

SOUTH PLACER FIRE DISTRICT
BOARD OF DIRECTORS
Regular Board Meeting Minutes
June 08, 2022

REGULAR BUSINESS

The South Placer Fire District Board of Directors regular meeting was called to order on Wednesday, June 08, 2022, at 7:04 p.m. by President, Gary Grenfell.

Present:

Gary Grenfell, President
Dan Bajtos, Vice President
Sean Mullin, Clerk
Ken Musso, Director
Terri Ryland, Director
Mike Johnson, Director
Chris Gibson, Director

Absent:

None

Staff in Attendance:

Fire Chief, Mark Duerr
Deputy Chief, Matt Feeley
Division Chief, Jeff Ingolia
Battalion Chief, Matt Van Voltinburg
Division Chief, James Magnuson
Engineer, Brian Bailey
Captain Paramedic, Nick Paskey
Firefighter Paramedic, Bryan Doepel
Captain Paramedic, Shawn Cline

Public Comment: None

Consent Agenda: Director Ryland made a motion to approve the items for the consent agenda. The motion was seconded by Director Gibson.

Rollcall:

Ayes: Grenfell, Bajtos, Mullin, Ryland, Gibson, Johnson, Musso Noes: None Abstain: None
Absent: None Carried

OLD BUSINESS

Station 18 New Truck Room Update: Staff recommends discussion on the proposed project and progress made to date. Chief Duerr began that the wall is complete. The project is now on hold as the Board continues to review the current financial situation and revisit the project needs in the future.

Employee Retention: Staff recommends discussion on current issues facing the District involving employee retention. Chief Duerr began that there are no changes since the last meeting. He continued the District is waiting to fill the current vacancies awaiting the results from the ballot assessment.

Public Hearing and Consideration of the Levy of the Assessments for the Proposed South Placer PFD Fire Protection and Emergency Response Services Assessment: Director Ryland began with some guidelines and requirements before opening the public hearing that will end with the conclusion of the

ballot proceeding that allows property owners in the South Placer Division 2 their last opportunity to submit their ballots. She noted that speakers are allotted three minutes to speak during the hearing and may request a replacement ballot from the representative with SCI Consultants in attendance at the meeting at this time. Chief Duerr gave a presentation to the Board and public discussing the current needs of the District while forecasting the future financial position for the District. President Grenfell then opened the public hearing to the public that wished to speak at 7:34 pm. Members of the public stepped forward to express their questions and comments to the Board. The Board recessed at 8:10 p.m. to allow staff and consultants to organize their responses to the public. The board meeting and public hearing reconvened at 8:20 p.m. Chief Duerr, consultants with SCI and the Board members responded to the inquires and discussions of the public. At 8:43 pm President Grenfell announced a last call for ballot submission and noted the public input of the hearing was then closed. President Grenfell then declared that he directs the tabulation of the ballots to begin tomorrow at 10 am at the South Placer Fire District in the training room and will be open to the public. He advised that the public hearing is continued to the July 13th Board meeting where should the tabulation find that a weighted majority of ballots submitted are in support of the proposed assessment the Board may consider a Resolution to levy the assessments commencing in Fiscal Year 2022-23.

NEW BUSINESS

Fiscal Year 2022/23 Preliminary Budget Adoption: Staff recommends adoption of the preliminary fiscal year 2022/23 budget. Chief Duerr gave a short presentation on the Fiscal Year 2022/23 budget status while noting the importance of having a preliminary spending plan before next board meeting that occurs in July. He continued that this budget assumed a 5% increase in property tax revenues from the prior fiscal year but a decrease in ambulance revenues. An increase in overtime budgeting is expected to more match the District trends. He continued that he has allocated the minimum purchase of required personal protective equipment and heart monitors for the capital expenditures spending category. It was noted that the budget will be operating at a deficit of \$90,000 overall. Director Ryland made a motion to approve the Fiscal Year 2022/23 Preliminary Budget as presented. Director Gibson made a second to the motion.

Rollcall:

Ayes: Grenfell, Bajtos, Gibson, Mullin, Johnson, Musso, Ryland Noes: None Abstain: None
Absent: None Carried

Authorization providing for the Levy and Collection of Special Tax Measure A for Fiscal Year 2022/23: Staff recommends approval of Resolutions to authorize the levy and collection of the Districts Special Tax, Measure A by Placer County. This special tax was passed by South Placer Fire District with 69.2% of the ballots in 1980. The special tax is \$70 per residence, .05 per square foot of commercial property, and \$2.00 per acre for vacant land with no cost-of-living adjustment or Consumer Price Index. Estimated revenue is \$707,000. Director Mullin made a motion to approve the resolutions to levy and collect the special Tax Measure A for Fiscal Year 2022/23. Director Bajtos made a second to the motion.

