

**MINUTES
PARADISE TOWN COUNCIL
SPECIAL MEETING – 6:00 PM – June 20, 2012**

1. OPENING

Mayor Culleton called the Special Meeting of the Town Council to order in the Paradise Town Council Chambers at 6:00 pm and led the pledge of allegiance to the flag of the United States of America.

COUNCIL MEMBERS PRESENT: Joe DiDuca, Scott Lotter, Tim Titus, Alan White and Steve “Woody” Culleton, Mayor.

COUNCIL MEMBERS ABSENT: None.

STAFF PRESENT: Town Clerk Gutierrez, Town Manager Rough, Town Attorney Moore, Assistant Town Manager Gill, Community Development Director Baker, Finance Director Will, HR/Risk Management Analyst Peters, HR/Risk Management Manager Peters, Public Works Manager Derr, Acting Police Chief Tazzari, and Interim Fire Chief Cone.

2. COUNCIL CONSIDERATION

Item 2a-1: Following a report from Town Manager Rough, Mayor Culleton opened the matter of adopting a resolution approving interim budget appropriations to public comment.

1. Tom Kelly stated that he is in favor of the resolution.

2a-1: MOTION by White, seconded by DiDuca, adopted Resolution No. 12-21, a Resolution of the Town Council of the Town of Paradise approving Interim Budget Appropriations for July 2012 of the 2012-2013 fiscal year ending June 30, 2013. Roll call vote was unanimous.

Item 2a-2: Manager Rough reported to Council regarding the work effort since Council adopted Resolution 11-10 on April 12, 2011, which authorized the Town Manager to investigate the possibility of contracting Town fire personnel services to Cal Fire. Manager Rough stated that a Request for Proposal was submitted to Cal Fire after Council approval on September 15, 2011; Cal Fire responded with a proposal on January 20, 2012; and, discussed the effort of the study group in analyzing the four specific service level alternatives that are detailed in the staff report that led to the conclusion that contracted fire personnel services with Cal Fire would represent enhanced fire protection and emergency response services for our community and short and long term savings to the Town.

Mayor Culleton called for a recess at 6:55 pm and reconvened the meeting at 7:05 pm.

Mayor Culleton opened the matter for public input.

1. Tom Cole stated that he is a 30-year resident of Paradise, was employed in Town public safety for 20 years as a police officer and as a fire fighter, that it hurts him to think that the Town may not have its own fire department even though Cal Fire is a very effective agency, that there will be issues to address in a transitional MOU and asked to Council to stay attentive to the men who will be transitioning and to treat them fairly.

2. John Singler stated that he is a resident of Paradise and the president of the Paradise Firefighters Association, that the process of evaluating the proposal has been long and arduous; that the association has only been met with twice on the matter and that he thinks the vote of the association was influenced by threat of lay-offs; handed Council a copy of letter sent to retirees relating to retiree medical premiums; and, stated if employees are transitioned to Cal Fire, they will no longer be a liability to the Town.

Manager Rough stated that there was a follow-up letter sent to retirees informing that subsequent information was received indicating that there would be an impact to retired employees' benefits and discussed the rationale for capping medical premiums prior to any transition.

3. Keith Lockwood asked for the Council to consider changing the language in the Council action requested in paragraph 1b by deleting the words "that results in" with the words "with the objective of" as they relate to a cap on medical benefit premiums for current fire personnel.

4. Donald Becker stated that his experience with the immediate response of the Fire Department has been excellent, and asked if contracting with Cal Fire would affect the cost of fire insurance premiums for homeowners.

5. Tom Kelly stated that he thinks this proposal came as a sudden thing to many people in the town; asked if the Town could afford to wait until the Supreme Court makes a decision on the Affordable Health Care Act; that he thinks benefits guaranteed to retirees should be honored; questioned the retention of equipment by the Town if the personnel services are contracted to Cal Fire; and, asked if there is a provision for going back.

6. Vicky Hoggins stated that she first read about the proposal in today's newspaper, and asked if there will be another chance for public input.

Manager Rough stated that there will be additional opportunities for public input and that a proposed contract will have to come back to the Council for approval at a public meeting.

7. Loren Harvey thanked the Council for trying to solve this problem that was created by the economy going down and for trying to save the jobs of the firefighters.

8. David Lee stated that he sat on the board for Fire Protection District over 30 years ago, supported the incorporation of the Town for economic reasons, thinks the decision that the Council needs to make is the same as they had to make then, that is to keep the Fire Department whole, that Cal Fire is an outstanding department – as is the Paradise Fire Department - and to save money and keep the Town whole is the priority.

9. John Simon, stated that he has served Paradise as a firefighter in the Fire Protection District (FPD) and as a Paradise firefighter for 34 years, that in the transition from the FPD to a Town Fire Department PERS retirement benefits to employees were lost; that a transition can be very divisive; and, asked the Council to remember the emotional impact on the employees and to check out any detrimental impacts and to not let issues fall through the cracks just to save money.

May Culleton closed the public comment at 7:45 pm.

2a-2: MOTION by White, seconded by Titus, (1) Approved the Study Group's determination that a fire personnel services contract with CAL FIRE represents enhanced emergency services and great cost savings for our Town and community; AND, (2) Authorized the Town Manager and the Town Attorney to work with a committee of two designated members of the Town Council to develop the actual fire personnel services contract agreement with CAL FIRE, subject to final review and approval of the Town Council; AND, (3) Instructed the Town Manager and the Town's negotiation team to finalize current contract negotiations with the Paradise Firefighter's Association with the objective of a cap on medical benefit premiums for current fire personnel, prior to initiating Transitional Memorandum Of Understanding Agreement negotiations with the Paradise Firefighter's Association; AND, (4) Following ratification of the Memorandum Of Understanding Agreement with the Paradise Firefighter's Association, further authorized the Town Manager and the Town's negotiation team to meet and confer with the Paradise Firefighter's Association to develop a Transitional Memorandum of Understanding Agreement, subject to final review and approval by the Town Council. Roll call vote was unanimous.

Council concurred to appoint a committee of Mayor Culleton and Vice Mayor Titus to work to develop a fire personnel services contract agreement with Cal Fire, subject to final review and approval of the Town Council, and authorized the Town Manager and Town Attorney to work with the committee.

3. ADJOURNMENT

Mayor Culleton adjourned the Special Council Meeting at 8:15 pm.

DATE APPROVED: July 10, 2012

by: _____
Steve Culleton, Mayor

Joanna Gutierrez, CMC, Town Clerk