REGULAR MEETING AGENDA

GEORGETOWN FIRE DISTRICT
Board of Directors Meeting
Station 61 – 6283 Main Street, Georgetown CA 95634

Thursday, January 12, 2023
9:00 A.M.

1. **CALL TO ORDER, ROLL CALL, AND PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

2. **ADOPTION OF AGENDA**

3. **PUBLIC COMMENT** – Any member of the public may address the Board on any matter within the jurisdictional authority of the District. Comments shall be limited to three minutes per person, or such other time limit as may be imposed by the President, to enable the Board to complete its agenda within a reasonable period.

4. **DIRECTORS ITEMS**

5. **CONSENT CALENDAR**

   A. **APPROVAL OF MINUTES**
      i. Minutes of December 8, 2022

   B. **FINANCIAL INFORMATION**
      i. County budget documents
      ii. Bills/Invoices review

6. **CHIEFS REPORT**

7. **PROPOSITION 4 SPENDING LIMIT**

   Recommended Action: Approve

8. **RESOLUTION TO HIRE RETIRED ANNUITANTS**

   Recommended Action: Approve

9. **ELECTION OF OFFICERS OF THE GOVERNING BOARD**

10. **FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS**

11. **PUBLIC CORRESPONDENCE**

12. **PUBLIC COMMUNICATION**

13. **NEXT MEETING DATE AND ADJOURNMENT** – Next Regular Meeting Thursday, February 9, 2023

In compliance with The Americans with Disabilities Act, if you are a disabled person and you need a disability-related modification or accommodation to participate in this meeting via teleconference, please contact Chief Glenn Brown by telephone at 530.333.4111. Requests must be made as early as possible and at least one-full business day before the start of the meeting.

In accordance with Government Code Section 54954.2(a), this agenda was posted on the District's front door at Georgetown Fire District, at 6281 Main Street, Georgetown, California, on January 9, 2023.

/s/ Glenn Brown	January 9, 2023
Chief Glenn W. Brown	Date

REGULAR BOARD MEETING MINUTES
GEORGETOWN FIRE DISTRICT

Board of Directors Meeting
Station 61 – 6283 Main Street, Georgetown CA 95634
December 8, 2022
9:00 A.M.

1. **CALL TO ORDER, ROLL CALL, AND PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

Roll Call:

Director Davis –	**Present**
Director Anderson –	**Present**
Director Williams –	**Present**
Director Brown –	**Absent**
Director Webb -	**Present**

Director Davis led the pledge of allegiance.

Also Present:
Fire Chief, Glenn Brown
Administrative Assistant, Laura Azevedo
Fire Staff: Andrew Gregory, Curtis Chabot, Tom McGrady, and Corinne Staves

2. **ADOPTION OF AGENDA**

Director Williams motioned to accept the agenda as presented. **Director Anderson** seconded the motion.

Roll Call:

Director Davis –	**Aye**
Director Anderson –	**Aye**
Director Williams –	**Aye**
Director Webb -	**Aye**

The motion passes.

3. **PUBLIC COMMENT** – Any member of the public may address the Board on any matter within the jurisdictional authority of the District. Comments shall be limited to three minutes per person, or such other time limit as may be imposed by the President, to enable the Board to complete its agenda within a reasonable period.

None was offered.

4. **DIRECTORS ITEMS**

None.

5. **CONSENT CALENDAR**

Director Davis motioned to accept the consent calendar as it was presented. **Director Williams** seconded the motion.

Roll Call:
Director Davis – Aye
Director Anderson – Aye
Director Williams – Aye
Director Webb - Aye

The motion passes.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:
Regular Meeting November 10, 2022

6. **CHIEFS REPORT**

Chief Brown updated the Board on many topics including budget, personnel, volunteers, apparatus, LAFCO's request for discussion on fire services in the County, policies and procedures, community activities, and many other topics.

7. **NEW BUSINESS**

A. California - Fire Code
Corrine Staves discussed a three-year study and proposed changes to the California Fire Code. The implementation date is July 2023. The study was conducted evaluating all counties and their service needs. The resulting Code adoption is an attempt to make the Code good for all. Corinne articulated that the code language is drafted so that the Chief has final authority to enforce sections.

B. Resolution 22-10A
Chief Brown discussed two drafts for the Memorandum of Understanding 22-10A for personnel benefits. Draft #1 resolves that the Board agrees to provide Lifetime Medical Benefits to all employees and their beneficiary, who were hired prior to January 1, 2020. Draft #2 resolves that the Board agrees to provide Lifetime Medical Benefits (including Medical, Dental, and Vision) to all employees and their beneficiary, who were hired prior to January 1, 2020.

Director Davis motioned to accept the draft #1 resolution as presented.
Director Anderson seconded the motion.

Roll Call:

Director Davis –	**Aye**
Director Anderson –	**Aye**
Director Williams –	**Aye**
Director Webb -	**Aye**

The motion passes.

ANNOUNCE CLOSED SESSION AND ADJOURN OPEN SESSION TO CLOSED SESSION

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8. **ADJOURN TO CLOSED SESSION**

A. Pursuant to Government Code 54956(d)(2), the Board will meet in Closed Session to consider potential litigation.

ADJOURN CLOSED SESSION AND OPEN REGULAR SESSION
REPORT OUT OF CLOSED SESSION

Direct Davis stated no action will be taken out of closed session.

9. **FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS**

- Fire Apparatus Report
- No letters but verbal acknowledgement of Mosquito Fire and Christmas Party accomplishments.

10. **NEWSPAPER ARTICLES / Social Media**

- The tree is coming
- A gift for GEOFire
- DOING MORE WITH LESS' Grants and volunteers give Georgetown Fire an edge
- County fire district fired up about insurance rates
- Camino man found dead day after crash
- Community invited to Mosquito Fire meeting
- Texas Hold'em success

Georgetown Gazette

- GEORGETOWN FIRE "Doing more with less"

Facebook

11. **PUBLIC CORRESPONDENCE**

None was presented

12. **NEXT MEETING DATE AND ADJOURNMENT** – Next Regular Meeting Thursday, January 12, 2023, at 9:00 A.M.

