

**Joint Committee Meeting
Ross Town Hall
Friday, November 18, 2011
Meeting called to order at 0830**

No public in attendance to address the committee.

Introductions: Scott Hunter, Ross Town Council, Chief Tom Vallee, Rupert Russell, Ross Town Council, David Weinsoff, President RVFD Board, Rich Shortall, RVFD Board, Rick Marshall, Ross Valley Firefighters, Rick Addicks, Ross Firefighters, Debra Stutsman, Town of San Anselmo and RVFD Executive Officer, and Jeff Kroot, RVFD Board.

Report on attending Kentfield FPD meeting and that they unanimously agreed to end discussions with Ross.

Discussion of RVFD initial timeline, issues and next steps. Chief Meagor distributed the list of items for discussion.

1. **Operations and Administration:** Chief Meagor reviewed the staffing and station locations that will remain the same as they are currently.
2. **Cost sharing:** Chief Meagor reviewed the items that would be part of the cost sharing. This is the starting of ideas and these items will be reviewed and prioritized as we go through the process. Fairfax, San Anselmo, and SHFPD are satisfied that the cost sharing relationship between the three agencies is fair. The committee will need to work on determining the percentage for Ross. Ross call volume is about 10% of the whole with station staffing at 25%. It is anticipated that the cost sharing will be somewhere in between those figures. Chief Vallee and Chief Meagor will be put together various options for discussion. Discussion followed about numbers and percentages to be used for creating options.
3. **Memorandum Of Understanding with labor groups:** Determine the variances between the labor groups. There are variances between the two groups, i.e. Social Security, pay rates, sick days, etc. Discussion has begun about the various variances and Ross Firefighter's have asked for a consultant to assist in the process. Also, policy and procedures would need to be reviewed and discussed for any variances. Questions about PERS, Ross and RVFD are in the same risk pool, but there are a few elements that are different. The base rate for PERS is the same. Merging the two contracts should be a simple process. The only issue is that there are Side Funds for both agencies. Right now, it is recommended that the Side Funds remain with each agency. This item is under discussion and calls have been made to PERS for guidance and information. The Side Fund for Ross also includes Police Department.

4. **Assets and Liabilities:** Determining the current assets and liabilities. Process is already underway. The fire station buildings are owned by the individual towns. The plan is for the fire engines and equipment to remain under the ownership of current owners with future purchases to be made by the new JPA. The only debt service for the current JPA is the \$88,000 for the fire engine lease payment. Fire engine lease purchases have worked well for the last 15 years. Question about insurance coverage for the JPA. The JPA is self insured separate from the towns. The specific questions regarding the JPA and risks for members should be answered by attorneys. Other Post Employment Benefits (OPEB) – both agencies have them at different levels. RVFD has an agreement with the actuary to do scenarios for liability and costs.
5. **Joint Powers Agreement:** Question about a board vote for adding a new member. It would require a unanimous vote of the Board. Board meets monthly currently. Member Shortall spoke on the current JPA and that the board has a single focus of providing the best service possible. Member Russell asked about any issue with the public with the Department. Executive Officer Stutsman responded that it is a great working relationship and the public is very happy with the service they receive from the Department. President Weinsoff spoke on the prior review of the JPA and that there were many discussions, meetings, and independent attorney reviews. There were no issues from the public with the service they received from the Department. Member Hunter asked about public buy in and that the public meetings should be held after there are decisions made for issues. Rick Marshall spoke on how the department and stations are very much community stations. Chief Meagor agreed and that at some point the engine will probably say RVFD, serving the town of Ross. Member Kroot also spoke on the many meetings and that it is definitely a process for the public and towns. Chief Meagor will be making presentations to the Fairfax and San Anselmo Town Councils explaining the process and what it will entail.
6. **Timelines:** Member Russell asked about Chief Vallee and his timeline. He has committed to seeing this through, as long as the town continues to move forward. Member Shortall also asked about how long it took for SHFPD to join the JPA. Chief Meagor responded that the realistic goal would be July 1st. Member Russell also said that the town is facing having to hire a town manager, and this will effect that decision. Discussion about possible public reaction and the 3 to 6 month timeline. The Chiefs said they can bring back information by January regarding cost sharing options. Member Russell is looking for recommendations from the Chiefs. Chief Vallee spoke on the issues with the MOU's and that could be an issue that may take time. Chief Meagor said that a lot of these items can be worked on simultaneously. Chief Vallee asked about the current fire board and if they are in favor of the Town of Ross to joining the JPA. President Weinsoff responded that yes, the Board is very much on board with this merger. Rick Addicks suggested again getting a third party consultant into this process sooner rather than later to get the process started and explain the differences and understand what they are being asked to take on. Member Hunter

responded and asked that we wait until January meeting and decide to hire a consultant then. Discussion about what items the consultant would look at, specific questions for the consultant, etc. Agreed to wait until January when there are more specifics to be discussed.

Next meeting: to be held on Monday, January 9, 2012 at 0830, at the Ross Council Chambers.

Minutes respectfully submitted,

JoAnne Lewis, Administrative Assistant

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