



SAN DIEGO COUNTY FIRE

5560 Overland Avenue | Suite 400, San Diego | CA 92123-1204

www.sdcountyfire.org

SAN DIEGO COUNTY FIRE PROTECTION DISTRICT ADVISORY BOARD MEETING

Monday, January 8, 2024 | 1:00 p.m. | San Diego County Fire Office, Balboa Room

AGENDA

- I. CALL TO ORDER
 - A. Pledge of Allegiance
 - B. Roll Call
 - C. Declaration of Quorum
 - D. Introductions

- II. PUBLIC COMMUNICATION: Members of the public may address the Board on any subject matter within its assigned purview and not on the agenda. Please notify County staff prior to the meeting.

- III. APPROVAL OF MINUTES FROM SEPTEMBER 11, 2023 **(VOTE)**

- IV. MANAGEMENT TEAM REPORT
 - A. Fire Chief's Update

- V. NEW BUSINESS
 - A. Updating the Ambulance Transportation Fees in the San Diego County Fire Protection District Ground Ambulance Service Area—Pending Board of Directors Action
 - B. Accept a Donation and Modify the Grounds on the Borrego Springs Fire Station for Firefighters to Live—Pending Board of Supervisors/Directors Action
 - C. Authorize the Acceptance of a Donation From the Fire Safe Council of San Diego County—Pending Board of Supervisors Action
 - D. Authority to Accept \$1.6M in Grant Funding from the Governor's Office of Planning and Research, Regional Resilient Grant Program for community education, community chipping and roadside vegetation management — Pending Board of Supervisors Action
 - E. Adopt a Fire Advisory Board Meeting Schedule for 2024

- VI. NEXT MEETING
 - A. Monday, May 13, 2024 at 1:00 pm at the San Diego County Fire Office – 5560 Overland Ave, Suite 400, Balboa Room, San Diego CA 92123 (County Operations Center).

- VII. ADJOURNMENT

For meeting information, please contact:

San Diego County Fire

TEL: (619) 455-1819

Nicole.DelToro@sdcounty.ca.gov



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Written materials distributed to the Fire Advisory Board in connection with this agenda will be made available to the public less than 72 hours before the meeting at the Office of San Diego County Fire.

ASSISTANCE FOR THE DISABLED

If you are planning on attending this meeting and need special accommodations, please contact County Fire staff at least 24 hours before the meeting. Individuals requiring sign language interpreters should contact the Americans with Disabilities Coordinator at (858) 505-6521, in advance of the meeting.

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Monday, September 11, 2023 | 1:00 P.M.

MINUTES

Members

Jason Shanley	District 1 – Seat 1 – (Absent)
Bret Sealey	District 5 – Seat 2
Clifford Kellogg	District 5 – Seat 3, Vice Chair
VACANT	District 2 – Seat 4
Dan Summers	District 2 – Seat 5
Randy Lyle	District 2 – Seat 6 – (Absent)
Benjamin Tulloch	District 2 – Seat 7, Chair

County Staff

Tony Mecham	CALFire/Chief
Jeff Collins	County Fire/Director
Marc Regier	County Fire/Assistant Director
Dave Nissen	County Fire/Temp Expert Professional
Nicole del Toro	County Fire/EMS Admin Secretary



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- I. CALL TO ORDER at 1:01 p.m.
 - A. The group recited the Pledge of Allegiance.
 - B. Roll Call was taken.
 - C. A quorum was declared present with four (4) members in attendance, and two (2) absent.
 - D. A new member was introduced: Bret Sealey, Seat 2, representing District 5.

- II. PUBLIC COMMUNICATION
There was no public communication.

- III. APPROVAL OF MINUTES FOR THE MEETING OF MARCH 6, 2023 (VOTE)

ON MOTION of Member Kellogg, seconded by Member Summers, the Advisory Board approved the Minutes of May 15, 2023. Motion carried.

