

MOAPA VALLEY FIRE DISTRICT MEETING MINUTES

Monday, September 9, 2024 Location: MVFD Headquarters

Board Members	Joseph Davis (Chairman), Gene Houston (Vice Chairman), Judy Metz, Josh Jensen, Chris Stolworthy.
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I. CALL TO ORDER

- A. Joe Davis call's the meeting to order
- B. Pledge of Allegiance
- C. Conformance with the Open Meeting Law
- D. Roll Call/Introduction
 - 1) Board Members:
 - a) Joe Davis, Chairman
 - b) Gene Houston, Vice-Chairman
 - c) Judy Metz, Board Member
 - d) Josh Jensen, Board Member
 - e) Chris Stolworthy, Board Member
 - 2) Additional Representatives/Guests:
 - a) MVFD Chief Stephen Neel
 - b) MVFD Assistant Chief Brian Young
 - c) MVFD Executive Assistant Samantha Empey
- E. Discussion & Possible Action: ***Adoption of the agenda as posted.***

Judy Metz motions to adopt the agenda as posted, Josh Jensen seconds the motion. All in favor, none opposed. Motion was passed.

II. PUBLIC COMMENT

- Chief Neel read letters from community members unable to attend the meeting. Letters from Kelcey Trigg, Anna Livingston (King), Gregory Johnson, Koby Hughes, Gabriel May, and Matthew Weise are included at the end of the minutes.
- **Andrea Smith (Station 72):** Expressed concern about the wildland program affecting valley coverage and suggested finding moderation.
- **Janell Foster (Station 73):** Submitted a letter read during the meeting, included at the end of the minutes.
- **Ryan Maffia (Station 74):** Supported the wildland program but suggested shifting from volunteer roles to paid personnel to address coverage issues.

MOAPA VALLEY FIRE DISTRICT

MEETING MINUTES

Monday, September 9, 2024 Location: MVFD Headquarters

- **Dylan House (Station 74):** Shared his positive experiences with the wildland program, emphasizing its value for gaining knowledge and experience. Voiced strong support for the program.
- **Otto Foster (Station 73):** Voiced concerns about potential coverage gaps caused by wildland deployments and recommended an audit to ensure adequate valley coverage.
- **Bret Empey (Station 74):** Supported the wildland program, stating that many members involved in wildland deployments would not otherwise be district members, minimizing concerns about coverage gaps.
- **Chairman Davis:** Ended public comment, noting that most comments were unrelated to the agenda item. Emphasized the meeting's focus on whether Chief Neel or paid personnel should deploy for wildland fires and acknowledged confusion surrounding the wildland program.

III. ADMINISTRATIVE ACTION

A. Discussion & Possible Action: ***Approval of June 2024 minutes***

- There is uncertainty regarding whether a three-bay or eight-bay garage was approved in the capital outlay. Samantha Empey will review previous meeting recordings to confirm. This item is tabled until the next meeting.

IV. GENERAL BUSINESS

A. Discussion & Possible Action: ***MVFD Chief Performing Wildland Deployments***

- **Chairman Davis:** Added this item to the agenda. Previous meetings addressed Chief Neel's workload, leading to the hiring of Assistant Chief Brian Young. Emphasized the importance of hiring full-time personnel to serve the community. Opened discussion to board members.
- **Judy Metz:** Expressed concerns about full-time personnel deploying for wildland fires, stating the Assistant Chief was hired due to Chief Neel's overwhelming workload. Wants more education on the wildland program to make an informed decision.
- **Chris Stolworthy:** Acknowledged the validity of both perspectives. Supports personnel gaining experience through wildland deployments but stressed the importance of maintaining district coverage.
- **Josh Jensen:** Asked about the frequency of wildland fires (99 in 2019, decreasing in subsequent years due to fire mitigation) and medical calls

MOAPA VALLEY FIRE DISTRICT

MEETING MINUTES

Monday, September 9, 2024 Location: MVFD Headquarters

(approximately 800 annually). Advocates prioritizing medical responses over wildland deployments and believes paid personnel should not deploy.

