



**VISTA FIRE PROTECTION DISTRICT  
Regular Board of Directors Meeting  
Minutes – November 9, 2022**

*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**

Vice President Elliott called to order the regular meeting of the Vista Fire Protection District Board of Directors at 5:00 PM at the “Smart Space” conference room located at 450 South Melrose Drive, Vista CA.

*Pledge of Allegiance*

Vice President Elliott led the assembly in the Pledge of Allegiance.

1. Roll Call

Directors Present: Elliott, Gomez, Miller, Ploetz

Directors Absent: Fougner

Staff Present: Karlena Rannals, Administrative Manager, Deputy Chief Craig Usher, and Matthew Bertolucci, Legal Counsel

2. Approval of this Meeting’s Agenda

MOTION BY DIRECTOR MILLER, SECOND BY DIRECTOR PLOETZ, and CARRIED 4 AYES; 0 NOES; 1 ABSENT; 0 ABSTAIN to approve the agenda as submitted.

3. Open Discussion with the Board (Public Comment)

Several students from Rancho Buena Vista High School and Fallbrook High School (see attachment 1 for a participant listing) attended the meeting informing the board members that they were attending as a part of their government class, and this meeting was one of six that he must attend for credit. The Vice President welcomed them both on behalf of the Board. No one requested to speak to the Board.

4. Approval of the Minutes

MOTION BY DIRECTOR PLOETZ, SECOND BY DIRECTOR ELLIOTT, CARRIED 3 AYES; 0 NOES; 1 ABSENT; 1 ABSTAIN (Miller) to approve the Board of Directors Meeting minutes held October 12, 2022.

5. Fire Department Reports

a. *District Fire Inspector:* Deputy Chief Usher reported on behalf of the Inspector Nichols who was unable to attend. No additional information was provided to the report.

b. *Fire Marshal:* Deputy Chief Usher summarized the previous month’s report and reported on the following topics:

i. *District Update:*

1. Fire Code: the Ordinance approved at the October meeting was submitted to the Board of Supervisors for ratification.

2. Mar Vista De-annexation: A hearing was held on November 7 at LAFCO. He informed the board that it will be 9 months to a year before the de-annexation is complete.

3. Weed Abatement: The City is in the process of force abating nine (9) parcels within the District.

4. Community Wildfire Protection Plan: he was unable to meet with the committee last month. He reported that he will work with the Administrative Manager to get the report on the website.

5. Annual Hydrant Report: the report was included with the meeting material. No additional information was given.

c. *Fire Chief Update: Interim Chief:* Deputy Chief Usher reported that to date an interim fire chief has not been appointed. He reported the following to the Board:

i. Fire Department Performance: September 2022: No additional information was provided to the report.

ii. Agency Update

1. City Manager: In mid-October the announcement was posted issued seeking a new city manager. The City Council desires to create a new policy as to the future hiring of department heads. Amanda Lee was appointed as the Acting City Manager.

2. Interim Fire Chief: Chief Vander Pol retired November 2nd. The tentative plan is to delay a recruitment for a new fire chief until the new hiring policy is in place. There is consideration to hire a temporary Acting Fire Chief thru a headhunter firm.

3. Fire Chief Recruitment: Once the policy is official, a stakeholder from the Fire District will be requested to serve as a panelist when the recruitment process begins. The timeframe to conduct the recruitment has not been determined.

4. Reconstruction of Fire Station 3: fire department members met with the design team last month, and he is working on the financials. It is his intent to have a rough finance plan and design to present at the December meeting. The location of the temporary station location will be on Arcadia Avenue.

5. Operations: Four new hires started at the end of October; all hires were to fill current vacancies. A new hiring process has been started to fill the remaining vacancies.

## 6. Officers' Reports

a. *Accounts Payable:* MOTION BY DIRECTOR GOMEZ, SECOND BY DIRECTOR PLOETZ, and CARRIED 4 AYES; 0 NOES; 1 ABSENT; 0 ABSTAIN approving the October 2022 Accounts Payable and Payroll Requests that included the Treasurer's certification for the availability of funds.

b. *Treasurer's Report:* Director Elliott summarized the reports in the absence of the Treasurer reporting the investment totals and rates of return highlighting the investment totals and rates of return for the period ending October 31, 2022.

c. *Administrative Manager's Report:* Ms. Rannals reported that there was no other information to the monthly report provided. She also reported on the following topics as information or seeking direction:

i. Accounting & Finance Responsibility Transition: she met with Treasurer Jeff Golden to learn the processes in place and discussed the timeline to assume the financial responsibility. The goal is to transition all responsibility by January 31, 2023.

