



**VISTA FIRE PROTECTION DISTRICT**  
**Regular Board of Directors Meeting**  
**Minutes – September 11, 2024**

*These minutes reflect the order in which items appeared on the meeting agenda and do not necessarily reflect the order in which items were considered.*

**REGULAR AGENDA**

President Elliott called to order the regular meeting of the Vista Fire Protection District Board of Directors at 1:00 PM at the “Smart Space” conference room located at 450 South Melrose Drive, Vista CA.

1. Pledge of Allegiance

Director Miller led the assembly in the Pledge of Allegiance.

2. Roll

Directors Present: Elliott, Fougner, Miller, Ploetz

Directors Absent: Gomez

Staff Present: Karlena Rannals, Administrative Manager; Gerard Washington, Fire Chief;  
Chris Cardinale, Legal Counsel

3. Motion waiving reading in full of all Resolutions/Ordinances

MOTION BY DIRECTOR PLOETZ, SECOND BY DIRECTOR FOUIGNER, and CARRIED 4 AYES; 0 NOES; 1 ABSENT; 0 ABSTAIN to waive reading in full of all resolutions and/or ordinances.

4. Oral Communication (Public Comment)

No one requested to speak to the Board.

5. Consent Calendar

MOTION BY DIRECTOR MILLER, SECOND BY DIRECTOR FOUIGNER, CARRIED 4 AYES; 0 NOES; 1 ABSENT; 0 ABSTAIN to approve the consent calendar with the removal of 5.d.(3) District Inspector report:

a. Board of Directors Minutes – August 14, 2024

b. *Payroll Register*

• Payroll paid on September 7, 2024	\$5,000.00
• Payroll taxes paid on September 7, 2024	\$ 382.50
Total	<u>\$5,382.50</u>

b. *Accounts Payable*

• Accounts Payable Check 4229 thru 4235 to paid September 11, 2024	\$101,083.65
• Auto withdrawal(s) paid on July 8 – August 8, 2024	\$ 967.37
Total	<u>\$102,051.02</u>

c. *Receive and File*

i) Fire Department Reports

(1) *Fire Chief*

(2) *Fire Marshal*

ii) Hydrant Maintenance Annual Report – Little Yellow Buddies

ii) Administrative Manager’s Report

- iii) Correspondence
  - (1) None

(3) *District Inspector*

Director Miller requested additional information on items within the report, which included:

- a. Q: of the 1,509 non-compliant properties, what is the current status? He was informed that as of this date, the staff did not have an exact number; however, the reinspection's started on September 9.
- b. Q: inquired if the weathered signage has been replaced? The Administrative Manager reported that she has not received any request for purchase or payment to date for a replacement.
- c. Q: has the work been verified completed listed on the Hydrant Maintenance Report Annual Report. He was informed that random testing is done through training exercises by fire department personnel.

MOTION BY DIRECTOR MILLER, SECOND BY DIRECTOR PLOETZ, CARRIED 4 AYES; 0 NOES; 1 ABSENT; 0 ABSTAIN to RECEIVE AND FILE item 5.d.(3) District Inspector report of the consent calendar.

6. Continuing Business

a. *Weed Abatement - Update*

Chief Washington summarized the initial process identified in February 2024. With modifications from the board members, the dates were amended. The courtesy notices were sent in April, and once inspections started in June, the second step of a 30-day notice was omitted, in error. Unfortunately, the notices that were sent were the 10-day notice. It is not the intent of the Fire Department to force-abate property. In the rare cases that were force-abated, there was no communication from the property owner to the Department, or there was no assurance that the property owner would work collaboratively on a plan to gain compliance. They are encouraging all residents to reach out to the office, and they will be happy to have an inspector contact the property owner and meet at the property to clarify the inspection and assist them with understanding what needs to be done to achieve compliance.

During the course of the Fire Chief's presentation, Director Fougner's requested that the Chief reconfirm the Department was suspending forced abatement until each property owner, who requests a meeting, has an opportunity to meet with a fire inspector on his premises to review the violation. Chief Washington confirmed the process that the staff is following. Director Fougner advised that he had personally sent a postcard mailer in his own name to the property owners in his Division informing them of this decision.

Chief Washington informed the board members that there have been lessons learned and that at the conclusion of this year's abatement season, all staff will meet to plan improvements to next year's program. The Board requested to review the communication to residents at the January 2025 meeting.

7. Public Hearing

a. *Final Budget Fiscal Year 2024/25*

President Elliott opened and closed the public hearing. Ms. Rannals reported that there were no written comments submitted.

8. New Business

a. *Resolution No. 2024-06*

Ms. Rannals summarized the staff report and the purpose of the resolution that establishes committed and/or constrained fund balances for FY24. Staff evaluates the District's equity (or fund balance) to ensure the appropriate reserves are allocated to meet the constraints of GASB 54, in addition to the long- and short-term financial needs of the District. Resolution No. 2024-06 meets GASB 54 criteria and Exhibit A reallocates the unassigned fund balances to achieve the long and short-term financial needs. She responded to questions from the board.

