



VISTA FIRE PROTECTION DISTRICT
Regular Board of Directors Meeting
Minutes – December 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.

SPECIAL AGENDA (10:00 AM – 12:00 PM)

Ethics Training (Workshop)

Pursuant to the requirements of AB 1234, the following local officials, and staff (those who receive compensation for their service or are eligible to have their expenses reimbursed) attended the Ethics Training workshop presented by Christopher Cardinale, Alvarez-Glasman & Colvin:

Vista Fire Protection District

Director:

James Elliott
Robert Fougner
Read Miller
John Ploetz

Staff:

Karlana Rannals, Administrative Manager/Board Clerk
Gerard Washington, Fire Chief

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

President Elliott led the assembly in the Pledge of Allegiance.

2. Oath of Allegiance – New Elected Board Members

The following members were sworn-in as members of the Vista Fire Protection District Board of Directors for terms prescribed by law:

Read Miller – Division A
Robert Fougner – Division B
John Ploetz – Division C

Angie LaCarte, Notary Public, administered the *Oath of Allegiance*.

3. Election of Officers

Pursuant to Fire District Law 1987, Section 13853, the District Board shall elect a president, vice-president, and a Secretary/Clerk.

MOTION BY DIRECTOR MILLER, SECOND BY DIRECTOR FOUIGNER, and CARRIED 4-0 to nominate and elect the following officer effective January 1, 2025:

President John Ploetz

MOTION BY DIRECTOR PLOETZ, SECOND BY DIRECTOR FOUIGNER, and CARRIED 4-0 to nominate and elect the following officer effective January 1, 2025:

Vice President Jim Elliott

MOTION BY DIRECTOR ELLIOTT, SECOND BY DIRECTOR MILLER, CARRIED 4-0 to nominate and appoint effective January 1, 2025 the following:

Secretary/Board Clerk Karlena Rannals

4. Roll Call

Directors Present: Elliott, Fougner, Miller, Ploetz

Directors Absent: None

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

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

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

6. Oral Communication (Public Comment)

Caitlin Kreutz, Encinitas: informed the board members that she found a US Forest Service Grant that she believes that the District would qualify to receive. The deadline to apply is February 28 and there would be matching grant requirements. She will continue to research and provide additional information at a future meeting.

Daniel Gomez, Vista: spoke on receiving permission from the District to use the District logo on the Fire Safe Council canopy and table cover. He also spoke about the CERT program and collaborating with the Vista Fire Department. He requested that the District contribute \$5,000 to the program.

Brynn Pikula: attended the meeting to introduce her company *Specialty Mowing Services* to assist with wildfire fuel management.

7. Consent Calendar

MOTION BY DIRECTOR FUGNER, SECOND BY DIRECTOR MILLER, CARRIED 4 AYES; 0 NOES; 0 ABSENT; 0 ABSTAIN to approve the consent calendar as submitted:

a. Board of Directors Meeting

- 1) Minutes (Regular Meeting) November 13, 2024

b. *Payroll Register*

1) Payroll paid on December 7, 2024	\$5,200.00
2) Payroll taxes paid on December 7, 2024	<u>\$397.80</u>
Total	<u>\$5,597.80</u>

c. *Accounts Payable*

1) Accounts Payable Check 4255 thru 4261 paid December 11, 2024	\$360,508.87
2) Auto withdrawal(s) paid on November 10 – December 9, 2024	<u>\$970.28</u>
Total	<u>\$361,479.15</u>

d. *Receive and File*

1) Monthly Reports

- a. *Fire Chief*
- b. *Fire Marshal*
- c. *District Inspector*
- d. *Effective Response Force Report – October 24*

- 2) Southern Operations Seasonal Weather Outlook – December 2024 – March 2025

- 3) Administrative Manager's Report
- 4) Correspondence
 - a. None

8. New Business

a. *Board Vacancy*

Ms. Rannals summarized the staff report provided. The vacancy is a result of Director Miller being elected to a four-year term representing Division A. The vacancy became effective December 11, 2024. She reported that the remaining board members have the option of appointing a representative to the Board in lieu of a special election. If they choose the option of a special Election, the cost is approximately \$275,000 - \$450,000. The board members did not believe it was prudent to spend the money for a special election. Staff responded to questions from the board.

MOTION BY DIRECTOR PLOETZ, SECOND BY DIRECTOR FUGNER, CARRIED 4 AYES; 0 NOES; 0 ABSENT; 0 ABSTAIN to appoint an at large representative in lieu of a special election. The President requested that the Board Clerk notify the public of such vacancy pursuant to all applicable laws and publish a Notice of Vacancy in the newspaper.

The Board of Directors agreed to schedule a special meeting on January 15, 2025 starting at 12 pm to interview all applicants to fill the "at-large" vacancy on the Board of Directors. All interviews will be scheduled time certain.

The Board of Directors also agreed and announced that at the regular meeting scheduled for January 15, 2025 they would appoint the successful applicant to fill the vacancy on the Board of Directors.

b. *Policy 3020 – Use of District Seal, Logos or Emblems*

Ms. Rannals summarized the staff report provided. She informed the board that the purpose of the policy is for 1) Brand Protection; 2) Legal Compliance; 3) Public Trust and Reputation and 4) Clarity for Internal and External Use. She noted that restrictions on the use of an agency's seal are common. Such policies tend to give the agency's custodian of records (for example the board clerk) custody of the agency's seal and create penalties for unauthorized use; however, penalties are not being recommended. She responded to questions from the board.

