



Staff report for meeting date 11/17/2022

Prepared by Secretary/Treasurer Rae Bell Arbogast– *disclaimer: any opinions expressed in this document belong to the author and do not represent the official stance of the district.*

Agenda item 4. a) Correspondence

Incoming: Donation of \$3,000 from the AK & CM Jennings Foundation for the Pike City Fire Department,

Outgoing: Fiscal Year 22-23 Budget sent to Sierra County Auditor Van Maddox and posted on website, Thank you letter and receipt to AK & CM Jennings Foundation for a as listed above, Thank you letter to the Pike Community Support Foundation for the donation of the electronic sign for the Pike City Firehouse.

Agenda item 4. b) 5 Board member/Staff reports

- In early November we discovered that the propane heater in the engine bay at station 1 in Alleghany wasn't working properly (it is approximately 20 years old). A new heater was ordered on November 7th. The new one features oxygen and carbon monoxide sensors, so is legal for indoor use in California even though it is not vented. It is 10,000 BTU and the price was only \$160 with shipping. I was not able to find one with higher BTU's that includes the carbon monoxide sensor (can ship to California).
- I contacted AT&T earlier this month and added long distance calling to the phone line at the Pike Firehouse. This could be important in the event of cell service going down for any reason.
- California Office of Emergency Services (CAL OES) has rolled out a new online platform for entering Mutual Aid Reimbursement Requests (MARS). The new system is still being updated, but they are requiring all pre-position assignments to be entered this way. As of this writing, the first pre-position assignment from August has been submitted. The September assignment isn't quite finished because I need help on a couple of items. Cal OES staff have been very responsive to my requests for help. I don't have the dollar figures yet. Once everything is submitted online, Cal OES staff generates a draft invoice for review, then after we approve it, it gets submitted for payment.

Agenda item 4. b) 6 Firewise Communities – An update was provided for the Pike Community Support Foundation's newsletter on November 1st. An edited version was also sent to the Mountain Messenger for publication (attached).

Additionally, we got the following email in October. I did add their link to the website. It can be found here: <https://www.plioceneridge.org/wildfire-preparedness-resources> scroll to the bottom of the page.

Rae Bell,

Good morning! I wanted to send Pliocene Ridge CSD some positive feedback... a group of students I tutor were working on an emergency preparedness project for National Fire Prevention Month. They do research and make checklists, plans, and kits to take home to their families. They were doing research on fire safety and ended up on your Wildfire preparedness resources page (www.plioceneridge.org/wildfire-preparedness-resources). The kids thought we should let you know it was a big help :)

We found lots of useful information so thank you!! And we wanted to pay you back for the help, so together we all did some research to find you another educational fire safety-related resource to share with you...I'll put their suggestion below:

"The Science Behind Firefighting" - <https://personalinjurylawcal.com/blog/california-wildfires-the-science-behind-firefighting/>

This article has some really interesting information on the science behind wildfires and fighting fires, so they thought it'd be a helpful link for your Wildfire preparedness resources page... I was wondering if it's not too much of a hassle for you, would you be able to add it there? the kids would be so proud to see :) Thanks again Rae Bell!

Stay safe and happy Halloween! Hope to hear from you soon .

Sincerely, Ms. Lyons and Angel, Makayla, and Jordan

Agenda item 4. b) 7 Firehouse Projects and ADA compliance

Pike City Firehouse and Alleghany Station 1

Status of PG&E energy audit (Retrofit program available to public agencies): I attended a remote meeting with our new Sierra Business Council Rep and CH Services the new contractor on October 31st. I provided them with all of the requested information. We are scheduled to have an “on the ground” meeting to look at both the Pike Firehouse and Alleghany Station 1 on November 16th. Dan Guyer is going to meet with us at the Pike Firehouse since he is more familiar with it.

Alleghany Firehouse Station 1 Repairs

The roof repair was completed on 10/22/22; total cost \$3,000. Thanks to Ned Cusato, Bob Hale, Bruce Coons and Larry Allen for helping with this since I was still away. Money was transferred out of the Alleghany Firehouse reserve fund to cover the expense in October.

The wall repair has not been started yet, but most of the materials were purchased from ABC supply last April. They required pre-payment, then the order took forever to arrive, with a lot of frustration in between. We will not do business with them again. The materials are being stored at the County Yard for now. Completing this project will require several days of good weather.

Pike City Firehouse Rescue Bay conversion to ADA friendly meeting space

As noted last month, we were hoping to have a cost estimate for the rescue bay conversion ready by this month’s meeting for further board discussion and possible action. I doubt if it will be ready in time for the meeting, but I put an item on the agenda just in case.

