

ROSS VALLEY PARAMEDICS AUTHORITY
Held a Special Meeting
6:30 p.m. Thursday, November 7, 2024
300 Tamalpais Drive, Corte Madera, 94925
Approved December 5, 2024

1. Call to Order- Chair Robbins called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m.
2. Roll Call
Board Member Attendance: Chair Robbins, Meagor (attending remotely), Blash, Candell, Casissa, Corbett, Finn
Staff Present: Weber, Mahoney, Martin, Pomi, Longfellow

3. Pledge of Allegiance

4. Open Time for Public Input

There were no comments.

5. Review and Approve Meeting Minutes
 - a. Approval of October 7, 2024 minutes

M/s, Candell/Finn, to approve the Consent Calendar as submitted.
Ayes: All

6. New Business
 - a. Presentation by Citygate Associates with Mr. Stewart Gary regarding EMS deployment and fiscal assessment issues, and possible direction to staff

Executive Officer Weber presented a staff report including the history of the RVPA, how the system works, and the reason for the study.

Mr. Stewart Gary and Consultant Charlotte Jourdain presented a PowerPoint presentation that included the following: 1) Tonight's briefing; 2) How the study was conducted; 3) Policy choices; 4) Capstone observations; 5) Response time performance- 2023; 6) Medic 18 response locations; 7) Medic 14 response locations; 8) Incident demand and Medic 18 locations; 9) Fragile ambulance peak demand capacity; 10) JPA organization; 11) RVPA; 12) JPA fiscal structure; 13) RVPA- Property Tax and ambulance billing; 14) Implications of RVPA separation; 15) Fiscal implications of RVPA separation; 16) Summary recommendations; 17) Next steps.

Staff and the consultants answered questions from the Board regarding what is meant by significant changes; fiscal restructuring; if it would be possible to agree on a new revenue restructure by January 2025; if Corte Madera is basically braking even; Section 1.3.3, "JPA

Fiscal Structure”; how to calculate the reasonable rent for Ross; the number of Medic 18 calls per year; if RHNA and Housing Element numbers were factored in; if runs to San Quentin were factored in; Finding #11 and response times; Table #19; if staff has received input from Fire Chiefs; if private ambulances are staffed by paramedics and if there is a cost difference between private and public sector systems; the agenda for the November 21st meeting.

Chair Robbins opened the meeting to public comments.

Mr. Dan Schwarz, Larkspur City Manager, thanked the Board for addressing the questions he raised on behalf of the Central Marin Fire Authority member agencies. His takeaway from the study is that there is a lot of work to do to resolve the various questions. The original concerns are about revenue and expenditure fairness. He asked the Board to form a working group of Fire Chiefs and City Managers to talk about the way the money moves around in this organization. He is confident there is a solution that would please everyone.

Mr. Kevin Sudama, representing the Marin County Fire Department, supported the Town of Ross signing a lease agreement and keeping Medic 18 in the Town of Ross. He would like the level of service from the RVPA to remain intact and would like to see implementation of the recommendations in the report.

Mr. Tommy Pasalka, President of the Ross Valley Firefighters Association, stated the RVPA has provided advanced life support services to the greater Ross Valley for forty years. The Citygate report clearly highlights the risks involved with any division of the RVPA. Medic 18 is in the right location to respond to calls throughout the valley.

Ms. Christina Johnson, Ross Town Manager, asked if a new provider would need to meet a standard response time if the service area opened up to bid. She stated the Town Council of Ross is concerned about the response time issue and is looking forward to negotiating a new, long-term agreement with the RVPA. The Town of Ross has asked the Ross Valley Fire Board to delay the closure of the Ross Fire Station.

Chair Robbins closed the meeting to public comments.

Board member Finn stated the RVPA is due to refresh its documents and agreements which is common in the life cycle of an organization or enterprise. He would like to make a project out of improving housekeeping matters and take the nuclear option off of the table.

Board member Meagor thanked staff and Citygate for the excellent report. He stated he was working as a Firefighter when the RVPA was created. The Board represents every citizen in the JPA service area. He wants to move forward to create a better agency.

Central Marin Fire Chief Martin stated the intent of the study was not to implode the RVPA. It is an exceptional organization providing paramedicine throughout the Ross Valley. He read the report and is of the opinion that there are conclusions and findings that are based on inaccurate information or assumptions. The report outlines the need to up-staff a third unit. He would like to see the RVPA remain sustainable throughout the future.

Ross Valley Fire Chief Mahoney stated the report highlights the mission of the JPA. Keeping the JPA intact is the best thing for all of the communities. He supports keeping the ambulance in Ross.

Executive Officer Weber stated this is an important conversation and there are steps that can be taken to improve the organization. The integrity of the report is rock solid and represents seven months of work. There is work to do and they should “roll up their sleeves”.

Kentfield Fire Chief Pomi stated the goal is to continue the success of the RVPA. He acknowledged the work of Executive Officer Weber.

7. Old Business

There were no Old Business Items

8. Announcements/Future Agenda Items

There were no announcements or requests for future agenda items.

9. Adjournment- Chair Robbins adjourned the meeting at 8:45 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Toni DeFrancis,
Recording Secretary