

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

Minutes of Regular Meeting: April 20, 2021 at 3:00pm. Located in the Chester Public Utility District conference room: 251 Chester Airport Road.

Directors Present: Steve Trotter, Steve Voboril, Joe Waterman, Royce Raker and Steve Graffweg.

Directors Absent: none

Guests Present: 3 Present with unknown amount on the conference call as well.

Staff Present: 11 CPUD/CFD employees and volunteers present with unknown amount on the conference call as well.

1. **Call to Order:** Director Waterman called the meeting to order at 3:05pm.
 - a. Pledge led by Director Waterman
 - b. Agenda approval: Director Trotter made a motion to accept the agenda with no changes. Director Graffweg seconded the motion. All in favor, agenda approved.

2. **Public Comment Non-Agenda Items:** none

3. **Public Comment Agenda Items:**

Public members on the phone: 4 comments

 - (1) Regarding Agenda item #21, why are Paramedics paid so little to do so much? Director Waterman's response was to please send in your contact information to Chief Layne.
 - (2) Asked the board to consider extending the lease to St. Andrew's school at 198 Main St. Director Waterman's responded with thanking them for their comment.
 - (3) Locations are hard to find, and her daughter goes to that school. Director Waterman's responded with a thank you for their comment.
 - (4) Oldest Christian school in the area. The students that attend the school support local events through the Chamber of Commerce as well as help the elderly. Director Waterman's responded with a thank you for their comment.

4. **February 16, 2021 Regular Meeting Minutes:** Director Trotter noted 2 typos and then made a motion to accept the minutes. Director Voboril seconded the motion. All in favor, motion carried.

5. **February 23, 2021 Special Meeting Minutes:** Director Trotter noted two minor errors and then made a motion to accept the minutes. Director Voboril seconded the motion. All in favor, motion carried.

6. **March 16/17 2021 Special meeting (Budget Workshop) Minutes:** With no discussion, Director Graffweg made a motion to accept the minutes. Director Trotter seconded the motion. All in favor, motion carried.

7. **March 23, 2021 Meeting Minutes:** Director Trotter noted a typo and then made a motion to accept the minutes. Director Graffweg seconded the motion. All in favor, motion carried.

8. **April 1, 2021 Special Meeting Minutes:** With no discussion, Director Trotter made a motion to accept the minutes. Director Graffweg seconded the motion. All in favor, motion carried.

9. February 2021 Financials: After a brief discussion, Director Graffweg made a motion to accept the February 2021 Financials. Director Trotter seconded the motion. All in favor, motion carried.

10. March 2021 Financials: With no discussion, Director Trotter made a motion to accept the March 2021 Financials. Director Raker seconded the motion. All in favor, motion carried.

11. General Manager Report (Exhibit A): Allan Homme:

- Internet issues may be caused by SCADA, researching a resolve. Director Raker stated that going with Digital Path for internet has been good for his household.
- Pump #1 at 4th Ave. maintenance will cost \$5793.81. Though unbudgeted for, it is necessary to avoid a costly repair.
- Sierra Controls to Troubleshoot Well #1 Control panel.
- Cost for fuels reduction at the plant were \$4842.07 for 33% completion. They will be asked back to do more this year.
- Central Valley Regional Water Quality Control Board letter was sent in regards to the \$27K pending fine. Teleconference is planned for Thursday to designate a new sampling spot and to discuss the I&I issues.
- 5% completion on sewer jetting program
- 0% Backflow assemblies tested, (topic later on agenda)
- Waiting on amended applications for both the Collection and Treatment Grants.
- Legal Costs for the month were over \$4000.00
- Sewer has been completely connected to the facility. Working with Plumas County on abandoning the septic system.
- Justin Bottini has been hired as fulltime with benefits due to his good work ethic and he being a good asset to the district.
- Israel Lopez is our seasonal hire who is a hard worker and we will get him into the OIT program as soon as possible. He had a great attitude during the sewer connection project last week.

Discussion only, no action

12. Inflow and Infiltration Mitigation (I&I): Allan Homme: He stated he was looking at ideas with helping with the budget in regards to the 27K fine we may be facing. If we were to purchase the manhole inserts (Parson handout given) for about 8K or 9K this would help with about 40% of our I&I problem as well as be applied as part of the fine owed. The meeting Thursday with the Region Board will include working on fixes. Director Voboril stated that laterals are also a problem. Director Waterman confirmed that statement as he has seen the film from when they sent a camera down the system a few years back. Director Trotter recommended an inspection of the laterals every time a property changes ownership.

Informational only, no action.

