

# THE FOOTHILL INQUIRER

*THE VOICE OF THE PEOPLE*

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## FPUD Works on Rebuttal to Measure B

By Roy West

A special FPUD meeting was held on Friday, April 1st to discuss the District's effort to argue against Measure B.

The meeting began with Sherry Wicks noting changes in the usual format for the agenda; specifically the omission of the Pledge of Allegiance. She asked Board President Adam Larsen if the Pledge could be reinstated and the attendees of the meeting agreed that it should be. Larsen asked director Bill Angerer to lead the Pledge.

Jo Ann Glover, who put the agenda together explained that director Brad Reeves, (on vacation in Hawaii), had

contacted her and asked that the agendas be "streamlined"; apparently to speed things up at meetings.

President Larsen asked Jo Ann to put the agenda format back to the way it has traditionally been.

Back to measure B.

Measure B is a voter initiative begun by Thomas Brent and others to have the voting rate-payers of this water district decide whether to force the District to roll back the rate increase instituted in July of 2010.

Each party, (Brent and District) have worded a pro and con argument respectively on Measure B and then each will present a rebuttal to the other party's argument. The April 1st meeting agenda dealt with the District rebuttal.

These are the position statements

that will be in the voter pamphlet for the election on June 21st.

According to the Placer County Elections Department this special election could cost the FPUD around \$28,000. For some reason the ballot measure was not able to be combined with the Gaines/Campanelli election in May which would have resulted in much less cost to the District.

The position statements on Measure B don't seem to be available on the Elections Dept. website yet so we have re-printed them in their entirety on Page 4 of this issue of *The Foothill Inquirer*.

We will make the rebuttals available as soon as we have them.

The next regular Board meeting will be Wednesday, April 13th at 7 PM at the Fire District conference room.

## Foresthill Fire Protection District Board Meeting

By Tamra West

On Tuesday, April 5 the Foresthill Fire Protection District held their monthly board meeting. All 5 Directors were present.

1st action item was the approval of the bid for the Long Point shaded fuel break which is in the Iowa Hill area on Big Dipper Road and in a portion of downtown Iowa Hill.

2nd action item was the approval of modification to organization structure to include 3 full-time Captain Positions, 1 Part-time Battalion Chief Position and reclassifying the Deputy Fire Marshal position to the rank of Battalion Chief. This action had no associated cost increases. All of the employees who will fill these positions have been doing the duties of a higher class

and will now be given the higher rank to go along with their increased duties.

3rd action item was to set a budget workshop date which is set for Thursday, April 28 at 9:00 a.m. The board will go over the 2011/2012 budget with Chief Snyder.

4th action item was to approve the 2010 audit, but this item was tabled to the May board meeting so the board can review the budget for next year.

Discussion item was the station remodel which is still in the researching stage.

Keith Hernandez reported on the Firefighter Association; they are gearing up for their annual Easter Egg hunt. The "Fill the Boot" drive was a success this year (after having to

reschedule this event due to heavy snow).

Chief Kurt Snyder discussed the Fire Study being performed by Anchor Point. Chief Snyder drove the people from Anchor Point around our community to show them the roads and Anchor Point said "Well, you only have 1 viable road in and out of Foresthill". They will use a computer model to study fire scenarios with regards to our canyons and will make recommendations as they see fit to our evacuation plans.

Foresthill Heights subdivisions' new owners met with Gary Kirk regarding the project they are proposing for that parcel. Gary informed them that they would have to have a left turn lane from See Fire Board Page 5

**Community Briefs**

The Foresthill PUD and Fire Protection District board meetings are filmed by the *FhInquirer*. Copies of these meetings can be rented from the Foresthill Library or can be purchased from the *Inquirer*. Contact *fhinquirer@ftcnet.net*

**The Foothill Inquirer**  
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The Foothill Inquirer is an independent newspaper/newsletter that covers news-of-interest mostly dealing with the foothill area but also covering State and national issues.

Our goal is to provide current and accurate news for the foothill area.

The FhI is now available only on the web or by email. There are also hard copies at the Foresthill Library for reference. If you would like to be placed on the e-mail loop, email fhinquirer@ftcnet.net and request that you be placed on our email loop. If you would like to place an advertisement the priced is \$12.00 for one months worth of advertising, plus your ad is on our website.

