

ROSS VALLEY FIRE DEPARTMENT

Minutes of the Ross Valley Fire Board Meeting of May 11, 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

Board Absent: Brekhus, Greene

Staff Present: Weber, Yeager, Martinelli

Town Managers Present: Donery, Johnson

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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. Hellman asked about the bio-diesel use requested a while back. Chief Weber responded that we converted to use bio-diesel as reported about six months ago.

No public comment concerning this item.

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

Emergency Preparedness Coordinator: Chief Weber said that Miranda Miller, the Emergency Coordinator, is working on a strategic plan, and the draft will be presented to the Board in June and have it developed by September.

MWPA: Chief Weber reported a significant number of projects related to the FY22-23 work plan, mainly focused on evacuation routes and defensible space.

Staffing: Chief Weber reported that we are adding two new FF/Eng-Paramedic positions; they started on May 1, and since they are lateral candidates from MCFD, their training should be shorter than a new hire without any experience in the field.

Dir. Goddard asked about the Emergency Coordinator's scope of work since Fairfax has some projects that would benefit from her coordination. Goddard also asked about the projects PG&E is working on involving tree removal and if there is any coordination between them and the Fire Department. Chief Weber responded that the California Public Utilities Commission mandates PG&E, and they have very little oversight and local control over their work. However, we have expressed our interest in working together for mutual benefit, and we are working with them to improve communications.

Dir. Shortall said he has had several conversations with the local NRGs about coordination between Firewise and NRGs and has provided written documents a couple of times. Additionally, he has also discussed with Miranda Miller her role. Shortall said that one thing that will help is the addition of the Countywide Emergency Coordinator (Elaine Wilkinson), and Miller is part of the local group that will be working with Wilkinson.

Chief Weber added that the Ember Stomp wildfire prevention event is coming up, and he recommends the Towns distribute the information that can be located on the FIRESafe Marin website. Shortall encouraged the public to attend since Chief Weber will be recognized for his great work.

No public comment concerning this item.

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 Burdo/Goddard – roll call vote, six ayes, two absent.

No public comment concerning this item.

7. Review Fiscal Year 2022-2023 Proposed Budget & 5yr Budget Projection

Deputy Director Fire Yeager provided an overview and thanked the BCs and program managers for their efforts in prioritizing certain items such as training, health and wellness, fire hydrant replacement, turnouts replacement and maintenance, fleet parts and fuel, etc. San Anselmo Finance Director Jeff Zuba summarized the staff report and mentioned that the projected budget increase from the last fiscal year is approximately \$630k. The budget includes a salary and benefits increase estimate subject to change based on active contract labor negotiations, and if that changes before June 15, they will update the numbers. Further, there is a \$176k increase on the CalPERS Unfunded Liability, and due to the current economic climate, it is not reasonable to issue bonds to reduce it.

Zuba also mentioned a \$48k health benefits increase, and a new line item is the loan repayment for the new fire engine that will start next year for \$169k coming out of the vehicle fund. He also explained the five-year projections.

Burdo asked if the current projections account for any salary increases. Zuba responded that it includes an estimate for salary and benefits.

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 recapped the staff report and said that a preview of these items was presented at the last Board meeting, and the request for associated costs from the previous RFP was included in this new staff report. He summarized the cost breakdown for an approximate cost of \$139k. The goal is to find longevity and a sustainable path forward for the Department, and he provided some options. Further, Chief Weber said that the intent is to provide regular updates to the Board to move the process forward once responses are submitted.

Goddard asked about the timing related to some of the options and if it is realistic for the Department to make some changes before the current shared service agreement expires on August 2023. She would like to know what the Department would do if we are in a long process and the agreement expires. Chief Weber responded that the process depends on what options the Board elects. For instance, if one option is selected, it can be moved to the implementation phase, but MCFD is here to assist in creating a pathway forward.

Burdo asked if Board members could attend the "pre-proposal conference" on May 19 and Chief Weber responded yes, as long as there were not four Board members to avoid violating the Brown Act and attend to monitor. Then, Burdo asked who was part of the evaluation committee, and Chief Weber said that it was the Management Committee (Town Managers and Shortall from Sleepy Hollow). Finally, Burdo asked if a subcommittee was going to be established, and Chief Weber said that that was not the intention since it is not a massive RFP, but if the Board desires it, we can establish one or call for a special meeting.

San Anselmo Town Manager/RVFD Executive Officer Dave Donery added that the Management Committee would review all the submissions and bring a report to the Board for final decision.

Burdo asked that section 2.4 be revised to include a parenthesis next to the evaluation committee/Management Committee, and he supports the release once the changes are made. Kuhl also asked for the document to be revised since a section had incorrect numbers.

RVFD Captain Oscar Arenas said that the RFP is an essential subject for Labor Management. Therefore, the Firefighters must share their input from the early stages of the RFP development. Chief Weber responded that stage II would entail reaching out to stakeholders in a public meeting. The Labor-Management Subcommittee can also agendaize it for their next quarterly meeting and make it part of the discussion.

Goddard added that she recalls going through this process 4-5 years ago. The process was unclear, and she would like to incorporate some communication out to our constituents via social media or the Department's website so that people understand the process and the different options. Kuhl asked if the Chief could present the various options at the next Board meeting. Chief Weber responded yes; he could have it agendaized and cover the different options, but we would not have the RFP answers yet. Chief Weber agreed that the public should be included, and we will make sure the process is well advertised. Kuhl asked if the item would be for educational purposes only, and no Board action or discussion will be required. Chief Weber responded yes. Kuhl then asked if anyone objected to having the educational item, and no one objected.

No further public comment concerning this item.

M/S Burdo/Goddard – roll call vote, six ayes, two absent. Approved after reviewing and revising the RFP document.

9. Announce adjournment to Closed Session

No public comment concerning this item.

10. Adjourn

The next meeting is scheduled for June 8 via zoom video conferencing.

Respectfully submitted,

s/Mariana Gonzalez
Administrative Assistant