

**MORONGO VALLEY COMMUNITY SERVICES DISTRICT BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

11207 OCOTILLO STREET. MORONGO VALLEY, CA 92256

**REGULAR BOARD MEETING MINUTES**

6:00 p.m. Regular Business

**March 15, 2023**

Covington Park – MPR  
11165 Vale Drive  
Morongo Valley, CA 92256

<https://morongocsd.specialdistrict.org/>

This Board Meeting will take place in person at the Covington Park MPR, located at the address above. As a convenience to the public, the meeting will be livestreamed for those who wish to observe remotely. Please note that due to the in-person meeting format and technical limitations, members of the public will only be able to provide public comment in person. Please also note that in the event of technical issues that disrupt the meeting livestream, the meeting will continue.

Meeting Livestream VIA Zoom ID: 506 966 7982 Passcode: 629875

*The Morongo Valley Community Services District complies with the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990. If you require special assistance to attend or participate in this meeting, please call (760) 363-6454. Materials related to any items on this agenda submitted to the Board after distribution of the agenda packet are available for public inspection during normal business hours at the CSD Main Office, 11207 Ocotillo Street, Morongo Valley, CA 92256.*

**A. CALL TO ORDER**

The Regular Board Meeting of March 15, 2023, was called to order at 6:07 PM.

**B. ROLL CALL**

1. Jennifer Henning, President - Present
2. James Ronald Whitney, Vice President - Present
3. Jonny Tolbert, Director - Present
4. Christina Gorke, Director - Present
5. Michael Emory, Director - Present

**C. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

Chief Brakebill leads.

**D. PRESENTATIONS**

**Samuel Martinez, Executive Officer, LAFCO for San Bernardino County**

*LAFCO 101: A brief introduction to our Local Agency Formation Commission for San Bernardino County.*

**E. PUBLIC COMMENTS**

The Board of Directors now takes time to consider your comments on items which are on the agenda. The President will recognize you at the appropriate time to assist in the orderly and timely conduct of the meeting. When called upon to speak, please state your name and residence. Comments will be

limited to three (3) minutes or less for both agenda items and non-agenda items. If you wish to comment on an agenda item or non-agenda item during Public Comment, or raise your hand. In addition, members of the public may submit comments electronically prior to the meeting using the form on the District's website. The President will recognize all electronic comments submitted at least 48 hours prior to the meeting either by reading the comment(s) at the meeting or noting on the record that comments were received and provided to the Board at or before the meeting.

**Alex Segrest**  
**Shawna Johnson**  
**Gary Newhouse**  
**Karen Lowe**  
**Arthur A Ayala**  
**Nancy Steinfelot**  
**Jan Lundquist**  
**Dr. Yerman**  
**Chuck Greenwood**  
**Richard Johnson**  
**Eva Rowles**  
**Leslie Fisher**  
**Olia Sather**  
**Vanessa Wruble**  
**Eric Weston**  
**Jeordyn Diesel**  
**Jessica VonDerAhe**  
**Linda Christian**  
**Sabrina Matthews**  
**Jeannie May**  
**Janet Osborne**  
**Lynn Watts**  
**Autumn Anderson**  
**Rosemary Mallut**  
**Otter Smith**  
**Lisa Black**  
**Ted Wright**  
**Pam Larkin**

#### **F. APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA**

The Board generally considers items in the order listed on the agenda. However, items may be considered in any order as established by the direction of the Board. Under certain circumstances, new agenda items may be added by a two-thirds vote of the Board. [Gov. Code Sec. 54954.2(b)(2)]

1. Agenda for the Regular Board Meeting of March 15, 2023.

**MOTION:** Vice President Whitney motioned to approve the agenda of the Regular Board Meeting of March 15, 2023.

**SECOND:** Director Tolbert.

**RESULT:** Motion passes 5/0 vote.

## **G. AGENCY REPORTS**

### **1. Sheriff's Report – San Bernardino County Sheriff's Representative**

Sheriff Scalise reported Operation Dust Devil has ended. However, Captain Warrick has set aside funds to continue off-road enforcement. Operation Consequences is still going on which is a problem-oriented policing project that the county and sheriff Dicus have put in place to focus on specific problems and specific areas. Morongo Valley is not one of those problem areas. The station has received 7 additional deputies after being short-staffed due to covid expect an increase in patrols. In regard to the catalytic converter thefts, there is 1 in custody.