Director Williams motioned to adjourn the meeting. **Director Webb** seconded the motion.

Roll Call:

Director Davis –	**Aye**
Director Anderson –	**Aye**
Director Williams –	**Aye**
Director Webb -	**Aye**

The motion passes.

In compliance with The Americans with Disabilities Act, if you are a disabled person and you need a disability-related modification or accommodation to participate in this meeting via teleconference, please contact Chief Glenn Brown by telephone at 530.333.4111. Requests must be made as early as possible and at least one-full business day before the start of the meeting.

/s/ Glenn Brown

Chief Glenn W. Brown

Date

Chief's Report

January 12, 2023

A. Budget

We are working with the County on getting correct financial numbers. The County is behind in paying bills for all agencies. I would like to plan a budget workshop once the county and us get caught up.

B. Personnel

We have hired Josh Holtgrieve as a new Firefighter/Paramedic. He has completed his classes and is going through county precepting. Once completed, he will come on full-time.

One of our other new paramedics has been injured off duty and is off for 3 months or more.

You have a resolution to hire back 2 recent retirees' as Extra Help prior the normal 180 day waiting period.

Julie Medsger has been hired as our full-time Administrative Assistant. She is going through background and is scheduled to start around February 1, 2023. Laura and Brandi will stay on and provide on the job training and will then be available on an as needed basis.

C. Volunteers

Ken Pauley has been elected the new president and will be attending board meetings when he can to provide reports.

We are working with the volunteers on a plan for some added concrete and structures to the training area at #62

D. Apparatus Report

OES E4101 is still at Riverview for a blown head gasket.

WT 63 is still out of service. Repairs are being finalized and should be in service soon.

E263 is at Veerkamp's and will be picked up and returned soon.

The Side x side is in service and available for use at #61 – a full cab has been installed.

E. Facilities Report

We had some additional clean up completed at #62 and #64. Work was completed by our crews, Growlersburg and some citizens.

F. JPA Report

Mike Blankenheim has been elected Chairman and I have been elected Vice Chair.

G. Fire Authority

Nothing new to report.

H. Training

We have a joint training with Garden Valley this Saturday and plan more joint training in the future.

I. Grand Jury

Nothing new to report.

J. LAFCO

Nothing new to report.

K. Policies and Procedures

Delayed

L. Grants

We received official notification that we did not receive any FEMA grants this year. The new round of AFG grants has just opened and we are working on grants in conjunction with our JOA partners.

M. Community Activities

Great by all involved in the Christmas activities. The tree was successfully removed last week.

N. Fire Prevention

Nothing new to report.

O. Personal

I will be in AZ from Feb 24-27 and March 15-19

P. Special

Monday is a holiday

Staff will be reaching out to plan a negotiation session regarding benefits and other items.

We upstaffed (OES Paid) a 3-person engine over 4 ½ days (once for 2 days and again for 2 ½) for the recent storm activity. Crews had no major storm incidents. They did training, filled sandbags, and assisted with downed trees.

We assisted in the recent road closure on Volcanoville Road. The pavement is due to be completed tomorrow.

GEORGETOWN FIRE DISTRICT

Office Phone: 530-333-4111
Facsimile: 530-333-4020
www.georgetownfiredepartment.com

Post Office Box 420
6283 Main Street, Box 420
Georgetown, California 95634-0420

RESOLUTION 2022-13

WHEREAS the Board of Directors conducted a hearing on the appropriation limitation for Georgetown Fire Protection District on the 12th of January 2023; and,

WHEREAS the hearing was advertised and noticed as required by law; and,

WHEREAS the Board received testimony and other evidence regarding the appropriation limitation to be established for the Georgetown Fire Protection District.

NOW, THEREFORE, IT IS HEREBY RESOLVED by the Board of Directors of Georgetown Fire Protection District, that the Georgetown Fire Protection District appropriation limit for the 2022-2023 fiscal year, as described in Article XIII B of the State Constitution and implemented by Chapter 1205, Statutes of 1980 is the sum of $1,329,465.96 computed as follows,

$ 1,238,440.58	x	1.0735	=	$ 1,329,465.96
(2021-22 Appropriation Limit)				(2022-23 Appropriation Limit)

The foregoing resolution was passed and adopted by the Board of Directors of Georgetown Fire Protection District at a meeting of said Board held on the 12th day of January 2023, by the following vote:

AYES:
NOES:
ABSENT:
ABSTAINED:

President, Craig Davis
Georgetown Fire Protection District

Date

Fire Chief, Glenn Brown
Georgetown Fire Protection District

Date

RESOLUTION FOR 180-DAY WAIT PERIOD EXCEPTION

Gov. Code sections 7522.56 & 21224

Resolution Number 2023-01

January 12, 2023

WHEREAS, in compliance with Government (Gov.) Code section 7522.56 of the Public Employees' Retirement Law, the Georgetown Fire Protection District must provide CalPERS this certification resolution when hiring a retiree before 180 days has passed since their retirement date; and

WHEREAS, Rob Poseley, CalPERS ID 6376136542, and Corinne Staves, ID 7378951030, retired from Georgetown Fire Protection District in the positions of Engineer/Paramedic, effective October 7, 2022, and December 31, 2022, respectively; and

WHEREAS, Gov. Code section 7522.56 requires that post-retirement employment commence no earlier than 180 days after the retirement date, which is April 7, 2023 and July 1, 2023 respectively without this certification resolution; and

WHEREAS, Gov. Code section 7522.56 provides that this exception to the 180-day wait period shall not apply if the retiree accepts any retirement-related incentive; and

WHEREAS, the Georgetown Fire Protection District, the Georgetown Fire Protection District and Rob Poseley and Corinne Staves certify the Rob Poseley and Corinne Staves has not and will not receive a Golden Handshake or any other retirement-related incentive; and

