

ROSS VALLEY FIRE DEPARTMENT

Minutes of the Ross Valley Fire Workshop and Board Meeting of January 11, 2023

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

WORKSHOP MINUTES

1. 5:30 pm Call to order - Workshop

Board Present: Cutrano, Brekhus, Kuhl, Burdo, Hellman, Shortall, Finn

Board absent:

Staff present: Weber, Mahoney.

Town Managers Present: Donery, Johnson, Abrams

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- 2. 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.

- 3. Presentation from Local Motion Solutions (LMS) on Leadership and Governance Study; recommendation: Receive Presentation and direct staff.**

Chief Weber provided a background related to the *Leadership & Governance Study* focused on analyzing and providing options to the RVFD Fire Board once the MCFD/RVFD Shared Services Agreement ends on June 30, 2023. LMS was tasked with providing pros, cons, and other considerations for the six potential management solutions for RVFD.

The LMS draft report requested by the Town Managers only provides options and not recommendations as directed by the Fire Board. The goal is to bring the revised report to the Board for decision in March, so that a plan can be put into effect in July 2023. During the presentation, LMS showed the different models while emphasizing that not all options are mutually exclusive, and that short-term options might be needed to get the desired model. RVFD stakeholders would have to decide RVFD's Governance and Leadership/Management. So, LMS explained the pros, and cons for the following models: (1) Independent Fire District; (2) Dependent Fire District; (3) Joint Powers Agreement; (4) Joint Powers Authority or Agency (JPA); (5) Contract for Services; (6) Stand-Alone Fire Agency.

Kuhl asked what the Shift of property taxes meant. Irving responded that each Town would have to shift a portion of their property taxes to fund the district and the amount would be roughly equal

to what the Towns currently pay for Fire Services. The Board discussed funding and Hellman requested to add more details about the property tax funding to the revised report. Helman also asked for more clarification on provision of services and if the Joint Powers Agreement is a short-term option, and Irving explained how this model works and noted that Central Marin Fire Is the only agency who has expressed interest in a Joint Powers Agreement with RVFD.

Brekhus asked for clarification on shift Battalion Chief. Irving explained how the shift coverage work with the Joint Powers Agreement model. Hellman asked to footnote the current RVFD BC coverage.

Brekhus asked why the Stand-Alone Fire Chief model included a Fire Chief, Deputy Chief, and Fire Marshall. Irving responded that other Fire Agencies with the same size as RVFD have all three positions. The Board discussed the cost and potential savings.

Burdo asked about the short- and long-term options. Irving responded that a short-term option can either be a Joint Powers Agreement or Stand-Alone Fire Agency. Burdo also asked if there is a plan to include the public's opinion. Politzer responded that public outreach is not part of the scope for phase one, but the understanding is that once the Board decides the options, LMS would present to each JPA Member Agency Council. Burdo also suggested that each Town surveys their community to get the public's input and asked about the voting threshold. Chief Weber responded that if the voting changes the budget by 5%, it requires a unanimous vote, and Finn also explained how voting works. Finn agreed with Burdo about the Joint Powers Agreement model and also mentioned the RVPA as a possible model.

Brekhus talked about the time frame to decide and what other possible options RVFD might have such as extending the MCFD/RVFD Shared Services Agreement, continue with Chief Mahoney services as Deputy Chief, hire an Interim Fire Chief. LMS and the Board discussed Brekhus' questions.

Brian Colbert, San Anselmo Council member thanked LMS for their presentation, and thanked all for their questions, time, and commitment to the community. Hellman also thanked LMS for the presentation.

No public comment concerning this item.

4. Adjourn

RVFD BOARD MEETING MINUTES

1. 7:07 pm Call to order. Announce action in closed session, if any.

Board Present: Cutrano, Brekhus, Kuhl, Burdo, Hellman, Shortall, Finn

Board absents:

Staff present: Weber, Zuba, Mahoney, Badawi

Town Managers Present: Donery, Johnson, Abrams

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2. Receive Audit Presentation from MD&A and accept FY 21-22 audited financials.

