



LITTLE LAKE FIRE PROTECTION DISTRICT



74 E Commercial Street
Willits, California 95490
(707)459-6271

MINUTES

April 14th, 2026

- OPENING:** Tony Madrigal called the regular meeting of the Little Lake Fire Protection District Board of Directors to order at 5:05 PM.
- ROLL CALL:** Tony Madrigal, Arnie Mello, Skip Lucier and Nancy Stipe
Absent: Tom Herman
- AMEND:** Michelle Schnitzius explained that Resolution 2026-4 failed to be added with the Weist Law presentation. The presentation was introducing Resolution 2026-4 to be voted on. Motion to add Resolution 2026-4 to the agenda: Skip Lucier 1st; Arnie Mello 2nd.
- SUSPEND 5:11 PM:** The meeting was suspended to advance the Weist Law presentation on the agenda. Cameron Weist discussed Resolution 2026-4 regarding the Section 115 Trust, explaining that the district should fund at least 85% to maintain investment performance. He advised against exceeding this threshold to avoid super funding, as CalPERS will not reimburse excess contributions. The objective is to proactively manage the district's unfunded liabilities. Since the fund's value fluctuates with the market, the district can review its options annually. Cameron informed the board that the Section 115 committee, consisting of Arnie Mello, Michelle Schnitzius, Eric Alvarez, and Tony Madrigal, interviewed three candidates and selected Shuster Investment Group. While all investment managers offer similar services, the committee preferred Shuster for its personalized approach and range of services. Tony Madrigal asked



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whether PARS invests with US Bank and if Shuster invests internally. Cameron confirmed this, noting that although Shuster works with Les Schwab, the district would work directly with Shuster, not a third party. Tony also noted that CalPERS did not offer customization. He then asked about next steps following the adoption of Resolution 2026-4. Cameron stated he would schedule a meeting with Shuster to initiate the process and arrange the transfer of funds. Arnie Mello expressed his appreciation for Shuster's flexibility.

MEETING RESUMED: 5:28 PM

MINUTES: Approved by Skip Lucier 1st and Arnie Mello 2nd.

TREASURER'S REPORT: Michelle Schnitzius explained the insurance for equipment, volunteer AD&D policy and buildings has increased. Michelle informed the board the district can save \$9,000.00 by removing earthquake and flooding insurance next year. The board did not think that it would be fiscally responsible to our community to drop flood and earthquake insurance for the rate difference offered.

CORRESPONDENCE/PUBLIC COMMENTS: NONE

OLD BUSINESS: INSPECTIONS: Fire Chief Eric Alvarez reported that staff just finished schools and hotels are almost completed. Apartments will begin shortly after. Fees have increased for the state mandated inspections. Administration hours, fuel, correspondence, staff and the new software required for the inspections need to be recovered. Captain So added all rooms that are vacant will be inspected now. Chief Alvarez also added that schools, hotels, motels, and apartments can use the State of



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California out of Sacramento instead of the local fire departments, but did not advise on the cost.

ELECTRICAL FOR CARPORT: Chief Alvarez reported that Deputy Chief Thomen is changing the carport plans to save money. 300 E Hill Rd is installing solar and hopes to use the carport if allowed.

ENGINE 5480 REPAIR: Chief Alvarez reported that Deputy Chief Thomen stopped by the mechanics shop in Healdsburg and they are willing to accept Engine 5480 at the end of the month. Deputy Chief Thomen recently discovered that the pump is not taking pressure, which is worse than originally thought. Staff is hoping the pump is not destroyed.

VOLLUNTEER FIRE CAPACITY/ASSISTANCE 50/50 GRANT: Michelle Schnitzius announced that the staff has recently been granted a 50/50 grant for radios. Chief Alvarez explained the differences in radios. These radios will be the BK 9000's. The BK 9000s will communicate with Caltrans and CHP, and county law enforcement, which will be more efficient during accidents. Chief Alvarez also added that the new radios are easier to update because they have WiFi.

NEW BUSINESS: **WEIST LAW:** See suspended meeting for notes. Motion to accept Resolution 2026-4: Arnie Mello 1st, Skip Lucier 2nd.

POLICIES: Michelle will be working on updating the Workplace Violence Prevention Policy, Harassment Policy, and Family Leave Act in accordance with the updates to California State Laws.

ADA TITLE II COMPLIANCE: Michelle reviewed the new ADA digital compliance policies. Michelle stated our website is ADA compliant as the district pays for website compliant updates due to the new mandates.



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VFIS INSURANCE: Michelle explained the increase under the Treasurer's Report.

BILLS: Motion to pay bills: Tom Herman 1st, Arnie Mello 2nd.

TRAINING REPORT: Captain So reported the last training was reviewing the tablet command software. On April 7th, the water tender and pump operations were reviewed. On April 28th there will be a pack test which is a 3 miles hike with 45 lbs of hose. After the pack test, Deputy Chief Thomen will review radios. The last EMT was about breathing emergencies. Captain So just signed up for the last of his fire educator series. Captain So informed the board the community donated to the department through the National Fire Safety Council and he recently ordered educational supplies for the children for handouts at events. The community donated a total of \$1175.00 and Captain So ordered \$1169.00 worth of educational material and banners. Captain So thanked the community for their support. He will also make a Facebook post thanking the community as well. Captain So reported that the mass casualty simulation event at the high school was a success and can be watched on YouTube. He invited the board to watch after the board meeting. Captain So has a busy upcoming schedule volunteering at school events.

FIREFIGHTERS' ASSOC. REPORT: Association President Chad Leshar was not able to attend.

CHIEFS REPORT: Chief Alvarez reported there have been 214 calls to date. Chief Alvarez also ordered a volunteer recruitment kit in hopes of bringing in more volunteers. Volunteer response has been down due to busy schedules. Mostly staff has been responding at all hours. Staff are volunteers after hours and on weekends. May 6th Little Lake Fire will host the Chief's meeting. May 13th there will be a mandatory Epi Pen training with Teresa from Medstar. Chief Alvarez thanked



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Deputy Chief Thomen for repairs of our engines and station. Deputy Chief Thomen has saved this community an extreme amount of money over his 43 years here.

Meeting Adjourned 6:45 PM

Motion to adjourn: Arnie Mello 1st, Nancy Stipe 2nd.

Tony Madrigal

Tony Madrigal, Chairman

Michelle Schnitzius

Michelle Schnitzius, Secretary

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