WHEREAS, The Georgetown Fire Protection District hereby appoints Rob Poseley and Corinne Staves as extra help retired annuitants to perform the duties of the Part-Time Engineer/Paramedic for the Georgetown Fire Protection District under Gov. Code section 21224, effective January 12, 2023; and

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1 For California State University (CSU) academic retirees

2 For California State University (CSU) classified retirees

WHEREAS, the entire employment agreement, contract or appointment documents between Rob Poseley and Corinne Staves and the Georgetown Fire Protection District has been reviewed by this body and attached here in; and

WHEREAS, no matters, issues, terms or conditions related to this employment and appointment have been or will be placed on a consent calendar; and

WHEREAS, the employment shall be limited to 960 hours per fiscal year for all CalPERS employers; and

WHEREAS, the compensation paid to retirees cannot be less than the minimum nor exceed the maximum monthly base salary paid to other employees performing comparable duties, divided by 173.333 to equal the hourly rate; and

WHEREAS, the maximum base salary of this position is $8,345.31 and the hourly equivalent is $34.39, and minimum base salary for this position is $7,585.76 and the hourly equivalent is $31.26; and

WHEREAS, the hourly rate paid to Rob Poseley and Corinne Staves will be $34.49/hour; and

WHEREAS, Rob Poseley and Corinne Staves has not and will not receive any other benefit, incentive, compensation in lieu of benefit or other form of compensation in addition to this hourly pay rate; and

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED THAT the Georgetown Fire Protection District hereby certifies the nature of the appointment of Rob Poseley and Corinne Staves as described herein and detailed in the attached employment agreement/contract/appointment document and that this appointment is necessary to fill the critically needed position of Part-Time Engineer/Paramedic for the Georgetown Fire Protection District by January 12, 2023, because several full-time members are out on disability and/or deployment.

The foregoing resolution was passed and adopted by the Board of Directors of Georgetown Fire Protection District at a meeting of said Board held on the 12th day of January 2023, by the following vote:

AYES:
NOES:
ABSENT:
ABSTAINED:

President, Craig Davis Date
Georgetown Fire Protection District

Fire Chief, Glenn Brown Date
Georgetown Fire Protection District

GEORGETOWN GAZETTE ■ Thursday, December 15, 2022

O, Christmas tree!

Georgetown's Christmas tree is plucked from the Blodgett Forest Research Station and hauled to town on Georgetown Precast owner Ronnie Beam's crane truck, an annual tradition.

o courtesy of Ken Pauley

The towering tannenbaum is dropped off on Main Street to be decorated before the Parade of Lights.

Courtesy

LIGHTEN UP

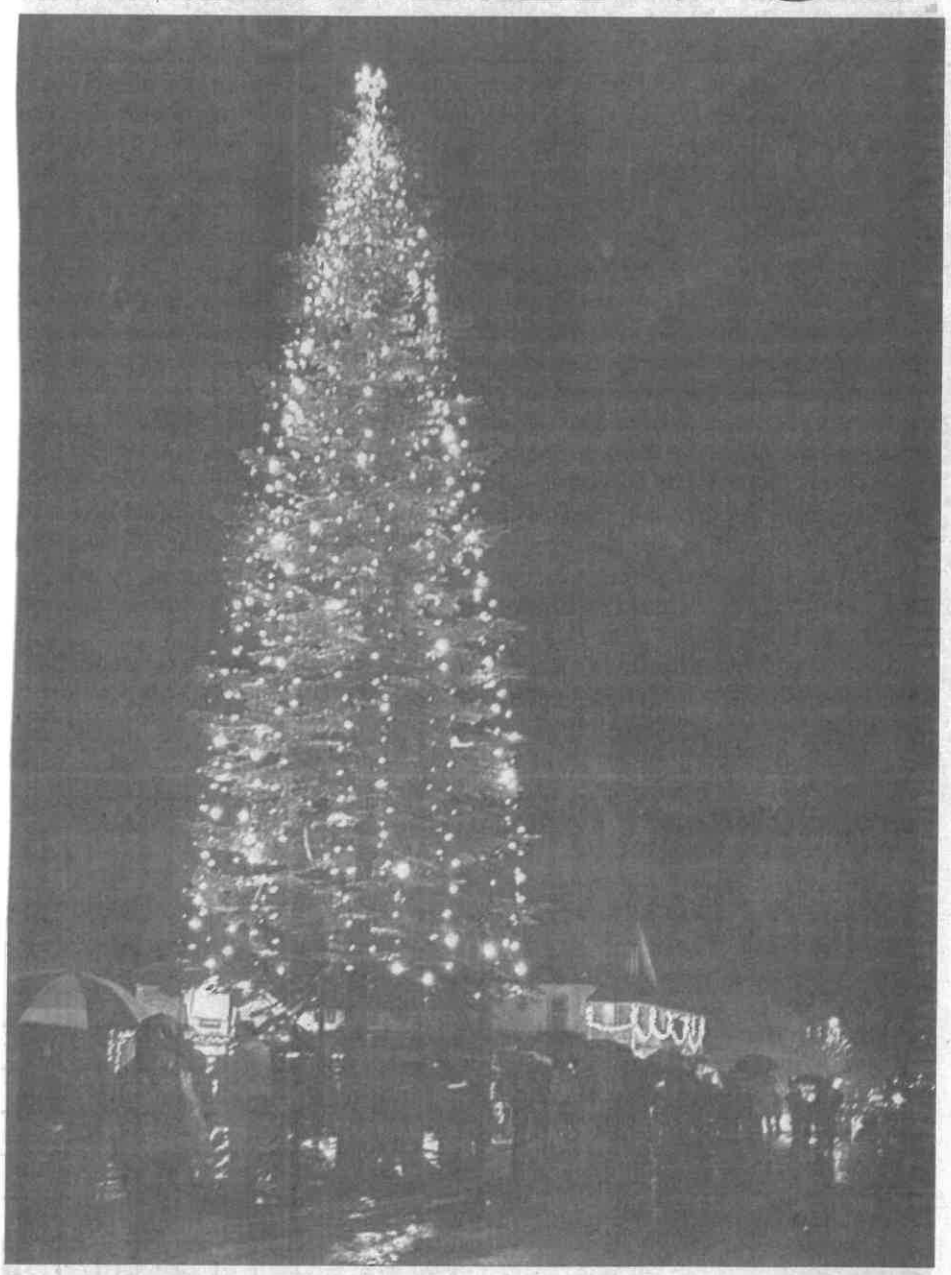

Photo courtesy of Ken Pauley

The community of Georgetown braved the rain Dec. 5 for it's annual Parade of Lights and official lighting of the Christmas tree on Main Street. Each year the tree is cut from the Blodgett Forest Research Station and hauled to town on Georgetown Precast owner Ronnie Beam's crane truck.