ii. Redistricting: she reports that she spoke with Elizabeth Stitt, Redistricting Partners about the final steps to implement the creation of districts for the 2024 election cycle. She reminded the board that she requested Redistricting Partners to forward the documents to the San Diego County Registrar of Voters anytime between November 9 and November 30.

iii. 8<sup>th</sup> Supplemental Agreement: she reports that she and Deputy Chief Usher have a meeting planned for November 14 to discuss the language modifications. It is intended to have an agreement for the board to discuss and/or approve at the December meeting.

iv. November 8 Election Results: congratulations to Directors Miller and Elliott for their reelection to the Board of Directors. A notary is scheduled for the December meeting, as new board members will be sworn into office. In addition, the Board will elect their officers and appoint a board clerk.

d. Legal Affairs: Mr. Matthew Bertolucci, Legal Counsel reported that the work authorized researching the fee ordinance, that the Board must adopt an ordinance to collect fees.

7. Ad Hoc Committee Reports

- a. *District Website*: Director Ploetz reported that he has not been able to work on it; however, the Administrative Manager has made some modifications. This will continue to be a work in progress.
- b. *Emergency Access Roads*: Director Ploetz reported that the ride along planned with Fire Inspector Nichols had to be rescheduled. He reported that there is an issue with the Fabry Lane access road, and suggested a gate code change. At the conclusion of the discussion board took the following action:  
MOTION BY DIRECTOR PLOETZ, SECOND BY DIRECTOR GOMEZ, and CARRIED 4 AYES; 0 NOES; 1 ABSENT; 0 ABSTAIN approving the change to the combination locks on all gates to the emergency access roads.
- c. *Response Times*: Director Miller and Gomez led the discussion as to the best method to monitor the district's response time. A proposal was submitted from FireStats to provide an annual review (audit). They reported that if approved it, would also serve as an indicator to the service that the District is receiving from the City. At the conclusion of the discussion board took the following action:  
MOTION BY DIRECTOR GOMEZ, SECOND BY DIRECTOR MILLER, and CARRIED 4 AYES; 0 NOES; 1 ABSENT; 0 ABSTAIN approve the annual report and authorize the expenditure to FireStats up to \$4,200.

8. Continuing Business

- a. *Contract Renewal – Landscaping Contract*: Ms. Rannals summarized the staff report provided. Director Ploetz was in concurrence with the recommendation from Ms. Rannals and agreed that it will buy time for a purchasing policy to be developed.

MOTION BY DIRECTOR PLOETZ, SECOND BY DIRECTOR GOMEZ, and CARRIED 4 AYES; 0 NOES; 1 ABSENT; 0 ABSTAIN approve the Agreement Between the Vista Fire Protection District and Aztec Landscaping, Inc. for Emergency Access Road Maintenance, Weed Abatement, and As Needed Services for a 12-month term effective December 1, 2022 for an amount not to exceed \$25,000.

9. New Business

- a. *Independent Auditor's Report FY2021-22 (time certain: 5:30 pm)*: Jonathon Abadesco, Fedak & Brown, LLP participated via Zoom. Mr. Brown summarized the financial statements of the District noting that the District has received a "clean opinion" for the FY22 audit. He also reported that the auditor's had no disputes or concern with management or the internal controls in place. He responded to questions from the Board.

MOTION BY DIRECTOR MILLER, SECOND BY DIRECTOR PLOETZ, and CARRIED 4 AYES; 0 NOES; 1 ABSENT; 0 ABSTAIN to accept the FY 2021-22 independent audit and management report as presented.

*Ten-minute recess*

- b. *Office Space – SmartSpace Sublease*: Ms. Rannals summarized the staff report provided. She reported that timing was of the essence to make a decision, she conferred with Directors Elliott and Fougner and was given direction to secure a month-to-month lease for \$800 per month that include, utilities, internet, phone, mailbox, janitorial services, and 15 hours per month use of conference rooms. In addition, the sublease can be terminated with 30 days written notice. She responded to questions from the Board.

MOTION BY DIRECTOR GOMEZ, SECOND BY DIRECTOR PLOETZ, and CARRIED 4 AYES; 0 NOES; 1 ABSENT; 0 ABSTAIN to ratify the month-to-month sub lease with SmartSpace signed by the Administrative Manager effective November 1, 2022 for \$800 per month.

- c. *Budget Authorization:* Ms. Rannals informed the board of the need to equip the office with basic furnishings such as desk, chair, printer, filing cabinets, etc., along with the authorization to pay the monthly rent since it is not in the approved budget plan. She requested approval to proceed with the purchase of the necessary office equipment requesting up to \$5,000 in expenses. In addition, she requested authorization to pay the rent for the remainder of the fiscal. She responded to questions from the Board.

