



VISTA FIRE PROTECTION DISTRICT
Regular Board of Directors Meeting
Minutes – August 14, 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

President Elliott led the assembly in the Pledge of Allegiance.

2. Roll

Directors Present: Elliott, Gomez, Fougner, Miller, Ploetz
Directors Absent: None
Staff Present: Karlena Rannals, Administrative Manager; Gerard Washington, Fire Chief;
Bret Davidson, Deputy 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 5 AYES; 0 NOES; 0 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 PLOETZ, SECOND BY DIRECTOR FOUIGNER, CARRIED 5 AYES; 0 NOES; 0 ABSENT; 0 ABSTAIN to approve all items on the consent calendar as submitted:

a. Board of Directors Minutes – July 22, 2024

b. Payroll Register

• Payroll paid on August 7, 2024	\$7,500.00
• Payroll taxes paid on August 7, 2024	\$ 573.75
Total	<u>\$8,073.75</u>

b. Accounts Payable

• Accounts Payable Check 4222 thru 4228 to paid August 14, 2024	\$30,177.61
• Auto withdrawal(s) paid on July 8 – August 8, 2024	967.37
Total	<u>\$31,144.98</u>

c. Receive and File

i) Financial Quarterly Report(s) – Information

- (1) FY24 Budget to Actual GF – June 30, 2024
- (2) FY24 Budget to Actual FMF – June 30, 2024
- (3) FY24 Combined Balance Sheet – June 30, 2024
- (4) Portfolio Summary Report – June 30, 2024
 - Interest Rate Summary

- (5) Annual Report of Revenues & Expenditures – Fire Mitigation Fees
- ii) Fire Department Reports
 - (1) Fire Chief
 - (2) Fire Marshal
 - (3) District Inspector
 - (4) 2024 Weed Abatement Activity Inspection – Interim Report
- iii) Administrative Manager’s Report
- iv) Correspondence
 - (1) None

6. Continuing Business

a. Buena Creek Fuels Management

At the last meeting, the Board of Directors authorized the services of FireWatch to conduct an aerial survey and analysis of wildfire risk. Mr. Gus Calderon and Ms. Caitlin Kreutz attended the meeting to present their results. Mr. Calderson reported that the imagery came out very well. They showed a GIS MAP and explained the layering of the map. The map shown provided a baseline of measurement and the health of the vegetation.

Ms. Kreutz submitted a proposal to the Administrative Manager outlining the first phase of looking for grants that will target dead and dying trees. She has experience working with the US Fish and Wildlife, and as a biologist is familiar with the environmental regulatory requirements and permits. She estimated 24 hours for research and analysis and can have a deliverable back to the District within 90 days.

MOTION BY DIRECTOR GOMEZ, SECOND BY DIRECTOR PLOETZ, CARRIED 5 AYES; 0 NOES; 0 ABSENT; 0 ABSTAIN to direct staff to pursue the first phase of the fuel reduction project.

b. Standards of Cover (SOC) Update

Chief Washington informed the Board that the response time report included with the agenda material was prepared by Paul Rottenberg of FireStats. The period was from July 1, 2023 to June 30, 2024. He noted that the format developed was following the contract.

Director Fougner provided an analysis to the board members of how the response times had increased over time, in the Rural areas after reviewing all the previous Standards of Cover. The Board discussed with the Chief the factors that are impacting those increases. The Chief reported that City of Vista is aware of the increases and is currently making an investment by adding GPS to the Opticom System. There is an upcoming meeting with Supervisor Desmond, and the attendees will make him aware of the need to add to the intersections within the unincorporated portion of the District the same system. This will help reduce the response times.

In addition, Director Fougner provided the Chief with additional background information on the development of the previous reporting format. The Chief will take the request back to FireStats for consideration and updating.

Directors Fougner and Elliott will meet with legal counsel to provide additional information on the contract agreed upon in 2010.

7. New Business

a. Special Presentation – “Navigating the Fire Insurance Maze”

Chief Davidson requested to defer this presentation to the September meeting, due to his deployment to the Lake fire, he was unable to update the presentation. There were no objections.

b. Vista Fire Protection District Conflict of Interest Code

Ms. Rannals summarized the requirements for the Board to review every two years the District’s Conflict of Interest Code and notify if any changes are necessary. She noted that a change is necessary to add the position of Fire Chief to the list of officials required to file.