MOTION BY DIRECTOR FUGNER, SECOND BY DIRECTOR MILLER, CARRIED 4 AYES; 0 NOES; 0 ABSENT; 0 ABSTAIN to accept staff's recommendation and approve *Policy 3020 – Use of District Seal, Logos or Emblems*.

c. *Resolution No. 2024-08*

Chief Davidson reported that existing law requires the Fire Chief of any district providing fire protection services and their authorized representatives to inspect every building used as a public or private school within their authority, for the purpose of enforcing specified building standards, not less than once each

year, as provided. The law also requires the governing authority to acknowledge receipt of the report in a resolution or a similar formal document. This resolution confirms that all required inspections were completed.

MOTION BY DIRECTOR PLOETZ, SECOND BY DIRECTOR FOUNGNER, and ADOPTED Resolution No. 2024-08 *entitled* a Resolution of the Board of Directors of the Vista Fire Protection District Acknowledging Receipt of a Report made by the Fire Chief Regarding Required Inspection of Certain Occupancies Pursuant Section 13146.2 and 13146.3 of the California Health and Safety Code on the following roll call vote:

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

d. *Ordinance No. 2025-01*

Ms. Rannals summarized the staff report provided. Staff reported that all residents and non-residents who utilize the Vista Fire Department Emergency Medical Services are charged fees. Base rates are established to cover the fixed cost of personnel, non-disposable supplies, and equipment assigned to the ambulances. Since the City of Vista is the provider for district residents, that district ordinance must mirror the City of Vista Fee Schedule. The first reading is a part of the adoption process, and the board is requested to set up a public hearing, second reading and final adoption. Staff responded to questions from the board and recommended that the board move forward with the adoption process.

President Elliott announced that a public hearing, second reading/final adoption would be scheduled for January 15, 2025. The board clerk was requested to publish all legal notices as required by law.

e. *Future Meeting Schedule*

President Elliott brought forth the discussion to add optional meetings, such as workshops to the meeting schedule to discuss in greater detail topics of interest to the Board of Directors. There are upcoming topics such as the weed abatement program, insurance, budget, etc. He suggested scheduling on a quarterly basis. The benefit of a workshop is to get questions answered and allow for a freer discussion. No action can be taken at these workshops. The Board, by consensus, believed this to be a good idea and the first workshop will be planned for February, date to be determined. The first workshop will be about the 2025 weed abatement program, and lessons learned from the 2024 program. Chief Washington requested that all comments about the 2024 program be delivered to Ms. Rannals by January 15, 2025. This will allow the staff to address all concerns at the workshop.

9. Continuing Business

a. *Buena Creek Fuels Management*

Vice President Ploetz reported that he has had conversations with Ms. Caitlin Kreutz, Environmental Consultant about the Forest Service Grants. In order to apply for the grant that Necessity of Right of Entry (ROE) Permits must be obtained. Mr. Cardinale reports that he has spent a limited amount of time researching the easements associated with the old developments. He believes that the maps may

already have the right to enter the property for maintenance. He recommended that the board authorize staff to work with the County for remediation of fuels management. He will prepare a plan of options and will present a report for the January board meeting.

10. Oral Report(s)

- 1) *Fire Chief* – in addition to his report submitted, Chief Washington reported:
 - The CERT Program will have a graduation for their volunteers on December 11.
 - He reports that there is the potential of two properties appealing their forced abatements.
- 2) *Deputy Chief – Administration – no report.*
- 3) *Administrative Manager – No report.*
- 4) *Legal – Cardinale*
 - He continues his work with the subcommittee for policies and procedures, and contract management.
- 5) *Board of Directors*
 - Miller – he reported that he has seen a significant improvement in weed abatement this year.
 - Elliott – he extended his appreciation on the work that has been done in the area of weed abatement.

11. Closed Session

Pursuant to the following section, the board met in closed session from 3:29 – 3:47 am, and discussed the following:

CONFERENCE WITH LEGAL COUNSEL – ANTICIPATED LITIGATION

Pursuant to Gov. Code Section 54956.9 (d)(4)

Based on existing facts and circumstances, the legislative body of the local agency has decided to initiate or is deciding whether to initiate litigation.

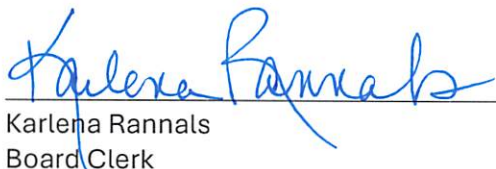
Number of potential cases: One

All board members listed, Administrative Manager Rannals and Chris Cardinale (Legal Counsel) attended and participated in the discussion.

Upon reconvening, President Elliott reported that there was no reportable action.

12. Adjournment

President Elliott adjourned the meeting at 3:48 pm.



Karlana Rannals
Board Clerk



James F. Elliott
President