### **2. General Manager/Fire Chief Report – James Brakebill**

Chief Brakebill started with the emergency service report, 1 structure fire, 31 EMS calls all requiring paramedics, 2 hazardous condition calls, 2 calls for general service, 3 good intent calls, and 1 false alarm for a total of 40 calls. Call volume for this area is increasing, we are 11% over what we were last year. Obtained a new OES type 6 Engine for the community at no cost. The strike team to help Big Bear and Running Springs just got back. The crew did refresher training with the wildland fire academy. Looking to change our medical director, we have 2 applicants. One is a medical director who serves Morongo basin ambulance. The other is the lead doctor at Loma Linda University Hospital. At the direction of the board, we have a brand-new phone system with Spectrum for \$30 more a month. CSD Information Technology System is in the process of updating because our current system is not compatible with the new phone system. Instead of spending money on brand new computers we are rebuilding our current computers.

### **3. Cash / Check Disbursements & Credit Card Purchases for January and February – Director Tolbert**

For the month of January, the CSD spent a total of \$74,677.57. That is \$32,982.40 less than the previous month. Bills outside of our normal monthly bills were \$6,356.39 to Allstar Fire Equipment (turnouts), \$2,691.38 to Bound Tree Medical (medical supplies), \$700.00 to Smith Marion & Co (state controller fee), \$650.00 to Brunick, McElhaney & Kennedy, And \$613.00 to Code R Decals & Graphics (patches), totaling \$11,010.77. That means our normal monthly bills were \$63,666.80. As of January 31<sup>st</sup>, we had \$623,646.89 in reserves. Currently, we use 6

accounts to hold our reserves. As of January 31<sup>st</sup>, we had \$385,912.70 in our bank account. For the month of February, the CSD spent a total of \$77,258.50. I know that is a different number than your cash disbursements. There is an amount on that report for a bill/check that has not been signed. It is on our agenda for our consideration tonight. That is \$2,580.93 more than the previous month. Bills outside of our normal monthly bills were \$3,301.10 to Bound Tree Medical (medical supplies), \$3,178.19 to Allstar Fire Equipment (turnout), \$1,600.00 to Brunick, McElhane & Kennedy, \$400.00 H&S Mobile Fire Equipment Repair (fuel leak), \$300.00 J.Edward Fire Protection (hood inspection), \$282.75 Pollion Electric (generator service), \$265.00 Schroder Plumbing (mainline breakage), \$125.00 Englander Investigations (background checks), \$110.00 to Vagabond Welding Supply (oxygen), \$100.00 to Steve Hayden S&C (emergency heat call), \$85.90 Ryan McEachen (home depot reimbursement), totaling \$9,747.95. That means our normal monthly bills were \$67,510.55. As of February 28<sup>th</sup>, we had \$623,646.89 in reserves. Currently, we use 6 accounts to hold our reserves.

#### **H. CONSENT CALENDAR**

Items on the consent calendar are routine matters or formal documents covering previous District Board instruction. Items may be acted on by one motion of the Board unless a Board Member requests a separate discussion and/or action on an item.

1. Minutes of the Regular Board Meeting of December 21, 2022.
2. Minutes of the Regular Board Meeting of January 18, 2023.
3. Minutes of the Special Board Meeting of February 2, 2023.
4. Minutes of the Special Board Meeting of February 23, 2023.

**MOTION:** Director Tolbert motioned to approve the following minutes as presented; Minutes of the Regular Board Meeting of December 21, 2022. And approve the following minutes with President Henning's corrections; Minutes of the Regular Board Meeting of January 18, 2023, Minutes of the Special Board Meeting of February 2, 2023, and Minutes of the Special Board Meeting of February 23, 2023.

**SECOND:** Vice President Whitney.

**RESULT:** Motion passes 5/0 vote.

#### **I. NEW BUSINESS**

1. **DISCUSS PRESENTING FIRE CHIEF BRAKEBILL WITH A PROCLAMATION FROM THE DISTRICT RECOGNIZING HIS PAST ACCOMPLISHMENTS RELATED TO HIS DUTIES AS FIRE CHIEF.**

The Board of Directors discussed presenting Chief Brakebill with a proclamation from the district recognizing his past accomplishments related to his duties as Fire Chief. Director Tolbert questioned why the proclamation was only for his position as fire chief and not

General Manager. Director Gorke expressed her concern saying it is an inappropriate time and this is just to save face with the community. After some deliberation, it was decided that the proclamation will be titled General Manager/Fire Chief.

**MOTION:** Vice President Whitney motioned for a proclamation to Chief Brakebill recognizing his duties as Fire Chief and General Manager.

**SECOND:** Director Tolbert.

**ROLE CALL:** Director Tolbert-Aye, Director Emory-Aye, President Henning-aye Vice President Whitney-Aye, Director Gorke-Nay.