- i. MOTION BY DIRECTOR PLOETZ, SECOND BY DIRECTOR GOMEZ, and CARRIED 5 AYES; 0 NOES; 0 ABSENT; 0 ABSTAIN to acknowledge receipt of the 2024 Conflict of Interest Code Biennial Notice and ratify the agency official’s notification that an amendment is required by October 1, 2024.

ii. *Resolution No. 2024-05*

MOTION BY DIRECTOR PLOETZ, SECOND BY DIRECTOR GOMEZ, and ADOPTED Resolution No. 2024-05 *entitled* A Resolution of the Board of Directors of the Vista Fire Protection District Amending the Fair Political Practices Commission’s Standard Conflict of Interest Code and Candidate Disclosure Statement and Repealing Board Action on August 18, 2022 on the following roll call vote:

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

c. Non-Renewal of Additional Fire Inspector Special Services

Ms. Rannals summarized the staff report provided. This notice of non-renewal is requested as a courtesy to the City of Vista as it will have a budgetary impact on the fire department budget. Chief Washington informed the board of his intent to fill the Assistant Fire Marshal position and assign that position as the District’s Fire Marshal. He is currently working with the Human Resources Department to develop an updated position description and a plan for recruitment. His goal is to have someone hired by the first of the year, but certainly by July 1, 2025. Staff responded to questions from the board.

MOTION BY DIRECTOR MILLER, SECOND BY DIRECTOR PLOETZ, and CARRIED 5 AYES; 0 NOES; 0 ABSENT; 0 ABSTAIN to authorize staff to notify the City of Vista of the District’s intent to no longer retain the additional fire inspector special services effective July 1, 2025.

10-minute recess

d. Vista Fire Protection District – Policies

Ms. Rannals summarized the staff report provided. She reminded the board that she was asked at the beginning of her employment to help create district policies. She reported that the document presented was a template from another fire district and she has collaborated with legal counsel on its contents.

She noted that because of a 2:2:1 meeting, she is proposing to strike the last sentence, first paragraph in Section 9.02 “Directors elected or appointed to the Board after March of 2024 will not be issued official badges.”

The board members acknowledged that there were numerous policies to digest and requested additional time to review and provide comments. It was agreed that any comments are to be submitted by August 30th to the Administrative Manager. She can then compile a tracked change version for review and/or approval at the next meeting.

e. Strategic Plan – Special Meeting

Ms. Rannals reported that a special meeting is requested to review and approve the District’s 5-year strategic plan document. Chief Despain is putting the final changes on the document. By consensus, the Board of Directors agreed to schedule a special meeting for September 17, 2024 at 10:30 am. Ms. Rannals will distribute the document as soon as it becomes available.

8. 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 or Chief Davidson will respond to.

Q: Director Miller requested additional information on the clearance of the evacuation roads, in particular Buena Creek and Gopher Canyon? Chief Washington has verified that all property owners have been notified for weed abatement in the high or very high hazard areas of the District. The second notices are currently being sent and they are staggered to assist the inspector’s workload. He also reminded the board members that CalFire would be coming back out in October for a second inspection on the roads. Chief Davidson will be providing the final report at the conclusion of the 2024 weed abatement program.

- The “Ignite Your Potential: Young Women’s Empowerment Summit” scheduled for August 9–11, 2024 was an immense success. There were eighteen young women enrolled in the weekend. One candidate came from as far as San Francisco.
- Six Strike Teams have been deployed throughout the state.
- He asked that all board members be mindful of how questions and information is gained from the staff. Words matter and the staff is frustrated. So, he asked for consideration of moving forward since he cannot change the past.

2) Deputy Chief - Administration

- He provided a brief synopsis of the two fires that occurred in the District the previous month.

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

- She informed the board that she will be out of the office August 22 –30, 2024 on vacation.

4) Legal –

5) Board of Directors

- Gomez: he informed the board that he chose not to seek a second term. He wants to focus on the Fire Safe Council and community engagement and education.

- Elliott/Ploetz: reported on their appearance at the City of Vista City Council meeting on the issue of traffic calming devices. *The letter sent to the City Council was shared with all board members.*

9. Adjournment

President Elliott adjourned the meeting at 4:33 pm.



Karlana Rannals
Board Clerk



James F. Elliott
President