

**ROSS VALLEY FIRE DEPARTMENT  
STAFF REPORT**

For the meeting of May 12, 2021

TO: Ross Valley Fire Board  
FROM: Jason Weber, Fire Chief  
SUBJECT: Authorize Check Signing Policy Update

---

**RECOMMENDATION**

That the Fire Board authorizes the check signing policy update that would increase the current single signature approval amount from \$2,000 to \$5,000 and allow any of the nine bank account signers to sign the operating and payroll checks.

**BACKGROUND**

The Department's operating and payroll bank accounts are at Bank of America. the authorized signers on the account are as follows:

- Town Managers of Fairfax, Ross, and San Anselmo
- Battalion Chiefs
- Finance & Administrative Services Director
- Accounting/Benefits Technician
- Administrative Assistant

Currently, both accounts require two signatures for checks over \$2,000. The Executive Officer's signature is required for checks over \$5,000.

The Town of San Anselmo (SA-F) uses Tyler Technologies System (cloud-based software) to process payroll, accounts payables (AP), and account receivables (AR) for the Department. SA-F is in the process of adding the secure signature feature on behalf of the Department; this feature will allow the use of secure electronic signatures to be used on all checks. The secure electronic signature added will be the Finance & Administrative Services Director.

**DISCUSSION:**

The updated “check signing policy” increases the current single signature approval amount from \$2,000 to \$5,000 and authorizes any bank account signers to sign the checks. The proposed update to the check signing policy will require one signature for checks under \$5,000 and two signatures for checks greater than \$5,000.

Check signing includes operating and payroll generated checks. Payroll related check payments include (1) employee’s health insurance and deferred compensation deductions; (2) Department’s payroll expenses such as retirement and health insurance. While checks are used for most payments, payroll taxes are paid electronically as required by the tax collection agencies. Any payroll related expense is automatically processed from the payroll account to ensure vendors are paid on time and verify that the expenses are reflected on the general ledger.

**FISCAL IMPACT:**

None to the Department at this time.

**Attachments:** Updated Check Signing Policy – Attachment #1  
Staff Report for Change in Policy from March 8, 2017 – Attachment #2



# ROSS VALLEY FIRE DEPARTMENT

Policies and Procedures  
Administration  
Rules of Conduct

Check Signing Policy

Date Revised: 05/2021- By: M. Gonzalez

Date Created: 03/2017

Page 1 of 2

## SECTION 1: PURPOSE

The "Check Signing Policy" objective is to provide guiding principles to the Ross Valley Fire Department accounting procedures to ensure best practices and policies are followed.

For the purpose of this policy, "SA-F" refers to San Anselmo Finance Department, and the "Department" refers to the Ross Valley Fire Department.

## SECTION 2: POLICY

The Department entered into a Financial Service Agreement with the Town of San Anselmo (TOWN) on July 1, 2020. As part of the agreement, the Department's Administrative Assistant reviews, codes, and stamps invoices before presenting to SA-F. Upon receipt, SA-F processes and pays the Department's invoices within ten days of receipt.

Currently, the Department has two bank accounts with Bank of America, one operating account, and one payroll account, the authorized signers on the account are as follows:

- Town Managers of Fairfax, Ross, and San Anselmo
- Battalion Chiefs
- Finance & Administrative Services Director
- Accounting/Benefits Technician
- Administrative Assistant

Further, SA-F uses Tyler Technologies System (cloud-based software) to process payroll, accounts payables (AP), and account receivables (AR) for the Department. SA-F is in the process of adding the secure signature feature on behalf of the Department; this feature will allow the use of secure electronic signatures to be used on all checks. The secure electronic signature added will be the Finance & Administrative Services Director.

Check signing includes operating and payroll generated checks. Payroll related check payments include (1) employee's health insurance and deferred compensation deductions; (2) Department's payroll expenses such as retirement and health insurance. While checks are used for most payments, payroll taxes are paid electronically as required by the tax collection agencies. Any payroll related expense is automatically processed from the



# ROSS VALLEY FIRE DEPARTMENT

Policies and Procedures  
Administration  
Rules of Conduct

Check Signing Policy

Date Revised: 05/2021- By: M. Gonzalez

Date Created: 03/2017

Page 1 of 2

payroll account to ensure vendors are paid on time and verify that the expenses are reflected on the general ledger.

The check signing policy states that all checks under \$5,000 require ONE signature only. Therefore, such checks can be signed by the Finance & Administrative Services Director using the electronic secure signature feature. However, checks greater than \$5,000, require TWO signatures. For checks greater than \$5,000, any of the nine bank account signers are authorized to sign.

## SECTION 3: PROCESS

When operating or payroll checks under \$5,000 are generated, the SA-F team will issue the check utilizing the secure signature feature. For checks \$5,000 or more, the Finance & Administrative Service Director will sign the checks using the secure signature feature, and either a Town Manager, Battalion Chief, Executive Officer, Accounting/Benefits Technician, or Administrative Assistant.

All check requests require supporting documentation such as an invoice, expense report, or receipt. The invoice shall be stamped and approved by the Department before it gets processed by SA-F.

The secure signature process has three distinct participants:

1. The **authorized signature** – typically the Finance & Administrative Service Director signature which will appear on the check.
2. The **signature administrator** – can be one of the above, or security administrator in IT, an accounting supervisor or manager that determines the user(s) who can print the signatures on the checks. For this option, must provide the USERNAME on the network of this person(s) for each signature to Tyler.
3. The **Proxy user** to the signature – the payroll or accounts payable staff prints the signatures. This determination is made within the Department and set up by the signature administrator.

**Ross Valley Fire Department**  
**Staff Report**  
**February 28, 2017**

For the meeting of March 8, 2017

TO: Ross Valley Fire Board

FROM: Daria Carrillo, Finance and Administrative Services Director

SUBJECT: Change in policy regarding required signatures on checks

---

**RECOMMENDATION**

That the Fire Board approve a change to the check signing policy that would allow another Town Manager, a Battalion Chief or the Finance and Administrative Services Director to sign checks written on the payroll account in excess of \$5,000 in the absence of the Executive Officer.

**BACKGROUND**

The Fire Department's operating bank account and payroll account are at Bank of America. Both of these accounts require two signatures for checks in excess of \$2,000. The Executive Officer's signature is required for checks in excess of \$5,000.

San Anselmo is now using Tyler Technologies Incode financial software to process the Fire Department payroll. All payroll related payments, such as checks for deductions from employees' paychecks for medical insurance and deferred compensation, as well as Fire Department expenses related to payroll such as payments for retirement and medical insurance, are automatically processed by checks from the payroll account. Having checks automatically processed ensures that there is no chance of error with regard to forgetting to pay a vendor or in posting these items to the general ledger. The only exception is that payroll taxes are paid electronically as required by the tax collection agencies.

This is a change from the previous system where some vendors were paid online and because checks in excess of \$5,000 require the signature of the Executive Officer, there is now a possibility of delay in mailing these checks if the Executive Officer is not available to sign the checks.

Respectfully submitted,

Daria Carrillo  
Finance & Administrative Services Director