**RESULTS:** Motion Passes 4/1.

2. **CALIFORNIA SPECIAL DISTRICTS ASSOCIATION (CSDA) WORKSHOP INVOICE AND CM ENGRAVERS INVOICE FOR PAST BOARD MEMBER RECOGNITION PLAQUE**

Two invoices were received for a workshop taken and a plaque ordered both by President Henning. It was expressed that President Henning was late registering for the CSDA workshop and was informed by Chief Brakebill that her ticket was paid for. President Henning, however, was unaware that individual classes were at a price. For the plaque, President Henning thought she was helping Chief Brakebill when she had gone away from policy and ordered a plaque for past board member Shawna Johnson. After some discussion, it was agreed that the board is to follow policy. The District will cover the cost of the plaques, President Henning is to cover the cost of her CSDA course.

**MOTION:** Vice President Whitney motioned that in the spirit of the plaques, of giving them to Shawna and to Kristina, as well as the conference with the exception of the one class that Jonny has referenced of \$225 be covered by the District.

**SECOND:** Director Emory.

**ROLE CALL:** Director Tolbert-Nay, Director Emory-Aye, President Henning-aye Vice President Whitney-Aye, Director Gorke-Aye.

**RESULT:** Motion passes 4/1.

3. **DISCUSS PAST LEGAL EXPENSES INCURRED BY THE MORONGO VALLEY CSD**

Vice President Whitney presented the public with the past aggregate legal expenses from the last five years and explained the many services that BB&K provides. Shawna Johnson commented that many of those expenses were from prior employees that were removed. Director Tolbert argued you cannot pick and choose certain events throughout the year. Director Tolbert continued by saying we do not need to spend \$9898 in six weeks for legal bills.

4. **PUBLIC REVIEW OF ENGAGEMENT LETTER FOR BB&K**

Director Tolbert asked for this to be put on the agenda for the public to review the engagement letters from BB&K after a vote on the January 18<sup>th</sup> meeting the engagement letter that was later provided to Chief Brakebill to sign was different than what was voted on. Director Tolbert also stated that the public was not provided with either of these letters

when the public has a right to know where their money is going. He provided a policy for the board to review which states the Board is to receive 3 bids.

**5. STATION 461 MOLD MITIGATION**

Air-tech a mold sampling company came out and found three types of molds were discovered inside the fire station bathrooms and kitchen the Board of Directors were provided with multiple bids including Flood Response, ServePro, and Delta Restoration.

**MOTION:** Vice President Whitney motioned that Chief Brakebill can broker this deal to mitigate anything and everything to do with the mold and ancillary problems in the kitchen, the two bathrooms including but not limited to the exhaust fans, the rental of a shower and unexpected or unknown surprises not to exceed an additional \$30,000.

**SECOND:** Director Tolbert.

**ROLE CALL:** Director Tolbert-Aye, Director Emory-Aye, President Henning-aye Vice President Whitney-Aye, Director Gorke-Aye.

**RESULT:** Motion passes 5/0.

**J. CONTINUED BUSINESS**

**1. DISCUSSION OF OVER-BUDGETED SPENDING EXCEEDING A QUARTER OF A MILLION DOLLARS (\$250,000) IN JUST SIX MONTHS (JULY 1 – DECEMBER 30, 2022).**

Director Tolbert explained how most of the overages were from the Board of Directors not being properly informed about maintenance and turnouts from the previous General Manager and are now playing catch up. It was discussed to having a budget workshop with Bonnie miller our Bookkeeper.

**2. MAINTENANCE PERSONNEL TRUCK USAGE**

Chief Brakebill informed the board of Directors of an old brush patrol vehicle that was sitting in our storage. After some discussion and some further information provided, including taking off all the lights and fire-related equipment, it was decided to retire the vehicle and use it as a new maintenance truck for staff.

**MOTION:** Director Tolbert motioned to retire the brush vehicle and move it to the park's maintenance vehicle.

**SECOND:** Director Emory.

**ROLE CALL:** Director Tolbert – Aye, Director Emory – Aye, President Henning – Aye, Vice President Whitney – Aye, Director Gorke – Aye.

**RESULT:** Motion passes 5/0.

**K. INDIVIDUAL DIRECTOR REPORTS**

**1. President Henning**

Buddy, you asked earlier why we are here so my why am I here is because I love this community. I had a choice yeah, I see when I came on this board back in January, I applied I saw things that I wanted I think I have a skill set to help address, I don't know if we can fix them, but I have the skill set that I could possibly help to address these things,

