

**Stanislaus County Fire Authority  
Meeting Minutes  
July 6, 2006**

Chief Dale Skiles called the meeting to order at 0901hrs. The flag was saluted.

Roll call:

The following agency representatives were present:

Chief Barrett	CDF-SCU
Chief Karl Curnow	Denair Fire
Chief Jim Miguel	City of Modesto
Chief Kevin Blount	Mountain View Fire District
Chief Mike Wilkinson	City of Oakdale
Director Walt Luihn	Oakdale Rural Fire District
Chief Bill Kinnear	City of Patterson
Chief Dale Skiles	Salida Fire District
Chief Steve Mayotte	Stanislaus Consolidated Fire
Chief Gary Hinshaw	Stanislaus County Fire Warden's Office
Chief Gary Thompson	Westport Fire District
Director Bob Kimball	West Stanislaus Fire District
Chief Mike Passalacqua	Woodland Ave. Fire District

Also present were: Ron Cripe, RFTC; Dennis Wister, County Public Works; Chief Mike Kraus, Chief Mike Payton, Modesto Fire; Kim Morante and John Silveira, Stanislaus Consolidated Fire; Deputy Fire Warden Ray Jackson and Mimi DeSimoni, County Fire Warden's Office; and Assistant Chief John Barindelli, Westport Fire District.

Public Comment:

Chief Curnow thanked Chief Skiles for all the time and hard work he devoted to the County Chief's Association over the last two years as president.

Approval of Minutes:

The group agreed that the new format with a complete set of documents in one PDF file was a preferable way to receive the Board packets.

Chief Mayotte moved to accept the minutes from the June 1<sup>st</sup>, June 15<sup>th</sup> and June 22<sup>nd</sup> meetings as presented; Chief Miguel seconded the motion. Motion was passed unanimously.

Agenda Items:

A. Reports

1. Chief Skiles reported that the Board of Supervisors took action to accept the recommendations of the Fire Authority as presented in their business plan. Chief Skiles and Chief Hinshaw presented a power point presentation and answered their questions.
2. Chief Hinshaw gave an overview of what had transpired in the transition of the Fire Prevention Bureau responsibilities from Consolidated Fire to the County. Chief Mayotte suggested a contract between the County and Consolidated to use the Consolidated employees during the transition. Chief Hinshaw agreed that would be a workable solution and had County Counsel write the contract. He discussed the contract that was proposed with the employees, to pay their full salaries and benefits for 6 months, or until they transitioned over to County employment. The County currently does not have these types job classifications so they are currently doing a complete

comparison with 8 similarly sized counties. The employees did not like the 30-day clause in the contract, and refused to consider it unless the clause was removed. Chief Hinshaw approached them on three separate occasions to ask them to consider the contract. The contract was never taken to the Stanislaus Consolidated board. Chief Hinshaw expressed his disappointment that the employees mistrusted his and the County's motives for the 30-day clause. It is standard language in all of the County's contracts and was put in with the intent that when the positions were established, the employees would then transition over to County employment. It was noted that with the generous benefit package offered by Consolidated Fire, it will be difficult for the County to bring salaries up for these three employees to compensate for some of the benefits they now receive. Chief Miguel agreed that the City of Modesto could not match Consolidated Fire's benefit package for the Investigators. Since the Consolidated employees made the decision not to continue employment, Chief Hinshaw's office had to move ahead to find employees to fill the positions. On July 3, 2006 Chief Hannink took over as the Interim Fire Marshal, a retired fire marshal from the bay area will begin doing plan checks next week. The County is now advertising the job of Fire Prevention Specialist.

