

ROSS VALLEY FIRE DEPARTMENT

Minutes of the Ross Valley Fire Board Meeting of November 8, 2023

Note: These are summary action minutes only. The zoom recording can be accessed by clicking [here](#). The passcode is Rvfd110823#

RVFD BOARD MEETING MINUTES

1. 6:30 pm Call to order.

Board Present: Brekhus (Remotely), Robbins, Fineman, Burdo, Shortall, Finn, Hellman, Cutrano

Board Absents:

Staff Present: Mahoney, Lim, Weber, Cutter, Zuba (Remotely), Badawi (Remotely)

Town Managers Present: Donery, Johnson, Abrahams

Brekhus is attending the meeting remotely due to illness.

M/S Burdo/Cutrano to approve Director Brekhus attending the meeting remotely – roll call vote, eight ayes: Robbins, Fineman, Burdo, Shortall, Finn, Hellman, Cutrano, Brekhus

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Hellman suggested moving agenda Item 6 to the beginning of the meeting due to time constraints.

Item 6 - Authorize the Board President to Enter into a Contract with Marin County Fire Department for 911 Emergency Communications and Dispatch Services Starting July 1, 2024 and Choose One of the Options for Funding the One Time Startup Costs. – Interim Fire Chief Mahoney

Chief Mahoney provided a brief review of the Staff Report. No questions from the Board.

No public comment.

Chief Mahoney noted that a unanimous Board would be needed since the amounts are in excess of 3%. Hellman proposed having a discussion around the options related to the payment of the start-up cost, whether it's a one-time cost or the amortization option.

Robbins suggested option number two, the one-time lump sum, because there would be no fee to pay and it is the option the subcommittee recommended. Hellman agrees. Cutrano and Burdo seconded Robbins' suggestion.

Brekhus asked if there are any guardrails in place if the start up cost goes over budget since there's a budget of start up costs and an estimate of start up costs? She also asked what happens with RVFD's share if another agency backs out?

Chief Weber reviewed the process gone through to arrive at the amount for the start up cost budget. Various vendors have been involved and overall the budget is pretty conservative. Two bids have been received in the past couple of weeks and both have been below the estimated start up cost budget. If the project ends up outside of the estimated construction budget, value engineering and the scope of the project will be looked at.

If an agency were to back out, we would scale. Personnel wise, it's scalable - the number of dispatchers would be reduced. If an agency backs out on the facility piece, we'd have to take a hard look at what we

want to do moving forward. Everyone is intending to sign the contract this week.

Robbins asked for clarification on who the members of the Fire Dispatch Standards Committee are. The Standards Committee is an operational committee who make recommendations to the Executive Committee. The powers and authorities lie with the Executive Committee. The definition section of page two, specifies the Standards Group is comprised of certain officers, officials of the fire protection agencies in Marin County that advise fire chief and fire agencies regarding operational matters.

M/S Burdo/Cutrano to approve Board President to enter in contract with Marin County Fire Department for 911 Emergency Communications and Dispatch Services starting July 1, 2024 and using Option 2 as discussed by the Board – roll call vote, eight ayes: Brekhus, Robbins, Fineman, Burdo, Shortall, Finn, Hellman, Cutrano.

2. Chief Report – Verbal Update by Interim Fire Chief Mahoney

Emergency Preparedness Coordinator: Miranda Miller has moved to another agency. Working with the Management team to talk about the transition and bringing someone new onboard fairly shortly.

Director Shortall expressed interest in being involved in the hiring process of the next Emergency Preparedness Coordinator.

Special Meeting Date: Tentative Special Meeting date of November 27th at 3:30pm. More information to come.

Shared Services Update: Executive Officer Donery provided an update on the Shared Services. We are back in conversation with Central Marin Fire Department, starting with their management team and then the Chiefs.

3. 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.

No public comment concerning this item.

M/S Finn/Burdo to approve consent agenda – roll call vote, seven ayes: Brekhus, Robbins, Burdo, Shortall, Finn, Hellman, Cutrano. One absent: Fineman.

4. Annual Independent Audit Report for Fiscal Year Ending June 30, 2023 – Badawi & Associates

Zuba introduced Badawi & Associates. This is their third year preparing the annual audit report and basic financial statements. Based on their examination of RVFD's records, they've issued an unmodified or cleaned audit opinion. The recommendation is the Fire Board accept the annual financial report for the fiscal year ending June 30, 2023.

Badawi presented the results of the 2023 audit to the Board, which included deliverables and scope of the audit, areas of primary emphasis (revenues and receivables, pension and OPEB, management override of controls), auditors report and financial statements, required communications, and upcoming new accounting standards.

There is no significant fluctuation of the Departments assets over the last three years. There is an increase

in pension liability due to investment performance, but that's the case with most clients.

Badawi did not have any specific adjustments, which means the Department has done a good job capturing all transactions and closing the books. No significant risk or exposures were identified. There was no disagreement with management and no material weaknesses.

No public comment.

Burdo and Chief Mahoney gave a shout out to Jeff Zuba for all of his work with Badawi & Associates.

M/S Cutrano/Burdo to accept the audit – roll call vote, five ayes: Robbins, Burdo, Finn, Hellman, Cutrano. Three absent: Brekhus, Fineman and Shortall

5. Receive Presentation on Defensible Space Program – Kathleen Cutter

Cutter presented the Board with the 2023 end of the year Defensible Space Inspections report.

Cutrano asked what the reasons and limitations are of residents not curing violations. Reasons include people not having funds available, not physically able, and are resistant to being told what to do. A lot is also misunderstanding. It would be helpful to have hard data on points of resistance.

In 2023, \$37,000 worth of grants were awarded, which was about \$2,200 per applicant who received the grant. Funds from the Defensible Space Grant program go quickly every year.

Something new is residents can resolve things on their reports online. They would need to go to the corrections list, select the correction made, and upload a photo of the correction.

Robbins asked if there is pushback for the 5 feet defensible space. There is pushback and we need to figure out how to reach those people.

No public comment.

Director Finn shared that there are four firesmart public demonstration landscape gardens being built in Marin, one of which is in Sleepy Hollow, and should be complete February 2024.

6. Authorize the Board President to Enter into a Contract with Marin County Fire Department for 911 Emergency Communications and Dispatch Services Starting July 1, 2024 and Choose One of the Options for Funding the One Time Startup Costs. – Interim Fire Chief Mahoney

See above. This item was discussed at the beginning of the Board meeting due to time constraints.

7. Board requests for future agenda items, questions, and comments to staff, staff miscellaneous items.

No comment concerning this item.

8. 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.

No public comment concerning this item.

9. Adjourn

The next meeting is scheduled for January 10, 2024, San Anselmo Town Council Chambers, at 525 San Anselmo Ave. San Anselmo, CA 94960, and via Zoom.

Respectfully submitted,
s/Samantha Stettler
Administrative Assistant