one of those things is the potholes, Olen last night talked about filing these himself. I know Jonny has said on so many occasions there is CALtrans. We are in District 8, District 8 is huge, and they don't care about us. But I'm doing research we might have inroads with them. So that's one of the little things. Another thing who said Hess, is that Hess goes to fast there's a safe route to school's programs. There's money out there that can address those speeding issues on Hess, I'm on Hess I want traffic to slow down. So these are just a few things that I know I wanted to try and bring to make where we live even better, because this place is amazing, the people here are amazing. I had a choice on where I live, we could have bought a home in Palm Springs very easily. We already owned property up here, we love it up here, we wanted to live here. And that's why we bought a house and put so much into it and this is my home. This is where I want to be. And someone had said earlier that they don't want this community to be a Palms Springs, well thank God because I don't either. I left Palms Springs, and I moved here because I love Morongo, I love so much about it. The preserve it goes on and on, the community, the new people here and this place where we live. That is why I am here, and I'm sorry that at this moment there are so many rumors, conspiracy theories, suspicions about why I'm here and there's so much ulterior motive. I don't have any ulterior motive, I have probably spent more vacation time and other time trying to get things done, address things, and hopefully answer some questions and put the truth out and squash some of these rumors and theories that are out there. I promise you there is no ulterior motives, and I would even say that I'm offering, I would love to meet with any of you that want to have a cup of coffee, have an ice cream cone, just have a chat and ask me questions directly, I will answer them. I would love for you to get a chance to know me, you know talk to me and if you want to yell at me, please yell at me. Tell me and give me an opportunity to answer those. That's all I ask. Rosemary Mallet had asked earlier what is your service to, my service is to this community, and making our home our group that we have here even better than it already is. And I want to get to know all of you better. I come from a family that is dedicated to service, people who have been public servants. And so many other things that are too long to list, I'm not going to bore you, it's late but I do want the chance to get to know so many of you, each and every one of you and I want you to get to know me, talk to me, ask me questions, give me the opportunity to answer you each back so that we could work together, I

want to work with everyone, I want us all to work together. And to answer your question I'm not resigning; I will not be resigning because I still think I have certain skill sets that are so freaking annoying especially when it comes to government type nonsense and bureaucracy that I know how to navigate and I kind of know how to maneuver around and I want to take those skill sets, those annoying habits and I want to go bug those people at CALtrans or county or wherever so that we can get what we have earned meaning tax dollars, safe routes to schools, whatever else is out there. I want us to have that, us the community. And that's it. I hope you take me up on my offer, and Shawna, I meant that you know I hope you call me, give me a time and just talk about the bills. And Suzanne, please if you want to have coffee and chat let's do it. Vanessa you to I met you once before and I still have to take you up on that. I'm sorry I don't remember all of your names but if you want to chat, I'll chat with you.

## 2. Vice President Whitney

In the last zoom and again in full transparency, my tone can come across as very robotic and apathetic at times which is why a lot of times, I make what I think is a funny joke or just lighten things up a little bit. I mentioned it in full transparency because somebody put in the chat something about my tone. I said for the record I'm on the spectrum so my tone sometimes I'm not really aware of it and in fact, Jen sits here next to me when she finds that I'm going off in a certain way she says I told her to say easy trigger she says I'm not saying trigger but ill say easy cowboy or something like that. It was not to have any empathy, nothing whatsoever except for transparency as to why you might see I do things a little bit differently. Somebody mentioned that they saw that I rock back and forth. If I were in a swivel chair id be going like this, my husband will tell you, we hold hands all the time because my fingers are always doing this until he squeezes them to say stop doing it. I'll do a circular motion that kind of thing, but one of my traits that you're going to see from me a lot is I get very fixated on something. I will beat that dead

horse over and over and over and so on that note, I want to throw out the misinformation that is still floating out there. I think a lot of it's been cleared up, but I just want to make sure. Again, I'm fixated that these rumors that are false are not still things that are being considered because if they are 100% untrue if they are just raise your hand and ill address it if we've moved beyond it, I'll just go on to the next one. There was a top 10 list that then became a top 13 list. The first one is that we want to fire the fire chief. anybody? The second is I want to incorporate Morongo Valley. All I want to do is this email, so the Chief asked me and Mike early on he said, listen guys I'm really excited now that the Fire Department and everything are set. And Chief if I'm putting words in your mouth correct them. He said you know throw with me the ideas that you have, really excited to get going. Well, again I'm the kind of guy now that every day I would want to send an email of ideas that I've got of things that we can start attacking. I tried to monitor and make it like every other day and Chief was getting them, I didn't know he was getting them, but he was actually doing things on his whiteboard and writing them down. He actually told me that he wrote something like incorporating Morongo Valley from my email. For the part I'm going to read, please forward me the positives and negatives so that we can assess and confirm that our current unincorporated status is best for our Morongo Valley residents as a proper and substantive analysis most likely has not been performed in quite some time. So, I knew nothing about special districts, incorporated towns, or incorporated cities. Jonny had accurately said you have to have at least 10,000 people but when I went online, I saw that there was a big bear lake that has 5,000 people. Needles has 4,000 and change it's an incorporated city, apparently, they changed the law that's why those are there. I asked about a little bit more to a former city manager of Palm Springs who knows our little town he said yeah you guys would have to have a police department and a whole bunch of other things it would never even make sense up here. I still

