

**Contra Costa County Public Safety Support Services Association**  
**MEETING MINUTES**  
**March 20, 2023 1000-1200 Hours**  
**Via Zoom Meeting**

**Call to Order:**

*Captain John Bensley called the meeting to order*

**Pledge of Allegiance**

*Led by Captain Jon Bensley*

**Attendees:**

- *Jon Bensley Captain Moraga Orinda FPD*
- *Jim Howard CCCFPD Battalion Chief (Retired)*
- *Chris Harder Captain San Ramon Valley Fire (Retired)*
- *Mario Ferrer Battalion Chief Chevron Fire*
- *Nick Vleisides, Chaplin San Ramon Valley Fire, San Ramon PD, Contra Costa County Sheriff*
- *Chris Hummel Captain CCCFPD*
- *Katy Himsl Fire Medic Moraga Orinda Fire*
- *Andy Kalenian Moraga Orinda Fire*
- *David Hood Engineer El Cerrito Fire.*
- *Damian Bannister San Ramon Valley Fire*
- *Melinda Drayton Retired Deputy Chief Oakland Fire, First Responder Wellness Center*
- *Brian Helmick Deputy Fire Chief CCCFPD*

- **Introductions:**

General introductions were made to introduce everyone

**Guest Speaker**

Melinda Drayton talked about a proactive approach to wellness. There should be no borders when it comes to peer support and behavioral health. She talked about the support they received from peer support around the state after the Ghost Ship Fire in Oakland. She spent a year and half developing a binder of resources to make sure there would be no delay in treatment because of a lack of resources. Personally, she comes from a family with mental health challenges with two suicides, including her dad and aunt, so suicide prevention is near and dear to her heart. She recently met with a department where during a course of a members career, the member experienced 12 suicides in their department.

The Counseling Team International (TCTI) provides services for peer support, team training, CISM, pre employment. They compete for departments who are suffering with EAP programs in areas for first responders. SHIFT Wellness specializes in training and education and has a catalog of classes for training and retreats. They range about \$1000 dollars a day for retreats. The Wellness Treatment Center is based in Newport Beach and does not turn away members needing help. During Phase 1 of treatment

includes residential and care facilities, they will enter into a home that has a doctor, nurse practitioner, therapist, EMDR, and ART for a minimum 45 days and a maximum of usually 90 days. Admission process is typically over the phone and takes about 45 minutes. It usually takes a few days to get someone in for treatment. She highly recommends the first responder to have a buddy with them to help navigate the intake process. They work with logistics for transportation to the treatment center. Phase 2 is like "Dorm Life" with a curfew. There are freedoms to move around and visit family or even go offsite. Towards the end of the members stay, there is a family support transition period. Families will learn how to support, and what they need for support when the person transitions back home. After discharge there are monthly check-ins from alumni, and quarterly check-ins from staff. They work with all private insurance and provide a good rate and payment plans. This is a first responder only residential facility. There is a re-admittance process for responders that back slide. To access service, the admission line is open 24/7. An intake division will receive the case and work with the person needing treatment.

**Approval of Minutes:**

- Minutes were approved and ready to be submitted

**Communication:**

- SB542 No changes, no further to report.
- AB1116 No changes, no further to report.
- SB803 Peer Support Specialist Certification Program Act of 2020 no changes, no further to report

**Officer Reports:**

**President**

- Captain Bensley reiterated CICCIS for single resources out of the country for wildland fires as a peer support provider. Cal Fire has a division for support services. BC Newell Banmiller from Cal Fire is a contact for CISM. Also, contact Captain Bensley for more details. He can help you with the necessary task book. There is a draft written for the Executive Chiefs Letter. Bensley shared the letter on the screen and reviewed it with the group. Helmick pulled the letter from the Executive Chiefs until May so the group can brainstorm and see what we can improve on even further. The efforts over the past years have been great, but we are not doing enough. He would like to have budget discussions for 2024 and 2025. How can we invest to raise the bar and support members even more. We need to talk about strengths, opportunities, and threats. Need to see if other agencies will invest more or look for grant money to help enhance our programs..