Contact us at our email address to place an advertisement.

If you have a community notice of an event or lecture it will be put in the 'Community briefs' section free of charge.

Meeting	Date	Time	Place
<b>FPUD Board meeting</b>	Wednesday April 13	7:00 p.m.	Foresthill Fire District office 24320 Main St. Foresthill
<b>Foresthill Fire Safe Council</b>	Tuesday April 19	5:30 p.m.	Foresthill Fire District office 24320 Main St. Foresthill
<b>WAC MAC</b>	Wednesday April 20	6:00 p.m.	Colfax Memorial Hall, 22 Sunset Circle, Colfax
<b>West Placer MAC</b>	Thursday April 14	7:00 p.m.	Dry Creek Elementry School 2955 PFE Rd.
<b>Planning Commission</b>	Thursday's April 14 & 28	10:00 a.m.	Planning Commission Chambers 3091 County Center Dr. Auburn

**“Spring into Safety” Event to be held on Thursday, April 28th**

Law enforcement and fire agencies in the Foresthill community are keeping the “public” in public service by hosting “Spring into Safety” on Thursday, April 28 from 6:30 to 8:30 p.m. at the Foresthill Veteran’s Memorial Hall.

The Placer County Sheriff’s Office, Foresthill & Iowa Hill Fire Protection Districts, California Highway Patrol, US Forest Service, California Department of Fish and Game, and other public protection agencies in Foresthill, will present information on a variety of topics ranging from gun safety, carbon monoxide poisoning prevention, traffic law updates, hunter safety provisions, and more.

Those in attendance will have the opportunity to meet one-on-one with the sheriff substation sergeant, Foresthill & Iowa Hill Fire administrators, resident deputies and highway patrol officers, game wardens, forest service law enforcement officers, the high school resource officer, and sheriff and fire volunteers and cadets. A variety of safety literature will also be available for reference.

Rescue vehicles and special equipment will be on display outside for viewing before the event. Child care for kids over the age of 5 will be available on-site; by prior appointment only. Each family will receive a prize ticket upon arrival entering them in a free drawing to win a ride in a sheriff or fire vehicle and to be taken out for dessert with a public safety representative.

For more information, and child care reservations, please call Community Services Officer Amanda Rogers at (530) 889-6922.

## A LITTLE HISTORY

### Charles Finning

Interview by Norm McLeod of the Foresthill Divide Historical Society, April 6, 1979 (Part 2) Printed as received

Dad was getting along in years and found it hard to get around so mother told me to come home so I'd be here with her. In them days, not everybody could drive a car, and I could drive the car and take her places and things like that. I enjoyed it, we had a good life. (Gold mining?) No, I never did. I worked as a (mining engineer?) around here quite a bit, generally on the outside, building and things like that. But I never got underground, I think I worked underground one shift, that was all. Worked out at the Four Aces Mine down here, and I would have an outside job running a compressor. At that time, we were working nights. They fired a couple of men down there and the man that went on the night shift was going to lose his shift, and I said well, I'll run the compressor and I'll go and help him, so I worked half a day, half nights underground that was about the only time I worked underground, I guess. I guess so, I didn't like to go underground, there was no need of it and I seen a lot of fellows with TB and things like that working underground and I didn't like it and I didn't want to get started on it. I liked to work outside, yes. The Three Queens, that was known as the Four Aces Mine at that time. Right over the hill (here) I don't know how I could describe it to you, you know where the Hughes mill is out here, right below Eucado Canyon, right below that. Way down at the bottom. Quite a mine there, they took out several large buckets of gold there. I don't like to say exactly, but it seems that an old fellow by the name of Drummond went down and took the first bucket out and made quite a bit of money at it. We've seen a lot of things happen here on the Divide.

(More lumber then?). No. (More today) oh, yes. The only lumber there was mills like my Dad's that he didn't cut maybe any more than 3 or 4 thousand feet of lumber a day, but just for the local market, the mines and things like that, the building of the mines and when the town burned down of course they were busy rebuilding the town. That was the only market for the lumber, very little lumber went out. Dad said the only lumber he shipped out was, somebody, a teamster, bringing a load of hay and he always took a load of lumber back with him. All our business, with the mines, we generally took out lumber.

