

ROSS VALLEY FIRE DEPARTMENT STAFF REPORT

For the meeting of: September 10, 2025

To: Board of Directors
From: David P. Donery, Executive Officer
Subject: Fire Chief Employment Agreement

RECOMMENDATION:

That the Board approved the updated Employment Agreement for Ross Valley Fire Chief Dan Mahoney.

BACKGROUND:

Dan Mahoney was appointed Ross Valley Fire Chief by the Fire Board on June 12, 2024 and signed a one-year agreement. Chief Mahoney and the department's management committee negotiated the terms of a proposed successor contract. At the August 13, 2025 Fire Board meeting, in Closed Session, the Board reviewed the proposed successor contract and provided direction to staff.

DISCUSSION:

The Chief's current total compensation includes his base salary of \$254,629 plus a 2.5% educational incentive which bring his FY 2024/25 total compensation to \$260,995.

After negotiations with the management committee, discussion with the Fire Board and an analysis of the current total compensation of other Marin County Fire Chiefs, the following terms are reflected in the proposed agreement:

Salary: 4% COLA plus a 1.23% Equity Adjustment bringing the base salary to \$268,072

Longevity Pay: After twenty (20) years of completed full-time permanent service, the Employee will receive 4% additional base pay. Chief Mahoney qualifies for this.

Educational Incentive: RVFD Educational Incentive Program: All employees who have an Associate's degree or 60 college units shall receive a sum equivalent to 2.5% of base monthly salary. Differential pay, incentive pay, or any other form of compensation will not be included for the calculation of Educational Incentive. The Chief qualifies for this incentive, and his benefit remains unchanged.

The department offers a 5% increase for employees with a bachelor's degree.

The sum total of these terms adds up to a year over year 9.23% increase in the Chief's compensation and would bring his total compensation for the 2025/26 fiscal year to \$285,497.

The current median total compensation for Fire Chiefs in Marin County is \$291,641.

If approved, this agreement will be retroactive to July 1, 2025.

Vacation Time:

In addition to compensation, the updated agreement includes the addition of two additional vacation days added to the Chief's monthly accrual. The Chief currently accrues 204 hours per month, and the additional two days makes the new accrual become 220 annually. This would make the annual vacation accrual in line with the County average of 224 hours per year.

Multi-Year Agreement:

To coincide with the Firefighters and Battalion Chief MOU, this agreement spans three fiscal years and includes a COLA of 4% in years two and three, mirroring the Chief Officer's agreement.

Ongoing Goals and Professional Development:

As part of the Chief's performance review and with input from the Fire Board, the following goals have been set for the 2025/26 fiscal year:

Leadership (October 2025) - Attend California Fire Chiefs Association Conference. Attend various leadership and workshops the conference has to offer. (Issues Facing The Fire Service Labor And Management, Firefighter Recruitment Strategies, Policy Updates And Covering Your Agency/Leadership Expectations Engaging Your Next Generation Firefighters).

Leadership (by May 2026) – Will seek out and attend executive management level finance and budget training opportunities.

Leadership - Have Department fully staffed by filling four Firefighter Paramedic vacancies along with staffing the 40 hr. Battalion Chief Position (by June 2026).

Leadership – Onboard Wildfire Preparedness Coordinator position and integrate into member agencies needs (by January 2026).

Project Management – Work with the town of San Anselmo to complete the Fire Station 20 remodel project (before July 2026).

Project Management – Work with the Town of Fairfax to prepare Fire Station 21 remodel project bid (before July 2026)

Project Management - Consolidate all three JPA Amendments into one JPA version (by July 2026)

Project Management - Review current RVFD fee schedule and work with the Finance Department to determine if fees need to be revised through the execution of a fee study (by March 2026).

CONCLUSION:

Once approved, the compensation for the Fire Chief position is set through the 2027/28 fiscal year. The management committee will continue to conduct an annual performance review along with the development of annual goals and a professional development plan, with input from the Board.

Attachment #1: FY 2024/25 RVFD Fire Chief Employment Agreement