will be misconstrued as the district grossly taxing and will ultimately affect other districts negatively as they work to get it passed. Fire Chief Dan Tafoya asks for cover while the 218 is passed.

Fire Chief Dan Tafoya asked the Board about the budget increase before and after 218 implementations.

Fire Chief Rita states that it was \$243,000.00 from the assessment and \$127,000.00 from the county for operating revenue.

Fire Chief Dan Tafoya asks them, had they not obtained the 218 what would they have.

Commissioner Stiles replies that they would have been operating with one person on staff. The 218 going into effect allowed for there to be additional people on staff, as such, a majority of the 218 funding goes to human resources to staff the station. The volunteer world is failing, and The West Plainfield Fire Protection District does not have volunteers and needs to staff the department.

Fire Chief Dan Tafoya shares his opinion that whoever determined the budget did a poor job because the additional operating revenue is being claimed to be not enough.

Commissioner Roos surmises that the districts may need to entertain the perspective of consolidation, in an effort to maintain rate.

President McMullen asks for any further discussion. Given no further discussion, President McMullen opens the floor for a motion.

Commissioner Lindsey states that there is obviously dissonance between board members, as there is a budget committee meeting tomorrow where the board can discuss further and with a sharper pencil. Lindsey proposes taking an assessment of the cost increase and to carefully examine budget and table discussion. If tabled can take decisive action based on the budget committee review. Commissioner Lindsey does not feel as though there is enough information now to confidently make a decision with new information and should be carefully considered.

Postpone increase for a set time, and table decision until after Budget and Benefits Committee.

Commissioner Roos asks Fire Chief Rita what the timeline is for the Board to have decided.

Chief Rita replies that in Early August Levy amounts must be sent to the Assessor's office. 10 days' notice published in the paper before a public hearing about it and likewise for the decision made.

Commissioner Roos reiterates we need to be sensitive to other Districts.

Commissioner Amy expresses concerns that the next discussion will be on the 18th of June where Lindsey will not be present. Lindsey may be able to arrange zoom call and potentially provide written comments to board clerk.

Commissioner Roos will also not be available for the June 18th meeting.

Chief Rita proposes to reconvene discussion at July meeting with official public comment proposed and potentially an additional special meeting.

Motion: Table decision on the approval of resolution 2402 to the July 16th, 2024, meeting of the board
By: Lindsey
Discussion: Fire Chief Rita suggests a Special Board meeting to make a determination prior to July as the District must give 10 days and add time to get notice published (can take papers a few days to get notice setup and published) between adopting resolution of intent to levy and conducting meeting to adopt actual resolution to levy.

Commissioner Lindsey withdraws motion.

Motion: To not move forward with adoption of resolution 2402 and move forward as is without any increase based on CPI and leaves levy at last year's rate.
By: Commissioner Roos
Second: Commissioner Lindsey
Discussion: Marcus Klinkhammer, Willow Oak Fire Chief inquires of the board if they are confident that they could adjust budget and be in good standing for the next fiscal year moving forward with what has been proposed?

Assistant Chief Stiles includes that the district has adopted a preliminary balanced budget for income to expenses over the year. The budget does not address long-term structural deficits for the district.

Commissioner Amy expresses concern and discomfort in switching completely from the original resolution last meeting.

Assistant Chief Stiles expresses that there is still time following Budget and Benefits Committee meeting to redetermine decision to move forward.

Commissioner Amy speaks in support of next steps that are more balanced or an approach like the original Motion by commissioner Lindsey.

Commissioner Lindsey clarifies that thinking has changed when discussing time frames for decision. Preference is to assist districts in passing their 218's as it could be harmful to colleagues.

Commissioner Amy speaks in support of looking for an option in between where it does not have as great of an impact on the district. Leaning towards an option that would not lock the district into place as much as what was originally proposed.

Fire Chief Rita reminds date of submission of actual date of assessments to the county as August 2nd and confirmation of final levy is September 30th. Last year the county did allow information late due to ballots were still incoming posted August 2nd, seems as though they may be able to accommodate/be flexible.

In Favor: Commissioner Lindsey, Commissioner Roos, President McMullen

Opposed: Commissioner Amy, Commissioner Stiles
Motion passed with a 3:2 majority vote

b. Discussion / Action – Adopt Resolution 24-02 – Resolution of Intention to Continue Assessments for Fiscal Year 2024-25, Preliminarily Approving the Revised Engineer's Report, and Providing for Notice of Public Hearing for the West Plainfield Fire Protection District, Fire Protection and Emergency Response Services Assessment

Motion: Adopt Resolution 2402 with draft mark stating 'No Change to Rate for Levy'

By: Commissioner Lindsey

Second: Roos

Discussion: No

In Favor: Commissioner Lindsey, Commissioner Roos, President McMullen

Opposed: Commissioner Amy, Commissioner Stiles
Motion passed with a 3:2 majority vote

4. Next regular Board meeting on June 18, 2024, unless another date is agreed upon Lindsey available June 20-26 for any special meetings scheduled.

No change in date for the regular board meeting.

The Public Comment meeting for Resolution of Intent to Levy will be moved to July.

5. **Meeting Adjourned (President McMullen)**

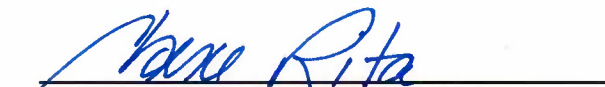
Motion: Motion To Adjourn
By: Commissioner Amy
Second: Commissioner Lindsey
Discussion: No Discussion
Motion passed by unanimous consensus

Meeting Adjourned at 9:00 PM

Minutes Approved: June 25, 2024



JAMES McMULLEN
President / Commissioner



CHERIE RITA, Interim Board Clerk
(signed October 23, 2024)