

Ross Valley Fire Board meeting
Wednesday, April 11, 2018
Ross Valley Fire Department

Board members present: Brekhus, Kuhl, Reed, Brown, Shortall, Finn, Lacques, Greene

Meeting opened and board went into closed session.

No reportable action from closed session.

Open time: Steve Lamb, San Anselmo – he was wondering how close to the end of hours for Acting Chief Meagor is before it runs out. Staff has been following the hours and he will be okay through the end of June.

Consent Agenda: M/S to approve Consent Agenda as presented: Greene/Kuhl.


Report on Fire Prevention Activities: the consensus of the board was to move this item to a future meeting.

Appoint representative to MERA Board of Directors: Acting Chief Meagor reviewed the staff report and explained that we need the replacement members for this board. Member Shortall spoke that there is a time commitment for this board. Discussion about who should attend these meetings. Battalion chief Grasser has been attending meetings currently. Member Shortall offered to be the alternate. Battalion Chief Tim Grasser would be listed as the primary. M/S Greene/Brown to adopt Resolution 18-03 – A Resolution of the Ross Valley Fire Department Appointing a Representative and Alternates to the Marin Emergency Radio Authority Board of Directors. All ayes.

Update on the status of Fire Chief Recruitment and Executive Management shared services. Acting Chief Meagor presented the staff report and requested that there be a special meeting next Wednesday, April 18, 2018. Member Lacques asked what the scope of the executive summary is. Acting Chief Meagor replied that it will present what services MCFD would be providing, key components, scope of services and the delivery model that MCFD would be utilizing. All board members will be able to be at the special meeting.

Meeting adjourned at 9:05pm.

Minutes respectfully submitted,


JoAnne Lewis
Administrative Assistant

AGENDA ITEM # 30
Date 5/11/18

**Ross Valley Fire Department
Special Board Meeting**
Wednesday, April 18th, 2018
San Anselmo Council Chambers

Board members present: Brekhus, Kuhl, Greene, Brown, Lacques, Reed, Finn, Shortall

President Brekhus called to order and moved into closed session.

No reportable action from the Closed Session.

Discussion/consideration of summary report for a shared service agreement for Fire Chief and administrative services with Marin County Fire Department: Acting Chief Roger Meagor gave an overview of the staff report and what will be covered in the presentation.

Acting Chief Roger Meagor then began the presentation with the background of how we arrived to this meeting.

He then turned the presentation over to Marin County Fire Chief (MCFD) Jason Weber for his portion of the presentation.

Following his presentation, President Brekhus opened the discussion with what the next steps would include and whether the board would like to go further with the creation of a draft agreement for services.

Member Lacques asked questions regarding the employees – they would be separate employees from the RVFD employees. He also asked if the Chief was currently performing the responsibilities that would be done by the county fire employees. Acting Chief Meagor replied that the Battalion Chiefs, Administrative Assistant, Captains, Fire Inspector, etc. perform those responsibilities. Discussion ensued about what functions would be separated out throughout the staff. The intention is to hire someone who has the experience to perform budgeting, strategic planning, etc. in order to relieve the administrative duties the shift Battalion Chiefs are currently performing. And it is also important for all personnel to understand the budget and keep within budgets. Discussion about the various aspects of the various positions that would be supported by MCFD personnel.

Item was opened to comments from the public: Steve Lamb, San Anselmo. He would be interested to hear the staffs' opinion of this proposal. He had a question regarding the percentages on the Cost and Terms page. He noticed there was an error in the calculations. Chief Weber appreciated the information and responded that he would like to hold the baseline on the amount that was presented and not change the bottom line.

Captain Todd Standfield, Association President for the local union. He would like to share with the Board how the firefighters feel about which decision they would support. Will the shared services model enhance our service to our communities? Our organization needs to begin to change to meet the newer demands and requests for service that the public is asking for. The members support the shared services option.

President Brekhus asked the board members if they are comfortable going forward with this before moving forward with the drafting of a proposal.

Member Greene suggested waiting for a future meeting to make the decision.