Agenda item 4. b) 8 Pending Grants

- ❖ CDF 50/50 grant for Fiscal year 21/22 – Followed up on the missing EMS turnouts on 11/2/2022 and was told that they will ship on November 23rd.
- ❖ CDF 50/50 grant for Fiscal year 22/23 – For 10 hose packs to be split between Pike City and Alleghany FDs. The resolution and other required documents were submitted on November 2, 2022 and we got the finalized agreement today! (11/14/2022)

Agenda item 5. a)1 Policies and Procedures: Policy 2040 Capitalization The entire policy can be found online: <https://www.plioceneridge.org/bylaws-policies-procedures>

With the recent repair work going on at Station 1 in Alleghany, I realized that I needed to review the capitalization policy for buildings (text below). We borrowed the original policy from another district. In the past we scrutinized the equipment section of this policy but not the section below.

Suggested additions in ***bold italics at the end***, suggested deletions ~~crossed out~~.

- A. **Buildings, structures and other improvements** include all costs related directly to their acquisition or construction, including materials, labor and overhead costs during construction; attorney and architect's fees and building permits and other related fees. **Building alterations** will be capitalized when they increase the value or life of the building. ~~All other land improvements having a limited life and requiring ultimate replacement shall be capitalized. This includes grading and landscaping, pavement, sidewalks and other related recreational improvements, which add to the value of the property.~~
Building alterations are defined as work that changes either the footprint or the functionality of an existing structure.
Repair and maintenance work done for the purpose of keeping an existing building in good condition is not considered an alteration and shall not be capitalized.

Notes: In my opinion, we don't want to capitalize landscaping or grading or pavement unless it is part of a new construction project, in which case it would be covered by the first sentence. The added text is for clarification. Per the district's auditors, as a non-enterprise public agency Pliocene Ridge CSD is not required to budget for depreciation.

Staff has not had a chance to work on the FUNDS Policy updates as mentioned in September.

Other pending items with nothing new to report this month:

- NFIRS (National FIRE Incident Reporting System)
- Signage for firehouses

Pike and Alleghany Firewise® Community Update

By Rae Bell Arbogast

Pliocene Ridge CSD Secretary/Treasurer

Firewise USA, is a nationwide program that sets the parameters for gaining firewise recognition and maintaining that status. It is up to community members to do the required “boots on the ground” work and to report that work so that it can be applied to maintaining firewise status.

Pliocene Ridge CSD (fire district) is supporting both the Pike and Alleghany firewise communities by handling the administrative tasks associated with maintaining firewise status. These tasks include public education and outreach via a website, facebook pages, direct mailings and events such as the potluck held on April 9th at Plum Valley. The Sierra County Board of supervisors allocated title III funds in the amount of \$2,500 for each community which is being used to reimburse Pliocene Ridge CSD for the firewise administration.

The online application to maintain firewise status was recently completed for 2022. Pike reported an investment of \$264,660 out of the \$3,139.40 required to maintain firewise status and Alleghany reported an investment of \$2,197.58 out of \$1,198.68 required. Investment is money spent for fire prevention work and actual work performed by residents (in-kind counted at \$27 per hour by firewise USA). I know from observation that a much larger investment was actually made in each community, but this is all that was reported. PLEASE REPORT YOUR WORK if you value firewise status for your community. Forms available online at: www.plioceneridge.org/firewise For questions email me at plioceneridge@gmail.com or leave a message at 530-288-0624.

Two other key pieces for maintaining firewise status are the 3-year action plan and the Community Assessment which must be updated every 5 years. For both the Pike and the Alleghany Firewise Communities, the action plans need to be updated in 2024 and the Community Assessments need to be updated in 2026.

The Sierra County Board of Supervisors recently submitted a grant request for \$100,000 to the Wildfire Recovery & Forest Resilience Grant Program for fuels reduction planning around the community of Forest City (within Pliocene Ridge CSD). The total project cost is \$111,500 and this is JUST for the environmental and planning work needed to have a “shovel-ready” project. Another application for funding for the actual fuels reduction work will be needed once the planning phase is complete. My understanding is that Forest City was chosen because previously completed planning work by the Forest Service helped it meet the application requirements.

This provides an idea of the hoops that must be jumped through to get funding for fuels reduction work. In my recent attempts to find funding for fuel reduction projects in Pike and Alleghany, it became apparent that the County’s now expired Hazard Mitigation Plan is a key piece needed to qualify for funding from the big pot of money held by the Calif. Dept. of Forestry. I understand that a technical support grant to update Sierra County’s Hazard Mitigation Plan is also in the works. Both Pliocene Ridge CSD and the Alleghany Water District submitted letters of support for that effort.

As I type this article on November 1, 2022 our first substantial rain is coming down, with snow expected in Alleghany by tonight. It looks like we can put another wildfire season behind us.