Advisory Committee

MEETING NOTES

Present: Jackie Johnson (Dean, Oxnard College Public Safety, Health, Athletics, and Kinesiology), Bill Lynch (OC Public Safety / Fire Technology Department Chair), Carl Schwab (OC Public Safety/ EMT Coordinator), Tamara Crudo (OC Public Safety/Fire Academy Coordinator),Doug Stuart (Oxnard FD), Jeremy Henderson (Ventura City), Tony Hill (Ventura City), Keith Gurrola (Fillmore FD), Jeramy Guercio (Cal Fire), Nick Stitzel (Cal Fire), Amber Henderson (Cal Fire), Jesse Rodriguez (Fire Technology Student)

Absent: Nathan LaRusso (Oxnard FD), Alexander Hamilton (Oxnard FD), Curtis Tolmie (Oxnard FD), John Colamarino (Oxnard FD), Casey Rosdail (Ventura County FD), Dustin Gardner (Ventura County FD), Karsten Guthrie (Oxnard FD), Scott Guirarte (Ventura County FD), Chad Cook (Ventura County FD), David Endaya (Ventura City FD), Chris Rosa (VC EMS), Dave Updike (USFS Risk Management), Merrit Eaton (Buena HS), Claire Hartley (VCMC), Jason Johnson (City of Port Hueneme), Hunter Taylor (Rio Mesa HS), Joey Williams (GMR), Rosa Soliz (Oxnard union)

Meeting Date: 3/10/2026 | Approval of Minutes from: | Recorded By: María Magaña

AN = Action Needed **AT = Action Taken** **D = Discussion** **I = Information Only**

	TOPIC		DISCUSSION	ACTION NEEDED
I.	Welcome / Call to Order		Meeting called to order at 12:05pm. Attendees introduced themselves and their respective agencies/roles.	
II.	Approval of Minutes		Motion: Jeremy Henderson Second: Doug Stuart Passes unanimously	
III.	College Updates		Fire Technology Update	

B. Lynch begins by sharing Fire Technology enrollment. Classes are 96-104% enrolled. There will be no summer courses offered due to budget constraints. There are typically two courses in the summer that will not be offered this year. EMT courses will be offered.

Equipment upgrades include rotary saws, SCBA units, turnouts and nozzles. The classrooms are becoming more fire centric.

Students are being hired. Currently 4-5 in Kern County Fire Academy. LA city was on site for recruiting and are actively testing. Their plan is to hire 400- 800 over the next 3 years. Anticipate many students getting jobs.

Fire Academy

T. Crudo begins by sharing an update on Battalion 65. They are a much larger group and have had challenges in areas such as fitness levels, their ability to acclimate to the turnouts and the long days. There is a co- requisite of fitness and the class session. Future considerations include changing the co-req to a pre-req but is still a work in progress.

Currently have 28 cadets who are doing Fire Control 3 again. Academy gets two courses so that it can capture both sides with larger enrollments. Initially the enrollment was 38.

OCRFA just received a brush engine from county fire. New equipment is coming in this semester to meet the 2024 guidelines. The academy received grants for thermal imaging cameras and have incorporated that into the ICS.

T. Crudo shared the graduation date for Saturday, May 9th.

The Application for Fall 2026 academy is currently open through March. Normally, the fitness component to get in is to run 5 laps up to the tower roof. However, with County's Training Academy, availability for that tower may or may not work. The academy has chosen the Beep test (20-yard run) instead which will be given at Orientation on April 27th. They will need to complete the beep test with an 8.5.

			In addition to academy training, the ARTP is receiving stand-alone testing requests from agencies including CAL Fire, Oxnard Fire, and Ventura County, with Ventura City anticipated. These exams are now based on the Firefighter 2024 curriculum, with written testing derived from approved sources such as IFSTA and JBL. The academy has transitioned to JBL due to cost considerations for cadets. T. Crudo shared the Wildland Academy graduation will be March 27th. The Fire Academy and the Wildland Academy now offer a Certificate of Achievement, which incorporates the academy, fitness co-requisite, and required prerequisite courses. As a result, students completing these programs will graduate not only from the academy but also receive a Certificate of Achievement recognizing the full set of completed coursework. <u>EMT</u> C. Schwab reported the EMT program achieved record first- and third-attempt pass rates on the National Registry EMT exam in 2025, marking the highest performance in Oxnard College history. He requested feedback from local fire agencies on recruit preparedness and explained how it would be beneficial. The potential development of an anonymous survey was suggested to gather input on educational experiences and identify program strengths and areas for improvement. B. Lynch suggested to reach out to EMS training personnel to determine feasibility and next steps.	I
IV.	Employer Updates		<u>Oxnard Fire Department</u> D. Stuart provided an update on Firefighter recruitment. A total of 1,174 applications were initially received. Applications were filtered using the FCTC list, resulting in 904 qualified applicants after review. Staff are conducting a detailed, manual review of all applications to determine candidates for the next phase. Selection is not based solely on FCTC scores. The department is using a holistic review process considering job history & consistency of employment, relevant work experience, resume quality and explanation for employment gaps or terminations. Approximately 300 candidates will be invited to the Beep test which is scheduled for May 7-8 at Fire Station 1. Approximately 15 current vacancies but plan to hire 19 candidates.	I

The department is concurrently administering a captains exam, requiring significant staff time and coordination.