Photo courtesy of Micah Reilly

Santa and friends get a ride with Micah's Rides and Deliveries in the Parade of Lights.

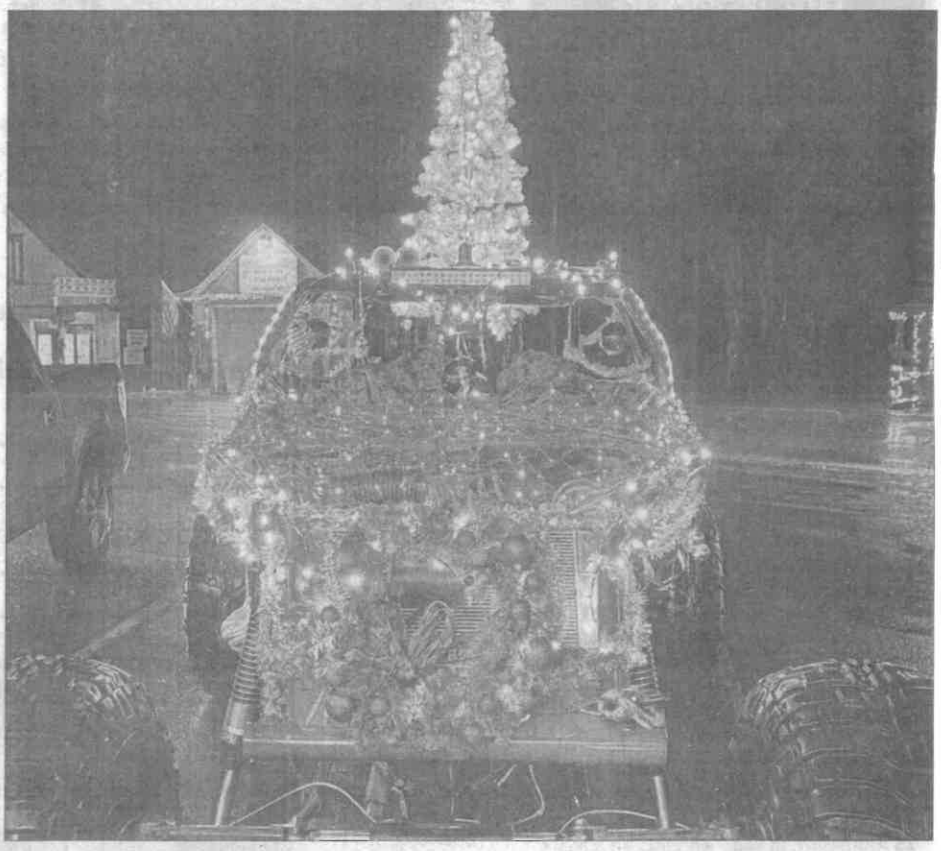

Photo courtesy of Bret Preble

Georgetown residents Bret and Traci Preble's off-road buggy was brightly shining for festivities.

Courtesy photos

Georgetown Divide Public Utilities District Directors Michael Saunders, Donna Seaman and Robert Stovall, from left, take their oath of office, administered by El Dorado County Superior Court Commissioner Gary Slossberg.

GDPUD reorganizes board

Georgetown Divide Public Utility District
News release

The Georgetown Divide Public Utility District Board of Directors' Dec. 13 meeting began with re-elected and newly elected officials taking their oath of office.

El Dorado County Superior Court Commissioner and Judge-elect Gary Slossberg administered the oath of office to Michael Saunders, who was re-elected to a second term; Donna Seaman, an appointed director elected to her first full term after being appointed in February of 2021; and Robert Stovall, a former member of the Finance Committee elected to fill the seat that opened when appointed Director Gerry Stewart chose not to run for office.

Mitch MacDonald, left, follows Michael Saunders, right, as GDPUD's next board president.

During the board reorganization, Director Stovall received a proclamation recognizing his service as a member of the Finance Committee. Due to his election to the board, it was noted he will resign from his committee commitment.

Outgoing Director Gerry Stewart, who could not be present, was honored with a "leadership appreciation" plaque in grateful recognition of his service as an appointed director since early 2021, along with his earlier tenure from 1974-80, where he served as board president two years.

Before moving to the selection of officers for 2023, outgoing board President Saunders stated, "I have been honored to serve as president the past two years during the challenging time of the COVID pandemic,

See GDPUD, page 3

GDPUD Continued from 1

board and staff turnover and the Mosquito fire. Rates have remained frozen; all directors are now able to request items be added to the agenda; and the study of the Auburn Lake Trails Community Disposal System was approved, to name a few (accomplishments). Thanks again to the community, the hard work of the district staff, and the service of the board members. I look forward to working with all of you."

General Manager Nicholas Schneider acknowledged the recently adopted board policy providing for the rotation of officer positions among directors. After this occurred the board chose new officers for the coming year — Mitch MacDonald will be stepping into the role of president, while Donna Seaman will assume the vice president role. Mike Thornbrough will remain treasurer for the district.

Furthermore, Directors Stovall and MacDonald were selected to serve as liaison members of the Finance Committee, and Directors Seaman and Thornbrough as liaison members of the Irrigation Committee.

