

November – December 2024

CHIEF'S MESSAGE

by Chief Eddie Dwyer



To The Community

There have been many rumors that the fire district is in turmoil. This can't be further from the truth. Yes, we are going through growing pains, which as I stated in an earlier Chief's report, would occur.

We have had considerable challenges this year from the retirement of Chief Rosevear, followed by the Crozier Fire, Prepositioned Task Force Deployments, Single-Resource Deployments, Staffing and Grant Compliance.

One Of the biggest issues being managed, is that prior to Chief Rosevear announcing his retirement, I paid for a Paramedic refresher program. It is an 8 week long intensive training program requiring 40 hours education for each session.

My original plan was to have it completed by May of this year. Due to the needs of the district, I had to delay trainings which were scheduled at in-state venues. I had to adapt my schedule, which required me to travel out of state, primarily to Michigan and Pennsylvania to complete the requirements of this course. This caused an exponential increase in cost for hotels and travel, forcing me to attend back-to-back sessions. All expenditures were paid out of pocket, and not being reimbursed, nor do I plan to request reimbursement for tuition or travel expenses to attend this course.

I chose this endeavor to ensure that, as a Paramedic, I am providing the best service to the community that I can. My goal always is to ensure that the best EMS and Fire Services be provided to the residents Mosquito. I have been in Detroit, Michigan for the last three weeks completing this course.

Prior to his retirement, Chief Rosevear established committees to assist in the administrative oversight of the fire district. These committees provide for writing and evaluation of the budget, longevity of the fire district, capital improvement and more.

Since taking on the position as Interim Chief of the fire district, my focus has been on operations, ensuring that the fire district is no longer reliant on a single person. Through training of our firefighters, recruiting former Volunteer Chief and command officers back to the fire district, we have changed the profile of the fire district.

Our personnel are now capable and equipped, with experience, and training, to manage many types of emergency incidents. They have learned the skills of emergency radio communication, assessment of emergent situations, and requesting appropriate external resources necessary for resolution of emergency events.

A recent call included a response to a resident experiencing a critical life-threatening medical emergency. Partnering with our Support Group medical cadre, Support Group helicopter LZ team,

the patient was transported to the appropriate hospital in the Sacramento area. The patient was receiving in-hospital emergency medical care 53 minutes following the activation of 911. These actions made considerable difference in the residents' recovery.

Earlier this year, our members were able to respond to a structure fire taking command, deploying hose lines, establishing water supply, communicating with Fire Dispatch at Camino, and giving direction to incoming resources, then extinguishing the fire with minimal damage to the house, leaving it habitable for the homeowner and family.

Though I responded from home, the fire was managed by our volunteer personnel. Each day, our focus is to continue to build upon the strengths of our members, increasing the capability with which they respond to emergencies in the community.

We have also focused on reconciling relations with community groups, seeing value in all who wish to provide a service to residents of the Mosquito Fire Protection District.

The administration of the fire district has a successful working model that has allowed me to focus on the operational needs of the fire district. Building the operational capability of the fire district, restructuring command, increasing the ability for response, maintenance and repair of fire assets has been and continues to be a priority. Servicing tools and equipment, increasing training, building mechanisms to increase income to the fire district through deployment of personnel and equipment, while increasing the ability of our personnel to earn a higher rate of income which does not impact our budget, are also all part of the operational build up.

The issues our operational ability faces should take little more than a year to resolve. We are on our way to fully integrating both administration and operations. It is my belief that with the actions taken so far, this endeavor should take about a year and a half. Once the integration of the administrative and operations functions occur, and as our in-district capability increases, it was my intent, if at all possible, to reduce the Fire Chief's position to a part time 20 – 30 hour work week, leaving the position scalable based on the needs of the community and changing conditions.

One of the committees serving the community was charged with identifying the needs of upper-level command, Their decision was to go to the outside to fill the Fire Chief's position. I informed the MFPD Directors in a meeting prior to my being placed in the position of Interim Chief, should they choose that direction, I will not apply. Once the notification is made that a new Chief has been hired. I will resign and immediately vacate my position.

Earlier this year, I made a promise to the community, I would remain in my position. I am basically a volunteer not bound by contract paid at a level just above minimum wage, I have remained in my position working 14-18 hours daily to achieve what is needed for the district.

Though recent actions taken negate my promise, I remain without contract. It is my intent to remain as interim chief if the MFPD Board of Directors wish, vacating the position on notification that a new Chief has been hired. It must be understood, this is not a resignation! That decision will be made when appropriate.

This letter is not written in anger, it must be stated I do not and will not fault the committee or the board for making the hard decision to go to the outside. They obviously believe my performance has not met the standards required to serve the community. As I have always said, the district

cannot be held hostage by a single person, which is why I have worked hard building the operational capability of our personnel. The community's needs must be the priority of any person sitting behind the Chief's desk.

I can only apologize to the community for my failure to properly serve all of you.

Events:

On November 16th DA's held a successful pancake breakfast, bringing in donations to assist the fire district in serving the community.

Public Safety and Training:

All future CPR Courses have been cancelled.

Support Group Training:

Monthly training on the first Saturday of each month.

Department Training and Safety:

Firefighters will undergo Low Angle Rope Rescue training December 4-6, this is the first step in becoming Rescue Systems Technicians,

Six MFPD Volunteer Members will undergo an IDLH Academy being held at El Dorado Hills Training Ground. This 8 week Academy beginning in January 2025 will provide personnel with the basic training necessary to enter the Life Hazardous Environment of a structure fire.

Operations Report:

A report on district asset repair needs will be provided in December.

Recruitment & Retention:

MFPD is recruiting for in district residents looking to participate as Volunteer

Firefighters. We will be sending new members to an IDLH Academy being held at El Dorado Hills Fire District Training Grounds, starting in January for 8 consecutive Saturdays. Dates to follow.

Requests For Service

Medical Calls:	7	Public Assist:	0
Motor Vehicle Accidents:	1	Smoke Check:	1
Debris Burns:	2		

Logistics:

Nothing to report.

Projected income earned by the fire district for participation in the state mutual aid system;

Crozier Fire: 12 days deployment. Vehicle rental and administrative fees equal roughly \$55,296.

Bridge Fire: 12 days deployment. Vehicle rental and administrative fees, equal roughly \$55,296.

Prepositions: 10 days deployment. Vehicle rental and administrative fees, equal roughly \$46,080.

Estimated Total: \$156,672

** This does not include employee fees and all are estimates of earnings. **

Fire Chief's Association / El Dorado County Regional Fire Authority:

The El Dorado County Regional Emergency Service Authority is in contract negotiations with the County. More info to follow in December.