

**ROSS VALLEY FIRE DEPARTMENT
STAFF REPORT**

For the meeting of November 13, 2024

To: Board of Directors

From: Dan Mahoney, Fire Chief

Subject: Receive an Update on Receipt of a Letter from Ross Requesting a “One-Year Delay in the Closure of the Ross Fire Station 18” and a Recommendation from Staff to Defer Any Action Until After December 5, 2024.

RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends that the RVFD Board receive an update regarding the receipt of a letter from Ross Town Manager Christa Johnson requesting “an amendment to the Ross Valley Fire Department (RVFD) Joint Powers Authority Agreement (JPA) dated January 1, 2022, to allow for a one-year delay in the closure of the Ross Fire Station 18”. Staff also recommends the Board defer any action until after December 5, 2024.

BACKGROUND AND DISCUSSION

On November 11, 2021 the Board voted unanimously to close Fire Station 18. Effective January 1, 2022 all Members entered into the Third Amendment of the Joint Powers Authority (JPA) identifying that Station 18 “ shall be closed on July 1, 2025, or upon a written agreement among all Members to close on an earlier date” (Section 9.2(d)).

On October 14, 2024, Ross Valley Fire Board President Thomas Finn received a letter from Ross Town Manager Christa Johnson (directed to do so by the Ross Town Council in a 5-0 vote) requesting “an amendment to the Ross Valley Fire Department (RVFD) Joint Powers Authority Agreement (JPA) dated January 1, 2022, to allow for a one-year delay in the closure of the Ross Fire Station 18” (Attachment # 1).

The letter states the one-year delay will enable the Ross Valley Paramedic Authority (RVPA) to complete its comprehensive study and engage in transparent Board discussions about the future of the RVPA Joint Powers Agreement. An email was also received by RVPA Executive Officer Chief Jason Weber stating that the Town of Ross is requesting a lease agreement be agreed on before December 31, 2024.

The following RVPA meetings have taken place or are scheduled:

- **November 7, 2024** - An RVPA Special Meeting (Attachment #2) was held that included a presentation of the much anticipated Citygate “EMS Deployment And Fiscal Assessment Review” comprehensive study. A question and answer session, as well as public comment, were taken to allow the RVPA Board to consider the information presented. Citygate Public Safety Principal Stewart Gary, specialized legal Counsel Andrew Schouten, General Counsel Emily Longfellow, and staff were available for questions. Due to the complexity of the issues and details of the report, RVPA staff did not seek any formal decisions from the Board at this meeting.
- **November 21, 2024** - An RVPA Special Meeting has been scheduled to engage the RVPA Board in deliberations regarding reaching an agreement (lease terms) with Ross to continue housing Medic 18 in its current location, the Town of Ross.
- **December 5, 2024** - An RVPA Regular Meeting is scheduled.

At this time, staff feels a proactive approach has been taken by both RVPA (scheduling Special meetings) and the Town of Ross (providing a December 31, 2024 timeline for a lease agreement), therefore allowing for additional deliberations to occur on the RVPA Board would be beneficial before taking action on the letter received from Ross regarding “ a one-year delay in the closure of the Ross Fire Station 18”.

Staff recommends the Board take receipt of the letter and defer any action until after the November 21, 2024, RVPA Special meeting and the Regularly scheduled RVPA December 5, 2024 meeting. These upcoming RVPA meetings will provide needed insight into whether the letter request should be acted upon or at least considered by the RVFD Board.

Staff will remain engaged with the RVPA discussions and will provide a staff report update with recommendations at the December 11, 2024, RVFD Board meeting.

FISCAL IMPACT

There are no fiscal impacts to this report.

ATTACHMENTS

Attachment #1 – Town of Ross Letter

Attachment #2 – RVPA Board Packet for November 7, 2024