



**BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING- HYBRID**  
**FINAL - OPEN SESSION MINUTES**  
**January 18, 2023, 8:35 AM – 1:02 PM (PST)**  
*California Fire Safe Council Office: Sacramento, CA*

**Board Present:** Bob Roper, Pat Frost, Kate Dargan, David Horne, Laura Blaul, Rex Frazier, Steve Hawks, Pat Kidder, Ed Mertens, Chris Ochoa, David Shew, Troy Whitman, Frank Bigelow

**Staff Present:** Bruce Martin, Jeremy Boone, Felicia Dunn, Nina Evans, Amber Gardner, Becca Joyner, Sara Kniss, Julia Marsili, Jessica Martinez, Brooke McAllister, Britney Munoz, Lara Popyack, Patrick Vaughn

**MEETING CONVENED AT 8:35 PM**

**I. Welcome**

Roundtable introductions.

**A. Introduction of Frank Bigelow**

Introduction of Frank Bigelow, who is assuming CAL FIRE representation on the CFSC Board on account of Steve Hawk's retirement. Frank Bigelow is an Assistant Deputy Director for CAL FIRE, serving 19 years with the Department. He started his career as a Fire Fighter and worked his way through the ranks working in various programs along the way, including fire operations, the air program, and fire plan. In his current role he oversees the Community Wildfire Preparedness and Mitigation Division as well as Fire Engineering and Investigations. While working as a Fire Captain in the CAL FIRE Madera-Mariposa-Merced Unit, he worked very closely with the local Fire Safe Councils for administration of grant funding of various types of projects.

**B. New Staff Introductions**

Introduction of Patrick Vaughn, HR Specialist, and Becky DeForest, Staff Grant Specialist, who joined the California Fire Safe Council team on November 7, 2022 and October 10, 2022, respectfully.

**C. Agenda Review**

No updates or changes needed.

**D. Executive Director Recruitment**

Bob Roper provided an update on the recruitment efforts for the vacant Executive Director position. The process is ongoing; there is nothing to report at the time of the Board Meeting.

**E. Recognition of Jerry, Ed, and Pat's CFSC Service**

Jerry Davies, Ed Mertens, and Pat Kidder were presented achievement awards for their service on the CFSC Board of Directors. All three Directors will be stepping down from service in the new term after 20 years, 5 years and 19 years, respectfully.

**F. Jay Lopez Status**

Jay Lopez continues his leave of absence for the new term; he is still an active member but resigned as Co-Chair and will return as a non-Officer Board Member. A status update will be provided by the next Board Meeting.

### **G. Board Comments**

David Horne and Kate Dargan provided acknowledgements and well-wishes for Jerry, Ed and Pat's retirement from the Board.

## **II. Approval of Past Minutes – Open Session**

November 3, 2022, Open Session Minutes:

**Motion to approve the November 3, 2022, Open Session Minutes by Troy Whitman, seconded by David Horne- with unanimous approval.**

## **III. Informational Agenda**

No agenda items.

## **IV. Consent Agenda**

### **A. Employee Medical Benefit Contributions**

Bruce Martin recommends increasing the CFSC contribution for employee health care from \$475.00 per month to \$525.00 per month per employee. If an employee elects not to enroll in any benefits plans offered, they may take a monthly non-salary bonus of \$125.00 (subject to payroll taxes). Discussion ensued whether to accept this recommendation. The Finance Committee recommends an amendment to the proposal to increase this benefit from \$125.00 to \$150.00.

**Motion to adopt the Employer Medical Benefit Contribution Increase proposal with the amendment by the Finance Committee to increase the benefit to \$150.00 by Pat Kidder, seconded by Chris Ochoa- with unanimous approval.**

## **V. Open Session**

### **A. Board Email Updates & SharePoint Access**

Felicia Dunn provided an overview of the Board Email & SharePoint Access project currently underway. By fully integrating the Board of Directors into CFSC's business operations, data security threats will be minimized. Expected deadline of project completion is March 1, 2023.

### **B. Conflict of Interest/HR Training**

Laura Blaul provided an update regarding the mandatory signing of the Conflict of Interest and Confidentiality forms for the Board of Directors as well as the required sexual harassment training. As Secretary, Laura Blaul is responsible for maintaining HR training resources for the Board of Directors; Patrick Vaughn will manage staff HR training resources as the HR Specialist.

### **C. Associated Alignment Updates**

Kate Dargan prompted a discussion regarding further aligning the mission of CFSC with key partners and stakeholders. Conversation has been ongoing since 2020. The eventual goal is to maintain aligned concepts and operations between all organizations to achieve an overall

strategy for wildfire resilience in the state. Discussion ensued. No concrete decisions were made but Board Member-led conversations will continue with staff support.

