



**MINUTES OF THE  
SCOTTS VALLEY FIRE PROTECTION DISTRICT  
BOARD OF DIRECTORS  
REGULAR MEETING OF  
July 10, 2024**

**1. Opening Business**

1.1 Call to Order

The Regular Meeting of the Board of Directors of the Scotts Valley Fire Protection District (SVFPD) was held on Wednesday, July 10, 2024 at the City of Scotts Valley Council Chambers. President Parker called the meeting to order at 6:02 p.m. and provided a teleconferencing notice for Director Pisciotta.

1.2 Pledge of Allegiance and Moment of Silence

President Parker called for the Pledge of Allegiance and a Moment of Silence to follow.

1.3 Roll Call

Director(s) Present:	President Joe Parker (JP) Vice President Adam Cosner (AC) Director Kris Hurst (KH) Director Russ Patterson (RP)
Director(s) Virtual at Alternate Location:	Director Daron Pisciotta (DP)
Director(s) Absent:	N/A
Fire District Staff:	Chief Correira Battalion Chief McNeil Deputy Fire Marshal Collins Administrative Services Manager Rodriguez

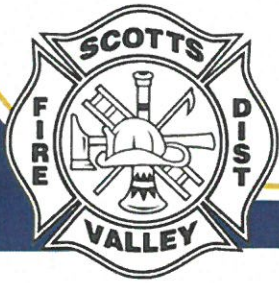
**2. Special Presentations and Introductions**

2.1 Survey Results Presentation: EMC Research

Ian Stewart is the Senior Principal from the polling firm EMC Research. Stewart gave a PowerPoint presentation via zoom for the Board on the Bond Measure survey results from recent polling of Scotts Valley residents.

The survey was conducted June 13 – 23, 2024 via a multimodal approach using telephone (landline and cell phone), text messages, and email invitations to a web survey. The sample universe for this project was those likely to vote in a November 2024 election in the Scotts Valley Fire District pulled from voter profile information. A total of 300 interviews were conducted with an overall margin of error  $\pm 5.7\%$  points. Respondents were selected at random from this likely November 2024 universe, and were contacted multiple times and offered the opportunity to participate before being replaced with another randomly selected respondent. Results were checked against the expected November 2024 universe and





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weighted as necessary to reflect the demographic and geographic makeup of the District. The results can be projected to all likely November 2024 voters in the district.

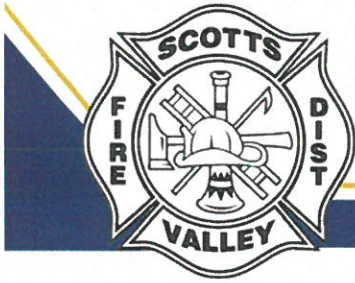
Participants were asked a variety of questions in regards to favorability towards the district and the potential tax measure. The survey polled on the support for the tax measure as presented with a 70% favorability before asking participants to rate a series of topics on level of importance. The list of topics were items that could be included in the fire protection bond measure, such as maintaining life-saving emergency medical services, strengthening wildfire protection and prevention, ensuring the fire station is structurally sound, improving 911 response times, investing in new fire engines and safety/rescue equipment, installing solar arrays and modern heating and cooling systems, building a new training facility for firefighters, moving the fire station closer to Scotts Valley's population centers, and building a new emergency coordination center. After rating the series of topics on importance, the participants were again asked about their support on the tax measure, resulting in 69% favorability.

The key finding of the survey was that support for the fire protection bond measure is slightly above the threshold for passage in November, but within the margin of error of the survey. The measure is susceptible to opposition messaging focusing voters on the cost, and the burden of several tax measures on the ballot could combine to suppress support, if voters are not reminded of the tangible benefits of enhancing fire services. The fire district is viewed very favorably by voters, as are local fire and police departments. Trust of the district to manage tax dollars is also high, relative to what we see for some other local government institutions. Voters are motivated by maintaining lifesaving medical services, keeping response times low, and strengthening our preparation for wildfires and other natural disasters. And moving the fire station to be closer to population centers is not seen as overly important, and other facilities-focused elements fall low in terms of importance.

## **Public Comment:**

- Marilyn Kuksht inquired if Branciforte Fire District members were involved in the survey.
- Chief Correira confirmed residents of the Branciforte Fire District were included in this survey.
- Becky Steinbruner inquired if any controlled survey participants were from the Branciforte area, if the survey was available in any language other than English, what percentage of the survey participants are property owners, and where was information pulled from to gather who was most likely to vote.
- Chief Correira confirmed that, statistically, it is likely that a portion of the randomly selected survey participants are from the unincorporated rural area around the district. The Chief also stated the percentage of survey participants that were property owners was 66%.
- Stewart stated that Spanish was not included because the level of language isolation in the district was not high enough to statistically affect the survey results. Stewart also stated information was collected from a variety of sources to provide contact





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information and vote history information, but much of the information came from the County.