MOTION BY DIRECTOR FOUNGNER, SECOND BY DIRECTOR MILLER, and APPROVED to accept staff's recommendation listed in Staff Report 24-17 and ADOPTED Resolution No. 2024-06 *entitled* a Resolution of the Board of Directors of the Vista Fire Protection District Establishing Committed and/or Constrained Fund Balances for FY24 on the following roll call vote:

AYES: Elliott, Fougner, Miller, Ploetz  
NOES: None  
ABSENT: Gomez  
ABSTAIN: None

b. *Final Budget FY 2024/25*

Ms. Rannals delivered a PowerPoint presentation on the Final Budget for FY25 focusing on the differences between the Preliminary and Final budget. She reports that the revenue projection of \$5,156 (in thousands) is expected to decrease (1.6%). The revenue anticipated is primarily from the San Diego County Tax Assessor's FY25 estimated receivables (\$4,712); the remainder is comprised of Interest and Miscellaneous revenue.

She reports that the overall Operating Budget of \$4,802 (in thousands) increased (5.5%). She summarized the expenditure changes between the proposed budget and preliminary budget expenditures that include:

- Emergency Services – \$4,241 (\$193) - this is where 90% of the tax revenue goes to fund the emergency response and fire prevention services. Since property tax is expected to increase 4.6%, so should this expense.
- Grant – \$3 (-\$193) – the overall decrease is the direct result of receiving the ARPA Grant in FY24. No other grants are anticipated this year.

She also provided an updated overview of the District's cash position, and she responded to questions from the Board.

MOTION BY DIRECTOR PLOETZ, SECOND BY DIRECTOR ELLIOTT, and ADOPTED Resolution No. 2024-07 *entitled* a Resolution of the Board of Directors of the Vista Fire Protection District Adopting a Final Budget for Fiscal Year 2024/25 on the following roll call vote:

AYES: Elliott, Fougner, Miller, Ploetz  
NOES: None  
ABSENT: Gomez  
ABSTAIN: None

c. *Special Presentation – “Navigating the Fire Insurance Maze”*

Due to Chief Davidson’s deployment to the Airport Fire, this item is deferred to a future meeting.

*10-minute recess*

9. Oral Report(s)

1) *Fire Chief* – In addition to his report submitted, Chief Washington reported that a question arose out of the 2:2:1, and he will respond:

Q: Director Miller requested additional information on what type of new construction was permitted in the district? The 13,360 square feet of new construction was comprised of Single-Family Residence – 2; ADU’s – 2; Barns – 2; Animal Shelter – 1.

He also reported the following:

- Provided an update on the fires and the personnel assigned to the Bridge Fire, Line Fire and Airport Fire
- As a result of the deployments, and the vacancies within the department, the North Zone is seeking to drawback resources.
- The GPS signaling that is being added to the Opticom, should also be added to signals in the unincorporated area. He intends to make the inquiry when meeting with Supervisor Desmond.
- Station 3 reconstruction is moving forward. The personnel assigned to that station should be moving into the temporary facility later this month. There was an inquiry as to whether or not there will be a groundbreaking or demolition ceremony. The Chief will find out if one is planned.

2) *Deputy Chief – Administration – not in attendance.* No report.

3) *Administrative Manager – Ms. Rannals:* In addition to her report, she reported on the following:

- She reminded the board members of the upcoming special meeting on September 17, 2024 starting at 9am.

4) *Legal* – No report

5) *Board of Directors*

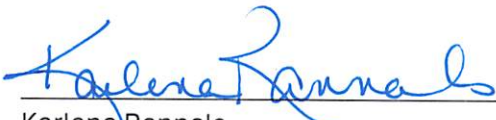
- Miller: he proposed to add to the October agenda the Fire Inspector Additional Services to discuss what items that he could focus on that is over and above the basic contract. His suggestion was items identified within the CWPP.

- Fougner: reported that he met with the Board President, Administrative Manager, and legal counsel to discuss specifically the contract between the District and the City. Through discussion there is a desire to bring the contract language up to date.
- Ploetz: Encouraged attendance at the general meeting of Fire Safe Council on September 12 starting at 10:30 am.
- Elliott: reported that Directors Elliot and Ploetz, Chief Washington and Ms. Rannals met with the City Manager on August 21<sup>st</sup>. Topics of discussion included:
  - Response time - Reporting, contract standards, changes in Standards of Cover over time, working toward compliance, and how City decisions can have an effect on the District such as traffic calming.
  - Fire Mitigation Funds - Finance transfer of funds, Order of spending (Grants first, then FMF), need a clear accounting and reporting for Fire Mitigation Fee report to county for reimbursement to VFPD.
  - Fire inspector/Deputy Fire Marshal positions.
  - Update on Buena Creek project - This could be a model for City projects as well.

He also informed the Board that he, Director Ploetz, and the staff have a meeting with Supervisor Desmond on September 16<sup>th</sup>. A report will be provided at the next meeting.

10. Adjournment

President Elliott adjourned the meeting at 3:48 pm.

  
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Karlena Rannals  
Board Clerk

  
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James F. Elliott  
President