

Measure P Oversight Committee Meeting Minutes

October 10, 2017

The Measure P Oversight Committee Meeting was called to order by Fire Chief Tim Marrison at the hour of 5:30 p.m. at Los Banos Fire Station No. 1, 333 7th Street, Los Banos, CA.

Committee Members and staff present: Mark Bodley; Gerry Giesel; Eric Popish; Richard Stewart; Diana Thurston; Tim Marrison, Fire Chief; Gary Brizzee, Police Chief; Mason Hurley, Assistant Fire Chief; Kim Tomas, Accounting & Budget Supervisor; Sonya Williams, Finance Director; and Mary Lou Gilardi, Administrative Coordinator.

Chief Marrison welcomed everyone and started the meeting off by stating that we had a quorum and that it would be a quick meeting. He also indicated that it was being called for kind of selfish reasons which he would explain later in the meeting. He indicated that he would be retiring effective October 27th, and he didn't want to retire without talking to the Measure P Committee. He also stated that he didn't advise the committee at their last meeting because he hadn't talked with the City Manager or his department yet.

Agenda Item I

Chief Marrison introduced Kim Tomas, Accounting & Budget Supervisor for the City to review the Preliminary 4th Quarter Report with the Committee.

Kim Tomas advised that the 4th Quarter Report was a preliminary report as we were just getting ready to start our audit for the FY 16-17. The revenue in this preliminary report is showing collected only through May because the State is always behind in sending us our money. If you look at revenues, this report indicates we are only at 91% because we have at least one more payment that is due to come in. Our expenditures are slightly under, but as stated, when this report was done, we were still paying expenditures for the FY 16-17. Our interest earnings are outperforming what we had expected. Most everything else is on target. Kim explained that staffing expenditures for Fire are slightly higher due to the strike teams that have gone out. However, the corresponding revenue that comes in for these strike teams is listed under Misc Revenues under the Fire Section which is around \$39,627. Kim touched on the cash and fund balance indicating that the fund balances don't change with the exception of the cash because our fund balance doesn't change until we're done with all of our revenues and expenditures for the year. You'll see those changes in the 1st Quarter Report for FY 17-18.

Chief Brizzee asked if Kim could explain the cash and fund balances in more detail.

Kim explained that the \$1.6 million is the total fund balance, with \$1.5 for building and \$152,104 for MDCs. She explained that the regular fund balance was utilized for staffing with the passage of Measures A & K. These numbers will change in the 1st Quarter Report for FY 17-18 because we will have all of our revenues and expenditures in.

Committee Member Diana Thurston asked a question in regard to Item C – The hiring of 1 community service officer in year 1. She wanted to know if this was the person who helps the animal control officer.

Kim explained that this person was the CSO that was hired in year 1 of the Ordinance when this first went into effect. She explained that the animal shelter is paid out of the Code Enforcement Department (General Fund); it does not come from Measure P funding.

Diana explained that someone had brought her a question about personnel for the Animal Control Division. She inquired as to whom she would speak to about this issue.

Chief Brizzee advised Diana that she could speak to him about this matter.

Since there were no other questions, Committee Member Mark Bodley indicated that this 4th Quarter Report was preliminary and didn't see the need to approve it until they received the Final 4th Quarter Report.

Chief Marrison indicated that we would change this item to an informational item only until the Final Report is received.

Chief Marrison advised that the City is having a consultant review our current development impact fees structure and what we charge for new buildings being built. There may be an adjustment on that as well depending on what they find. You'll hear more about that when the consultant comes forward with a plan on what fees to implement. Workshops will be held to get the community's input.

Agenda Item II

Chief Marrison explained that the Training Tower behind Station 1 is on standby; however, the fueling facility is moving forward. An RFP has been released to get contractor's lined up to pour concrete which will include the fueling facility; it will also include the lights being installed so that we can use the new concrete for training. We have ADA issues for both Station 1 and Station 2. These issues will also be addressed in this RFP. This is both impact fees and general fund money. It doesn't affect Measure P funding at all, but the reason Chief Marrison brought this up was because this project was originally Measure P funded and that is why Chief Marrison wanted to update the committee on this project. Hopefully we'll get good contractor participation and have this built in the next 5 – 6 months. Once this project is complete, we'll have a well-lit area to use for training as well as a parking lot.

We are still hopeful that the property on Gilbert Gonzalez Jr. Drive becomes permanent property of the City of Los Banos. Then Station 3 and the Training Tower will be located on that piece of property. It's big enough to accommodate that plus future growth. Maybe someday in the future the Police and Fire can work on a Public Safety Repair Facility being located out there for Police and Fire vehicles.

It was inquired about the City owning that property. Finance Director Sonya Williams explained that the property was owned by the City, but it was solely in the name of the RDA, and with the dissolution of the RDA, the City is now trying to work this out with the Department of Finance.

