

**ROSS VALLEY FIRE DEPARTMENT
STAFF REPORT**

For the Meeting of November 27, 2023

To: Board Of Directors

From: Dan Mahoney, Interim Fire Chief

Subject: Board Shall Consider The Labor Management Subcommittee Recommendation To Increase Staffing With A Position Start Date Of July 1, 2024 Funded By Each Member Agency Paying Their Respective “Percentage Share” From The Position Date Of Hire.

RECOMMENDATION:

Staff recommends the Board approve the “Labor Management Subcommittee” recommendation to increase staffing with a position start date of July 1, 2024 funded by each member agency paying their respective “Percentage Share” from the position date of hire.

BACKGROUND:

At the January 2020 Board meeting, a “Staffing/Deployment” side letter was approved to enhance the current “Labor Management Subcommittee” (subcommittee) with additional members. The subcommittees’ goal was “how to increase staffing”.

The subcommittee held its first meeting on April 20, 2022. Discussion was held regarding the need to identify future funding if the Department was awarded its grant application for the 2021 “Staffing for Adequate Fire and Emergency Response” (SAFER) Grant. Staff was given direction to provide an ongoing cost estimate after the first 36 months and present it to the Board for discussion at the June 2022 Board meeting. Staff presented the cost estimate at the June 2022 Board meeting. No direction to Staff or action was taken other than for Staff to keep the Board informed on the SAFER Grant application. Ultimately the SAFER Grant was not awarded to the Department. There has been no formal discussions at the Board level and the subcommittee did not meet after the June 2022 Board meeting.

At the September 2023 Board meeting, Staff recommended filling a vacancy in the subcommittee and holding another subcommittee meeting before the October 2023 Board meeting. The vacancy was filled at the meeting.

The subcommittee met on October 5, 2023. A Staff Report was presented and a discussion was held regarding increased staffing to three-person engine companies. A

motion was passed to bring a recommendation to the Board that included a funding plan and start date for the new firefighter position.

At the October 2023 Board meeting staff presented a Staff Report (Attachment #1) that included the subcommittees' recommendation as follows:

1. **Funding Plan:** Each Member agency will begin paying their respective "Percentage Share" from the position date of hire.
2. **Position Start Date:** July 1, 2024

The Board discussed the proposal and recommended that it be brought to each town council for discussion.

Staff presented the subcommittees recommendation to the San Anselmo Town Council on October 24, 2023, the Fairfax Town Council on November 1, 2023 and the Ross Town Council on November 9, 2023. All town councils provided their Board Directors with direction to support the subcommittees recommendation.

DISCUSSION:

The Department needs a paradigm shift to maintain effective operational readiness in this modern world. In order to meet all of these new demands, we need to increase our engine company staffing as soon as possible. The Department is currently the only department in Marin County that has two-person engine companies.

It has been a long term goal of the Fire Board to make the transition to a three-person engine company. The "Labor Management Subcommittee" recommendation to increase staffing with a position start date of July 1, 2024 provides an opportunity for the Department to begin staffing its engines with one three-person engine company prior to July 1, 2025 if the Board so chooses. The remaining two engine companies will be staffed with three personnel after the closure of Station 18 on July 1, 2025.

If the Staff recommendation is approved, it is important to remember that once the new firefighters start, they will need to be trained through our Firefighter Training Program. This is expected to take approximately 3 months.

Staff will return to the Board in June 2024 with a status update and recommendation on a process to move forward with updating the RVFD Joint Powers Agreement and the Firefighters Memorandum Of Understanding to reflect one three person engine company as minimum staffing. Minimum staffing of one three person engine company is estimated to start around October 2024, however the above mentioned firefighter training and its completion will be the deciding factor.

FISCAL IMPACT:

Each member agency will begin paying their respective “Percentage Share” from the position date of hire with a start date of July 1, 2024. The fiscal impact would include a \$632,028 increase to the FY 24/25 Budget. Member percentage shares are listed in Table 1 below.

The costs in Table 1 represent a fully-burdened cost of three Firefighter Paramedic positions, taking into consideration the following: monthly salary/benefits were calculated using the Boards agreed (on 1/8/22) amounts from the Firefighter Paramedic “Side Letter Of Agreement” and salary schedule/benefits were adjusted to match the negotiated increase/benefit changes since 2020, overtime costs are based on the negotiated leave days (sick/vacation), and one time equipment costs are based on outfitting the Firefighters with protective clothing (one time equipment costs only included in 24/25 and 25/26).

Table 1

FY	Fairfax	Ross	San Anselmo	Sleepy Hollow FPD
Percent Share	23.30%	23.37%	40.53%	12.80%
24/25	\$147,262	\$147,705	\$256,161	\$80,900
25/26	\$156,034	\$156,503	\$271,420	\$85,719
26/27	\$164,114	\$164,607	\$285,473	\$90,157

Encl.: Staff Report For Increasing Staffing To Three Personnel – Attachment #1