

## MINUTES

**FIVE CITIES FIRE AUTHORITY  
SPECIAL BOARD MEETING  
FRIDAY, OCTOBER 25, 2019  
CITY OF GROVER BEACH COUNCIL CHAMBERS  
154 SOUTH EIGHTH STREET  
GROVER BEACH, CALIFORNIA**

### **CALL TO ORDER:**

Chair Nicolls called the Five Cities Fire Authority (FCFA) Special Board meeting to order at 10:00 a.m.

### **FLAG SALUTE:**

Chair Nicolls led the Flag Salute.

### **ROLL CALL:**

FCFA Board: Chair Barbara Nicolls, Vice Chair Karen White and Board Member Keith Storton.

FCFA Staff Present: Fire Chief Stephen Lieberman, General Counsel Molly Thurmond and Clerk to the Board Tricia Meyers.

### **AGENDA REVIEW:**

**Action:** Vice Chair White moved, Board Member Storton seconded, and the motion passed unanimously to approve the Five Cities Fire Authority's Agenda by a voice vote.

**AYES:** White, Storton, Nicolls

**NOES:** None

**ABSENT:** None

**ABSTAIN:** None

### **APPROVAL OF MINUTES:**

**Consideration of Approval of Minutes (MEYERS)**

**Action:** Approved the minutes of the Special Board Meeting of July 26, 2019 by a voice vote.

**AYES:** Storton, White, Nicolls

**NOES:** None

**ABSENT:** None

**ABSTAIN:** None

### **COMMUNITY COMMENTS AND SUGGESTIONS:**

Riki Heath thanked the Board Members for their service to our communities.

### **CONSENT AGENDA:**

None.

### **PUBLIC HEARINGS:**

None.

**CONTINUED BUSINESS:**

None.

**NEW BUSINESS:**

- a. **Fire Chief Report – Annual Weed Abatement and Consideration for Change.** Chief Lieberman presented a report to the Board regarding the issues and concerns with the current weed abatement program. At the Five Cities Fire Authority's July Board meeting, Chief Lieberman informed the Board that he was preparing a response to the Grand Jury regarding "Fire Risk Management". The Grand Jury was focused on the need for a weed abatement program. This gave the Chief the opportunity to look at the member community programs and the inefficiencies. He reported that dry landscaping in the front yard of homes is not a significant fire risk. In many cases, the weeds appear to be more of a nuisance than a fire hazard. The weed abatement program timeline that is followed is no longer effective. Property owners are removing weeds in Spring, but not keeping them cleared through the fire season in the Fall. Chief Lieberman also explained that the cost of abating weeds from properties each year is unknown. The cost is dependent on how many owners are non-compliant. In the last fiscal year, there was an overage in the weed abatement budget due to an increase in abatements. The program also impacts staff time to administer the program. Chief Lieberman proposed to focus on the open space areas and develop a vegetation management program. Another suggestion is to send an annual notice to each homeowner to require weed abatement compliance year round. Chief Lieberman wanted the Board to know that the current weed abatement program is a fiscal and operational issue. Battalion Chief Riki Heath spoke during public comment and stated that he is currently working on identifying fire hazard severity zones.

**Action:** Board Members supported the Fire Chief moving forward with discussing the weed abatement program difficulties with each member community.

**BOARD MEMBER ITEMS:**

None.

**FIRE CHIEF ITEMS:**

- a. Reserve Firefighter Jim Rodlin has accepted a promotion with his full-time employer and is leaving the area.
- b. Response Activity Update. There were about 2800 calls for service year to date.
- c. A grant application will be submitted to San Luis Obispo County Parks for a Utility Task Vehicle(UTV).
- d. Five Cities Fire Authority has obtained 3 UTVs from the Defense Logistics Administration Surplus Equipment. Staff is still looking for utility pickup trucks.
- e. Chief Lieberman has a meeting with the Grand Jury on November 5<sup>th</sup>. It is regarding dispatch costs and the dunes response areas.
- f. A strike team has been deployed to the Tick Fire.

**BOARD COMMUNICATIONS:**

Vice Chair White reported that Oceano Community Services District will hold an election in March of 2020 to ask the voters to approve a tax of \$180 per year for each parcel to help pay for emergency medical and fire protection.

**CLOSED SESSION:**

None.

**ADJOURNMENT:**

Chair Nicolls adjourned the meeting at 10:59 a.m. The next Board meeting is scheduled for November 15, 2019, at 10:00 a.m. at the City of Grover Beach Council Chambers, 154 South Eighth Street, Grover Beach, California.

/s/ Barbara Nicolls, Chair

ATTEST:

/s/ Tricia Meyers, Clerk to the Board

(Approved at Board Meeting on 11/15/19)