

## ROSS VALLEY FIRE DEPARTMENT

Minutes of the Ross Valley Fire Board Special Meeting of February 14, 2024

*Note: These are summary action minutes only. The zoom recording can be accessed by clicking [here](#). The passcode is Rvfd021424#*

### RVFD BOARD MEETING MINUTES

#### 1. 6:30 pm Call to order.

**Board Present:** Brekhus, Robbins, Colbert, Burdo, Shortall, Finn, Hellman, Cutrano

**Board Absents:**

**Staff Present:** Mahoney

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

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

**Firefighter Paramedic Recruitment:** Still in the process of interviews. Chief's interviews on Friday, February 16th.

**Fire Stations Remodels for Stations 20 and 21:** Big progress has been made and we're moving forward with plans.

Burdo shared that the Town of San Anselmo passed a resolution allowing Narcan to be placed in Town facilities. The Fire Department has Narcan at all of the Ross Valley Fire Stations and on the engines. An informational flyer will be made and include this information to get the word out to the public.

**No public comment.**

#### 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.**

**M/S Robbins/Burdo to approve consent agenda – roll call vote, eight ayes: Brekhus, Robbins, Colbert, Burdo, Shortall, Finn, Hellman, Cutrano.**

#### 4. **Budget Revision to Fiscal Year 2023-2024 Operating Budget. – Interim Fire Chief Mahoney & Finance Director Jeff Zuba**

Chief Mahoney introduced Finance Director Zuba who presented and summarized the Staff Report.

Brekhus asked where the OES reimbursement money is applied when the Department receives the funds because it appears the reimbursement money is currently being put into the reserve funds instead of being treated as a reimbursement. The reimbursement money should not be treated as found money because it's an expenditure that's already been spent.

Mahoney acknowledged this was discussed previously. Staff was going to come to the Board with a recommendation on how reserve funds should be treated when the Department is reimbursed. No decisions have been made yet because Zuba and Mahoney are still looking into how other agencies handle this and are discussing best practices. In the interim, the money is going back to the Undesignated

Reserves if it's not spent. That's the common practice we've always used; it comes in as revenue, gets balanced out with overtime, and then the remainder goes into reserves.

**No public comment.**

**M/S Colbert/Burdo to approve Resolution 24-02 adopting budget revisions to Fiscal Year 2023-2024 – roll call vote, eight ayes: Brekhus, Robbins, Colbert, Burdo, Shortall, Finn, Hellman, Cutrano.**

**5. Recommend the Board Come to Consensus on Whether the President of the Ross Valley Fire Department Board of Directors Should Have the Ability to Add Future Agenda Items. – Interim Fire Chief Mahoney**

Chief Mahoney summarized the Staff Report.

Finn proposed that the provision that allows the President of the Board to add items to the agenda through communication with the Executive Officer be restored with a modification. The proposed modification is that the President of the Board, together with the Vice President of the Board, will collaborate with the Executive Officer to add items to the agenda.

The Directors discussed varying opinions and points of view. Coming to no consensus, Mahoney recommended coming back in six months to see if there have been issues with Resolution 24-01. If there is a need to amend Resolution 24-01 in six months because issues have arisen, discussions can open up again. There was no objection to Mahoney's recommendation from the Board.

**No public comment.**

**6. Receive Report on Ross Valley Fire Department Stand Alone Fire Chief Model and Associated Costs and Provide Direction to Staff. – Interim Fire Chief Mahoney and Executive Officer Dave Donery**

Chief Mahoney summarized the Staff Report.

Finn noted the Board is not being asked to approve a proposal, but to direct Mahoney to explore and refine the proposed stand alone fire chief model further.

Colbert and Hellman both asked questions related to the model RVFD has currently and historically been operating under, one Fire Chief and three Battalion Chiefs. Colbert's question was how successful can any Fire Chief be without the appropriate level of support? Hellman's question was why is the current state not sustainable? Mahoney explained that staying with the current model would keep RVFD in the status quo. If RVFD wants to shift to being a progressive fire department, where the Fire Chief has the autonomy to be forward thinking and work towards a vision for the Department, then changing the current model by adding a 40 hour a week Battalion Chief will contribute to this. As it is now, the Battalion Chiefs are doing a lot of ancillary tasks beyond just responding to incidents. They manage training, facilities, communications and technology, fleet, serve as liaison to San Anselmo Finance, and human resources functions.

Cutrano, Shortall, and Finn all expressed their support for the proposed stand alone Fire Chief model because it is what is currently needed, as long as it does not inhibit or complicate future shared service discussions with Central Marin Fire Department (CMFD). Cutrano asked how the presented structure would work with eventual discussions around shared services and how it relates to senior management with CMFD in the future. Mahoney stated that discussions with CMFD entailed special Battalion Chief

roles and that the 40 hour BC would move into one of those special roles. Shortall also expressed that he's a strong supporter of doing something with CMFD down the line because that would give us the resources to run as a modern fire department.

Burdo asked about salary for the 40 hour Battalion Chief and Fire Chief. Mahoney stated the Battalion Chief salary is laid out in the MOU and is a step program and the Fire Chief salary would be a negotiated contract.

Robbins asked how often in a week Battalion Chief's go out on an incident and if that will change when there are three people on the engines. Mahoney said that won't change when there are three people on the engines because Battalion Chief's respond when an incident needs their support.

Direction was given to Staff to continue pursuing this proposal and to present more details at the next Board meeting and beyond.

**No public comment.**

**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. Announce adjournment to Closed Session: 7:46pm**

Personnel Matter - Direction On Hiring Fire Chief Position

**10. Announce action in closed session, if any:**

No reportable action.

**11. Adjourn**

The next meeting is scheduled for March 13, 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