think and it might be years down the road to make sure that with the pass-throughs for property tax, I mean all the things were supposed to get 20 basis points I believe after property tax. I want to make sure that all of those I's are being dotted and all those T's are crossed and were getting as much as we should get because I heard through the grape vine that were not getting everything that we should be getting, and I don't know if its from the county. Jen and I have had some conversations about this but just as if I come onto a company as a CEO or President first thing, I do is to show them C Corp, S Corp, LOC, LLP is that's what's best for the shareholders. Here the very first thought is we are a special district is that what's best for my neighbors and how long ago was that analysis done. I was actually told I think it probably we don't even know; it would have been so long ago. First, I ask the analysts and I do stochastics which are relative strength charts and trend lines and things like that, then I bring it to the shareholders. I apologized because I didn't know that the law was changed so the reason, I sent in that email is because two of the cities have fewer than 10,000 residents. So anyway, in a very quick analysis what I looked at and realized oh this is an old law and was told you need a police department and all that moved on. I'm still not sure what the other choices are, we are a special district. By the way when I would bring the public in, is if I got to a point in my private analysis which is what this was really, if were going to cost even \$100 to start to do an analysis that's when I would bring people in and say okay look I've done a bunch of you know configuring here do we want to go forward and see if it makes sense for us as residents to have the status that we are currently have its going to cost \$143 to do XYZ there would be a vote. If you guys said no its not worth it or if you guys said yeah, it's cheap enough okay lets at least just even if it results in nothing its only a hundred some odd dollars. That would be my process and I can tackle it; I would do all that stuff I don't care. And then bring it back to you again and now if it's going to be a thousand to go to the next thing you

guys would say its worth it. ill give the argument we could debate, and you know figure out what makes the most sense, that's sort of my process. I have a lot more ideas that everybody would start ranting and raving about. If there was a visitor center right here to help our little businesses and were the top little thing when they come up the hill. And by the way it could be piggybacked with The Coyote Cone or any one of the businesses. I'm giving an example of just brainstorming, I love brainstorming sessions. 99% of them can be shot down every now and then and then one of them that's thrown out there is kind of a fun idea. At any rate my next one was I want to pave the roads. My point is exactly that, I would love to do that, if we can't do that if we do a tiny bit of due diligence and realize okay, we can co-mingle that with something else. We'll have a committee that writes letters for XYZ, whatever there is I want to do as much for this little town as we can possibly get done. I don't sleep much because I would be the one driving around the roads and seeing the road I'm about to go down that the sign is crooked like really crooked. I wanted to call or do something to get it straightened, or a new sign. We have our dumpster in our house by Burrtec I had to replace it because it looked like it was all beaten up, I like things to be very much in order so anything that anybody would want I would love for them to send me an email and say is there anything we could look into this, if there's enough of it we can form a committee if we can have the interaction. The next thing for the sake of time is that the three new board members have serial meetings, we have never I don't think even since the beginning of December. We came on December 21<sup>st</sup> the three of us have never gotten together even socially because God forbid, we discuss district business, I again airing on the conservative side, make sure that doesn't happen. I don't even email anybody anymore. When I first came on I didn't realize that sending out that was actually my email was to chief because he said give me your thoughts and all that because Mike had come on as fire commissioner I CC him and Jen was

President and thought ok you guys can be CC'd on it no ones going to do anything its just information and then there's the Brown Act thing saying anybody responds because it had nothing to do with the parks, I did it because Mike was Fire Commissioner, Fire Chief, and the President. And she and I would talk about different things because three people can't chat so I can't even talk to mike in my own house about things that Jen and I talk about there's never been a single serial meeting of any kind even the emails now they say for information only. I'm getting them from everybody else, I don't even send them anymore. It is because nobody responded if someone had responded it would have been a breach, nobody responded so your fine but don't do that if you do put everybody on there put for information only on it and don't reply, something like that. Its so tricky apparently its information only do not reply, everybody gets it and its done but since nobody replied to my emails there was no violation of any kind, they said that there was a grey area there but if somebody had replied that would have been a regulation. So, I'm not emailing anybody anymore. The only ones concerned with it were the new board members because we didn't understand. In other companies you have DNO and VNO insurance. I don't feel I did something wrong; I was a due diligence and I did a lot of it and I was not convinced that the DNO aspect the director and officers aspect was incorporated into ENO even though it was for directors and officers because in the private world DNO is a separate insurance so even though Jonny was correct and perfectly fine with it, Tink was correct and perfectly fine with it. My narrative was I'm not correct and perfectly fine, I kept going further and further. Chief and I had many many conversations back and forth, I think I confused the heck out of Chief. I ultimately got the answer, it took a long time and everyone is on the same page now with ENO is all you get here you don't get you know insurance. I don't know what point I threw in the towel but it was a fight, I kept fighting and fighting and fighting because like I said in the private sector DNO is totally