Rollcall for Resolution 14-2021/22 Providing for the levy and collection of Special Tax Measure A for Fiscal Year 2022/23:

Ayes: Grenfell, Bajtos, Gibson, Mullin, Johnson, Musso, Ryland Noes: None Abstain: None
Absent: None Carried

Rollcall for Resolution 15-2021/22 Requesting collection of charges on tax roll Fiscal Year 2022/23:

Ayes: Grenfell, Bajtos, Gibson, Mullin, Johnson, Musso, Ryland Noes: None Abstain: None
Absent: None Carried

Fiscal Year 2021/22 Budget Amendment to address committed funds from the former Loomis Fire Protection District: Staff recommends discussion and board action to address the committed funds account as well as address the recommendations from the fiscal year 2021 audit regarding Designated (Equity) Reserves. Chief Duerr explained that upon recent discovery that \$1,561,261 Facilities Reserve Loomis reserve funds of the prior Loomis Fire District were believed to have been formally committed to the Station 18 project, but no board action item formally committed these funds to facilities. Meeting minutes identify the movement of the funds from unassigned to facilities, but the formal process established by GASB did not occur. Chief Duerr continued that he recommends uncommitting these funds and moving the “committed” funds into unassigned fund balance. In addition, in note 8 of the audited financial statement for 2020/21 the auditors recommend the District’s board-designated Contingency Reserve be increased to the historical 5% of budget at \$700,000, currently set at \$410,000. Chief Duerr recommended moving approximately \$300,000 of these newly transferred unassigned funds into Contingency Reserve to increase the reserve to 5% of budget to bring the contingency reserves into alignment in addition to formally correcting the reserve balances of the now consolidated District. Director Ryland noted that this may be a good time for the Board to further review the board policies for fund balances. Director Mullin asked Chief Duerr to do further research and bring the item back for discussion and action at the July Board meeting.

INFORMATION AND DISCUSSION

Correspondence: A recent PARS statement for the month of April.

Chief’s Report:

- Wildland fire training complete
- One new engine on site Friday June 10th
- Firefighter Physical – 1st phases completed
- No fireworks in unincorporated Placer County
- 355 call – 18% increase from 322 in May of last year
- 11% increase in calls over last year total
- SSV response times- arrived within 99% of the SSV response times
- 2022 Fire Prevention department – large increases in new starts, mitigation fees, total permits, square footage, prevention fees

Functions: Open House- Station 18 on June 11th, July 4 bike ride at Shelborne Estates

Board/Staff Comments: none

Future Agenda Items: Reallocate fund balances, Prop. 218 Ballot Measure

There being no further business to come before the Board, the meeting adjourned at 9:09 p.m. The next regular meeting will be held on Wednesday, July 13th, 2022.

Respectfully submitted,



Recording Secretary, Kathy Medeiros

**FOLLOWING CORRESPONDENCE
SUBMITTED FOR THE RECORD**

June 8, 2022

Board of Directors
South Placer Fire Protection District
6900 Eureka Road
Granite Bay, CA 95746

Re: Special Benefit Assessment District

I have lived in Granite Bay for 45 years and have watched the fire district grow from mostly volunteer firefighters and medical aide to a professional first responder service to be proud of. However, I do not support the Special Benefit Assessment District proposed by the Board and have listed some of the reasons below:

- This method used to seek this increase in funding was unclear to the property owners.
- The reason for seeking funding this way is that it only requires 50+1 of ballots returned to pass rather than 2/3 approval if done the usual way.
- Method of assessing each property owner was unclear in Engineer's Report.
- Concerns about ballot that included signature, address and vote not being confidential.
- Questions re meaning of weighted ballot.
- Misleading information on fliers sent out by South Placer Firefighter Association.
- Why ballots were sent to Station 17 to hold 45 days until counting date and not a neutral address.
- Why results will not be announced to anyone until the following month at a Board meeting.
- Mixed messaging on how to get replacement ballots
- Confusion on how to get a ballot if none received in first place.
- Poor direction on what to do if ballot not received and unable to attend July 8 meeting to get one.
- Entire SPFD will benefit from Assessment and entire SPFD should pay for it, not just Granite Bay Division property owners.

The consolidation with Loomis was to be revenue neutral, but the Granite Bay Division property owners pay considerably more. Between 2012 and 2021 Granite Bay tax revenues have increased \$3,060,951 while Loomis tax revenues have only increased \$464,670. The consolidation of the two districts was only revenue neutral for the first year and after that it has been a deficit for the Granite Bay property owners.


For fiscal year 6-30-18, SPFD salaries and benefits were little more than \$7.3 million or 70.6% of SPFD general revenues. General revenues have grown from 2019 to 2021 at rate of about 7% per year on average but salaries and benefits have been paid at a rate that exceeds income growth. For fiscal year ended 6-30-21 general revenues have increased since FY 6-30-18 by \$2.4 million but salaries and benefits paid increased by more than \$3.8 million in same period and are now almost 90% of entire SPFD general revenue.

It isn't about how much property tax you pay, it is about how much property tax you pay to South Placer Fire District. The entire South Placer Fire District will benefit from this Assessment and the entire South Placer Fire District should pay for it – not just Granite Bay property owners.