13. Emergency Services Report (Exhibit B): Chief Brian Layne:

- May lose a per diem paramedic due to medical issues
- Applied for a no match grant for 2 fully outfitted vehicles, synthetic hose and the repair of the training burn trailer that is used county and basin wide for about 280K. The 2 Pickups would then be rotated to be line use vehicles. The Expos would be sold through the surplus process. Director Waterman voiced his concerns in insuring the new vehicles.
- Meeting with the CFO and CEO of Seneca for a \$51K Duty Officer / Stand-By Firefighter at the cost of Seneca, and still provide fire coverage when the Ambulance is committed to a transfer.
- A Per Diem has obtained their MICN certification that gives us the ability to take critical care transfers. We will have to update our Nor-Cal provider agreement.

- Seneca also to potentially rent the 198 Main St. apartment for their traveling nurses. Working with Seneca on getting our ambulance service reimbursement rates up.
- SIFC annual dispatch cost is about \$6700.00 annual to basin chiefs. Basin Chiefs and OES chiefs have begun conversation on a fulltime fire dispatch option. Director Waterman wished them good luck.
- The Chief Report financial figures consists 2 months' worth of data.
- Director Waterman stated that at Basin Chief's meetings it was mentioned that all the departments were hurting for paramedics.

Information only, no action.

14. Finance Committee Updates: (Waterman/Voboril)

1. Director Waterman stated that they met 3 times for a total of about 8 hours, and not much progress made on the Budget.

He handed out a work-in-progress budget that the committee crafted today, (Exhibit C) using the template from the CSDA training workshop. A copy of the handout was requested by the Professional Firefighters IAFF Local 5317 representative, and was given during the recess. Director Waterman stated that we need to fund streetlights in a different way and receivables that are from past fiscal years should be put to "Bad Debt".

Director Voboril stated that loans between funds can only last 1 year. It was explained by Director Voboril that the 1.25 million taken in this year has gone towards the deficit in the 400-fund account. Director Waterman stated the committee has decided to move forward in moving 1.4 million dollars from the 500-fund account to the 300-fund account.

Director Waterman wants to recommend that the 500 account have zeros in the budget as those funds are too variable. A recommendation from the Finance Committee will be to limit sending folks out of county that are paid from the 400 and 600 accounts as there was a cash flow problem last year and to bolster the 500 account. He asked if the board liked the CSDA format for budget. Director Trotter stated they need to look at previous years for ups and downs trends.

Chief Layne explained that the delay in payment from OES was due to COVID and the new FISCAL system. He reiterated the need for the Line of Credit to cover the outflow during fire season. Director Graffweg expressed that he agrees with a more simplified budget, like the workshop presented.

2. Director Waterman stated that the handout that was given out was for the current fiscal year, not for the next fiscal year and no budget projections have been made.

No action, information only.

15. Personnel Committee Update: (Graffweg/Trotter)

a. After a brief discussion, Director Graffweg made a recommendation on behalf of the Personnel Committee to the board, to adopt Policy #3090 Debt Management as presented. Director Trotter made a motion to adopt Policy #3090. Director Voboril seconded the motion. All in favor, motion carried.

b. 1. Director Graffweg stated that he liked the CSDA policy template handbook and would like to structure CPUD policies in that format. The committee would like to work with staff in superseding existing policies and implementing new ones. It was agreed that this project would be taken at a section at a time and each policy will be presented to the board as a recommendation to adopt. No action.

2. Director Graffweg stated that he wanted the opportunity to talk about positions and people within those positions and have the comfort of using names. No action.

Recess: 4:43pm

Reconvene: 4:50pm

16. **Propane Agreement:** Allan Homme expressed his opinion of Hunt Propane and the services they have provided as well as the price of propane. He believes he is within his purview regarding the Contract policy to extend the contract with Hunt Propane. Director Voboril would like to see 3 quotes. Director Trotter voiced his concerns regarding due diligence by not getting RFPs. Director Waterman would like to review the policy at the next Special meeting.

Discussion only, no action.

17. Auditor Agreement: Allan Homme stated that he has gotten good feedback from staff and board members regarding RT Dennis Accountancy. Director Trotter stated that he would like the General Manager to come to the board with policy knowledge and a recommendation in the future. Director Waterman stated that the fees the auditor has proposed in the new contract has gone down, probably due to his familiarization of the district.

Discussion only, no action.

18. Resolution #401, Credit Card Users: After a brief discussion, Director Trotter made a motion to accept the amended resolution. Director Graffweg seconded the motion. All in favor, motion carried.

19. Emergency Service Pay Schedule: Chief Layne explained that this is needed for PERS regarding the Retired Annuitants that work for us as Per Diems as well as IMTs. This will need to be approved by Resolution at the next Regular meeting. Director Voboril expressed his concerns as they are currently in the middle of labor negotiations with the safety personnel. Director Trotter stated that the Out of County rate needs to be noted in Table B.

Discussion only, no action.

