SAN DIEGO COUNTY FIRE
5560 Overland Avenue | Suite 400, San Diego | CA 92123-1239
www.sdcountyfire.org

SAN DIEGO COUNTY FIRE PROTECTION DISTRICT FIRE ADVISORY BOARD MEETING

Monday, August 17, 2026 | 1:00 P.M.

MINUTES

Members

VACANT	District 1 – Seat 1
Mike Stein	District 2 – Seat 2
Debra Foster	District 2 – Seat 3
Randy Lyle	District 2 – Seat 4
Ben Tullock	District 2 – Seat 5, Chair
John Clark	District 3 – Seat 6
Jesse Robles	District 4 – Seat 7
Bret Sealey	District 5 – Seat 8
Clifford Kellogg	District 5 – Seat 9, Vice Chair

Guest

Theresa McKenna	San Miguel Fire & Rescue
Andrew Shouten	Attorney representing San Miguel Fire Consolidated Fire Protection District
Billy Tomasello	CALFIRE/Firefighters Local 2881 Vice President

County Staff

Tony Mecham	CALFIRE/Chief
Jeff Collins	County Fire/Director
Marc Regier	County Fire/Assistant Director
David Sibbet	County Fire/Fire Services Coordinator
Melissa Keane	County Fire/Program Coordinator
Daniel Twohy	CALFIRE/Battalion Chief
Nicole del Toro	County Fire/EMS Admin Secretary

I. CALL TO ORDER at 1:00 pm.
   A. The group recited the Pledge of Allegiance.
   B. Roll call was taken.
   C. A quorum was declared present with eight (8) members in attendance, and no absences.
   D. Introductions were made.

II. PUBLIC COMMUNICATION
Public communication from Theresa McKenna and Andrew Shouten occurred during agenda items V.C. and V.D.

III. APPROVAL OF MINUTES FOR THE MEETING OF MAY 11, 2026 (VOTE)

ON MOTION of Member Kellog, seconded by Member Sealey, the Advisory Board approved the minutes of May 11, 2026. Motion carried.

AYES:	**8**	**NAYS:**	**0**	**ABSENT:**	**0**	**ABSTAIN:**	**0**

IV. CHIEFS REPORT
   A. Fire Chiefs Update – Chief Tony Mecham
      - Staffing 96%
      - Started hiring process for the fourth person at Station 36 in Jamul
      - 5-year staffing plan has begun to coincide with the County's 5-year budget forecast
      - New EMS Bureau – quality assurance, training, skills lab
      - Ramp re-opening of Ramona Air Base
      - Facilities – major maintenance program, purchased tower on Jamacha, started design at Descano Station 45, new Borrego Station 60
      - Fleet – vehicles are currently in the queue: three medium rescues; five replacement ambulances ordered, 3 training fire engines, two type 1 engines and two type 1 ambulances

   B. Director's Update – Jeff Collins
      - Kudos to Chief Mecham's efforts in regards to getting the C130 down here and his support on the firehawk to contain the Sorrento fire
      - Budget process with the Board of Supervisors – our expected cost increase, two water tenders being fully staffed
      - Presentation to the Board of Supervisors on Wednesday regarding Wildfire Preparedness

V. NEW BUSINESS
   A. Firefighter Wellness – Information Only

The Advisory Board members received a presentation on firefighter wellness and safety.

   B. Mandated Fire Inspection Reporting for Fiscal Year 2025-26 – Pending Board of Directors Action

ON MOTION of Member Cliff Kellogg, seconded by Member Debra Foster, the Advisory Board

received the report and voted in support of the findings. Motion carried.

AYES: 8 NAYS: 0 ABSENT: 0 ABSTAIN: 0

C. Approve a New Cooperative Agreement Between the County of San Diego and CAL FIRE for Fire Protection and Emergency Medical Services – Pending Board of Supervisors Acton

A public comment and request was made from Theresa McKenna with San Miguel Fire & Rescue to see the cooperative agreement and postpone the vote until each Advisory Board member has done their due diligence and ensure it is the best use of County taxpayer money to be entering into a new contract with the State.

