ROSS VALLEY FIRE DEPARTMENT
STAFF REPORT

For the meeting of September 9, 2026

To: Board of Directors

From: Dan Mahoney, Fire Chief
Jeff Zuba, Finance Director

Subject: Consider approving the proposed Fourth Amendment to the Amended and Restated Joint Powers Agreement and direct staff to circulate it to Member agencies for ratification.

RECOMMENDATION:

Staff recommend that the Board consider approving the proposed Fourth Amendment to the Amended and Restated Joint Powers Agreement and direct staff to circulate it to Member agencies for ratification.

BACKGROUND:

Joint Powers Agreement: Town of Fairfax, Town of San Anselmo and Sleepy Hollow Fire Protection District (The Members of the Ross Valley Fire Authority) entered into an Amended and Restated Joint Powers Agreement on July 1, 2010. This document updated the original 1982 Joint Powers Agreement forming the Ross Valley Fire Department.

First Amendment: The Members entered into the First Amendment to the Amended and Restated Joint Powers Agreement, effective as of July 1, 2012 (the "First Amendment"), to (i) include the Town of Ross as a Member of the Authority; (ii) modify the composition of the Board; (iii) revise the Members' cost sharing and ownership rights; and (iv) address certain other issues agreed upon among the Members.

Second Amendment: The Members entered into the Second Amendment to the Amended and Restated Joint Powers Agreement, effective as of February 13, 2014 (the "Second Amendment"), to: (i) establish a Management Committee and (ii) implement the provisions of Government Code § 54956.96, permitting the disclosure of certain closed session information in an authorized closed session of a Member.

Third Amendment: The Members entered into the Third Amendment to the Amended and Restated Joint Powers Agreement effective January 1, 2022 to: (i) provide for the closure of the

Ross Fire Station 18 and (ii) allocate Authority resources, savings and costs attributable to the Ross Fire Station closure.

Section 24.5 of the Third Amendment outlines how the Authority would credit savings to the Town of Ross beginning on the date of the Ross Fire Station closure (July 1, 2025) through the planned transition of three (3) Captain positions to three (3) Firefighter Paramedic positions, and three (3) Engineer positions to three (3) Firefighter Paramedic positions equaling a total of 6 positions.

Savings for each position vary slightly. This is due to differences in the salaries and benefit costs of the employees who left the positions compared with the employees who replaced them. As a result, although we applied the same methodology to each position, the actual savings reflect the specific compensation costs associated with each employee and their replacement. For example, these differences are driven by each employee's salary step, applicable education incentive pay, and CalPERS retirement tier (Classic or PEPRA). The savings calculation also included the "elimination of one fire engine from the Authority's vehicle replacement schedule".

The Department began recognizing savings at the start of FY 2025-26, as retirements triggered the personnel transitions described above. These savings were adjusted three times during the fiscal year, in July, January, and May, to reflect five of the six completed personnel transitions, with the May adjustment bringing total savings to $367,328. These calculations are detailed in three FY 2025-26 budget revisions approved by the Board on July 9, 2025, January 14, 2026, and May 13, 2026. As of July 16, 2026, the Department completed the transition of the sixth and final position. Because this transition occurred after the start of the new fiscal year, the savings reflect the salary schedule effective July 1, 2026, bringing the full savings credited to the Town of Ross to $357,222.

The Third Amendment also addresses Section 9.4, Certain Service Levels. Effective July 1, 2025, the Department transitioned to a minimum staffing level of three firefighters on all three fire engines. This was accomplished through a combination of the closure of the Ross Fire Station 18, which allowed two of the Department's three fire engines to be staffed with three firefighters, and the Board's October 2024 approval to hire three additional firefighters to increase staffing on the remaining engine from two firefighters to three.

DISCUSSION:

As mentioned prior, the Third Amendment identified items needing follow-up once all personnel transitions were complete. A Fourth Amendment to the Amended and Restated Joint Powers Agreement is being proposed to (i) reflect changes to Section 8.1 Members' Percentage Shares, as outlined in the Third Amendment Section 24.5, due to the closure of the Ross Fire Station 18 and (ii) reflect the actualization of the proposed changes to service levels, as outlined in the Third Amendment Section 9.4 Certain Service Levels.