separate. Okay, moving on the three new members have formed a voting block. We've had votes not many since we've been on the board that range from 5/0 so it was unanimous 2/3, 3/2, 4/1, that is not a voting block the 4/1 was the one I dissented and the four of them agreed. I have my own way of voting in fact when it came to an earlier issue I may have abstained in a certain vote, which I don't believe in when you're on a board unless you're swimming in ignorance that's the only reason to abstain. You're supposed to make the hard choices but there's no voting block. When you've got unanimous, 2/3,3/2,4/1 again I was the one dissented when everyone else voted together. When there was an issue I don't remember if it was a formal vote or not but Tink whose Park Commissioner wanted something done on the application and whatever and Jen wanted something completely different and they kind of going back and forth it went to some kind of vote and I voted for Tink because I thought she was right and I thought Jen was wrong. That will happen all the time because if everybody's sitting in their chair and just autonomously just voting their conscience you will never have any kind of voting block. The three of us do not have similar minds so I can assure you, they don't have one like mine, I promise you they might be closer together and they might be closer but I don't know but hopefully that answers that. The next thing was that Jen works for Mike and me. She just does not work for us. We want a new truck for the district, once again my motion was to allow Chief to do whatever he wanted to within this certain budget not to exceed XYZ, that what he was doing that only to find out that they surprised him so things changed. We are benefiting by bringing BB&K on board, not a penny. First of all that BB&K works they aren't underhanded nor are we. The three board members don't reside in Morongo Valley, Mike and I have been here for five years. Jens has been here for twenty years as a property owner. We were giving the Chief a performance review because I think it was sloppily written on the agenda no insult intended, it read that way we aren't giving

Chief a performance review. We didn't allow the town to weigh in on the changing of council, we did on January 18th just the town didn't show up until a hostile zoom meeting after they had the opportunity to weigh in. We have something to hide on our 700 form, couldn't be further from the truth, in fact, we could have turned them into the county where a FOIA is required in order to get them to give them to Brittany. The fire department is going to be shut down due to black mold and the other buildings being in utter disrepair including but not limited to because of the roofs. The chief's phone was ringing off the hook on that one, fortunately that false room didn't fall on me but that was the new 13. And anytime I hear more I will just jot them down and every director's report I have I'll just go through them. I would like to thank Chief and all the firemen for keeping us safe, our staff, our community members who took time out of their busy schedules to come here tonight. My fellow board members and all of our fellow residence who have reached out to me personally and said thank you for hanging in there for fighting the good fight and fastening your seatbelt because anyone serving on the Morongo Valley CSD is going to have one hell of a bumpy ride and fortunately as my husband will attest, I love roller coasters that concludes my report.

### 3. Director Tolbert

As always, the first thing I will say is first and foremost thank you to the Morongo Valley Fire Department. Tonight, I sat here and watched for recalls while we are in this meeting. Mrs. Chavez, Mrs. Morton, Stewart, Chief you guys keep that office running for us you guys keep it going straight, you keep us in line. I think there were a couple of questions that were asked earlier this evening one of them was this lady asked how some items get on the agenda. Every board member is allowed to put items on the agenda. We talk to the Chief and Brittany saying we need this on the agenda. It's something we all feel needs to be judged by the board, that's how items get on the agenda. Also, they go through the office, and the chief and Brittany, put it on the agenda for us to go over. So that is how Mrs. Henning or Items gets on the agenda. About L.A.F.C.O, like I said we are not under L.A.F.C.O review. L.A.F.C.O. is

