

Published December 27th, 2017

All systems go for ConFire Station 16 construction

By Nick Marnell



If every celestial body aligns perfectly. Photo
Nick Marnell

To demolish Fire Station 16 in Lafayette, the Contra Costa County Fire Protection District hired Federal Solutions Group of San Ramon, the same company that the Moraga-Orinda Fire District fired in November as the contractor to build Fire Station 43 in Orinda.

The company could not secure a performance bond for the MOFD project and the district said it could not take the risk and terminated the FSG contract. "We're aware of the local issues," said ConFire Assistant Chief Aaron McAlister, who oversees the Station 16 rebuild for the district. "We did the due diligence (on FSG). But they're only doing the demolition, which is about a \$150,000 job."

The district pulled the demolition permits in December and expects the job to be completed by mid-January. "A 100 percent demolition, including the slab," McAlister said.

Before the building is razed, recruits from ConFire Academy 51 will use the structure for training exercises. Recruits will cut holes in the building with chain saws, breach the exterior walls and practice ripping through the roof and climbing through the windows. MOFD conducted similar training exercises at Fire Station 43 before it was demolished in 2016.

The ConFire board of directors approved the advertising for bids for the construction of Fire Station 16 and McAlister said the solicitations should be sent out in early January. The district has identified five preferential bidders, and by the first week of February, ConFire should know the lead bidders and a realistic cost estimate for the project.

"We're holding to the official estimate of \$3.5 million," McAlister said, but Fire Chief Jeff Carman warned his board Dec. 12 that construction costs are soaring. "The more time that goes by, the higher the costs go up," Carman said.

ConFire has hired Kitchell Northern California as construction manager, and though the sign outside Fire Station 16 suggests a completion date in 2018, the board packet issued Dec. 12 says that "construction is estimated to begin in April 2018 and take 11 months to complete."

Reach the reporter at: nick@lamorindaweekly.com

[back](#)

Copyright © Lamorinda Weekly, Moraga CA