



**VISTA FIRE PROTECTION DISTRICT**  
**Rescheduled Regular Board of Directors Meeting**  
**Minutes – July 22, 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 Gomez led the assembly in the Pledge of Allegiance.

2. Roll

Directors Present: Elliott, Gomez, Fougner (*participated via Zoom*), Miller, Ploetz  
Directors Absent: None  
Staff Present: Karlena Rannals, Administrative Manager; Gerard Washington, Fire Chief;  
Bret Davidson, Deputy Chief; Chris Cardinale, Legal Counsel

3. Oral Communication (Public Comment)

No one requested to speak to the Board.

4. Consent Calendar

MOTION BY DIRECTOR PLOETZ, SECOND BY DIRECTOR ELLIOTT, CARRIED 4 AYES; 0 NOES; 0 ABSENT; 1 ABSTAIN (Gomez) to approve all items, except 4.a. Minutes, (*a request to pull the item from Director Miller*) on the consent calendar as submitted:

b. Payroll Register

• Payroll paid on July 5, 2024	\$6,483.34
• Payroll taxes paid on July 8, 2024	\$ 495.98
Total	<u>\$6,979.32</u>

c. Accounts Payable

• Accounts Payable Check 4209 thru 4121 paid June 28 & July 22, 2024	\$109,375.17
• Auto withdrawal(s) paid on July 1 – 8, 2024	976.95
Total	<u>\$117,331.44</u>

d. Receive and File

- i) Fire Department Reports
  - (1) Fire Chief
  - (2) Fire Marshal
  - (3) District Inspector
- ii) Administrative Manager’s Report
- iii) Correspondence
  - (1) None

Director Miller requested to pull the Minutes for the June 12, 2024 for clarification within the written record. Staff and the Board President responded to his questions.

MOTION BY DIRECTOR PLOETZ, SECOND BY DIRECTOR MILLER, CARRIED 4 AYES; 0 NOES; 0 ABSENT; 1 ABSTAIN (Gomez) to approve ITEM 4.a. Minutes of June 12, 2024 as submitted.

5. Continuing Business

a. *Community Wildfire Protection Plan (CWPP)*

President Elliott summarized the process and acknowledged all individuals who assisted in completing the CWPP. This document will serve as a roadmap for the District and the Fire Safe Council of Vista to reduce the risk and create a more fire safe community.

MOTION BY DIRECTOR PLOETZ, SECOND BY DIRECTOR MILLER, CARRIED 5 AYES; 0 NOES; 0 ABSENT; 0 ABSTAIN to ACCEPT the Community Wildfire Protection Plan as approved by all parties to the document.

6. New Business

a. *Fuels Management Along Buena Creek Road*

Director Ploetz delivered a PowerPoint presentation showing through photos the severity of the fuels along Buena Creek Road. The fuels ranged from palm skirts, nonnative flammable palms, and unmanaged areas that have become dumping sites. He has researched the proper ways to obtain the necessary permits, noting grants are available for fuels reduction projects. He summarized that the District has an opportunity for the Buena Creek area to be a model for similar work in other areas of the District, and the District has an obligation as the government entity charged with fire protection to seek the maintenance of safe road corridors that allows residents to evacuate in a “not if” but “when” a wildfire occurs, potentially driven by Santa Ana winds.

b. *Outline of Processes and Obtaining Grants for Fuels Management*

Director Ploetz introduced Caitlin Kreutz and Gus Calderon from FireWatch for the next presentation. Ms. Kreutz and Mr. Calderon delivered their PowerPoint presentation on how FireWatch can assist the District by providing tools to effectively assess and prioritize fire risks. In addition, FireWatch uses an aircraft to collect aerial images of vegetation and utilizes multispectral imaging. In addition to the imaging, FireWatch can assist with grant procurement for risk mitigation. Based upon their successes of grants received, the provided before and after photos of areas within north San Diego County. They responded to questions from the board.

Ms. Rannals distributed a quote received from FireWatch for the Board to consider an aerial survey, image processing, land cover classification and custom web map for \$2,500. At the conclusion of the discussion, the board members supported the project and sought to start the project immediately.

