



Columbia College Fire Technology

Advisory Committee Meeting Minutes March 19, 2024 at 7:30AM

Invited: Shane Warner, Andrew Van Hoogmoed, Mark Ferreira, Al Brondolo, Aimee New, Brian Wilkes, Nick Ohler, R. Dickinson, Andy Murphy, Mike Schmidt, Matt Gilmore, James Klyn, Bill Barteau, Jen Fraser, Kevin Anderson, Brandon Price, Neil Gamez, Nathan Frankhauser, Pete Ryan, Mickey Brunelli, Kurt Rhoades, Robert Laeng, Danese Pimentel, Molly Day, Mike Johnson, Brian Elting, Rebecca Johnson, Chris Shore, Justin Chaplin, Mario Torres, Scott Herzog, Mackenzie Greene, Jacob Trevino, Lee Sands, Louis Millis, Jeff Santi, Bridget Pisciotta, Jim Scales

Those in Attendance: Shane Warner, Andrew Van Hoogmoed, Jen Fraser, Brandon Price, Michael Schmidt, Neil Gamez, McKenzie Greene, Bridget Pisciotta, Jake Trevino, Rebecca Johnson, Jim Scales, Chris Shore, Kevin Anderson, Abby Sunday, Mike Keegan

Welcome and Introductions

New Business

- Fire Academy Updates – Spring 2024: Currently in week 10 with 24 students. Accreditation is complete with all approvals and will renew in 5 years (2029). 25 candidates hired at Merced City Fire Department and five are Columbia College Fire Academy graduates.
- Fire Program Growth and Outreach Efforts: Currently we have CCAP courses at Sonora and Oakdale High School, as well as an articulation agreement with Mariposa High School. Pine Grove is trying to launch a Fire 1 course. Amador and Argonaut High Schools are merging which is causing some complications and delays for the CCAP courses to start. The Fire Program is very active in recruitment with participation in career fairs, on campus tours and focusing on positive customer service when interacting with interested students. Forestry Corps (short term occupational training program) qualifications through MLJT will continue all next year. This program has shown viability of the Columbia College Wildland Program. Would like to see Heavy Equipment coursework at Columbia College. Sierra Resource Management is a partner in the On-The-Job-Training. A new excavator/masticator is going to arrive any day. The next CAL FIRE grant has the potential to purchase simulators. The CC President has secured 2 million for facility pre-construction efforts. There are CERF grants and catalyst funds available as well. Sierra Nevada Alliance fellows are also available for extra program support.

- Wildland Fire Program
 - Curriculum/Certificate of Achievement: Certificate of Achievement is available for review and discussion. The Certificate of Achievement opportunity will become active in the Fall of 2025. Concern was expressed about the name and numbering system not aligning with the National Wildfire Coordinating Group (NWCG).
 - Advisory Committee Recommendation: The Fire Technology Advisory Committee approved a motion to move forward with a recommendation to the Curriculum Committee for the attached Wildland Fire Certificate of Achievement.

- Local Fire Agency Updates
 - US Forest Service: Overall 9 engines instead of 12 engines due to lack of quality candidates. 1 hot shot crew, fuels dozer module, and a helicopter, SERAL Project next phase will be approved in June. Round two will move towards the Emigrant Wilderness in Tuolumne County. Local classes available in training, dispatch, online portal being used and would like to collaborate classes. Training calendar will be sent out to advisory committee following this meeting.
 - CAL FIRE: TCU Hiring, hand crew hiring, fully staff, 22 engines, all hand crews, 2 helicopters, 2 air tankers. Another round of Chief and Captain hiring is taking place.
 - TCFD: Going well. Working though budget issues. The new Columbia Station plans have been approved and could take 1-2 years to complete. Contract for the CAL FIRE staff at Station 79 in the process of being signed for a two-year extension. Two more Chief positions approved. Overall state of the unit is good.
 - Twain Harte Fire Department: Increase in monthly Stipend for Interns from \$500 to \$1000.
 - EMS: Have been working on updating curriculum on a variety of courses. Received one-time funding to purchase a ambulance simulator for in the classroom, three Simulaids and additional supplies. Would like to work toward a potential paramedic program. PSFA finally approved through county. Would like to offer an additional EMT course, but there is not enough Adventist Health Sonora (AHS) clinical support for student hours. High School program needs funding for supplies and will work with the CTE Division to secure.
 - Community Education: Explanation of the program, courses available and ideas for future courses welcome.

- State Fire Training Testing / Evaluators / Interest in Evaluator, Ethics, RIO class: Columbia College Fire Program is willing to support those interested in becoming an evaluator and has written six more evaluator letters to SFT in an effort to get more available evaluators during skills testing.

- Academic Counseling: The Counseling Department offers academic counseling with students on an individual level. Have seen a rise in Credit for Prior Learning (CPL) applications and view it as an indicator of degree completion for students. Basic needs services are also available for students that include food, scholarships, grants, DSPS, housing, and health services.

Old Business

- Regional Training Facility at Columbia College Campus – Update: Needs to find a location. Looking into participating in a “road show” to look at other facilities. Contra Costa County was suggested as a location to add to the list of locations.

Announcements

- Fire Academy Career Fair @ Sonora City on April 25th
- Graduation is May 2nd at 6pm in Oak Pavilion
- Questions or Comments: Thank you for your collaboration and supporting the Fire Program.

Adjourn Meeting @ 10:00am