- **Chief Young:** Stated the need for better board education on the wildland program. Highlighted efforts to strengthen medical readiness and daily call coverage. Proposed a training session for the board. Explained that most personnel deploying for wildland fires meet only the minimum service requirements and are not daily responders.
- **Chief Neel:** Clarified that his one wildland deployment was managed with proper district coverage. He worked remotely while deployed and emphasized the importance of gaining wildland experience as a Fire Management Officer. Stated that his workload has significantly decreased since hiring Chief Young.
- **Judy Metz:** Raised concerns about Chief Neel's workload and its impact on his family.
- **Gene Houston:** Supports limited wildland deployments for paid personnel to gain necessary experience.
- **Chairman Davis & Chief Neel:** Reviewed the history of the wildland program and response statistics, highlighting the impact of seasonal differences.
- **Chief Young:** Emphasized MVFD's strong focus on EMS training and coverage, highlighting efforts aligned with his role as Assistant Chief of EMS, which is his primary responsibility.
- **Chief Neel and Board Members:** Chief Neel mentioned having letters from fire chiefs, wardens, and forestry officials to share regarding wildfires. Chair Davis and Judy Metz expressed that reading the letters was unnecessary at this time, as the board lacks sufficient knowledge to make an informed decision. The board agreed that a single meeting is insufficient to address the complexity of the issue and proposed scheduling a training or presentation for further education. Regardless, two letters were read by Chief Neel and are included at the end of these minutes.
- **Chair Davis:** tabled this agenda item and requested that it be placed as an action item on the next agenda.

V. FINANCES

A. Discussion & Review: ***FY24 Budget***

MOAPA VALLEY FIRE DISTRICT

MEETING MINUTES

Monday, September 9, 2024 Location: MVFD Headquarters

- Discussed capital outlay, C-Tax, bank account balances, wildland revenue, grant funding numbers, current purchase orders, and fiscal year 2025 budget plans.

VI. COMMENTS BY THE GENERAL PUBLIC

- **Rene Eastin (Station 73):** Highlighted her extensive volunteer work and expressed concerns about coverage gaps year-round, not just during wildland deployments. Emphasized the need for more training locally before deploying. Voiced feeling blindsided by discussions of hiring full-time wildland personnel, as she believes the program should remain a benefit for current members who have contributed significantly.
- **Max Robison (Station 73):** Noted a disconnect between the wildland program and the agenda topic but emphasized the program's value for gaining experience. Suggested additional training would be beneficial.
- **Andrew Bosch (Station 73):** Despite being in paramedic school and working full-time, he continues to run calls and support the schedule. Supports the wildland program but stresses the need for balance to incentivize members to stay back and cover calls. Highlighted challenges with volunteering and noted that some members meet minimum requirements primarily to participate in wildland deployments. Suggested efforts to close this gap.
- **Maggie Dronet (Station 74):** Recently moved from California and has witnessed the devastating impact of wildfires on lives and property. Expressed support for the wildland program and for Chief Neel deploying to gain the knowledge and experience needed to lead effectively.
- **Adam Smith (Station 72):** Highlighted communication as a key issue across all aspects and emphasized the need for improvement.

VII. REPORTS

A. Chief Stephen Neel

- Awarded SAMHSA grant.
- Approved by SNHD for a new medication to stop internal bleeding.
- Addressing two inverter fires with mitigation measures.
- Ordered fuel tanks for apparatus and emergency management.
- EMS Supervisors appointed; training scheduled.
- Implementing a 90-day stipend trial funded by a grant.
- Purchased a turnout extractor.
- Launched a new orientation program.

MOAPA VALLEY FIRE DISTRICT MEETING MINUTES

Monday, September 9, 2024 Location: MVFD Headquarters

- B. Assistant Chief Brian Young
 - Launched monthly community CPR program
 - Bottle of Life program
 - With the SAMHSA grant, can hire a community outreach paramedic
 - Looking for a grant for community access AEDs
 - Attending the upcoming EMS Expo
- C. Moapa Station 72 Battalion Chief Adam Smith
 - Has been appointed Chief of Fire Training
 - Station 72 is doing well
- D. Logandale Station 73 Chief Neel
 - No new updates
- E. Overton Station 74 Battalion Chief Dylan House
 - Members have been averaging 35 hours per month
 - Seeing an increase of member involvement in station maintenance
- F. Board Member Report and General Comments:
 - **Judy Metz:** Voiced frustration with how the meeting unfolded, beginning with letters unrelated to the agenda item, which created unnecessary tension. Noted that many letter writers appeared misinformed about the agenda topic. Emphasized that public comments should pertain to agenda items. Addressed concerns from members about the lack of a safe, anonymous way to voice concerns about leadership without fear of retaliation, suggesting the need for an alternative feedback avenue.

VIII. SETTING OF NEXT MEETING

- A. Next meeting is set for:
**Monday, December 2, 2024 @6:00 p.m. MVFD
Headquarters. 3570 Lyman St, Logandale, NV 89021.**

IX. ADJOURNMENT

Joe Davis motions to adjourn. Judy Metz seconds the motion. All in favor, none opposed. Motion was passed.