The board also reaffirmed the following ad-hoc committees and director assignments:

Grants Committee: Stovall and Saunders

Policy Committee: Seaman and Saunders

Audit Committee: Thornbrough and Saunders

Labor Negotiations: MacDonald and Thornbrough

Board President MacDonald stated, "I am honored to have the opportunity to serve at the gavel. We have developed a great team of motivated and enthusiastic staff, community volunteers and board members who work synergistically well together as a cohesive team. I want to thank Director Saunders for being an outstanding role model in leadership and encouraging me to prepare for the responsibilities of the position."

In addition to receiving monthly financial, informational and committee reports, the board took the following additional actions:

Appointed Martha Helak to the Finance Committee. The Board interviewed Helak, who is employed as a government relations analyst with the Sacramento Municipal Utility District.

Introduced and received the first reading of Ordinance 2022-03. The ordinance amends and replaces Ordinance 2015-02, involving theft of water and tampering with district facilities. This update came as the state Senate passed Senate Bill 427 that updates the fine amounts available when water meter tampering or water theft occurs.

Approved district membership to the Regional Water Authority, the California Municipal Utilities Association and the Community Water Systems Alliance. These memberships will help the GDPUD stay in front of legislative issues as well as provide a platform for the district to receive regional support when pursuing grant applications.

Authorized the release of a request for qualifications for consulting services to provide federal advocacy services. With the recent fires and infrastructure funding that is available, it was advised by staff to pursue representation that can ensure the district has a seat at the table when funding and grants are being passed out.

Approved development of a request for proposals for consulting services to develop a water transfer policy. With the changing landscape of water in California it was recommended by staff to develop a water transfer policy that will help to ensure the GDPUD and its customers will be informed about how and potentially when any future water transfers could take place.

Approved the issuance of a request for bids for paving services. This is necessary because as GDPUD repairs water leaks or upgrades infrastructure it is important to ensure the safety of the roads in the district. Staff will post the request for bids on the eBidboard, as well as seek qualified companies to submit bids that will provide on-call service utilized as needed.

Approved the sale of surplus equipment. GDPUD recently posted a couple of surplus items on the GovDeals auction site. The district was able to sell its 1991 Case 580 Super K backhoe for $13,000 and a 2006 Chevy Colorado pickup for just over $1,000. Staff has identified additional equipment that has met its useful life span and will be placing it on the same auction site. Find the online auction at gd-pud.org/auction- items.

Courtesy photo

On Dec. 10 the Unsung Heroes put on a dinner at the VFW in Georgetown for the Volcanoville families who lost their homes in the Mosquito Fire. This is a photo of some of the families, along with members of Unsung Heroes and volunteers who helped with the dinner. They gave each family $1,600 and Mike Sproull of the Food Bank of El Dorado County gave each family $250 in gift cards. He will be sending out an additional check to each family for an additional amount from another fundraiser.

Who are the Unsung Heroes of Georgetown?

Kathleen Mendenhall
Staff writer

The Divide has plenty of big hearts and capable hands. What was missing was the needle and thread to stitch them all together. The Unsung Heroes of Georgetown is doing just that.

Alissa Cimino, owner of Gas & Go, stepped up during "Snowmageddon," when the community so desperately needed a guide to help organize and coordinate volunteers to get donations and distribute blankets, batteries, food, flashlights, phone chargers, gas for generators and so much more. Patrick McGinnis, owner of McGinnis Lock & Key, has now joined Alissa in the coordination of Unsung Heroes, along with Mary Lusi. These three form the core management of Unsung Heroes with an army of volunteers always ready to step up to help.

Alissa says, "The plan with Unsung Heroes is to be boots on the ground in the first hours after an incident." They have local eyes and know what is immediately needed and often are able to handle what is needed without governmental red tape.

Unsung Heroes operates daily in the background of Georgetown life. However, there was another big need for the group after the Mosquito Fire. Thirteen homes in the Vocanoville area completely burned during that fire. Originally it was thought to be 20, however, after extensive research they found the loss to be 13.

Unsung Heroes has the knack for pushback. "No" is an unacceptable word and the more they hear that word, the stronger their resolve. That is what led to Day on the Green held Nov. 5 at VFW Park in Georgetown, an event sponsored by Unsung Heroes as well as the VFW of Georgetown.

Day on the Green began as a simple idea of a few bands volunteering to perform with the proceeds going to families who lost their homes. The event grew to a 12-hour festival, the kind that has never been seen in Georgetown before. The day was met with a rain storm but that didn't deter the 325 people who attended.

Scott Vickery built the stages. Scott and Patrick found Volcanoville Inn's original delivery truck and had it transported to VFW Park. Buck Earnest, a local favorite with the Rubber Bullet Band, made the commitment for his own group and put out

See **HEROES**, page 4

Heroes *Continued from 1*

a call to other local bands, including the Georgetown Boys and Fornis. Headliners were the Good Old Boys, Cash Profits and Cliff Huey. Innervoice Media from Auburn offered a production video of the event. They also made an offer to all bands performing at the event a full recording session of the bands at a discount.

There were two stages going all through the event. Musicians from the bands not only played but helped set up stages. Charlee Simons was the announcer for the event. The Georgetown Hotel donated all rooms for the big, out-of-town groups. Food trucks Fuelin' the Rubicon and Shandey's showed up and donated their time. Face painter Lauren Williams shared her services. Ken at Gas & Go contacted MarVal Manager Troy Neidigh, who arranged for more than 70% of the food to be donated for the event. Local wineries and Holiday Market donated ample amounts of wine. Divide Supply donated two electric lawnmowers and purchased $400 worth of T-shirts. Georgetown Hardware donated a generator, Garden Valley Feed and Hardware donated an impressive tool kit, El Dorado Disposal donated a debris bin for the raffle and provided free dumpsters at the event and the Lutheran Church in Auburn organized all their parishes to donate

Unsung Heroes has also offered to return when it is time to clean up the fire-razed properties in Volcanoville. Jeepers Jamboree donated a Jeepers trip, Kahuna Land Massage donated a massage, Seaquest donated a complete animal encounter visit and Last Chance Repair donated a certificate for a repair on a small motor. Wilkinson Portables donated porta potties and only charged for the cleaning, which Becker Law Group and McNicholas & McNicholas, the Mosquito Fire attorneys, paid for half of while also also donating $3,000.