Committee Member Giesel had concern about having a training area behind Station 1 and someday building a Training Tower and having a training center at a future Station 3. Chief Marrison explained that the RFP would put concrete out back, install the lights that we had previously purchased, and add a canopy over the fuel. We will be able to do a lot of training after this is complete. We will be able to train in a well-lit area behind Station 1. In the future, Station 3 will be for all the big trainings and Station 1 will be used for simple trainings. Chief Marrison would also like to see canopies installed someday in the back of the property for the trailers, etc.

Agenda Item III

Asst. Chief Hurley gave the update on the Mobile Data Computers. He explained that the six new MDCs is complete and very close to being fully operational. IT has been working very hard to tie all the mapping and new technology together. Hopefully, within the next few weeks, everything will be up and running. The IT Department has suggested the use of cellular network connections to replace the 800 MHz system (Gobi Cards). We would like to move forward with the new Gobi Cards for 4 of the 6 units (two front-line Engines and the two command units).

Agenda Item IV

Asst. Chief Hurley explained that with the installation of the new MDCs and the upgrade from the 800 MHz to the Gobi Cards (cellular connection), there will be a monthly cost for the cellular internet connections. The cost for all four devices is approximately \$160 per month. We have the funds budgeted for this year as part of the install of getting everything up and running, but we need the Measure P Committee to authorize the use of funds annually to cover the cost of the Gobi cards for the 4 units.

Committee Member Bodley asked if we wanted to put the cellular internet connectivity in the other two units. Asst. Chief Hurley replied not at this point. He explained how the 800 MHz works for what we do right now. Chief Marrison explained that the two front line engines and the two command vehicles are always staffed by career firefighters so they will be the Incident Commander at any large fires. The other two units that we installed are units that will be typically driven by a volunteer firefighter. They are not usually the Incident Commanders. Chief Marrison also stated that in the cash and fund

balance – Measure P’s \$294,029 has been put aside every year for items just like this. This is part of the cycle that Measure P was designated to do.

Committee Member Giesel stated that he considers this an on-going operational expense.

Police Chief Brizzee stated that the Police Department has the very same expense taken out of Measure P for the maintenance of their system.

Committee Member Thurston agreed that this is something that falls within the guidelines of Measure P.

Chief Marrison believes that the \$100,000 annually put aside for MDC maintenance truly was designed to install and maintain that system. We actually put away a lot more than what we need to maintain our system. If the committee doesn’t agree with that, then you’ll have to vote on it.

Committee Member Giesel stated that if we are using Measure P Funds to cover for the Police Department right now, we need to continue to cover for the Fire Department.

Finance Director Sonya Williams read from the Measure P – It is to fund additional technology equipment and vehicle upgrades. She feels it’s within the guidelines of Measure P.

Chief Brizzee spoke a little bit about the 800 MHz system, and how the department outgrew that technology a few years ago.

After a lengthy discussion, it was moved by Committee Member Mark Bodley, seconded by Committee Member Diana Thurston, to approve the use Measure P Funds to maintain the cellular internet communication connectivity for four (4) new MDCs and in future budget years. Motion carried unanimously.

Chief Marrison thanked the Committee for approving that, and he also indicated that he appreciates the questions that the Committee Members ask. Don’t ever think that you should feel bad about challenging us on something. That’s what you are here for.

Agenda Item V

Chief Marrison asked if we could add an item to the agenda just for information only. Chief Marrison wanted to advise everyone on the committee that we have two members whose terms will be ending at the end of this year: Diana Thurston and Rhonda Rusk. Rhonda Rusk has indicated that she does not wish to seek reappointment. Chief Marrison wanted to remind Diana that her term will expire at the end of this year. Diana Thurston asked what she needed to do to be reappointed. Chief Marrison encouraged her to file an application at City Hall. Also, Eric Popish has submitted a letter that he will be resigning as he will be relocating out of town.

Eric indicated that his plans to relocate were accelerated from his original time line. He will be relocating by the end of the year.

Chief Marrison explained that we would accept the resignation of Committee Member Eric Popish effective December 1, 2017. He thanked Eric for stepping up and filling the position.

STAFF MEMBER REPORTS:

Chief Brizzee gave an update about being fully staffed; however that includes the two officers who were shot. He gave an update on both officers and their progress.

We have a couple of other injured officers. We are down about 6 employees right now. Code Enforcement is doing what they can. On a good note, one of the officers that we lost to the City of Merced has returned to City of Los Banos. Chief Brizzee stated that he appreciates all the hard work that Chief Marrison has put into this fire department and the City. He thanked him and wished him well on his retirement.

Chief Brizzee also wished Committee Member Eric Popish well in this new phase of his life.

Chief Marrison advised the committee that we have another engine in Santa Rosa on a Strike Team assignment. It seems like every couple of weeks this year we were requested to send an engine somewhere. We had an engine gone for three weeks down in Tulare County; returned two weeks ago, and now we are in Santa Rosa battling that wind driven fire. Committee members inquired as to what may have caused those Northern California fires. Chief explained that fires are hard to fight with winds such as those. Chief spoke with our crew today, winds were a little calmer. We're really hoping we get those guys back soon. We are having a brutal time with staffing. We have two guys out on injury; one guy is going through some cancer treatments so he is unavailable for any out of county assignments. We have three guys on the OES Engine, so it has been really difficult to staff our stations. We also have to deal with a couple guys who have paid for vacations that have been scheduled for quite some time, and two of our guys just lost their grandmother this week. It makes it difficult to staff our stations during fire season with everything going on.