Sincerely,


Sandra H. Harris

8



My name is Karen Biane. My husband and I are 38-year residents of Granite Bay. During this time, the South Placer Fire Department has responded to multiple house fires and emergency calls in our neighborhood.

One emergency call we witnessed was to help a toddler-drowning victim. Thanks to their efforts and excellent medical care, the child survived, and is thriving.

Four years ago they responded to an emergency call at our home. In our case, the responders were there within 5 minutes of my 911 call, and were very kind and compassionate in how they dealt with our needs.

The Department also provides emergency service at Folsom Lake on a regular basis. We frequently hear sirens at the park, especially on weekends.

We live in an area where a potentially catastrophic wildfire could occur. Folsom State Park is badly overgrown and tinder dry. This puts us in a position where, in my opinion, we could experience a fire not dissimilar to the Berkley fire of 1991, or more recently the fires that destroyed subdivisions in Redding, Santa Rosa, and the community of Paradise.

The members of SPFD put the lives and property of the Granite Bay community ahead of their own welfare. They RUN IN TO DANGER on our behalf, putting their own lives at risk. They perform community outreach, and are important members of our community.

I have reviewed the South Placer Fire Departments' explanation of district revenues and expenses. Having done so I understand the rationale for the fee increases being requested in our area.

**It is imperative that our fire department be properly staffed, trained and equipped. If an additional fee must be imposed to provide that, we support it.
Thank you.**

SPFD Board Meeting, June 8, 2022

My name is Diane Will and I live on Cavitt Stallman Road.

I support the South Placer Fire District, but I do NOT support this ballot measure.

South Placer Fire District needs additional funding, but not just from the Granite Bay Division. This is a District-wide need, so it should be a District-wide assessment, not just an assessment for Granite Bay Division residents.

I would like it to be noted for the Administrative Record that I am protesting this ballot measure because:

- It does not comply with the intent and application of Proposition 218,
- It provides no “special” benefits over and above the general benefits already provided by the South Placer Fire District
- It misleads the public about the actual funding dollars provided to South Placer Fire District by the Granite Bay Division, and
- This assessment will benefit the District as a whole and will simply provide more dollars to subsidize the Loomis Division

Fire services are not eligible for assessment under Proposition 218:

The California Legislative Analyst’s Office has stated “Proposition 218 specifies that no property-related fee may be: levied to pay for a general governmental service, such as police or fire service” (*“Understanding Proposition 218,” Legislative Analyst’s Office, December 1996*)

The Howard Jarvis Taxpayers Association reinforced this by stating “As the drafters of Prop. 218, we at HJTA are in full agreement with the Legislative Analyst that fire suppression and emergency medical services are not eligible for assessment financing under prop. 218, but must be funded **only** through property taxes and other general and special taxes.” (*Mountain Democrat, “Garden Valley fire assessment may violate Prop. 218, August 2019*)

There no “Special” Benefits

Only special benefits conferred upon real property are assessable under Proposition 218. Any other benefits are NOT assessable and must be excluded. This includes any benefits to people.

SPFD calls for Rescue & Emergency Medical Service are between 65% and 70% of all calls

There are other calls for False Alarm, Service Call and Good Intent

The actual number of calls for fire in 2020 was 140 calls, or about 4% of all the calls for the entire year of 2020.

The focus of this Ballot Measure has been just on the \$70 Special Tax we pay, but we actually provide a lot more funding than that.

The Ballot Information Guide states that "South Placer Fire Protection District, Division 2, is funded through a **small portion of local property taxes**, miscellaneous fees, and a static \$70 special tax that has remained unchanged since 1981. The initial Special Tax, implemented in 1981, covered 100% of employee wages. Today that same special tax covers just 18% of wages." You make it sound like that is the **ONLY** funding provided by the Granite Bay Division. And that's just wrong.

Let's talk about that "SMALL" portion of property taxes, for FYE 6/30/21, the amount of property taxes paid to SPFD by each division is as follows:

\$8,272,001 GB Division property taxes; almost \$8.3 MILLION

\$329,031 Loomis property taxes paid to SPFD

And yes, I understand Loomis Division residents pay the same **RATE of property tax to the County** as Granite Bay Division residents, **but if their property taxes are funding OTHER public agencies, they are NOT funding SPFD.**

OK, so now let's talk about that \$70 Special Tax. In 1981, we were in a severe recession. SPFD asked the Granite Bay community to fund a Special Tax, on a temporary basis. This tax would be \$70 per parcel and was never intended to be permanent.

Forty years later, you are now suggesting this 1981 emergency funding request is the only funding the Granite Bay Division is providing to SPFD.

And how are those funds actually being spent? Engineers Report Final Dec 2021 shows these funds are being spent on legal fees, consultants and "other" services. So not a dime is being paid to our firefighters.

This assessment, if successful, will only continue to subsidize the Loomis Division and there will never be any incentive for the Loomis Division to contribute **ANY** more to their own fire services.