President Kuhl called to move the order of the agenda items, specifically, the annual RVFD Financial audit from item 7 on the agenda to item 2. No Board members objected to the request.

Zuba introduced Badawi & Associates and Ahmed Badawi, CPA Partner, provided the presentation for Fiscal year 2021-22. Badawi explained that this year's audit primary emphasis was revenues & receivables: improper revenue recognitions, pension & OPEB, management override of controls. Badawi clarified that his firm is not concerned that RVFD is improperly recognizing revenues, but the audit standards requires them to assume it as a high risk area. Per Badawi, RVFD received an unmodified opinion, which is a "clean opinion," meaning the financial statements were fairly presented, accounting policies were consistently applied, estimates were reasonable, and disclosures were properly reflected in the financial statements.

Badawi also provided a summary of the financial changes since 2020, and stated that there might be a pension liability increase in 2023, and according to the General Fund balance, the expenditure coverage percentage has increased year after year and in 2022, the percentage was 29.7% which is four months. Badawi also covered the required communication that includes Badawi & Associates and RVFD Management responsibilities, new GASB statements, Badawi did not have any significant audit adjustments, did not identify any significant risks or exposures, did not identify material weaknesses, and there were not disagreements with management.

The Board did not have any questions about the presentation, and there was no public comment concerning this item.

M/S Brekhus/Burdo – roll call vote, 7 ayes.

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.

None.

No public comment concerning this item.

5. Chief Report – Verbal Update by Chief Weber

Weather Update: Chief Weber talked about the weather challenges and the regular awareness communication between the three Towns and the County regarding potential flood situations to ensure everyone is aware of what is happening with regards to alert warnings or siren activations.

MWPA Update: Chief Weber reported that planning process for 2023 is currently being discussed, but the plan is to continue working on defensible space.

RVFD Administrative Assistant Update: Chief Weber reported that Monique Black, the temporary Administrative Assistant accepted a permanent position with another agency with the County. Chief Weber and Chief Mahoney will work with Management on next steps.

The Board did not have any questions about the Chief's update, and there was 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 Brekhus/ Cutrano – roll call vote, 7 ayes.

No public comment concerning this item.

7. Appoint President and Vice President to the Board for 2023

Chief Weber provided background on the election process and per previous years and to stay consistent, a Fairfax Board member should be appointed president and a Sleepy Hollow Board member should be appointed vice-president.

Cutrano nominated Hellman for president and Shortall nominated Finn for vice-president. The Board did not nominate anyone else for either position. Kuhl declared Finn as vice-president and Hellman as president.

M/S Cutrano/ Shortall – roll call vote, 7 ayes.

No public comment concerning this item.

8. Receive update on Fire Dispatch Services; Recommendation: receive update and authorize Executive Officer to send a letter of intent to participate in Countywide Fire Dispatch services.

Chief Weber reminded the Board the November 2022 discussion regarding Dispatch and the Sheriffs decision to terminate Fire Dispatching Services. Chief Weber summarized the staff report, talked about the different options, cost estimates and funding sources, and ongoing challenges with the transition, and the recommendation to sign the non-binding letter of intent to participate in Countywide Fire Dispatch services.

The Board did not have any questions, and there was no public comment concerning this item.

M/S Kuhl/ Burdo – roll call vote, 7 ayes.

9. Convene in Closed Session- Consider adoption of Resolutions 23-02 and 23-03. Resolutions of the Ross Valley Fire Department Board of Directors delegation of authority to make an industrial disability determination for CalPERS.

Finn, Burdo, and Hellman thanked Kuhl for his service as the 2022 RVFD Board President.

No public comment concerning this item.

10. Announcement of Closed Session Action- Reporting on any action taken at this meeting will be done in open session at the beginning of the next RVFD Board of Directors' regular meeting.

The next meeting is scheduled for February 8, 2023, via zoom video conferencing.

Respectfully submitted,

s/Mariana Gonzalez

Temporary Administrative Assistant