YES: 4 NAYS: 0 ABSENT: 2

- IV. CHIEFS REPORT

- A. Fire Chiefs Report (Chief Tony Mecham)

1. Chief Mecham provided the following information and updates:

- Moved forward with preliminary plans to redesign the 911 dispatch center.
- Bringing in a triple wide building to support the additional staff getting for the ECC.
- Community Risk Reduction – completed roadside vegetation clearance; met all state mandated inspections.
- On target to hit close to the 50,000 mark on defensible space inspections.
- Facility projects continue: 3 main items – 1) exhaust removal systems, 2) tuff sheds, 3) security fencing.
- Completed transition of the Borrego Springs Fire Protection District to County Fire.
- Fully funded this year for construction of Jacumba Fire Station, with a 17.5 million budget; no location yet.
- Next facilities in order for construction: Jacumba, Descanso, Ramona, Borrego.

Director Jeff Collins provided the following information and updates:

- Grand Opening for the East Otay Mesa Fire Station 38 on October 17, 2023 from 9:00-11:00am at 850 Alta Road, San Diego 92154.
- Completed budget process; total County Fire budget 110 million dollars.

- V. NEW BUSINESS

- A. Mandated Fire Inspection Reporting for Fiscal Year 2022-23 – Pending Board of Directors action to receive a report

The State code requires the San Diego Fire Protection District to perform annual inspections on all buildings used as a school, apartment complex, group care facility, residential care facility, commercial space, office complex, jails, law enforcement station, lodging unit, and day care facility. There are 215 of these occupancies within San Diego County Fire Protection District and Deer



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Springs Fire Protection District. County staff completed 100% of all these required fire inspections in Fiscal Year 2022-2023 by June 30, 2023. This report will be presented to the Board of Directors on October 24, 2023.

ON MOTION of Member Kellogg, seconded by Member Sealey, the Advisory Board voted to receive this report and vote in support of the findings.

AYES: 4 NAYS: 0 ABSENT: 2

- B. San Diego County Fire Protection District Ground Ambulance Service Area Update – Informational Item Only

The following update on the ASA’s implementation and the new deployment plan was given:

On May 23, 2023, the San Diego County Board of Supervisors authorized the County to contract with the San Diego County Fire Protection District to provide and/or manage emergency ambulance transportation services in the areas where the County has or will have this responsibility. This includes the area currently known as the Unified Service Area. On September 30th, at 5 pm, a new public-private ambulance model will be implemented in the Unified Service Area, which will be renamed the San Diego County Fire Protection District Ground Ambulance Service Area (ASA).

VI. NEXT MEETING

The next Fire Advisory Board meeting will be held on Monday, November 20, 2023, at 1:00 p.m. at the San Diego County Fire Office (County Operations Center) – 5560 Overland Ave, Suite 400, Balboa Room, San Diego, CA 92123.

VII. ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, the Advisory Board adjourned at 1:47 p.m.

NOTE: These Minutes set forth all action taken by the Advisory Board on the matters stated, but not necessarily the chronological sequence in which the matters were taken up.

For meeting information, please contact:

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Updating the Ambulance Transportation Fees in the San Diego County Fire Protection District Ground Ambulance Service Area—Pending Board of Directors Action

On July 28, 2022, the San Diego County Fire Protection District (SDCFPD) established ambulance transportation fees in anticipation of operating direct ambulance services in the community of Ramona starting on August 1, 2022. On May 23, 2023, the Board of Directors authorized the Executive Director to enter into a contract with the County of San Diego to provide for ambulance transportation services in the areas where the County has, or will have, that responsibility upon the expiration of existing contracts. This included in the area formerly known as the Unified Service Area. On September 30, 2023, the SDCFPD Ground Ambulance Service Area (ASA) became operational. The ASA now operates 22 ambulances in our rural communities through CAL FIRE and AMR.

It is anticipated the (ASA) will have a \$3 million to \$5 million deficit based upon the current fee schedule, minimum service levels and projected collections. County Fire staff worked with an outside consultant in emergency medical services to evaluate several fee schedule options to reduce this gap. In addition, recent legislation provides an opportunity to generate additional revenue from private insurance and reduce the impact on patients and taxpayers. Assembly Bill 716 requires provider health insurance plans regulated by the State of California to pay the full cost of an ambulance transport if a local agency establishes a fee ordinance. However, Medi-Cal and Medicare, public health plans, have capitated rates and will only reimburse based upon what is in statute or regulations. County Fire is proposing:

Current Fee Schedule

Service	Cost
Base Rate	\$2,500
Mileage	\$40
Treat, No Transport	\$150

Proposed Fee Schedule

Service	Cost*
Base Rate	\$3,395
Mileage	\$44
Treat No Transport	\$417
Standby/Special Event	\$211

***5% annual escalator beginning on July 1, 2024, through June 30, 2028**

The proposed fees were calculating using the Countywide average fee schedule for emergency transportation and increasing by 10% to reflect the cost increases for providing paramedic-level ambulance transportation services to a small population in a large geographic service area. However, even with the proposed fee increases, the ASA will still operate at a deficit.