ACTION: County Fire staff will send out a copy of the existing cooperative agreement as well as the instructions on how to find it, which can be found on the County's Purchasing & Contracting website.

ON MOTION of Member Lyle, seconded by Member Kellogg, the Advisory Board voted to support a new cooperative agreement between the County and CAL FIRE for continued fire protection and emergency medical services. Motion carried. Member Robles abstained.

AYES: 7 NAYS: 0 ABSENT: 0 ABSTAIN: 1

D. Enhancing Ambulance Transportation Services within the Grossmont Ambulance Operating Area – Pending Board of Supervisors and Board of Directors Actions

Board of Supervisors:

A public comment was made by Attorney Andrew Shouten, representing the San Miguel Consolidated Fire Protection District, that there is no transparency or public accountability on the services. Costs and revenue were questioned.

A public comment and request was made by Theresa McKenna with San Miguel Fire & Rescue, to slow down the process and work together. They want local control of their district and to stand up two ambulances. A copy of the contract was also requested.

ACTION: A request was made by Member Robles to receive a copy of the ambulance transportation contract between Grossmont Hospital Corporation and American Medical Response (AMR).

ON MOTION of Member Robles, seconded by Member Stein, a vote was taken to table this item until additional information (the contract between Grossmont Hospital Corporation and AMR) has been received, and increased collaboration with the impacted stakeholders in Zone 1. Six members opposed. Motion failed with 2 members in favor and 6 members opposed.

AYES: 2 NAYS: 6 ABSENT: 0 ABSTAIN: 0

Board of Directors:

ON MOTION of Member Clark, seconded by Member Sealey, the Advisory Board voted to support the following actions1) voted in support to authorize a competitive solicitation for the LEMSA and County Purchasing and Contracting on behalf of the San Diego County Fire Protection District; 2) voted in support to authorize a revenue agreement for the San Diego County Fire Protection District; 3) voted in support of allowing the San Diego County Fire Protection District to accept the current contract between the Grossmont Hospital Corporation and the private provider and to make amendments. Motion carried.

AYES:	6	NAYS:	2	ABSENT:	0	ABSTAIN:	0

ACTION: A request was made by Member Sealey, as a regular agenda item for the next few meetings, that County Fire comes back and gives the Advisory Board regular updates on this process, the continued engagement with the stakeholders, and get a better fidelity on with what the interim solution looks like as we are preparing for our staff updates.

E. CAL FIRE Wildfire Prevent Grant Award Acceptance – Pending Board of Supervisors Action

ON MOTION of Member Kellogg, seconded by Member Stein, the Advisory Board voted to support accepting funds to implement the targeted grazing program to support fire prevention in the San Diego County Fire Protection District, if County Fire is awarded grant funding. Motion carried.

AYES:	8	NAYS:	0	ABSENT:	0	ABSTAIN:	0

F. Increasing Battery Energy Storage System (BESSS) Safety Practices – Information Only

The Advisory Board received an update from staff.

G. Funding for a Contracted Firefighting Helicopter – Pending Board of Supervisors Action

ON MOTION of Member Lyle, seconded by Member Kellogg, the Advisory Board voted to support County Fire's future request to seek an increase in funding from SDG&E and issue a competitive solicitation for a contracted firefighting helicopter to serve our region. Motion carried.

AYES:	8	NAYS:	0	ABSENT:	0	ABSTAIN:	0

VI. NEXT MEETING

The next Fire Advisory Board meeting will be held Monday, November 9, 2026 at 1:00 pm at the San Diego County Fire Office – 5560 Overland Ave, Suite 400, Balboa Room, San Diego, CA 92123 (County Operations Center).

VII. ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, the Advisory Board adjourned at 4:03 pm.

NOTE: These Minutes set forth all action taken by the Advisory Board on the matters stated, but not necessarily in the chronological sequence in which the matters were taken up.

For meeting information, please contact:

San Diego County Fire

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