Ventura Fire Department

J. Henderson provided an operational update regarding leadership changes, station development, academy progress, promotional testing, staffing levels and continued collaboration with the college.

Chief Dyess retired in December and Chief McDonald has assumed the Fire Chief position. Construction of Station 7 has been delayed once again. Current projections estimate completion and opening in Spring 2027.

The department is currently conducting Academy #4 and noted that each academy continues to improve. J. Henderson expressed appreciation to partner agencies and the college for ongoing support, including neighboring departments and academy proctors. The academy is being held in Ventura City due to construction delays. T. Hill reported the current academy is in week 10 of 18 with 6 recruits remaining and graduation projected for May 8.

T. Hill explained EMS training continues to be incorporated into the academy curriculum. Weekly instructional sessions are conducted to maintain paramedic knowledge, EMS policy familiarity, and core competency skills while recruits complete fire academy training.

Promotional staffing remains a significant challenge. The department continues to experience difficulty attracting enough candidates for the Engineer position and emphasized the standards will not be lowered.

Fillmore Fire Department

K. Gurrola reported the department is concluding its current fire academy. The academy began with 14 and 10 recruits are expected to graduate.

The department recently hired a new Reserve Battalion Chief, Quincy Soan, formerly from Bakersfield with 32 years of experience, including the last 12 years as Truck Captain. Quincy Sloan will assist in

expanding and strengthening special operations training such as Truck operations, Hazard Materials and Urban Search and Rescue (USAR).

K. Gurrola also reported they are exploring a mini academy for paramedics, potentially focused on candidates with Oxnard College background. The purpose would be to increase staffing capacity and support multiple strike team assignments simultaneously. Fillmore now has an OES engine and would like to maintain the ability to deploy resources while still meeting regular operational commitments.

Cal Fire

A. Henderson reported a major staffing transition from seasonal Firefighter I positions to permanent Firefighter II positions, marking a significant historical change for the department. Historically, Firefighter I positions were seasonal and funded for approximately nine months per year. Cal Fire now has funding for the current and following year to expand permanent Firefighter II staffing, which serves as the new entry-level permanent classification. Applicants are strongly encouraged to apply for both Firefighter I and Firefighter II classifications, as the eligibility lists are separate and one list does not automatically transfer to the other.

Current minimum hiring requirements include CPAT certification and valid Driver's License. Approximately 460 Firefighter II positions were recently opened statewide and only approximately 120 applications have been received. The department expects this staffing expansion to be beneficial both to CAL FIRE and to partner agencies statewide

A. Henderson also reported Cal Fire exploring future academy process changes involving accredited colleges. Individuals who have already completed recognized programs such as the Oxnard Fire Academy may potentially receive credit or bypass portions of Cal Fire's internal academy process.

N. Stitzel provided additional information regarding academy partnerships, current training operations, Ventura Training Center staffing and workforce expansion opportunities.

Cal Fire is working with the college to pursue an ISA agreement with the college, similar to agreements used by other local agencies. The agreement would provide several benefits including potential program funding opportunities, stronger agency-college partnerships and the ability for academy participants to receive college credit while completing academy training.

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			N. Stitzel reported Cal fire has currently two concurrent academies in progress; Structure Academy and Wildland Academy. Current enrollments consist of 37 students in the Structure Academy and 35 in the Wildland Academy. Both Academies are scheduled to graduate on Friday, April 10. Currently staffing two hand crews at the Ventura City Training Center. Upon graduation of the Wildland Academy, staffing will increase from two crews to four crews for the summer season.	
V.	Partnership Opportunities		<u>Oxnard Public Safety</u> J. Johnson provided an overview regarding partnership opportunities and development of an Instructional Services Agreement (ISA) between the college and participating agencies. Currently, the college is undergoing executive leadership changes. Acting vice President/ Associate Vice Chancellor is now directly involved in ISA discussions. College administration requested copies of prior agreements and related examples, including previous ISA drafted in 2022, comparable College of the Canyons (COC) ISA, and existing Oxnard Police /Ventura ISA. J. Johnson acknowledged that the college initially needed clarification regarding how the ISA would operate She clarified that training would not necessarily occur on the college campus, and the college would not be required to provide instructional employees. Participating agencies would provide instructors/ staffing. The existing course structure is currently for 8 units. However, agencies are requesting to increase to 15 units. The target implementation date is July 1 with 5 year terms, to align with the new fiscal year. J. Johnson acknowledged the benefits the ISA will bring to the college. ISA revenue could help offset costs of operating public safety training programs. Partnerships would strengthen collaboration between the college and fire service agencies during a period of substantial statewide hiring demand.	AN
VI.	Roundtable & next Steps		B. Lynch opened the floor for any additional comments. C. Schwab requested confirmation regarding currently used cardiac monitor across agencies. Most agencies are using Lifepak 35 monitors with llmore staing they have a couple of Lifepak 15 units but have transitions to 35s.	

			C. Schwab raised a question regarding replacing the Lucas CPR device with another brand. Agencies confirmed there is no planned changed at this time. Student representative, J. Rodriguez, shared positive feedback regarding college training standards. He noted the college maintains high expectations in both regular academic classes and academy programs, including the Wildland Academy	
VII.	Next Meeting		Fall 2026 →Tuesday, October 20, 2026 Lunch meeting requested by committee	
VIII.	Adjournment		The meeting adjourned at 12:56pm.	