I guess the same thing with the Shakes, fellow named Ed Reuter, married a cousin of mine and he had teams, and he worked out of Auburn and he did a lot of freighting to the mines, I would say Last Chance and in there, and on his way back he hauled out shakes, and I can't remember the amount of shakes he said he hauled out in one season. With his team. And they told me at that time that Mr. Robie down here in Auburn at the Auburn Lumber Company bought the shakes from him. A lot of great big fine timber went to shake timber. Sure fine shakes. Most of the old cabins, you've seen them up in the mountains, They're built out of shakes, old frames with the shakes nailed on and that was their house. Some of them were kind of big cabins, too.

I went to grammar school here is all and - when I first started it was 2 rooms, yes. I was a very poor student, I think I resented every day I went to school, I didn't like it. I didn't like the confinement, I was happy when we were out. (School out there in the

woods) yes, that's very true. The very first year they sent me away to school, I wouldn't stay away I had to come back. I finally finished grammar school. I never went (to high school) I started and I quit, I decided I could make more money working, in those days you'd get 9 hours a day, you worked all day so that was big money in them times. (Working in the mill) oh, sometimes, and working around the mines, anything that you do, I would drive truck a little bit, anything that came up I would do. My education was - I went to Business College for awhile, McFloyds (?) down in Oakland, I was a poor student, I just, I can see now where I should have went ahead, it would have been a lot better for me, but - had a lot more advantages, but I couldn't see it at that time. I was smarter than my instructors, that was all.

Foresthill was on the way down at that time (when he was a young man). The mines, the big rush had been over and there were - people were moving out, they were going out to other localities, for instance, Bullion up here, the big mine at Bullion, that would close down, the Mayflower had closed down practically, and there was like - for years it went on here, somebody would start a mine, for a little while and it would go out of gold and the families would move back in town and they'd shut down the hatch and go somewheres else to make a living. That was just about the way it went for a good many years. Up and down, there'd be a little boom and they'd have to move out. It's too bad, too, I run the sawmill up here for 7 years and I had men working for me and they were good

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**Editor’s Note:** *Below are the arguments for and against Measure B, the initiative to turn back the FPUD rate increase that will be appearing on the June 21st ballot.*

**Argument in Favor of Measure B** By Thomas Brent

The citizens of Foresthill have signified that they want to vote on the acceptability of the unprecedented 9-1-10 water rate increase (60% over four years), by the Foresthill PUD, using Proposition 218., which disenfranchised many registered voters. This “protest” vote fell short by only a small margin. In the face of this significant community opposition, the FPUD gave wage/salary raises all around instead of applying the rev-

enue increase to their fiscal problems. Measure B sets the rates back to just before 9-1-10. It also states that beginning with Fiscal year 2011/2012, and continuing annually, the FPUD may adjust water rates using a Consumer Price Index percentage change, applicable to the FPUD serving area, and as published by the federal Bureau of Labor Statistics.

Over the years, the FPUD has mismanaged important fiscal matters. Funding for future expenses such as enhanced employee benefits, and long-lived asset maintenance has been lack-

ing. Suddenly they wanted to catch-up using rate-payers’ dollars at the time of a great recession.

In November, the voters “spoke” to elect a new majority of three Directors with their platform of cutting costs and finding new revenue sources. This was the First action to express a message for change. The Second positive action for change was qualifying our Initiative as Measure B on the ballot. The Third action needed to continue this process is to vote “yes” on this Measure B, and to ask friends and neighbors to vote “Yes”.

**Argument Against Measure B**

By Foresthill Public Utility District

Measure B would roll back monthly water rates to those established in 2008. Returning to the prior water rates will negatively affect the Foresthill Public Utility District’s (District) ability to maintain its water infrastructure.

The District commissioned a detailed rate study prior to the setting of current water rates. The District’s Board chose a rate plan that phases in over five years. Under this plan, the District begins partially funding existing infrastructure replacement as required

by Government Accounting Standards Statement No. 34 (GASB 34). Full funding as described in our financial statements will be achieved in the fourth year of the rate plan.