#### **D. 2023 Proposed Board Meetings**

Bob Roper proposed quarterly offsite Board Meetings; after discussion, the meetings were scheduled as follows: Q2: May 16/17 (*Southern CA Region*), Q3: July 25/26 (*Southern CA Region*) and Q4: Oct 24/25 (*Northern CA Region*). Local Fire Safe Councils will be invited to attend these quarterly meetings. Virtual meetings can be called as needed throughout the year, and the Executive Committee is available for any urgent business between quarterly Board Meetings. Planning nominations of Officers, budget discussion and strategic planning will occur during the Q4 meeting.

#### **E. Leg Walk Update**

As Incident Commanders representing the Board and staff, respectfully, Kate Dargan and Jessica Martinez provided an update on the proposed Legislative Walk- tentatively scheduled for April 18, 2023.

#### **F. Legislative Bill Introductions Update**

Chris Ochoa provided an update. Activity is slow this time of year; more bills will start to be introduced later in February. Updates will be available for the Leg Walk and during the next Board Meeting.

#### **G. Board Meetings Open to the Public Discussion**

Bob Roper opened a conversation with the Board on whether the CFSC Board Meetings should be open to the public. Bob Roper will draft options for the Board, for discussion at the next Board Meeting.

#### **H. Forest and Fire Action Task Force Update**

Steve Hawks provided an update on the Forest and Fire Action Task Force.

#### **I. Board Development & Recruitment Update**

Kate Dargan and Pat Frost provided Board Development updates as well as the status of Board Member Recruitment on behalf of the Board Development Committee. Conversation continues regarding the need for filling key stakeholder positions on the Board and increasing diversity. Pat Frost and Kate Dargan will provide recommendations regarding the size of the Board and on the inclusion of Fire Safe Council representatives on the Board by the next Board Meeting, with action proposed during the Q3 meeting.

#### **J. Nominations/Elections for BOD Officers 2023**

Kate Dargan introduced the Board Officers Nominations for 2023. The nominations are as follows: Co-Chair (*Bob Roper and Pat Frost*), Co-Vice Chair (*Kate Dargan and Rex Frazier*), Co-Treasurer (*David Horne and Angie Gibson*) and Secretary (*Laura Blaul*). Jay Lopez is still an active member on a leave of absence and will be reassigned from the Co-Chair position to a non-Officer Board Member position.

**Motion to approve the 2023 Slate of Officers by Pat Kidder, seconded by David Shew- with unanimous approval.**

Bob Roper proposed amending the Bylaws to include the option for Co-Vice Chair, Co-Treasurer and Co-Secretary Officer positions.

**Motion to approve the proposed Bylaws updates by Kate Dargan, seconded by Pat Kidder- with unanimous approval.**

#### **K. Financial Report**

David Horne provided the overview of the Finance Committee January 9, 2023, Status Report.

**Motion to approve the Finance Committee January 9, 2023 by Laura Blaul, seconded by Pat Kidder- with unanimous approval.**

Discussion ensued on future funding projects.

#### **L. 2023 Budget Adoption**

Lori Vance provided the proposed 2023 budget. The Board Finance Committee has reviewed the draft budget and is recommending approval by the full Board.

**Motion to approve the 2023 Budget by Laura Blaul, seconded by Kate Dargan- with unanimous approval.**

#### **M. Audit Committee Report & Tax Status**

David Horne will provide an update for the audit on behalf of the Audit Committee during the Closed Session.

#### **VI. Standing Agenda Items**

##### **A. Executive Director's Report**

Bruce Martin provided an Executive Director Staff Report.

##### **B. Staff Reports- 2022 CFSC Year in Review**

Amber Gardner, Jessica Martinez, Becca Joyner and Lara Popyack provided Year in Review presentation Staff Report across the Clearinghouse, Programs & Outreach, Business & Operations and Communications departments.

#### **VII. New Business**

##### **A. Future BOD Meeting Agenda Items**

A virtual Board Meeting was proposed to be held before the Leg Walk.

#### **VIII. Closed Session**

**Motion to Close Open Session and Open Closed Session by David Horne, seconded by Pat Kidder- with unanimous approval.**

CLOSED SESSION BEGAN AT 12:23 PM

#### **IX. Reconvene Open Session**

OPEN SESSION RECONVENED AT 1:01 PM

**A. Announcements**

Steve Hawks is officially being replaced by Frank Bigelow as a voting Board Member on behalf of CAL FIRE.

**X. Wrap-Up and Adjourn**

**Motion to adjourn the January 18, 2023, Board Meeting at 1:02 PM by David Horne, seconded by Troy Whitman with unanimous approval.**

**MEETING ADJORNED AT 1:02 PM**