not coming in here and knocking on our door. He came out yesterday because we contacted him, but he was contacted by a board member to come out and give an overall overview of what L.A.F.C.O is. Director Whitney, you asked why some people are saying that we're going to get paid. Where that came from is as board members were coming from a closed session you asked myself, you asked Director Gorke how we felt the public would react to us getting paid. What you didn't realize were people sitting over here that heard you say that. I'm saying you wanted to know how it got out in the public that the Board wanted to get paid. It got out in public because you asked me how I felt about it but I thought about it after and I think we would get hung if we tried it. You asked Director Gorke how she felt about it. I don't know what she said but the problem was there were people sitting out here that heard you say that. So, of course, they assumed that that was something you wanted to get done so when that happens, of course, they talk to each other and said look your Board wants to get paid. And it's like if that happens there's going to be a major issue, so they hear that and they are going to assume that right away. My recommendation is if you're going to say something like that say it in an open meeting and you can say I'm only asking because I heard we got paid and you get told yes there is a line in place that board members get paid for every meeting. We were grandfathered before that law was written so we do not get paid. For this board to be paid it would have to be a vote of the board, It would have to be on the agenda and we would have to vote on it. We would have to find out exactly what the law states and what you get paid for every meeting. We're not getting paid none of the board is getting paid. Let's get this clear right now no one is going to get paid while sitting up here. It was a question that was asked myself and Director Gorke what we thought would happen unfortunately whoever was over here heard that and took it and ran with it. There is a law in California that board members get paid we have been grandfathered in before that law was passed so no, we do not get paid. Ok, we are taking care of the truck, it was also part of our closed sessions. We have laws that the Brown Act says what we can go into closed sessions for unfortunately the way it's written if it says for legal issues, it might not be that so we have to make sure that when we come out to how we comment on it don't say oh I was scared were going to do this. Director Gorke said last night that as Board President at the time she

wanted to put on there, she's going into closed session to let the new board members know exactly what had been going on in the past. We did not walk in there going were getting sued right now because I know I didn't because there was nothing that we were being sued for we talked to our attorney and the attorney told us you are not being sued at this time. There were things said to the attorney that some board members agreed with and some of the board members did not agree with. I came out of the closed session with a much different opinion than what I'm being told Director Gorke and Director Whitney came out of the closed session with. There were questions asked at the January 18<sup>th</sup> meeting about that closed session my wife was one, and Mrs. Johnson was another that asked questions that I don't agree with the answers. I understand California confidentiality laws very well. A lot of you know my background I spent a number of years in the military with an extremely high government clearance. I understand classifications. Members of this board need to look into what could be said and not automatically this is a closed session we can't go into it because there are a lot of things that are said in closed sessions we can't say. There is also a lot about closed sessions that we can say. Don't just automatically go oh it's a closed session I'm scared because when you do that your just pissing people off because unfortunately there were a lot of former board members and spouses of former board members sitting out there. They're going to tell you that you are lying so to prevent that know what you are saying before you say it please because if you don't all you're going to do is get into arguments and if you don't you're going to piss all them off and we're going to be here till 10:30 at night on the second night. With me, this could have been handled so much better by the board. Please know what you are saying before you say it. Ladies and gentlemen please and thank you for coming out, thank you for your input.

4. Director Gorke

Nothing to report.

5. Director Emory

I'm going to read a prepared statement and just bare with me because I got some things to get off my chest. So recently I've heard many of the community making assumptions about my character and even demanding my resignation without even having met me. So, I'm going to use this time to provide greater incite to transparency

into who I am and contrary to rumor my husband and I have lived in Morongo Valley for the last five years. We love it here, we are your neighbors, not your enemies. We buy our gas here locally at American Gas to support Allison and Nick. We drink our beer in full support of James and Lisa and the whole staff at The Monument Bar. We love the fact that Spaghetti Western is now open and thriving. We buy our trinkets from Rachel at Black Luck Vintage and the essentials at Dollar General as needed. And the girl behind the counter at The Coyote Cone they couldn't be any sweeter they are adorable. In my professional career I act as the Executive Director of a full-service digital marketing agency and consulting firm that specializes in growth. I regularly engage with CEO sea-level decision makers and business owners that want to understand their growth goals, operation challenges, their business objectives and help them eliminate inefficiencies, overcome communication shortcomings, and maximize their revenue potential. I do that in my everyday job. And so, I'm confident that with my acumen would apply here at the CSD. It would greatly benefit this entire community and we would achieve similar outcomes. When I was in high school, I worked my ass off to achieve a full football scholarship to a prestigious division one university where I was fortunate enough to play on three of the greatest teams they've ever had there at the university. We won three straight patriot titles, we were undefeated in the regular season all three of those years. And we only lost to two eventual national champions Umass and Delaware. I received all league honors, and I am unaccustomed to folding in the face of adversity. On my journey I have faced and overcome a host of seemingly insurmountable obstacles that stifled many. And my experience has trained me to lean to difficult impedance and to forge ahead. As an athlete who majored in critical science and philosophy it's not surprising that I love pointing quotes specifically anyone can give up it's the easiest thing in the world to do, but to hold it together when everyone else would understand if you fell apart that's true strength its Miyamoto Musashi. Two days ago, marked the one-month anniversary of the death of my mother. For forty-four years she lived in the same town I grew up in New Jersey where the unofficial state motto is only the strong survive. And spent thirty of those years in service to other people. She worked as a construction administrator for the Archdiocese of Newark, where she helped oversee routine maintenance and upkeep of church facilities in a depressed area that glorifies the