Tim also stated that our call volume continues to go up every year by at least 200 to 300 calls and with that comes more structure fires, and the County is in the same boat. They are experiencing higher call volumes, more structure fires, and since 1966 we've had a Mutual Aid Agreement with the County where if they get overwhelmed with a situation, they can call us and they reciprocate. We have an agreement, where they come to our fires upon request. We've wanted to do this for sometime; and on October 18th it will go before City Council for approval. We are going to add an Automatic Aid Component to our Mutual Aid Agreement; we will still go within approximately a 5-mile radius of the City to help the County in Mutual Aids; however, if there is a confirmed structure fire, we would be dispatched immediately to the call if the City Council approves it. Or if the City has a confirmed structure fire within the City, the County

would be dispatched immediately. It gives the dispatcher the authority to dispatch the agency that would be offering the mutual aid, and saving the time for the responding agency to get out on scene and evaluate the situation and request mutual aid. That will dramatically help the response time for the agency that is providing the service. This is something that should have happened a long time ago. Our ISO rating has suffered because we haven't had an Auto-Aid component. This will help us achieve a better ISO rating.

Chief Marrison explained that he didn't announce to the Measure P Committee at their last meeting about his retirement because he did not let his firefighters know or the City Manager or the City Council. Tim indicated that he's known he was going to retire now for the last 28 years. It's always been part of his plan to work 29 years and then convert his sick time into service credit and retire with 30 years of service. He explained how he and his wife started looking at what will be happening between now and June 2018, when he originally planned on retiring, and with everything going on with his family life, he decided to retire in October so he's not staying to work and then taking off several weeks of vacation for various events. Chief Marrison will retire with 29 ½ years of service once the sick leave is converted to service credit. He explained that he wouldn't change anything that he has done with his life/career. He was able to serve the community that he grew up in, which was very important to him. This job has allowed him to give back to the community in more ways than he could've ever imagined. It has been quite the experience for him. Chief Marrison went on to tell the Measure P Committee that he has a lot of respect for the committee; they volunteer their time to help this Measure P Committee. If it weren't for Measure P funding, our Fire Department would be in a serious state of failure. Between the call volume we run and the different services that we provide to this community, we would not be able to provide 1/3 of what we do without those Measure P employees. The financial situation when it comes to PERS is looking very bleak. It's going to be tough, but without Measure P, it would be catastrophic. He advised the committee members that they are the guardians of Measure P. Tim encouraged the committee members to be engaged and ask the tough questions, and continue to be good citizens and help the public safety departments. His plan is to take a few months off; however, there has been a lot of interesting offers that have come his way lately. He's very excited to see what the future holds.

Our City Manager has seen the importance of keeping our Fire Chief local and within the Department. The Fire Chief and Asst. Fire Chief have to be willing to dedicate their lives to this Department in order to keep this Volunteer and Career Department successful. The City Manager has announced that Mason Hurley will be the next Fire Chief. Mason's badge pinning will take place on November 1st at the City Council Meeting. Chief Marrison encouraged the committee to attend the badge pinning as it is a very special time for Mason and his family.

Agenda Item VI

Committee Member Reports:

Committee Member Thurston expressed her happiness for Chief Marrison, and indicated that she has been very proud to be a part of Measure P.

Committee Member Stewart shared a story of when Chief Marrison came over while he was off duty to help him complete something that needed to be done.

Chief Hurley thanked the Committee for their service. He also stated that Tim will be missed. Tim has been a mentor and a role model to Mason. He expressed his excitement about moving forward. If there is ever any question, please feel free to contact me.

Committee Member Giesel thanked Chief Marrison for his service to the Community. He wished him best of luck in the future. He also wished Mason good luck.

Finance Director Williams congratulated Chief Marrison on his retirement and Chief Hurley on his promotion to Chief.

Accounting & Budget Supervisor Tomas congratulated Chief Marrison on his retirement. She also congratulated Mason on his new position, and reminded him that the Finance Department is there to help the Police and Fire Department with anything they need.

Committee Member Popish explained that he met Tim when he joined the Fire Department. He indicated that he has become very good friends with Tim, and he has a lot of respect for Chief Marrison. He congratulated Tim and Mason.

Committee Member Bodley stated that he was envious of Tim retiring at such a young age. Congratulations to both Tim and Mason.

Chief Marrison advised that the History Book is complete. It is available to be purchased here at the Fire Department. They are for sale for \$50.

There being no further business, it was moved by Committee Member Thurston, seconded by Committee Member Popish to adjourn the meeting at 6:33 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Tim Marrison
Fire Chief