



Orleans Volunteer Fire Department

October 18, 2020

MEASURE Z QUARTERLY REPORT, 1st QUARTER, FY20-21

BACKGROUND

The Orleans Volunteer Fire Department (OVFD) has been the grateful recipient of two sources of funding through Measure Z. The Humboldt County Fire Chiefs Association (HCFCA) was awarded funding FY17-18 for several simple “barns” or buildings to house additional fire apparatus for several rural fire departments throughout Humboldt County, and we were awarded \$85,000 of that allocation, which we have completed the use of last quarter. With the support of the HCFCA, we applied for Measure Z additional funding for FY 19-20 and were awarded \$140,000 of a total request of \$200,000 towards a complete fire station. We are very grateful for the approval of an extension for the use of the funding through FY 20-21.

In addition to those two welcome awards of funding, there has been an outpouring of support, some financial but most in terms of donated materials, labor, and expertise. Our small local businesses have helped out tremendously. As noted below, the Karuk Tribe has stepped up to help with the building as well. The building continues to be constructed using volunteer labor with some additional skilled labor from a local contractor who also donates some of his time to the community.

ACTIVITIES COMPLETED

FY 20-21 1st Quarter (July 2020 through September 2020) was characterized by the ongoing challenges of the COVID-19 pandemic dramatically complicated by two devastating fires, The Red Salmon Complex, lightning-started on July 27, 2020 and at 142,766 acres as of mid-October, and the Slater Fire, started on 9/8/2020 and at 156,618 acres as of mid-October. These fires changed work assignment for local firefighters, some of whom are also volunteers, and filled our air with heavy smoke for weeks. This made working outside hazardous, not just unhealthy, according to the Air Quality Index. The Slater Fire destroyed a significant portion of the Happy Camp community, upriver of Orleans and an integral part of the Karuk community. Several employees of the Karuk Tribe and other volunteers from the Orleans community, some also OVFD volunteers, directed their attentions to the immediate recovery needs of the people who lost everything in the Slater Fire.

In spite of all of these challenges, we continued to respond to medical, traffic collision, and fire-related emergencies. We also kept working on building our new fire station, holding work days nearly every week.

- The vendor installed the eight roll-up doors for the four apparatus bays
- Purchased a course-of-construction insurance policy to protect the OVFD and its funders from catastrophic loss from fire, vandalism, or other hazards while the building is under construction

PO Box 312, 38162 Highway 96, Orleans CA, 95556

- Purchased and installed a heat-resistant, waterproof underlayment designed for metal roofing
- Purchased and installed metal roofing and siding. The vendor, O&M Industries, not only provided the metal at a steep discount over other vendor quotes, but brought two senior members of their company out to Orleans for a free day of training and hard work. The roofing is complete and the metal siding progress is substantial.
- Completed the trenching, electrical conduit purchase and installation, and the installation of underground propane service a distance of 80' from the pole to which PG&E installed power east of the building to the building itself.
- Purchased and installed a transfer switch in anticipation of the purchase and installation of a propane-fired generator that will power the station during frequent planned and unplanned power outages.

PEOPLE SERVED AND BENEFITTED

When the new fire station is complete, it will provide a safe, clean, and central location from which the OVFD volunteers can continue to respond to our local emergencies, including fire, accident, and medical calls. The OVFD serves a first-out response area of over 1,000 people scattered over 198 square miles, and will continue to serve these communities. The new fire station will also serve as an ADA- accessible command center, with power, water, communications, and meeting room space that can be used during local incidents including fire, rescue, etc. Beneficiaries include not only the entire extended community from Somes Bar to Weitchpec and including Orleans and outlying properties, but our fellow responders in law enforcement including the CHP, Humboldt County Sheriff's Office, and the Forest Service.

INFLUENCE OF MEASURE Z FUNDING

The OVFD is a "bake sale" department, dependent on local fundraising to keep the doors open. This year, due to COVID-19, we were unable to engage in our usual fundraising activities (largely food service) and are therefore short around \$20,000 for operating costs. In addition to the Coast Central Credit Union \$4,000 grant noted last quarter, local and more distant friends have donated several thousand more dollars. Most recently, the Karuk Tribe donated \$25,420 for the completion of 374' of trenching, some in bedrock, to complete the sewer and water connections for the building and for the completion of the plumbing for the ADA-accessible bathroom. Though we must continue to dip into our savings to keep the doors open, the support of Measure Z is absolutely essential. Without it, we could not hope to have a safe, clean building in which to store and maintain apparatuses and PPE and provide for prompt, efficient, and safe first response in our area.