sacred principle of community. In her spare time, she volunteered at the local church Saint Anthony where she served as elected eucharistic minister and also sang in the choir. To hear how she was described by her friends, fellow parishioners and colleagues at the funeral, you would have thought that she was the one exception to the rule that nuns to be wed. The last decade of her life when not volunteering at the church she spent her time caring for my father, in addition to his full-time job as both an environmental and electrical engineer for Communists in New York City and volunteering at the church as a eucharistic minister and singing in the choir, my father served thirteen years as a volunteer firefighter in our community. His service however was cut short due to sustaining debilitating knee replacement surgeries on a fire call and then later also later being diagnosed with multiple sclerosis. My mother ultimately died of a heart attack while coming home from work on Valentines Day. She literally served the church until the last day of her life for forty-four years. By a show of hands how many audiences attended the CSD meeting in October. How about November in person? December? The reason I'm asking this is I and my husband were at those meetings. We asked our questions and at times felt much like you doing in your seats right now, angry, but mostly we were discussed that the toxic behavior that was exhibited by certain board members and by community members that were bullying the board members. So when we were approached to volunteer our time, and help this community by serving on the board, we didn't shirk away from the responsibility because we take our civil duty seriously. It would have been easy to say no thank you were too busy, it's too toxic, but instead we leaned into this challenge to try and do our part to help where we can, and for as long as we can. But that stated we aren't going to stomach bullying; we are not intimidated by anyone here, we are here to help, we are also part of your community. As an artist I applaud anyone's passion. To me it means you care. Civil discourse is an essential part of a functional society, but where I draw the line is the boundaries of decency and basic humanity are crossed. And the last CSD meeting via zoom my obligations to my now grieving family superseded the priority of me staying logged into the meeting. And somebody had the audacity to question my integrity and the legitimacy of my mother's death. What kind of person says that? Does that sound like a community to you? Its hard enough to deal with the loss of a loved one especially my mother. And I hope if you haven't don't it or haven't

gone through it, that you never have to go through it, but everyone is going to have to at some point. And then have to whether intentional cheap shots or blows on top of that is just, even last night the public comments suggested that I didn't help start MVAC with Penny, Lisa, and James Workman in Monument bar when it happened. Because we wanted to help the community and volunteer our time. I don't like lies that's not my character, I'm not here to sling arrows but it's really cheap when you know I can't respond and yet use that forum to lobby insults and lies. To me a statement like that is absolutely disgusting, wretched, and the exact opposite of the spirit of the word community. Statements like that only reveal your poor character, not mine. And further my resolve to do what's right for this community. And let's be clear the task ahead of us is daunting, we on the board can all do better, you in the community can all do better. I'm challenging all of us to do better. Working together is the only way we can dig ourselves out of this mess we are in. rather than send emails that I resign, how about instead offering instead how can I help you I didn't get one of those emails. I was listening when a few level-headed and civic-minded individuals use their voices to offer solutions. And I'd like to thank Dr. Donna, Vanessa, and Eva for speaking even Autumn today with their heart in being authentic so the spirit of collaboration in the community I am willing to make a grand bargain to help this community. I'm willing to step back from this board in one calendar year provided the following conditions are met, 1) we have no fewer than 60 attendees at every meeting, I will take attendance, and if there are not 60 the deal is off. 2) these attendees have to pledge to be civil, and decent, and strictly follow the quorum befitting a public community setting. If people can't control themselves, they lose their temper, lose composure, and act indecently in any way shape or form the deal is off. 3) there need to be committees formed consistently consisting of at least five community members, yes, they have to meet and adhere to the Brown Act and come ready to help provide solutions. If those committees aren't formed and maintained the deal is off. You wanted a show of faith, you got one. These are my terms, I'm not going to be bullied just like you're not going to be bullied. You don't want to be told what to do, that's fair. So, let's actually raise and elevate our game. I'm challenging you to be consistently part of the governing process, not just show up when there's a hot-button issue. It's easy to be angry, easy to be volatile, but it's necessary to be collaborative for the

greater good. Ill leave you with one last quote “the truth is not what you want it to be, it is what it is you must bend to its power or live a lie. You must understand there is more than one path to the top of the mountain. Thank you to the fire chief and to the department and the staff for all your hard work thank you to the Board President for all of you global efforts and thank you to my fellow board members for committing their time to service

**L. ANNOUNCEMENTS**

1. Next Regular Board Meeting April 19, 2023

**M. ADJOURNMENT**

The CSD Board of Directors adjourned at 11:24 p.m.

Moved: Director Tolbert      Second: Director Emory      Vote: Unanimous