

## ROSS VALLEY FIRE DEPARTMENT

Minutes of the Ross Valley Fire Board Meeting of April 13, 2022

*Note: These are summary action minutes only. The zoom recording can be accessed by clicking [here](#)*

### 1. 6:35 pm Call to order.

**Board Present:** Hellman, Kuhl, Shortall, Finn, Goddard, Burdo, Greene, Brekhus

**Board Absent:**

**Staff Present:** Weber, Yeager, Cutter

**Town Managers Present:** Abrams, Donery, Johnson

### Agenda – April 13, 2022

### 2. Announce action in closed session, if any.

None.

### 3. **Open time for Public Expression: The public is welcome to address the Board on matters not on the agenda. Please be advised that pursuant to Government Code Section 54954.2, the Board is not permitted to take action on any matter not on the agenda unless it determines that an emergency exists and that the need to take action arose following the posting of the agenda.**

None

### 4. **Board requests for future agenda items, questions, and comments to Staff, staff miscellaneous items.**

Dir. Goddard requested for periodic updates from the RVFD Emergency Preparedness Coordinator Miranda Miller.

No public comment concerning this item.

### 5. **Chief Report – Verbal Update by Chief Weber**

**Staffing:** Chief Weber reported that we are adding two new FF/Eng-Paramedic positions, and they are scheduled to start on May 1.

**MWPA:** Chief Weber reported that the DSpace program has started, and Dspace Lead Kathleen Cutter will present at tonight's meeting.

**Insurance Cancellation:** Chief Weber mentioned that this item was covered at the last Board Meeting and Dir. Brekhus and Dir. Greene drafted a letter to Insurance Commissioner Lara and Assembly Member Levine, and it was mailed to their respective offices.

**Emergency Preparedness Coordinator:** Chief Weber said that Miller, the Emergency Coordinator, has reached out to some of the Towns, and the goal is to bring a strategic plan in June and have it developed by September.

Dir. Goddard asked if May 7 is the Community Preparedness Day and if Miranda could attend that day. Chief Weber responded that it might be related to Wildfire Prevention Week.

6. **Consent Agenda: Items on the consent agenda may be removed and discussed separately. Discussion may take place at the end of the agenda. Otherwise, all items may be approved with one action.**

M/S Greene/Brekhus – roll call vote, all ayes.

No public comment concerning this item.

7. **Receive Presentation on Fuel Projects and Defensible Space Program**

The RVFD Defensible Space Lead, Kathleen Cutter, summarized her staff report and mentioned that her team added two new Dspace Leads and 25 seasonal inspectors. Further, Cutter provided information regarding how defensible space inspections work, training, and schedule. Cutter also mentioned using social media and the Towns' newsletters to inform the community about the ongoing defensible space inspections.

Chief Weber mentioned that last year the program performed over 15,000 inspections, and the goal is to provide as many resources as possible to residents that cannot afford to bring their homes up to standard. Additionally, he explained how MWPA funding works and mentioned the grants San Anselmo, and Ross received for evacuation routes and other projects and the grants available to the constituents through MWPA.

Dir. Greene asked if the project at the Bolinas ridge is part of the MWPA projects. Chief Weber responded that it is a testing project Marin Water is working on.

Dir. Goddard asked if residents could put signs authorizing the inspectors to enter their property. Cutter responded that last year they had residents email the program giving permission to enter the exterior property. Goddard asked for a process that could be shared with the Firewise community, and she also asked if the sandwich boards could be put up at the same time the online notices go out so people can arrange their schedules.

No public comment concerning this item.

**8. Review RFP for a Study to Develop Policy Options for the Board surrounding Future Leadership/Governance, and Authorize the Fire Chief to Release the RFP and Provide Responses to the Board**

Chief Weber said that this item is only for discussion and no action is needed during this meeting; Staff will bring the item back at the next Board meeting for action. He summarized the staff report and provided some background related to the Fire Chief hiring process and the shared services model. The goal is to start now to avoid not having options by the time the current shared service agreement with MCFD expires in August 2023.

Dir. Burdo asked if a consolidation option would also be presented. Chief Weber responded yes. Burdo asked if all the derivable stated in the MOU had been completed. Chief Weber said that the only outstanding item is the policy manual.

Dir. Brekhus asked why the County was not renewing and asked for more historical information; she does not like the idea of an RFP but would like to analyze the different options.

Dir. Shortall disagreed with Brekhus and said an RFP is needed since there are multiple options to look at. He also said that he is disappointed that Sleepy Hollow is not involved in the discussions, and he would like to be part of the discussion.

Dir. Goddard also supports the RFP because the Council could benefit from it.

Dir. Greene asked if this meant Chief Weber was departing. Chief Weber responded that several unexpected events such as the success of MWPA, the pandemic, and sta18 closure have made it difficult to run two different agencies. Therefore, chief Weber believes that the RFP would be beneficial to figure out what the best option for the Department is.

Dir. Finn reminded everyone that the Towns and not the Department own the stations and that it is a logistical and legal issue that needs to be addressed, and that sta20 needs to either be replaced or renewed.

Dir. Burdo asked if this was the first public notice that the County is not renewing the MOU. Chief Weber responded yes.

No public comment concerning this item.

**9. Discuss and Provide Direction to Staff related to transitioning from only teleconference meetings**

Chief Weber summarized the staff report and meeting options and thanked the Town of San Anselmo for sharing their Chambers for the Board meetings should the Board elect to have in-person/hybrid meetings.

The Board discussed the options. Greene asked if AB361 obviates the posting requirement. Donery said it does, and it also allows the Board to vote on it every month. Hellman asked if a quorum in chambers was required. Kuhl responded no, and he added that AB361 only applies during the emergency.

Dir. Shortall said that the hybrid model makes sense because it has been beneficial for the public to attend virtual meeting. Greene supports option three (3). Burdo agrees with Greene and Shortall, and he favors options one (1) and four (4). Greene reversed his selection to option one (1). Brekhus supports option three (3). Goddard supports option one (1) but would like to have the opportunity to revisit it every month. Kuhl favors options one (1) and three (3). Hellman asked if this would be voted every month.

Greene stated his motion for option one (1) indefinitely until decided otherwise or a Board member puts it on the agenda. Goddard suggested amending the motion for option one (1) but review it monthly. Greene did not accept the amendment and said that AB361 could be done in consent.

M/S Greene/Burdo – roll call vote, six ayes, two noes.

No public comment concerning this item.

**10. Announce adjournment to Closed Session**

No public comment concerning this item.

**11. Adjourn**

The next meeting is scheduled for May 11 via zoom video conferencing.

Respectfully submitted,

s/Mariana Gonzalez  
Administrative Assistant