Member Shortall asked for what the sense was from each board member where they are with their decision on which option to pursue.

Member Greene overall really appreciates the presentation, especially where the words "soft and squishy stuff" can be used. He feels it does make sense at this time to move towards shared services, with economies of scale, at the beginning they may be small, but can increase in scope. He thinks we should do it, because the firefighters want it, as an organizational proposition it makes sense in terms of management, finance and working with Chief Weber who has thought this through and is comfortable with public presentation. Speaking for San Anselmo, he feels we should go forward.

Member Kuhl is in favor of going forward with this Shared Services. If we go into this shared services, people in the positions if they leave, we may not have say in if they are no longer County employees.

Member Lacques agrees with what Member Greene said. He appreciates the work of Chief Weber and Chief Meagor that it is becoming clearer what functions would be performed. Is looking forward to seeing the draft contract. There are a lot of advantages to the shared services. The cost control of 3% is very important to him and wants to build into the contract to review the contract during year 4 in order to evaluate and decide about going forward.

Member Reed echoes the comments from the other board members. The nature of the fire service is evolving and changing, having a larger pool of expertise. He supports the idea. This is a "team sport" and everyone should be on the same page, maybe having a sub-committee of the board and "take the temperature" of the agreement and deal with any issues that may arise during the agreement.

Member Finn appreciates the hard work of the chiefs, the strengths are many, the weaknesses are few, and there are 9 positions in MCFD that would integrate easily into the RVFD organization. Versus having a stand-alone, unknown entity that would come into the department. RVPA contracts with the county for medics. Sleepy Hollow also collaborated for inspections, SHFPD has a long history with MCFD as well. This isn't a takeover by MCFD, we are asking the county to lend us bandwidth that we can use. He also had concerns about succession planning, and was happy to hear the succession planning that the Chief uses. The percentage costs, the JPA stays intact and untouched. There will be wordsmithing that will need to be done to put this agreement together. Can use other agencies agreements as a stepping stone for the agreement. Our mission is more critical than ever, that we need more depth, especially after the fires last October.

Member Shortall had concerns about this initially, appreciates the amount of work that the Chiefs put into this presentation. There is so much more expectations from the community that are really substantial. Agrees that this is organizational structure not a personnel structure. Also appreciates the 3% cap. He has had the opportunity to work with various members of the MCFD over the past year, feels it is a very strong team. It is a very good cultural fit. Knows that wouldn't be true for all departments in the county. Is very excited about this.

Member Brown had two concerns about this. The firefighters and the general public. San Anselmo has brought this up at other council meetings. After hearing from Labor that they are supporting this shared services proposal. The public expects us to provide service and this will

enhance the RVFD abilities to provide that increased service. Appreciates that the board went down both paths to look at the stand-alone option as well, efficiencies, etc. He supports this proposal.

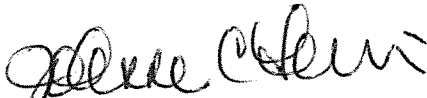
President Brekhus stated that this has been an interesting process and is impressed by the presentation. She wishes that this was coming down the road in five years instead of now, however supports the idea of shared services. Has concerns that this will weaken the ability to cancel the contract and go back to a "stand alone" fire department, if a Town has a disaster, or can no longer pay into the JPA. Would like to go back to the Council to have a discussion this item for their council. Would like to suggest having the item placed on the May meeting for final decision.

Discussion ensued about what the next steps would be to move forward and what to discuss in open session and which to discuss in closed session. The direction should be whether to move forward with the development of the contract. It was agreed to have Chief Weber and Acting Chief Meagor bring a short presentation to each Town Council for their input and information. Board discussed and agreed to suspend the recruitment for fire chief.

Discussion about whether to move the May fire board meeting to the following Wednesday May 16th in order to provide time for the Chiefs to attend all three council meetings. M/S Greene/Lacques to move the May board meeting to May 16th. All ayes.

Meeting adjourned.

Minutes respectfully submitted,



JoAnne Lewis
Administrative Assistant