### 3. Public Comment (GC §54954.3)

- Becky Steinbruner expressed appreciation for publicizing the board meeting on the Branciforte Fire Station marquee. She also asked the Board to consider writing a letter to Santa Cruz County LAFCO, requesting funding for district-based elections, and emphasized the importance of the district hiring a demographer.

### 4. Agenda Amendments (GC§54954.2) – Discussion/Action

- No Agenda Amendments.

### 5. Consent Calendar

5.1 Minutes: Approve Regular Board Meeting Minutes and Special Board Meeting Minutes of June 12, 2024

5.2 Approve SVFPD Claims Disbursements for the Month of June 1, 2024 through June 30, 2024 in the Amount of:

Payroll and Benefits:	\$ 658,591.69
General Fund:	\$ 59,877.34
Capital Outlay:	\$ 41,706.38
SCHMIT:	\$ 418.24
TOTAL:	\$ 760,593.65

5.3 Authorize Payment to Santa Cruz County Fire Agencies Insurance Group in the Amount of \$539,390.00 for Workers Compensation Insurance for the 2024/2025 Fiscal Year

5.4 Authorize Payment to CalPERS in the amount of \$1,209,214 for the Safety Plan's Unfunded Liability Annual Lump Sum Prepayment Option for the 2024-25 Fiscal Year

5.5 Adopt Resolution 2024-9 – Resolution Directing Termination of Measure T Parcel Tax of the Former Branciforte Fire Protection District, and Taking Related Actions

**Board Comment/Questions: None**

**Public Comment:**

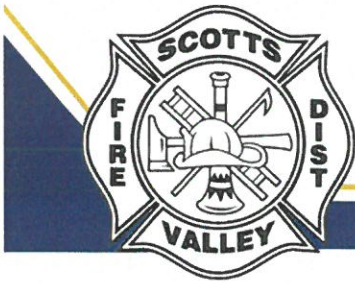
- Becky Steinbruner wanted to commend the board on the termination of Measure T.

**Motion to Approve the Consent Calendar Items 5.1-5.5**

**Move: AC**

**Second: KH**

**Roll Call Vote: 5-0**



## 6. Discussion Items

### 6.1 La Madrona Fire Station Planning

Cathy Dominico is a Managing Partner specializing in strategic consulting from Capital Public Finance Group (Capital PFG). Dominico gave a PowerPoint presentation for the Board on funding considerations of the La Madrona Fire Station.

The district's capital needs include a new fire station and a fire support facility. The current fire station at Erba Land does not meet essential service, building, and safety standards, and the support facility is necessary to accommodate the growing service population. The estimated cost for these projects is \$26.5 million, with \$24.5 million currently unfunded. Fire Districts have limited options to raise capital revenue, which include seeking a parcel tax, a special tax, or general obligation bond. All of these funding mechanisms currently require 2/3 voter approval. Parcel tax and special tax would cost the average taxpayer \$180 to \$215 per year, while a general obligation bond would be about \$110 per year over the life of the bond. This results in the general obligation bond being the most efficient option for the district and taxpayers.

Over the past 10 years, the District's assessed value has grown by an average of 5.56% per year including the Branciforte community. This means the District is able to issue general obligation funds efficiently. Should the District continue to grow at 5.5%, the tax rates would lower. Over the life of the bond, tax rates would average \$17 per 100,000 of assessed value. Even at the peak, the average taxpayer would pay \$160 per year.

The resolution includes the bond authorization amount, a 75-word ballot statement, full text of the measure (including key findings, accountability requirements, and bond project list), tax rate statement, and proposition 5 (ACA 1/10) compliance. The ballot statement was comprised of those really high supported items from the survey and developed by the fire station committee, staff, and consulting team.

## 7. Public Hearing/Action Items – Discussion/Action

### 7.1 Adopt Resolution 2024-8 Resolution of the Board of Directors of the Scotts Valley Fire District Ordering a General Obligation Bond Election, and Authorizing Necessary Action in Connection Therewith.

#### **Board Comment:**

- KH: Shared that she was under the impression that the primary reason for building the new station was for safety purposes and felt that the language of the ballot statement did not adequately reflect this goal. KH does not want the ballot statement, as presented, to appear disingenuous to the voters or to be seen as a marketing tactic.
- AC: Stated he believed strategic location is as important in building a new station. AC does not view the ballot statement, as presented, as a marketing tactic but rather as an effort to reflect the community's opinions and priorities based off the survey results.
- JP: Agreed with Director Hurst with the importance of noting the need to replace a structurally unsafe fire station.
- RP: Did not feel the language needed to be adjusted based on the survey results.





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- DP: Stated he agreed with both sides of the issue on the ballot language.
- Cathy Dominico: As presented, the ballot statement allots for four additional words before hitting the max of 75 words. In an effort to address the Board's concern, she suggested adding "to construct a seismically safe" strategically located station.

