

# MINUTES

## ORANGE COUNTY FIRE AUTHORITY

**Board of Directors Regular Meeting**  
**Thursday, February 22, 2024**  
**6:00 P.M.**

**Regional Fire Operations and Training Center**  
Board Room  
1 Fire Authority Road  
Irvine, CA 92602

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### CALL TO ORDER

A regular meeting of the Orange County Fire Authority Board of Directors was called to order on February 22, 2024, at 6:01 p.m. by Chair O'Neill.

### INVOCATION

The Invocation was led by Chaplain Kent Kraning

### PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Director Traut led the assembly in the Pledge of Allegiance.

### ROLL CALL

John O'Neill, Garden Grove, Chair  
Phil Bacerra, Santa Ana  
Chris Duncan, San Clemente  
Mike Frost, Dana Point  
Beth Haney, Yorba Linda  
Noel Hatch, Laguna Woods  
Joe Kalmick, Seal Beach  
Austin Lombard, Tustin  
Chi Charlie Nguyen, Westminster  
Bob Ruesch, Mission Viejo  
Joshua Sweeney, Laguna Hills  
Connor Traut, Buena Park

Troy Bourne, San Juan Capistrano, Vice Chair  
Ross Chun, Aliso Viejo  
Katrina Foley, County of Orange  
Carol Gamble, Rancho Santa Margarita  
Shelley Hasselbrink, Los Alamitos  
Kelly Jennings, Laguna Niguel  
Tammy Kim, Irvine  
Vince Rossini, Villa Park  
Nitesh Patel, La Palma  
Dave Shawver, Stanton  
Mark Tettermer, Lake Forest

**Absent:** Anne Mallari, Cypress

Donald P. Wagner, County of Orange

### Also present were:

Fire Chief Brian Fennessy  
Deputy Chief TJ McGovern  
Assistant Chief Lori Smith  
Assistant Chief Jim Ruane  
Director of Communications Matt Olson  
General Counsel David Kendig

Deputy Chief Lori Zeller  
Assistant Chief Robert Cortez  
Assistant Chief Rob Capobianco  
Assistant Chief Stephanie Holloman  
Clerk of the Authority Maria D. Huizar

## REPORTS

### A. Report from Budget and Finance Committee

Budget and Finance Committee Chair Bourne reported at its February 14, 2024, meeting, the Committee by a unanimous vote recommended forwarding the Annual Grant Priorities for 2024 to the Board of Directors for approval. The Committee also reviewed the Prefunding of CIP Projects Policy Review Process – B&FC Recommendation for Board Consideration. By a unanimous vote, the Committee recommended forwarding the item for Board approval and adoption of the proposed draft policy language changes to the Fiscal Stability Budget Policy, to formalize the prefunding of CIP regional assets, specifically for the future replacement of helicopters. Lastly, the Committee held its annual election of both the Chair and Vice Chair, electing Director Lumbard as Vice Chair of the Committee, and Director Bourne as Chair for the ensuing year.

### B. Report from the Fire Chief

Fire Chief Fennessy began his report thanking all for their support in text messages, emails, cards, and telephone calls received before, during and after his surgery. He noted his diagnosis was shared in order to magnify the resources available to OCFA employees. He also presented the EMS calls data noting in 2023 there were more than 132,000 EMS calls. He shared a story of a recent cardiac arrest patient, where CPR and cardiac defibrillation restarted his heart, ultimately saving a life. He complimented OCFA professional staff as they remain on the forefront of EMS services, providing a video interview with firefighter paramedic Dawn Hazard, who also serves as OCFA's EMS Services and Supply Equipment Coordinator. He reported on the lifesaving actions of our firefighters with an infant transport warming mattress, which prevents loss of neonatal body heat during transport preventing cold stress and hypothermia. Chief Fennessy stated there is a need for residents to prepare for the significant rainstorms projected to hit the communities OCFA serves. He shared a video illustrating swift water rescues that occur during severe storm systems. He concluded with the OCFA Strategic Goals, FY 23-24 – Second Quarter Update.

## PUBLIC COMMENTS (FILE 11.11)

Duke Steppe, President, OCFA Management Association (OCFAMA), welcomed new Directors Beth Haney and Mike Frost; shared appreciation with the Board of Directors for their work with the various labor negotiations in 2023, and for Past Chair Rossini's contribution and involvement in moving negotiations forward bringing the OCFAMA Memorandum of Understanding to completion. Additional thanks to Local 3631, Chief Officers Association, Executive Management Team, and Fire Chief Fennessy for their support and leadership.

Director Duncan recognized Assistant Chief Lori Smith's staff; Assistant Fire Marshal Ryan Aloï, Assistant Fire Marshal Antonio Solares, and Fire Prevention Specialist Eric Gomez for their excellent service to the city of San Clemente.

## 1. PRESENTATIONS (FILE 11.09)

- A. Clerk of the Authority Huizar administered the Oath of Office to newly appointed Director Beth Haney, representing the city of Yorba Linda.
- B. Chair O'Neill and Fire Chief Fennessy presented former Chair Rossini an award in recognition of his past year of distinguished service as Chair in 2023.

Chris Hamm, President of Local 3631, praised Past Board Chair Rossini's leadership and thanked him for his service in 2023.