20. 198 Main St.: Chief Layne stated his empathy for the school that currently rents the building. He believes the plans he has will greatly benefit the community and the district. He is working with Seneca in regards to a \$51K annual Duty Officer, renting the apartments for their traveling nurses as well as staffing that building with an engine. This will help keep our ISO rating at a 3, which benefits home owners insurance rates for Chester residents. He is meeting with the CEO of Seneca to do a walk through to work out the next steps in an agreement.

Director Waterman allowed 3 comments from public members stating their plea to the board to consider extending the lease for the school.

Chief Layne reminded the board that they already voted not to sell the building nor to extend the lease at a previous meeting and that it is being accounted for as a Fire Station with ISO. Director Voboril stated that the end of the lease is not new information to the current renter, as this has been going on for 10 months. Chief Layne said this is a unique opportunity to work with our base hospital and that our insurance payments we receive now would go up significantly if we go with Sac. Valley Med-Share through Seneca. We are always looking at ways to increase income.

Captain Dean explained the coverage area for Engines and Trucks where they are housed now, as opposed to where they could be housed for better response times and 100% of district coverage by ISO standards. Director Waterman expressed his concerns on getting the apartment rentable and is afraid of losing the rent we are currently receiving. After a bit more discussion, the board asked the Chief to get more details on cost and revenue potential for a presentation by the next regular meeting. Director Voboril made a motion to table this topic until the next regular meeting. Director Raker seconded the motion. All in favor, motion carried.

21. Fulltime Firefighter – Paramedic Employment: Chief Layne stated that due to brown outs of ambulance service as a result of having only 1 paramedic and losing per diem medics, the need is great for safety reasons as well as revenue reasons and the potential of losing our provider agreement with NorCal, to hire someone on fulltime. Director Voboril was unsure how they would be able to pay for the new employee. After a brief discussion, Director Trotter made a motion that a Paramedic gets hired as he has concerns for the mental health of the employees. Director Waterman seconded the motion. All in favor, motion carried.

22. Ambulance Annexation Update: Chief Layne stated that he has gotten NST Engineering to hook up with LAFCo. The Engineer will craft a report, and we will submit it with a letter to LAFCo. Director Waterman added that there will be application fees with LAFCo. Information only, no action.

23. Tax Measure Update: Chief Layne presented to the board a resolution (Exhibit D), which was vetted through district council, and considered compliant with Plumas County as a finished document that the board had previously requested of him. He explained that this new Tax Measure would bring a potential \$253K to the district in lieu of the \$127K that we currently have the potential of receiving under the current

Measure A. Director Voboril asked if we can go after a streetlight assessment within the same Special Ballot to help save on Special Ballot fees. The Chief liked this idea and will look into that as an option. There was more discussion by board members on the amounts not being equitable and the residential fee being too low. It was agreed that research needs to be done on how much involvement board members are allowed to have in helping with a tax measure before committees are formed. No action.

24. Backflow Fees: Allan Homme stated that to cover the cost of the inspections either by CPUD qualified staff or by an out sourced vendor, the fees need to be raised to \$85.00 per assembly. He presented to the board a 9-page description of his research, (Exhibit E). He explained that this is not an item that needs to go through the Prop 218 process, as it doesn't relate to property. This was verified with district council. Director Trotter made a motion to raise the Backflow Inspection Fee to \$85.00. Director Voboril seconded the motion. All in favor, motion carried.

25. Closed Session: The following read verbatim by Director Waterman at 6:25pm

- a. **Personnel (Gov. Code Section 54957)**
 - 1. **General Manager Employment Agreement**
- b. **Labor Negotiations (Gov. Code 54957.6)**
 - 1. **Safety Labor Negotiators Team Update**

26. Reconvened: 7:20pm

27. Report on Closed Session:

a. **1. General Manager Employment:** Director Waterman reported out that the board will be going back to the drawing board and moving away from the contract concept. There will be a special meeting to match a job description agreement between Allan and the Board and making sure the job description is appropriate. They are hoping to seal the deal at the next regular board meeting. No action.

b. **1. Labor Negotiations:** Director Waterman reported out that it was just an update on the communications with our Local. We are waiting to hear from them. No action.

28. Correspondence: Letter from the current renter of 198 Main St. Director Waterman stated that we have already been over that, and there is no other correspondence to discuss.

29. Comments:

A. Directors: Director Waterman thanked Allan for getting the sewer to the facility connected. Director Raker thanked Chief Layne for all the research on 198 Main St., the Tax Measure and the Ambulance Annexation.

B. Staff: none

30. Adjournment: Director Voboril made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 7:23pm. Director Raker seconded the motion. Hearing no objections, meeting adjourned.

Cheryl Johnson, CPUD Clerk to the Board.
Approval of Minutes 87%