

Stanislaus County Fire Authority
Meeting Minutes
August 7, 2008

Chief Skiles called the meeting to order at 9:05 a.m. The flag was saluted.

The following agencies were present:

Director King	Burbank Paradise Fire
Chief Barrett	CalFire SCU
Chief Benavides	Keyes Fire
Chief Miguel	Modesto Fire
Chief Botto	City of Oakdale
Chief Hoyer	Oakdale Rural Fire
Chief Kinnear	City of Patterson, West Stanislaus Fire
Chief Skiles	Salida Fire
Chief Mayotte	Stanislaus Consolidated Fire
Chief Hinshaw	Stanislaus County Fire Warden
Chief Passalaqua	Woodland Ave. Fire

Also in attendance: RaeLene Brown and Kim Morante, SCFPD; Laurie Wester, Ed Bartley, Salida Fire; Todd Filgas and Doug Harms, Stanislaus County; Ken Slamon, Mimi DeSimoni, Wendy Mirassou, Stanislaus County Fire Warden's Office; Mike Payton, Doug Machado, Modesto Fire; John Burton , John Borges, Burton's Fire Apparatus; Lucian Thomas and Kurt Kline, SR911.

Public Comment: Chief Mayotte brought up an issue initiated in the Chief's Association: DER's Hazardous Materials Area Plan. DER is working under a deadline, but he let them know that the time-line is not acceptable to the Fire Service. He has requested comments, and sent a letter to the County CEO; he has not received a response yet. He would like each Chief to evaluate the plan and their future participation. He discussed the current funding, and how the fire service is supporting the system without compensation.

Chief Hinshaw discussed the implications of signing of the Haz-Mat document. The consensus, taken by a roll call vote, (Modesto was not present at this time), was that Chief Mayotte was to report back to DER that the Fire Service does not accept the Area Plan as written. Chief Mayotte, Chief Hinshaw, and Chief Skiles will meet with the Special Operations Coordinator and direct him to call a meeting so that each agency's level of participation can be identified. Salida is considering cut backs in EMS response; therefore, in the future a similar discussion should take place on that topic as well.

Approval of Minutes: Chief Mayotte made a motion to accept the minutes from the June meeting, Chief Benavides seconded the motion. Motion was passed.

Staff reports committee- all in written form.

Agenda Items were taken out of order to allow guests to leave before general business

6.1 Doug Harms, County Assessor, spoke first regarding tax assessments and current trends in real estate. He provided information on the values of properties from 2003-2008. Stanislaus County is one of 3 counties in the nation that has the most sub-prime loans, hence the high foreclosure rates. The county re-set values last January, at that time there were 40,000 properties that were lowered in value. The assessment roll went down by \$4 billion. Values have continued to decline by 5-8% per month. The good news is that houses are starting to sell again. He explained the difference between typical real estate sales and REO sales. We may begin recovery within a couple of years, but 5 years is more realistic. The assessment roll is about at the same level it was at a couple of years ago.

Todd Filgas, from the Auditors Office, provided information for each district's assessed valuation. He reported that the values by district are all over the board, some are up, some are down. Supplemental taxes will not be providing the revenues they did in the past. Delinquencies will affect direct assessments, but not secured taxes. They will eventually be collected as property is sold. There was a question regarding forecasting; they do not expect as big of a drop next year unless commercial and farm properties were to go down as well.

- 6.4 Communications Interoperability – Lucien Thomas and Kurt Kline from SR 911 gave a presentation on the communications systems upgrades that have occurred recently. Sites at Mt. Oso, the jail, Newman, SR911, and Fowler Peak were highlighted. \$1.5 million of Homeland Security money and County and City general fund money has been used. Future projects are identified in the Stanislaus County Communications Plan – some of the highlights of this project include: simulcast system, VHF, 700-800 Mhz , and microwave in the initial build out. There is about \$900,000 available to begin the project from various sources, all grant funding. It will take a couple of years to make the improvements. Chief Skiles reported that the Communications Coordinator has applied for the Fire Act Grant again this year for \$1.7 million, this includes radios for all apparatus in the County. He cautioned that compatibility is a big issue, so be aware when you are making purchases. Motorola supports all of the future functions, some others don't. If you are going to make any purchases, check with Chad. Gary reminded everyone that when P25 compliance becomes effective in 2013, everyone will be required to switch, so although grant funding has been applied for, everyone should be budgeting for purchases and maintenance. Check FireScope for communications capability requirements.
 - 6.2 Chief Hinshaw gave the Operational Area Coordinator update. He provided handouts regarding firefighter deaths and injuries and reminded everyone that we have over 1000 man-days out of County and our crews are tired; this can leave them vulnerable to injury. The second half of fire season may be worse than the first half. Please make sure paperwork is filled out correctly to ensure payment. Serpentine fire had problems with relief schedules so crews were brought home to sort out the issues. There was discussion regarding the new OES engines.
 - 6.3 Annual Report- Chief Skiles asked the agencies to respond to the questionnaire that was handed out regarding satisfaction with services and suggestions for improvement. Where do we want to go next year? Please return your responses by August 22, so that they may be included in the annual report.
 - 6.5 Ad hoc Committee Report- Mimi reported on progress made by the committee on behalf of the districts. She is waiting for several districts to respond with information on permit fees that were not collected on their behalf. She will continue to work on getting information out of the Building Department to assist the districts.
 - 6.6 Fire Code- Chief Slamon spoke about two omissions on the Fire Code Adoption with respect to the Sprinkler Ordinance; F2s and S2s were left off so no fire sprinklers are required on those types of buildings. The three choices are to reopen the issue and take it to the Board of Supervisors, have the districts adopt a revised ordinance themselves (which would still have to be ratified by the Board) or wait for the next code cycle. This issue, and water supply will both be brought back on the next agenda.
 - 6.7 Swift Water Rescue Policy – will be brought back at the September meeting.
 - 6.8 Presentation of Training Officer awards – Chief Mayotte presented Ed Bartley, and Chad Hackett with the Training Officer of the Year awards. Both gentlemen were thanked for their hard work and dedication to training.
7. Announcements – Mimi announced that there is an opening for a member-at-large on the Fire Code Board of Appeals if anyone was interested. The next meeting will be on Thursday, September 4, 2008 – 0900 at the RFTC.

Meeting was adjourned at 12:05 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,
Mimi DeSimoni
Stanislaus County Fire Warden's Office