MOTION BY DIRECTOR MILLER, SECOND BY DIRECTOR GOMEZ, CARRIED 5 AYES; 0 NOES; 0 ABSENT; 0 ABSTAIN to proceed with the project. Counsel Cardinale noted pursuant to the District’s purchasing policy the Administrative Manager is authorized to sign the contract.

*10-minute recess*

c. *Standards of Covers (SOC) Update*

Deputy Chief Davidson delivered a PowerPoint presentation reviewing the Standards of Cover response time documents from the SOC's of 2010, 2015, 2020 and 2023. He reminded the board that the data is a "look back" period, and over time how the actual processing times (dispatch) and reflex times have changed. He compared data for high-risk fires assembly of an "effective fire response force" (EFR) and the four SOC's. After comparing all of the response times for Urban/Suburban and Rural from the SOC's for EFR and EMS calls, the data is telling the fire professionals that with the increase in population and traffic, response times have increased from the 2010 SOC in the rural areas on average of approximately two minutes.

Other data points of interest are:

With an increase in population and traffic, response times have gone up from 2010 in the rural areas by an average of about two minutes. Other data points of interest included:

- 2023 SOC data is skewed by COVID-19 (call processing time in 2021/22 went up to two minutes). The 2023 data for rural response is 10:32.
- Population in Vista in 2010 was 96,089 compared to 2023 of 124,000 (23% increase). *This is both the City and the District.*
- The annual call volume in 2010 was 10,200 to 2023 call volume of 16,205 (a 63% increase in call volume).

To address the increase in not only response times but also call volume, the fire department has done the following:

- Added two (2) Basic Life Support (BLS) ambulances in 2024.
- The City of Vista is in the process of installing an AVL Opticom system to speed up travel through primary and secondary roadways.
- Fire personnel are working with City staff to reduce the speed bumps on secondary and tertiary roadways that affect response times.

Staff responded to questions from the board. Director Fougner requested that due to the significant amount of information included in the presentation, he requested continuation of this topic at the August meeting. There were no objections from the board members.

*5-minute recess*

7. Oral Report(s)

1) *Fire Chief* – In addition to his report submitted, he spoke on the following:

- He distributed a flyer for the "Ignite Your Potential: Young Women's Empowerment Summit" scheduled for August 9 –11, 2024. The program in cooperation with Vista Fire Department, Oceanside Fire Department, North County Fire Protection District, California JAC and FCTC is a

program for all genders, specifically women, to prepare participants for the competitive path to a career in the fire service.

- Potential Arsons in Station 3 and 4 area, primarily trash/dumpster fires.
- Strike Teams have been deployed throughout the state.

2) *Deputy Chief - Administration*

- He reviewed the response data for the month of June.

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

- She reminded the board members that the candidate filing period started July 15 and will conclude August 9.

4) *Legal – Mr. Cardinale* will create a “Professional Services Agreement” template and forward it to the Administrative Manager. In addition, he will be adding standard policies that the District needs on future agendas.

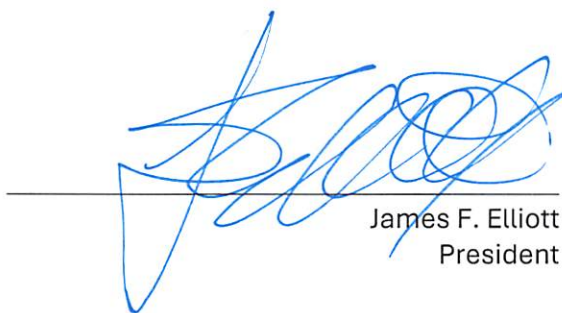
5) *Board of Directors*

- Miller: He conveyed his appreciation for the various presentations presented at this meeting. He also inquired about the number of shake shingle roofs remaining in the District. Chief Washington agreed to research.
- Gomez: he is working with CalFIRE about establishing a FireWise Community. He is also looking forward to accomplishing items with the CWPP.
- Elliott: he encouraged the board members to read “Only Your District Can Prevent Wildfires” located in the CSDA newsletter. In addition, the SB 4673 *Special District Grant Accessibility Act* has been introduced in U.S. Senate. If passed, it will add “special districts” to the definition for grant eligibility.

8. *Adjournment*

President Elliott adjourned the meeting at 4:26 pm.

  
Karlana Rannals  
Board Clerk

  
James F. Elliott  
President