## 2. CONSENT CALENDAR

On motion of Director Duncan, and second by Vice Chair Bourne, approved 23-0 Agenda Item Nos. 2A, 2C-2D, (Directors Mallari and Wagner absent). Agenda Item No. 2B was pulled for separate consideration.

### A. Minutes for the Board of Directors Meeting (FILE 11.06)

The record will show that any Director not in attendance at the meeting of the Minutes will be registered as an abstention, unless otherwise indicated.

Action: Approve the Minutes for the January 25, 2024, Regular Meeting as submitted.

### B. Annual Grant Priorities for 2024 (FILE 11.10G)

Director Gamble pulled this item for separate consideration.

Assistant Chief Cortez provided a summary of the staff report.

Chris Hamm, President Local 3631, spoke in support of inclusion of Engine 45 city of Rancho Santa Margarita, and Engine 46 city of Stanton, in the Staffing for Adequate Fire & Emergency Response (SAFER) Grant Program request to provide the proper staffing needed to both stations. He noted grant funding sources are not always reinstated and encouraged board members to reach out to their federal elected officials to ensure continued funding of this particular grant.

Brief discussion ensued.

By motion of Director Gamble and second by Director Duncan, approved unanimously 23-0 (Directors Mallari and Wagner absent) to add Station 45 and 46 to the list for evaluation asking staff to return the item to the Board before the final grant letter submission is made.

Director Shawver requested staff provide the cost of personnel that is not covered by the grant.

Director Chun asked staff provide to Board Members the language used in letters directed to congressional representatives for funding of OCFA grant priorities.

**C. Award of Public Works Contract for RFOTC Training Grounds Modifications and Upgrades (FILE 19.07B25)**

Action:

1. Accept Neuroth Construction, Inc. bid dated December 7, 2023.
2. Approve and award the public works contract to Neuroth Construction, Inc. in the amount of \$2,347,227.
3. Approve the plans and specifications for the Training Grounds Modifications and Upgrades at the OCFA RFOTC, as included in the contract.

**D. Award of Public Works Contract for Fire Station 41 Airfield Modifications (FILE 19.07C41)**

Action:

1. Accept J&L Constructors, Inc. bid dated January 11, 2024.
2. Approve and award the public works contract to J&L Constructors, Inc. in the amount of \$790,000.
3. Approve the plans and specifications for the airfield modifications OCFA Fire Station 41, as included in the contract.

**3. DISCUSSION CALENDAR**

**A. Prefunding of CIP Projects Policy - B&FC Review Process and Recommendation for Board Consideration (FILE 11.13)**

Assistant Chief Cortez presented the Prefunding of CIP Projects Policy – B&FC Review Process and Recommendation for Board Consideration.

Discussion ensued.

On a friendly motion of Director Gamble and second by Director Bacerra, and by a unanimous roll call vote approved 23-0 (Directors Mallari and Wagner absent) to pause consideration of the item, to provide for General Counsel’s legal review of the OCFA Joint Power’s Agreement of the disposition of the money in prefunded Capital account in the event of withdrawal of a member agency or termination of the JPA; returning this item for further discussion of the Board at a future meeting.

**RECESSED TO CLOSED SESSION**

General Counsel Kendig reported the Board would convene in Closed Session to consider item CS2 as it appears on the agenda with consultation with its labor negotiator’s Assistant Chief Stephanie Holloman and Deputy Chief Lori Zeller.

**CS1. CONFERENCE WITH LEGAL COUNSEL - SIGNIFICANT EXPOSURE TO LITIGATION** pursuant to paragraph (2) and (3) of subdivision (d) of Section 54956.9 of the Government Code: One (1) Case

**CS2. CONFERENCE WITH LABOR NEGOTIATORS** pursuant to Government Code Section 54957.6

Negotiators: Peter Brown, Liebert Cassidy Whitmore; Stephanie Holloman, Assistant Chief/Human Resources Director and Lori Zeller, Deputy Chief/ Administration & Support Bureau

Employee Organizations: Orange County Professional Firefighters Association, IAFF - Local 3631

**RECONVENED TO OPEN SESSION**

**CLOSED SESSION REPORT**

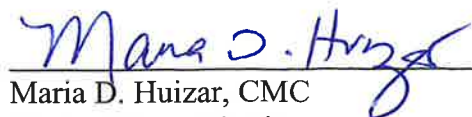
General Counsel Kendig stated there was no reportable action.

**BOARD MEMBER COMMENTS**

Director Rossini thanked Fire Chief Fennessy, praised Chair O’Neill in his service as the Vice Chair in 2023, and continued with thanking the Board Members, executive staff, the rank and file, leaders of the respective unions, and the entire OCFA family for making last year’s Board Meetings efficient and effortless. He noted he was very honored to be a part of last year’s success.

Director Chun expressed gratitude to Deputy Chief Zeller for meeting with him to discuss the renewal of the Joint Powers Agreement. He appreciated the time and thorough explanation.

**ADJOURNMENT** – Chair O’Neill adjourned the meeting at 8:58 p.m. The next meeting of the Orange County Fire Authority Board of Directors will be on Thursday, March 28, 2024, at 6:00 p.m.

  
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Maria D. Huizar, CMC  
Clerk of the Authority