**Vice President**

- Chief Howard Little less than normal turnout for the past two classes. KLOVE did a good job and good networking. Still waiting to hear back from the Chief Cook for Chaplin Classes. Crisis Response Care holding classes in Vacaville.

## Secretary/Treasurer

- Chief Ferrer Jim Brooks send details to the account to Jon Bensley
  
- **Committee Reports:**
  1. **Training**
    - Included in Vice President notes
  
  2. **Team Selection**
  
  
  3. **Peer Review**
    - *Nothing to report*

## **Organizational Reports:**

1. **California Fire Chaplains:** *No new reports*
2. **KLOVE (Crisis Response Care):** *No updates*
3. **CPSA:** *Not present, no updates*
4. **10-33 Foundation:** *Not present, no updates*
5. **California Fire Service Task Force on Behavioral Health:** *No updates*
6. **DRAN:** *Not present, no updates*

## **Old Business**

Chief Howard connected with Chad and learned that Ursula Brooks at AMR is their Peer Support Coordinator, and was supposed to make the meeting; therefore, Howard will check back with AMR for updates. Chris Hummelk will help with contacts.

Nick Vlesides is still working on connecting with local law agencies.

David Hood connected with El Cerrito Law and said they have a good program. Will follow up further.

Looking for someone to spearhead the We Remember Event. There may be a flyer already made.

## **New Business**

- **Agency Reports-Activities**
  
- **Fire**
  - **San Ramon Valley F.P.D.** (*Demian Bannister*) *Have an academy graduating March 31st and looking for new members to become part of peer support.*
  - **Contra Costa County F.P.D.** (*Chief Helmick and Captain Chris Hummel*). Helmick pulled the Executive Chiefs Letter to take a hard look at services provided and expanded upon CISM in training, support, workshops and retreats. Hummel wanted to make sure the letter represents the numbers as good as the people that record them. There are more

numbers than are actually recorded. There is a good majority of work that isn't documented.

Hummel had a defusing for a pediatric code and apparatus accident on the freeway.

Additionally, Hummel mentioned you can use the Union CPF and Bereavement fund to help bridge the financial gap to attend a retreat.

**Moraga-Orinda F.P.D.** (Andy Kalenian) Had 4-5 members attend classes in Walnut Creek. Had a recruit injured in the academy.

- **Crockett F.P.D.** (Lieutenant Earl Brown)
- **El Cerrito Fire** (Engineer David Hood) Attended the classes and will work with the PD contact to stay abreast of current activities.
- **Rodeo Hercules F.P.D.** (Capt. Jack Clapp) not present
- **Piedmont Fire** (Lt. Kevin Robinson) not present
- **Pinole Fire** no representative
- **Alameda County F.P.D.** (BC Michael Abele Captain Paul Mahar)
- **Cal Fire SCU** no representative
- **Fremont Fire** (Andy Swartzall Clinical Nurse Educator) not present
- **Richmond Fire** (Justin Cesar, Dylan McComb) not present
- **Chevron Fire** (BC Mario Ferrer)
- **EBRPD Fire** no representative
- **Federal Fire** no representative
- **Albany Fire** (Chief Lance Calkins) not present
- **Law**
  - **San Ramon PD** (Nick Vlesides)
  - **CCCSO** (Nick Vlesides)
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  - **CHP** (Brandon Correia) not present
- **EMS**
  - **AMR** (Chad Newland) no representative
- **MHP**
  - **Mental Health** (Colleen Pennington, PsyD) not present
  - **Mental Health DRAN** (Nathan Schlitz) not present
- **Chaplain**
  - **San Ramon P.D.** (Chaplain Nick Vleisides) Chaplains are busy with fentanyl overdose. There was a suicide as well.
  - **ECCFPD** (Father Robert Rien)

- *East Bay Regional Parks /CCCSO (Father Robert Rien)*  
*FBINAA (Janelle Cronk) not present*
- *10-33 (Jim Wilson) not present*

**Action items:**

**Good of the order:**

- Next meeting will be on ZOOM as well ( 3rd Tuesdays ).
- **Next Meeting:**  
**Date/s: May 16th, 2023**  
**Time: 1000-1200**  
**Location: Via Zoom.**

**Adjourn:**

*Meeting adjourned by President Jon Bensley*