## Public Comment:

- Becky Steinbruner expressed appreciation for the presentation and commended Director Hurst and President Parker for prioritizing the public's trust in the creation of the ballot statement. Steinbruner commented on senior exemptions, inquired clarification on what public oversight includes, asked the board to look into local partnerships to bring costs down on the project, and inquired about funding through a Prop 218 vote.

Cathy Dominico responded to Steinbruner's comments and questions, clarifying that senior exemptions do not apply to general obligation bonds. She mentioned that the Citizen's Oversight Committee, in relation to Prop 5, is still being developed but is expected to function similarly to the oversight of school district general obligation bonds. Dominico also explained that Prop 218 applies to benefit assessment districts, which are not used as a funding mechanism for capital improvements, such as the construction of a new fire station.

- Vicki Miller inquired about what is included in the architect's estimate and what would happen if the estimated amount is insufficient. Chief Correia responded to Miller's inquiry by explaining that RRM Architects developed the plan and that the project estimates from last year have been revised. The updated costs account for construction cost increases, the potential need for an engineered foundation, and geotechnical studies.

## Motion to Adopt the Amended Resolution 2024-8

Move: *AC*

Second: *KH*

Roll Call Vote: *5-0*

## 7.2 Adopt Resolution 2024-10 Resolution of Intent to Adopt an Ordinance Establishing Weed Abatement Program and Providing for Collecting the Expense of Abatement

Introduction of Ordinance 2024-1: Weed Abatement (First Reading)

- Deputy Fire Marshal Collins explained that if the resolution is adopted, she would present the ordinance at the next board meeting for the public hearing process and approval.

Board Comment/Questions: **None**

Public Comment: **None**

## Motion to Adopt Resolution 2024-10 as presented

Move: *AC*

Second: *RP*

Roll Call Vote: *5-0*



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7.3 Authorize Payment to McNeil and Company in the amount of \$62,904 for District Commercial Package and Umbrella Coverage, and Commercial Inland Marine Insurance.

- Chief Correira explained the main reason this item is on the agenda for approval is due to the amount being outside the District's signing authority without board approval. The Chief further explained this is a renewal of our insurance policy, with the only difference being that the Branciforte Fire District station would not have property damage insurance due to the high cost of insuring it.

**Board Comment/Questions:**

- JP: sought clarification on whether the previous coverage for the Branciforte station could continue as a separate, single-policy coverage. Chief Correira confirmed that having a separate policy was unfortunately not an option.

**Public Comment:**

- Becky Steinbruner inquired whether this included liability insurance for the Branciforte Fire Station. Chief Correira clarified that while there would be liability insurance for people on the property, there would specifically be no property damage insurance.

**Motion to Approve Payment as presented**

**Move:** AC

**Second:** KH

**Roll Call Vote:** 5-0

**8. Board of Directors and Administrative Reports – Information/Discussion**

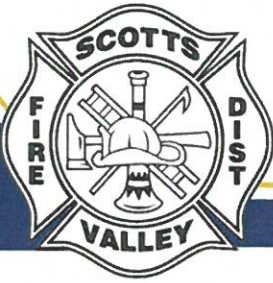
8.1 Board of Directors Report – Directors

- None

8.2 Administrative Report – Chief Officers

- Battalion Chief McNeil: Gave an update on the reconstruction type one apparatus bill. The apparatus committee met with Golden State to go over improvements that will be made, with a completion date of early 2025.
- Chief Correira revisited the issue of the ongoing radio challenges the district is experiencing. He informed the board that the county is still in the process of going out for bid for the radios, with the closing date extended to September 15th. The county has also brought on an additional consultant to help lead the process. The Chief informed the board that Engine 2538 is out on the strike team, along with two of the district's battalion chiefs. Chief Correira expressed appreciation to the Organization and Personnel Committee for their assistance with the Admin Confidential agreement. Lastly, he thanked the board for having a spirited discussion. discussion on the bond measure. He shared he appreciated the difference of opinions





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but happy to see through discussion they were able to land in a place that satisfied the group and now it will be in the hands of the public to decide whether or not the bond is something they want to fund.

## Public Comment:

- Becky Steinbruner commented on the low-impact camping ordinance that was presented to the County Board of Supervisors, expressing concern for residents living in rural areas. She asked the board to monitor the outcome of the ordinance.

## 9. Correspondence

- None

## 10. Request for Future Agenda Items

- No future agenda items requested.

## 11. Closed Session: Government Code §54957

- 11.1 Public Employee Performance Evaluation  
Title: Fire Chief

At 8:00 p.m., Board President Parker announced the Board Closed Session for the purpose listed in Item 11.1.

## 12. Open Session: Government Code §54957.1

- 12.1 Report on closed session

At 8:32 p.m. the Board reconvened to Open Session and President Parker reported on Item 11.1


- *Information was received, and direction was given. No Action taken.*


## 13. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 8:33 p.m.

Next Regularly Scheduled Board Meeting: Wednesday, August 14, 2024 at 6:00 p.m.

Attest

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Joe Parker  
Board President

  
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Mark Correia  
Board Secretary