The District water delivery system from Sugar Pine down to Todd Valley is aging and requires on-going maintenance. Some sections of our pipe network are sixty years old and nearing their expected life. In addition, two of the three treated water storage tanks are bolt-up steel army surplus tanks from the Vietnam War era and have limited remaining life. Replacement cost estimates exceed one million dollars. Today, the District would have to debt finance replacement of these assets.

Measure B limits future rate in-

creases to the percent change in the Consumer Price Index. Basing rate changes on an index and not on actual system costs severely limits the District’s ability to effectively manage its water delivery system. In addition, future financing options for major repairs or expansion will be negatively impacted by the rate increase restriction.

Our current rates are needed for the District to maintain basic water operations. The new rate structure is designed to pay for our existing aging water infrastructure. It is now up to the rate payers to support the delivery of safe drinking water by voting NO on Measure B.

**Did You Know?**

The FPUD receives approx. \$70,000 per year in property tax which goes to the general fund (not restricted). This is due to the fact that the majority of the District’s service area expanded after Prop. 13 in 1978. As a comparison, Meadow Vista County Water District receives approx. \$300,000 which is around 27% of their total general fund budget, (compared with 4.5% for FPUD). Georgetown PUD receives approx. \$1.5 million and uses this to keep their treated water rates down. According to their General Manager (Hank White) their property tax offsets about 50% of the cost of treated water, (currently at about \$24.00 per month) if they were to lose that amount of tax dollars, their treated rates would be around \$48.00 per month. This is why its very difficult to compare the FPUD to other Districts as there is so much in cost/revenue variations. The bottom line is each water purveyor must charge the true cost to provide service to its customers, establish sound debt re-payment objectives, provide some reserves for repair/replacement and rate stabilization.

**Fire Board** Continued from page 1

Foresthill going toward Auburn into the subdivision. The proposal from the owners is that the Fire Department could drive down to Monte Verde Estates, turn around and drive back to their proposed subdivison. Gary Kirk said "No, that is not acceptable to the Fire Department". So, I guess it is back to the drawing board for that subdivision.

Doug Ryan and his engineer met with Gary Kirk and the Fire Departments engineer regarding the proposed Forest Ranch idea. Doug Ryan only wants to put in 25 foot wide roads, (the standard is 28 foot wide roads) so the road widths will have to be increased. Doug Ryan also proposes having 3,000 gallon water storage tanks in the front yard of all homes in the proposed subdivision for fire suppression. He was told "No, that is not acceptable to the Fire Department".

The Foresthill & Iowa Hill Fire Safe Council will be passing out brochures on Thomas Drive - this road and adjacent roads to Thomas Drive are badly in need of clearing of brush.

There was discussion of my letter to Kurt Snyder, Fire Chief regarding the WARN system in Foresthill. This is the Placer County's Wide Area Rapid Notification emergency notification system - or what has been referred to as a "reverse 911". A trial run was

conducted in Foresthill about a year ago and not all phones were contacted. In fact, very few were.

At the Fire Study meeting I (Tamra) brought up the fact that the County's reverse 911 system does not work in Foresthill. Chief Snyder corrected me and said "Well, some of it works" and I responded "If ALL of it does not work, then it doesn't work". He stated that the problem is there are not enough AT&T long distance lines between Foresthill and Auburn and the lines get overloaded when the County tries to send so many calls.

My question in my letter to Chief Snyder was "In this day of computer programs, isn't there a computer program that Sebastian could perform the 911 reverse calls from up here? After all, it is a private phone company and they are in charge of all phones in Foresthill I do not understand why we cannot make this work. If the County already has a computer program, why can't they share the software with Sebastian? Has anyone checked into this? If so, I would like to know the answer." I received my answer at the board meeting. AT&T has removed 2 more trunks of long distance lines, so the odds of the WARN system working in Foresthill in the near future are VERY SLIM. Chief Snyder said that "He was glad I sent the letter because it

generated a lot of discussion". Rhonda Armstrong of Sebastian Telephone also responded to my question, along with Supervisor Jennifer Montgomery. I hope these agencies will keep discussing this issue. The Fire Department is actually looking at using their siren to warn us of an impending fire which would at least allow us to "Get out of town". I plan on keeping up on this issue, as it is important to me that we are warned to get out of town some way (I am quite fine with the old fashioned siren - at least it works!!).