Knee Deep Brewery and BarmHaus Brewery donated kegs, the Georgetown Distillery donated a gift certificate, White Hot Tees out of Placerville donated all Mosquito Fire shirts, VFW donated the park, Terry's Pizza donated pizza, Byron Pethman donated sound and light for the stages and there were unlimited volunteers who, in spite of the rain, helped throughout the day.

The company who does tent rentals in Garden Valley supplied tents, enabling the event to go on in the rain. Two groups also did substantial work. Mountain Enterprises donated a full crew who groomed the whole park and Golden Sierra Jr. Grizzlies cleaned the park next day. Chanzilla videotaped the event and it can be seen on Facebook. The reports were that the event went off without a hitch. Law enforcement paid visits to check in and were impressed with the amazing results

This event was a labor of love and determination. Pat McGinnis said he spent an average of 10 hours a day organizing. It is difficult to even figure out how much time Alissa spent. In the end the proceeds from the event were more than $20,000 and all proceeds will be given to the 13 families who lost their homes.

On Dec. 10 there will be a special dinner at the VFW where the families will be presented checks. There is no criteria for their spending this money. They lost their homes and the community wants to give back. Extended family, friends and representatives from Georgetown and Garden Valley fire departments, El Dorado County Sheriff Office and Food Bank of El Dorado County will be present.

Georgetown Fire Chief Glenn Brown has been so inspired b the work done throug Unsung Heroes that he is working on re-establishing a Community Response Team.

And what does the future hold for Unsun Heroes? The sky is the limit. Each stitch sewn joining the hear and hands of the community continues to strengthen the resolve of the group and the community it supports.

Photos courtesy of El Dorado County Department of Transportation

Construction crews build a rock-lined ditch on the south side of the new crossing between Placerville and Mosquito.

New bridge to Mosquito finding its feet

Eric Jaramishian
Staff writer

Groundwork has begun for the new Mosquito Bridge with grading for access areas and construction of abutments and piers under way.

El Dorado County Department of Transportation Director Rafael Martinez gave the Board of Supervisors an update on the project Dec. 6.

New road alignment on the north side of the bridge and minor widening improvements along the existing roadway are taking place. Foundations for the construction support platforms have been placed.

Construction crews are also drilling foundations for bridge trestles on the north side of the canyon. The trestles will be used to hoist construction equipment in the air and give workers access to locations where the abutments will be built.

A drainage system is part of the foundation work, Martinez said.

"It is a very daunting and difficult task but one that is very capable for our contractors and current staff," Martinez told the board, adding that major construction is expected to commence in spring 2023.

In a hopeful timeframe, Martinez noted the project could be done in as soon as two years but also anticipated it could take three years to complete, as projected before the start of the massive construction project.

"We are fortunate we have a very good contractor on board. We just might make it in two years," Martinez said.

The county hired Shimmick Construction Company to build the $93 million bridge. Martinez told the board previously, construction of the bridge is the largest capital improvement project in county history.

The current bridge has historically connected Placerville and Swansboro/Mosquito communities since 1867. When the new bridge is complete, which will span from ridgetop to ridgetop, the historical bridge will be open for pedestrian and cyclist use.

■ See **BRIDGE**, page 4

The ridgetop-to-ridgetop Mosquito Bridge project is seen from the air. The new bridge to Mosquito will rise some 400 feet over the historical bridge.

Martinez recommended making an addendum to the environmental impact report to add a concrete batch plant close to the construction location. The board approved the addendum in a 4-0 vote. Supervisor Wendy Thomas was absent from voting.

"The amount of concrete that is going to be needed at this location is immense, a magnitude of scale that we have never had in El Dorado County," Martinez said. "To be able to provide that many loads of concrete from one or two suppliers would pose a huge strain on the county's network circulation system."

He told supervisors impacts to roadways will still be prevelant, including road closures up to 10 weeks per year. Those closures will coincide with closures for the existing annual Mosquito Bridge maintenance that occurs during the summer.

During those closures, residents will have to use Rock Creek Road to get to Swansboro and Mosquito.

"I highly encourage all our residents to use our websites. That is where all the data is in terms of scheduling, timelines and delays," Martinez said.

The link to the Mosquito Bridge website for more information can be found atbit.ly/3uyry4n.

"We recognize it is going to be a lot of work but I'm looking forward to seeing this move forward and getting completed in maybe two years instead of three," said District 1 Supervisor John Hidahl.

GEORGETOWN GAZETTE

YEAR 141, NO. 51 SERVING THE GEORGETOWN DIVIDE SINCE 1880 THURSDAY, DECEMBER 22, 2022 | 50¢

Mosquito Fire debris removal estimated at $5M

Eric Jaramishian
Staff writer

El Dorado County is starting its bidding process to find a company to remove debris left in the Mosquito Fire's path. The forest fire in September burned more than a dozen homes in the Volcanoville area. All said and done, debris removal is expected to total $5 million.

Environmental Management Director Jeffrey Warren told the Board of Supervisors Dec. 6 the county has six months from the time California's governor declared a state of emergency due to the Mosquito Fire to finish county-led debris removal. That declaration came Sept. 8. Recent storm patterns are also prompting county staff to make haste contracting with potential debris-removal groups.

"Time is of the essence, that is why we are making the requests from the Chief Administrative Office to be able to execute that to avoid coming back to the board and delay the time," Warren said.

Unlike with the Caldor Fire, the county will lead the program, which will begin its second phase — removal of ash, debris and compromised concrete foundations — once the county accepts a bid for the work.

Contaminated soil testing and erosion control will also take place and county staff will hire a team of consultants to assist in completing debris removal.

The CAO is taking bids for the hazardous materials removal of no more than $3 million.