Recommendation: Support the proposed fee increase to reduce the cost/impact to other County Fire services.

Accept a Donation and Modify the Grounds on the Borrego Springs Fire Station for Firefighters to Live—Pending Board of Supervisors/Directors Action

On July 1, 2023, the Borrego Springs Fire Protection District dissolved and became part of the San Diego County Fire Protection District. There is one station to serve the community in Borrego but was built in the early 1960s and is inadequate for current operations. County Fire staff has been working with the community and Supervisor Desmond’s Office to explore temporary improvements while funding can be identified for a replacement station.

County Fire has engaged with the Department of General Services to initiate a project that would add a temporary living trailer or update the current buildings. In addition the Borrego Valley Endowment Fund is considering a donation to cover the costs for the trailer while the County pays for the site improvements.

Recommendation: Support the proposal to add a temporary trailer or make site improvements for the health and well-being of the firefighters stationed at the site and to accept a donation from the Borrego Valley Endowment Fund.

Authorize the Acceptance of a Donation From the Fire Safe Council of San Diego County—Pending Board of Supervisors Action

San Diego Gas and Electric (SDG&E) recently provided a \$60,000 donation to the Fire Safe Council of San Diego County (FSCSDC) for the purpose of applying long-term fire retardant (LTFR) along evacuation corridors in high fire risk areas throughout the County. FSCSDC has offered to pass the \$60,000 donation to County Fire to promote safety for our residents.

Recommendation: Receive an update on the SDG&E donation and vote in support of the proposed recommendation to receive the funding for the purpose of applying long-term fire retardant along evacuation roads (included for consideration in the Board Letter scheduled for the January 23, 2024 Board of Supervisors meeting).

Authority to Accept \$1.6M in Grant Funding from the Governor’s Office of Planning and Research, Regional Resilient Grant Program for community education, community chipping and roadside vegetation management — Pending Board of Supervisors Action

In Aug. 2023, County Fire jointly applied with San Diego Fire-Rescue and the Fire Safe Council of San Diego County to the CA Governor’s Office of Planning and Research *Regional Resilience Grant Program*. A total of \$1,588,838 was requested to fund three main objectives: 1) provide equitable public education and community engagement, 2) assist residents with maintaining defensible space by offering free community chipping, and 3) reduce the chance of a roadside fire start and protect evacuation corridors for safe evacuation through roadside vegetation management.

On Dec. 21, 2023, County Fire was notified that our application was successful. Through this grant, the following activities will occur over the next two years: working with Fire Safe Councils to update Community Wildfire Protection Plans, hosting Wildland Urban Interface and Last Chance Survival workshops, providing 24 free community chipping events throughout the County, and treating approximately 150 miles of evacuation routes with expanded roadside vegetation management. Because vulnerable populations bear an unequitable share of the risks and the consequences of wildfire, special attention will be given to ensure targeted service to individuals with disabilities or access and functional needs, limited English proficiency, geographically isolated individuals, households with low broadband subscription, seniors and older adults, and low-income individuals or families.

Recommendation: Support County Fire in accepting these funds and to be applied as previously described.

Adopt a Fire Advisory Board Meeting Schedule for 2024

The San Diego County Fire Advisory Board meets at least four (4) times annually to provide input to proposed San Diego County Fire Protection operations and items to be heard by the Board of Directors. Staff is proposing the following meeting dates for 2024:

1. January 8, 2024 (Present Meeting)
2. May 13, 2024
3. August 12, 2024
4. November 4, 2024

All meeting time are proposed for 1 pm at the County Fire main office in Kearny Mesa.

Recommendation: Approve the proposed meeting schedule.