**REMEMBER:**

Slow down and drive carefully near the Foresthill Bridge and look out for construction workers and pedestrians!

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## Finning

Continued from page 3

men and you try to keep them in the wintertime, and we didn't have unemployment and I couldn't keep them employed all winter at that time and what they made in the summer they went in debt for in the winter again, so they were just working for their groceries, their debtors all the time. It was too bad, I felt sorry for them, there was nothing I could do about it, so this Unemployment (Insurance) and things like that, it was a big boon for the working man today. At least their unemployment keeps them in food. Those men had big families, and it's great for them. They'd have to move, and one man told me I gotta find me another job, I work here for you in the summertime and then the winter comes along he says, I'm in the hole again. I'll never get ahead that way. So that's what the story is, too. Eventually they had to move out, like the rest of them.

We had dances (as a young man). Saturday night. Course, we done a lot of tricking and things like that too, that was a part of our entertainment. There was always something. You made your own excitement, your own - (dancing) that was the big event, on different holidays they'd have dances, any excuse to have a dance, that was their idea. They had a few musicians here in town, they'd get them together and they'd get them to playing and find some partners and have a dance. Talley Schwab, I think, I don't know. There was a family lived over there (Iowa Hill). I believe he carries the mail in there, doesn't he? His father had the store there. For many years. Yes, I guess it was (14 miles). There were some boys name of Kents (?) and they came from Iowa Hill, and the first fellow, they'd hike over here sometime and go to a

dance and hike back Sunday morning, they had to have it (stamina).

They were tough. A lot of deeds went on, we had a lot of fun though, these dances, we didn't have TVs and things like that to amuse us, we had to make our own amusement. Of course the dances were one of them. They played a lot of cards and games and stuff like that. (Professional gambling?) yes, a lot of it. A lot of fellows made a living, playing cards here. Just like all little mining towns, they'd wait for a fat one to come along and they'd take him. We never had a regular hall, we had a few pool tables around, scattered in saloons and things like that. I remember one time in the old Ray Hotel, a fellow by the name of Frank Smith, owned the hotel at that time, he had a pool table in there and they'd spend a lot of time, and the older fellows, they used to play pool too. They'd spend a lot of time on that. Two bits (shot of whiskey) yep, I'm talking now about the old bootleg days and I don't remember too much about the - gin whiskey was before prohibition, but as for Whiskey, you could buy all the liquor you wanted for two bits. You could buy it for \$5 a gallon, pretty good whiskey as I remember it. Some of the best whiskey I ever drank was bootleg whiskey. This was whiskey that my father was bootlegging here, he took this whiskey and he buried it, and he thought he was going to save it and some of it evaporated on him, he didn't move it around and then he got it out and we tried it and drank some and I

haven't drank any whiskey like it since. It was a good whiskey. Oh, yeh, (moonshiners) there was a lot of them around here. I never seen a still in my life, never seen one. Used to go up to Michigan Bluff, we used to go up to a fellow that had a still up there and bootleg, so I said to him one day, You know, I've never seen a still run, he says you come here next week or whatever day you come here. I'm going to be running it. He says I'll show you how to control this thing. You know, I (unintelligible) and they raided it when I got up there. He was supposed to have good whiskey. One time he had some made out of peach brandy, it was really good liquor. I bought a quart of it, I brough it home and put it here, of course I stashed it, my Dad was around with me, and I gave Dad a bottle and said try that and he thought it was good and he very seldom took a drink, how do you like that, so I gave him the rest of the bottle. But you go down there, I've seen buys there for \$5 a gallon.

I worked down in Horseshoe Bar one winter, for 3 or 4 months, those days it was hard work down there on those hillsides, you never left the bunkhouse in the rain unless you had 15 or 20 pounds of nails or some supplies on your back packing up to the mine, the mine was up on the hill, and wherever you moved was up or down hill, it was hard work.

*Part III to be in the next edition.*

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