"What is different from last year to this year is that we will be receiving technical assistance from (the California Office of Emergency Services), so we still have Cole Glenwright and Johnathan Bell to help us out, the ones who have been with us through the Caldor Fire," Warren said.

Officials reported they have not heard if the county will receive funding from the Federal Emergency Management Agency's California Disaster Assistance Act via a presidential declaration but will move forward with paying for debris removal. Monies will come from the General Fund.

An alternative debris removal program is an option for fire victims who wish not to participate in the county-led program, in which property owners must hire a qualified contractor and environmental consultants at their own expense and adhere to the state's standards. Clean-up must be reviewed by the Environmental Management Department.

Warren also requested the county contract with the California Association of Environmental Health Administrators. With the county-led program, no state liaisons from last year's fire disaster are helping, according to Warren.

"They have retired directors we would

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be able to contract to come back and assist the county in running the debris removal operations center team," he explained.

The environmental health liaisons would work with property owners and the county, taking on such tasks as collecting insurance information. $60,000 in Environmental Management funds will be used to contract for these services.

For monitoring and site assessment, supervisors approved a contract with engineering and consulting firm Tetra Tech Inc. That agreement has a $2-million price tag.

"Tetra Tech's response has been reviewed and found to be adequately meeting the county's needs," Warren said, noting the firm is recommended by the state for a fire the size of the Mosquito Fire.

Debris recovery operations crews have focused their initial scope to minimize the time debris ash is exposed to rainstorms. Warren told the board hazard trees will be addressed at another time.

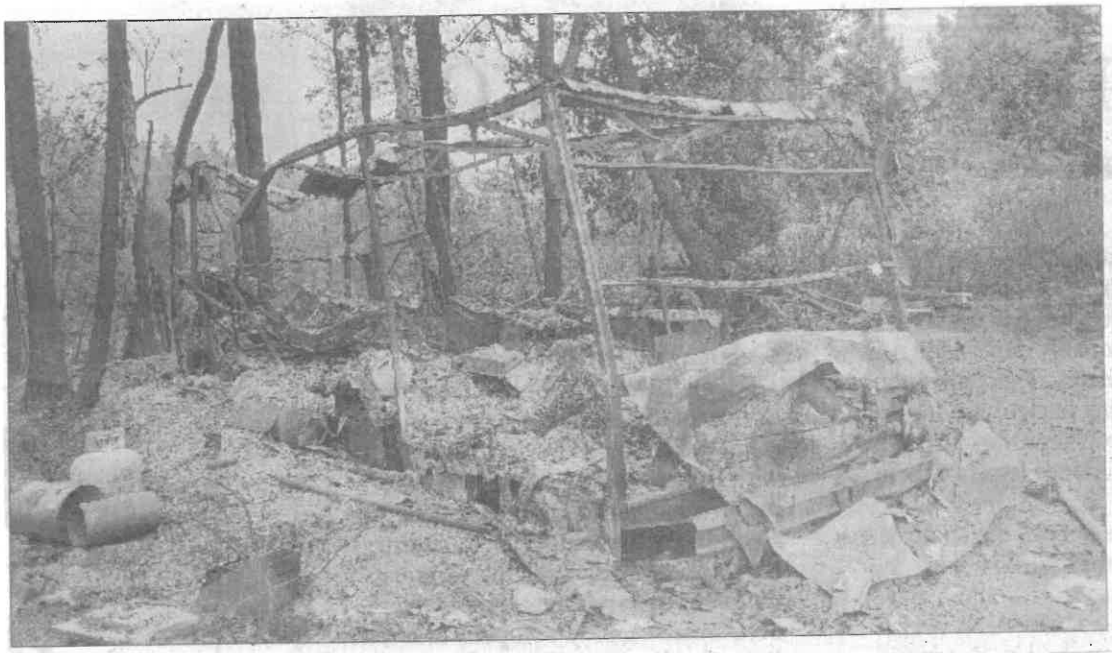
"The hazard trees are a hazard within the first five years to fall on the public right of away or cause some harm but we want to focus on debris removal at this time," Warren said.

Tree removal will be addressed at another board meeting, according to Warren.

El Dorado County Transportation Department Director Rafael Martinez reported to the board there was no significant damage to county-maintained roads. Board Chair and District 4 Supervisor Lori Parlin requested staff look into an inquiry from a Volcanoville resident about a private road in Mosquito damaged by heavy equipment.

The board voted to approve all matters relating to the debris removal in a 4-0 vote, with Supervisor Wendy Thomas absent from the meeting.

The Mosquito Fire burned more than 76,700 acres of land between Sept. 6 and Oct. 22.



Removal of Mosquito Fire debris in Volcanoville could cost as much as $5 million.

Photo courtesy of El Dorado County

Courtesy photo

On Dec. 10 the Unsung Heroes put on a dinner at the VFW in Georgetown for the Volcanoville families who lost their homes in the Mosquito Fire. This is a photo of some of the families, along with members of Unsung Heroes and volunteers who helped with the dinner. They gave each family $1,600 and Mike Sproull of the Food Bank of El Dorado County gave each family $250 in gift cards. He will be sending out an additional check to each family for an additional amount from another fundraiser.

Unsung Heroes help Mosquito Fire victims

Odin Rasco
Staff writer

When hardship hits, local communities come together to help those in need.

A community group on the Divide known as the Unsung Heroes teamed up with the Food Bank of El Dorado County Dec. 10 at the Veterans of Foreign Wars Hall in Georgetown to provide dinner and relief to people affected by the Mosquito Fire.

Outside it was a stormy evening but the VFW Hall had warm food and smiling faces as a lasagna dinner was served, made from ingredients supplied by the food bank and prepared by the Unsung Heroes. The meal wasn't the only thing provided — a total sum of more than $20,000 raised by the Unsung Heroes and by the community at large was given to those who had lost their homes in the fire. Food bank founder Mike Sproull also handed each fire victim a gift card for $250, with assurance more support was on the way soon.

The Unsung Heroes are a group of Divide locals whose mission is to provide help and support to its community in times of need. They have run blankets and generators to locals during snowstorms and helped clean up the Volcanoville area after the recent fire, among other good deeds.