Chief Mayotte took the opportunity to read prepared remarks regarding his opinion of the Fire Authority and the way it conducts business. He mistrusts the organization. Chief Mayotte's comments are attached to the minutes, for the record (not provided electronically). He did not believe that it was fair to leave the 30-day -out clause in the contract. His employees wanted a 6-month guarantee of employment. He felt that the County could increase the employee's base pay to make up for the benefits they would lose. Chief Miguel commented that the basis of the problem came down to a lack of trust, and questioned whether a change in the contract could re-establish the trust of the employees; if not, would there be a viable relationship? A personal services contract was also suggested. There was long discussion about what Chief Hinshaw should do to accommodate the employees.

Chief Hinshaw was directed to go back to the County and see if there is any language that would be acceptable to both parties, and ask the employees to consider one more time. However, he wanted it made clear that if he got the contract changed and the employees came back to work, when they are offered County jobs, he expects the Fire Authority members to stand behind him and not go through these issues again in 6 months. If the employees accept, terrific, and if they refuse and the County has to double-staff to bring on new employees during the 6-month contract, that the Fire Authority will fund the extra expense.

3. Chief Miguel gave an update on the Fire Investigation services that transitioned to Modesto on July 1<sup>st</sup>. Over the 4<sup>th</sup> of July holiday weekend they responded to 11 calls in the contract area, 3 were for structure fires. He was unaware of any unmet needs. He is interested in feedback from departments that have used their services. Modesto's lead investigator has been making contact with the agencies and after the holiday will be making appointments and getting on training schedules. His council will consider the contract on August 2<sup>nd</sup> and he believes they will approve it. He has spoken to the 3 Consolidated investigators regarding them coming over to Modesto Fire. Nothing has been solidified yet. The transition is important because some of them have 10-12 years left in their careers. Seniority is a big issue. He will continue to meet with the employees
- B. Funding: A report showing current funding, projected carry-over and fiscal year 2006-2007 costs was distributed. Mimi reported that we would not have final figures on this year's revenues until the beginning of August. Chief Skiles suggested that we hold any action on adjustments to the business plan until complete information is available.
  - C. Service Level performance expectations for Admin/Finance and Communications were handed out. These were in draft form for everyone to review and comment on. Mimi explained that the Finance / Admin. Items are projects and assignments she currently works on. If anyone has tasks that they would like to see added to the list please let her know. The list of expectations for the Executive Board and Administering Agency

are important. Members need to understand the time commitment and workload involved in these positions. Chief Skiles reviewed the Communications performance expectations. Many of the items were being carried over from Chief's Association committees to the Fire Authority because no one has enough time and expertise to devote to the projects. These documents will be brought back to the group to be formalized and adopted. Training and Special Operations will have similar documents soon.

- D. Elections – There was discussion on the election process. The by-laws are very general and do not set down specific rules for elections other than the month and that it be done at the discretion of board. It was suggested that the rules of procedure be amended so that there is a formal process in place and that all agencies have the opportunity to vote. Bob Kimball suggested that a nominating committee be formed two months in advance to seek out interested individuals willing to serve, but that he would like to see the same officers stay in place for an additional year to work on the business plan and service levels. Chief Miguel agreed that the bylaws should be amended before next year, but that continuity is important right now. Chief Skiles said that being in the position of Chair and Vice-Chair takes a huge time commitment. There is money budgeted in the business plan to reimburse the agencies for the time that the officers devote to Fire Authority business. Chief Mayotte suggested that we look at possibly hiring an executive director. Chief Skiles agreed that was a good idea. Chief Barrett made a motion to open nominations and to nominate the current board for another term; there was further discussion as to the board's willingness to serve another term. Bob Kimball made a motion to close nominations; Chief Curnow seconded the motion. A roll call vote reflected a unanimous vote in support of the current board serving another term.

Chief Skiles reported that there was a civilian fire injury reported in Fresno County related to a local firefighter. He will e-mail information on it as he gets it.

The next regular meeting is set for August 3, 2006 at 0900 hrs at the RFTC.

Meeting was adjourned at 1140hrs.

Mimi DeSimoni  
Clerk of the Board

Approved on a motion by Chief Barrett and a second by Chief Mayotte