

**ROSS VALLEY FIRE DEPARTMENT  
STAFF REPORT**

For the meeting of: March 11, 2015

To: Board of Directors  
From: Mark Mills, Fire Chief *MM*  
Subject: Vehicle Purchase

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**RECOMMENDATION:**

That the Board approves the purchase of a new staff vehicle to be funded in the amount of \$33,531.45 from the Vehicle Replacement Fund.

**BACKGROUND:**

Currently the Department owns a 2001 Chevrolet Impala that was originally purchased as a Chief's sedan. Over the years, the vehicle has been utilized by the fire inspector and more recently for transporting firefighters to training events. By utilizing the smaller staff vehicle, firefighters have minimized mileage reimbursements (rather than utilizing personal vehicles) for training events and fuel costs by taking the larger pickups.

**DISCUSSION:**

Staff is requesting the purchase a new hybrid vehicle that will further minimize fuel costs and be environmentally friendly, thus reducing the Department's carbon footprint. A plug-in hybrid could be utilized by all staff members during the day and for transportation to and from training events.

The existing vehicle (2001 Chevrolet Impala) is only valued at \$1750 dollars and needs estimated repairs that total over \$1100. Therefore, due to the age and potential repair costs versus the actual value of the vehicle, staff recommends replacement at this time.

In researching potential vehicles, the staff concentrated on a more environmentally friendly vehicle (electric or hybrid models) that would be capable of transporting four personnel to and from events and have enough ground clearance to be utilized for inspections as needed. The ground clearances came back at:

Toyota Prius	3.9 inches
<b>Chevrolet Volt</b>	<b>6.5 inches</b>
Ford Focus	3.9 inches

Additionally, the Department would be eligible for various refunds and reimbursements such as the Plug in Electric Vehicle rebate (PEV) which is funded through the

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Transportation Fund for Clean Air (TFCA) Regional Fund, the PEV Rebate program is designed to help public agencies within the Air District's jurisdiction to green their fleets. More than \$12 million is available in fiscal year ending 2015 for projects that accelerate the Bay Area's deployment of zero emissions on-road vehicles. The PEV Rebate Program provides funding through vouchers that are issued in the amount of

- \* \$2,500 per light-duty zero-emission vehicles, including battery electric and hydrogen electric vehicles;
- \* \$1,000 per light-duty plug-in hybrid electric vehicles;
- \* \$500 per zero-emission neighborhood electric vehicles; and
- \* \$2,500 per zero-emission motorcycles.

Only public agencies are eligible for funding from this PEV Rebate Program. Funding opportunities for non-public entities and for electric vehicle charging infrastructure are currently being developed and are anticipated to open in early 2015. Although, there are all electric vehicles available, they are limited in their range due to the battery components. A hybrid was chosen because it has an engine backup to the electric motor(s).

The Chevrolet Volt had the best ground clearance in its class. Purchasing a Chevrolet product also allowed for brand loyalty discounts, supplier pricing, a \$1000 rebate, and a \$1030 holdback discount from the dealer. The vehicle also comes from this dealer with the "HOV" capable stickers in place, which are normally an additional fee. The comparable for vehicles in this class are:

Toyota Prius	\$37,723.92
<b>Chevrolet Volt</b>	<b>\$33,531.45</b>
Ford Focus	\$34,878.49

Staff recommends the Chevrolet Volt due to the passenger capacity, ground clearance, and affordability.

#### **FISCAL IMPACT:**

Total purchase price of the vehicle including tax, tag, and title is \$33,531.45. The Vehicle Replacement Fund currently has a balance of \$291,434. After the purchase, the Fund will have a balance of \$257,902.