Members of the Unsung Heroes and Georgetown Fire Department Chief Glenn Brown spoke at the dinner, providing heartwarming words of appreciation to the community.

Courtesy photos

Members of the Georgetown Fire Department gather to celebrate the holidays.

Three long term personnel who retired this year, Scott Gosselin, Rob Poseley and Corrine Staves, were given custom wooden U.S. Flag plaques.

Georgetown Fire celebrates holidays in style

News release

Georgetown Fire Chief Glenn Brown says, "This never gets old ... every year at the Georgetown Fire Department Christmas party we dress up in our finest 1854 (year we were founded) dress uniforms, have a wonderful dinner (thanks Buckeye restaurant) and celebrate the amazing current and former members of GEO Fire."

The party was Dec. 12.

"This year unit citation certificates were given to all who participated in the Mosquito Fire response that ravaged our community and had us all evacuated for almost two weeks," continues Brown.

Three long-term personnel who retired this year — Scott Gosselin, Rob Poseley and Corrine Staves — were honored with custom wooden U.S. flag plaques.

Christmas presents such as "Volcanoville strong" T-shirts were given out. Volcanoville saw 36 structures lost to the Mosquito Fire.

Brown notes what is most important, "hugs, good wishes and great camaraderie was had and 2022, that started with Snowmaggedon, had COVID throughout and the Mosquito Fire toward the end was put to bed," commented Brown.

GEORGETOWN GAZETTE

THURSDAY, DECEMBER 29, 2022

Behind the scenes of the Mosquito Fire with Mrs. Brown's sixth-grade class

Black Oak Mine Unified School District
News release

The sixth grade class at the Georgetown School of Innovation started the month of September thinking they would be doing a photojournalism project. However, after being evacuated from school and many of the students having their own families evacuated, they came back and decided to change their project to involve the Mosquito Fire.

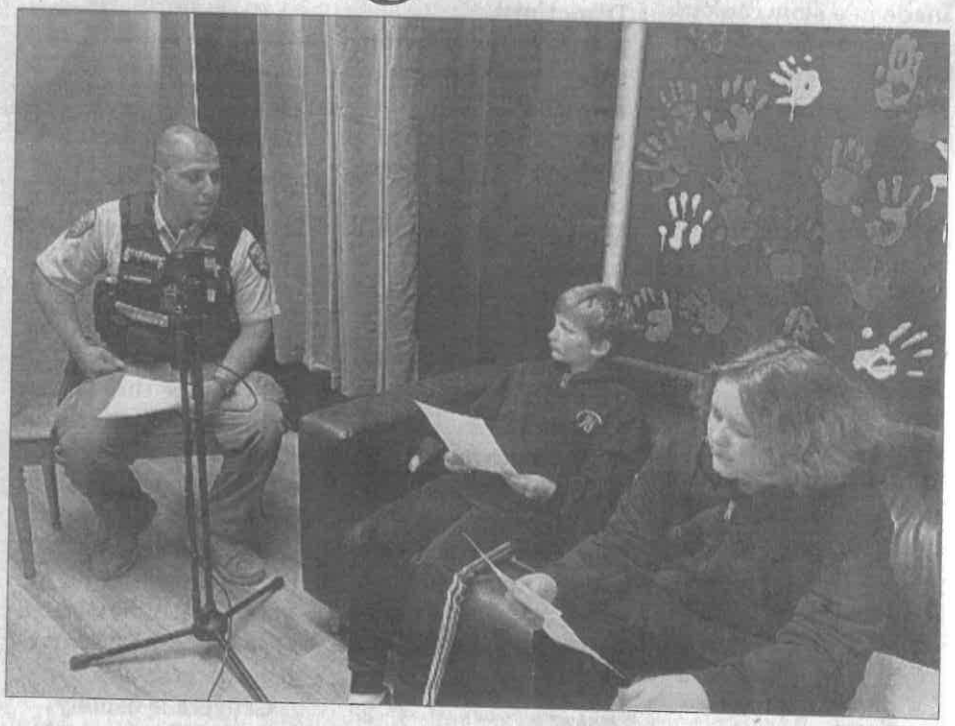
They decided they wanted to create StoryCorp type podcasts about different agencies that helped with the Mosquito Fire. The class came up with 10 different agencies to interview, from the Georgetown Fire Department ("Hometown Heroes," episode 1), to the Georgetown Divide Public Utility District ("Unsung Heroes," episode 5), to Animal Control ("Animals on the Loose," episode 9), to pilots ("Wings of Fire," episode 3) and everything in between.

Students broke into 10 groups and immediately started creating interview questions tailored to each agency. They recorded their interviews with the help of Cody Diamond of the Boys and Girls Club in the newly created sound booth at the Georgetown Club House.

Sixth-grader Haven Bailey said, "The best part was doing the interviews and getting together to create a story that others can enjoy."

Many of the interviews ended up being 30-40 minutes long. The students were then tasked with taking these interviews and editing them down into a five-minute story. For many this was the hardest part of the project. They chose titles for their

■ See **CLASS**, page 6



Courtesy photos

Sixth-grade students Jaxon Kozicki and Bryce Reynolds interview George Madaryan, the local El Dorado County sheriff's deputy.

Class *Continued from 1*

episodes, interesting quotes to pull out, created another script and then headed back into the sound booth to record a second time.

When everything was done each group had an amazing StoryCorp highlighting their agency complete with music and an introduction. The podcasts can be streamed at gtcubs.bomusd.org by clicking on the "Behind the Scenes of the Mosquito Fire" link near the top right side of the page.

The community, families and interviewees were all invited to come see the final product and listen to episodes as well as presentations in November. It was a great turnout and made everything come full circle for the students. They were so incredibly proud of their work and so excited when the agencies returned to view the final product.

Sixth-grade students Daniel Justice, Iris Schwartz and Jamaica Hall show off thei final project to Georgetown Fire Department personnel, who the episode is based or