MOTION BY DIRECTOR GOMEZ, SECOND BY DIRECTOR PLOETZ, and CARRIED 4 AYES; 0 NOES; 1 ABSENT; 0 ABSTAIN to authorize the purchase of all necessary office equipment not to exceed \$5,000, with the request to provide a detailed accounting of the expenses; and authorize the monthly rent payment of \$800 to SmartSpace for the remainder of FY23.

#### 10. Closed Session

Pursuant to the following section, the board met in closed session from 7:43 pm – 8:30 pm and discussed the following:

Conference with negotiators for the following real property  
2319 Panoramic, Lot 1, Vista  
Negotiating Parties: Jim Elliott, Director; Read Miller, Director  
Under Negotiation: Both Price and Terms of Payment  
*All board members listed and Karlana Rannals, Administrative Manager, and Mr. Matthew Bertolucci, Attorney, White & Bright and participated in this discussion.*

Upon reconvening, Vice President Elliott reported that the board took no action. The board requested that this matter be considered at the December meeting, in advance of the regular board meeting. Ms. Rannals will agendize the topic for discussion at 4pm.

#### 11. Directors' Announcements & Written Communications

- a. *Director Gomez:* conveyed his appreciation to the Deputy Chief for the personnel who attended and participated at the Día De Los Muertos at Rancho Guajome Adobe on October 29<sup>th</sup>.
- b. *Director Elliot:* he reported that he reviewed a LAFCO "Draft Policy Establishment on Out of Agency Services" scheduled for the regular commission meeting on November 7, 2022. The concern was with the current contract that the District has with the City of Vista for Emergency Services and any potential impact. He reported that he had signed a letter on behalf of the District commenting on the policy. He reported that he received a call from Keene Simonds, LAFCO's Executive Officer wanting to discuss his specific concerns. He informed the Board that the conversation was productive, and although Mr. Simonds does not believe the policy will affect any current contracts, he agreed to record the comments from the District at the hearing.

#### 12. Motion for Adjournment

MOTION BY DIRECTOR PLOETZ, SECOND BY DIRECTOR GOMEZ, and CARRIED 4 AYES; 0 NOES; 1 ABSENT; 0 ABSTAIN to adjourn at 8:39 pm.

*[Signatures next page]*

---

Karlana Rannals  
Board Clerk/Administrative Manager

---

James Elliott  
Vice President

Minutes

Vista Fire Protection District Board of Directors

November 9, 2022

Page 6 of 6

Student Attendance		
1	Kalea Hernandez	Rancho Buena Vista High School
2	Hunter Amesse	Rancho Buena Vista High School
3	Dixie Lopez	Rancho Buena Vista High School
4	Hector Ortiz	Rancho Buena Vista High School
5	Ryan Tinkle	Rancho Buena Vista High School
6	Janae Combs	Rancho Buena Vista High School
7	Riley Fenton	Rancho Buena Vista High School
8	Sophia Morelli	Fallbrook High School
9	Grace Rexrode	Fallbrook High School
10	Daniella Chavez	Fallbrook High School
11	Melanie Clash	Rancho Buena Vista High School
12	Mayra Elena	Rancho Buena Vista High School
13	Naydelin Blanco	Rancho Buena Vista High School
14	Euadalup Pozos	Rancho Buena Vista High School
15	Chris Lopez	Rancho Buena Vista High School
16	Gilaine Blascan	Rancho Buena Vista High School
17	Vivianna Reyes	Rancho Buena Vista High School
18	David Perez	Rancho Buena Vista High School
19	Riley Fentah	Rancho Buena Vista High School
20	Makenzie Davis	Rancho Buena Vista High School
21	Erick Cantheigh	Rancho Buena Vista High School
22	Rowen Morgan	Rancho Buena Vista High School
23	Catalina Wick	Rancho Buena Vista High School
24	Alexa Gardoza	Rancho Buena Vista High School
25	Natalie Braegger	Rancho Buena Vista High School
26	Anthony Orange	Rancho Buena Vista High School
27	Jared Valadez Crus	Rancho Buena Vista High School
28	Damian Solis	Rancho Buena Vista High School
29	David Baker	Rancho Buena Vista High School
30	Daisy Castellanos	Rancho Buena Vista High School
31	Elizabeth Hernandez	Rancho Buena Vista High School
32	Ireyshka Lebron	Rancho Buena Vista High School
33	Isabel Garcia	Rancho Buena Vista High School
34	Hirusha Naotanna	Rancho Buena Vista High School
35	Colton Misel	Rancho Buena Vista High School