Update Section 8.1

Per Third Amendment Section 24.5, the Department has now realized, as of July 16, 2026, the "full savings, by elimination of one engine from the Authorities vehicle replacement schedule and the planned transition of three (3) Captain positions to three (3) Firefighter/Paramedic positions, and three (3) Engineer positions to three (3) Firefighter/Paramedic positions". (See Attachment 3) The section also states that after the full savings have been realized "the Members' Percentage Shares (Section 8.1) shall be adjusted to reflect the savings attributed to Ross. The Member percentage shares will be adjusted based on the full savings realized, which is $357,222, and will begin on July 16, 2026.

The proposed edits for Section 8.1 are outlined below:

1. *Section 8.1 Members' Percentage Shares Established is hereby amended by restating the section to read as follows:*

*All costs shall be fairly and equitably allocated among all Members. The Members hereby acknowledge and agree that the Percentage Shares in this Section 8.1 represent such a fair and equitable allocation as of the ~~First~~ **Fourth** Amendment Effective Date. As of the ~~First~~ **Fourth** Amendment Effective Date, the cost sharing shall be as follows:*

San Anselmo	*~~Forty and Fifty-three One-hundredths Percent (40.53%)~~*
	Forty-one and Ninety-nine One-hundredths Percent (41.99%)
Fairfax	*~~Twenty-three and Three Tenths Percent (23.3%)~~*
	Twenty-four and Fourteen One-hundredths Percent (24.14%)
Ross	*~~Twenty-Three and Thirty-seven One-hundredths Percent (23.37%)~~*
	Twenty and Sixty-one One-hundredths Percent (20.61%)
Sleepy Hollow	*~~Twelve and Eight Tenths Percent (12.8%)~~*
	Thirteen and Twenty-six One-hundredths Percent (13.26%)

Update Section 9.4

The Third Amendment Section 9.4 states there will be "not less than three (3) full-time sworn trained firefighters at two of the three fire stations and not less than two (2) full-time sworn trained firefighters at the third fire station". On October 11, 2023 the Fire Board approved the creation of one additional firefighter position (Start date of July 1, 2024). This additional position allows the Department to staff all three fire stations with not less than (3) full-time sworn trained firefighters starting July 1, 2025 (Ross Fire Station Closure Date).

The proposed edits for Section 9.4 are outlined below:

2. *Section 9.4,* ***Certain Service Levels,*** *shall be deleted in its entirety and replaced with the following revised Section 9.4****, Certain Service Levels****:*

> *"9.4, Certain Service Levels. The Authority's three fire stations will be routinely open, fully staffed and equipped for 24-hour continuous operation by not less than three (3) full-time sworn trained firefighters at ~~two of the~~ all three fire stations. ~~and not less than two (2) full-time sworn trained firefighters at the third fire station.~~ Notwithstanding the foregoing, the Fire Chief shall have the sole discretion as to the most effective manner of handling and responding to calls for service. This includes positioning both equipment and staffing between and among the fire stations to meet conflicting demands. Consequently, the Members acknowledge that there may be times when equipment or personnel may not be available from all three fire stations."*

The Fourth Amendment has an effective date of July 16, 2026, as this was the first day the final Firefighter/Paramedic hired as part of the staffing transition began employment with the Department. As of this date, all six positions identified in the agreement had been fully attrited and backfilled with Firefighter/Paramedics. Establishing July 16, 2026, as the effective date ensures that the savings calculation reflects the point at which the entire staffing transition was complete, and all six positions were incorporated into the savings.

VOTING:

Per the JPA Section 2.3 (d)(i), "Any change in a Member's cost-sharing percentage" shall require the unanimous vote of the full Board. Therefore, because the Fourth Amendment proposes a change in Members' cost-sharing, **a unanimous vote of the full Board is needed to approve this recommendation**.

FISCAL IMPACT:

Now that the Department has realized the "full savings" contemplated under the Third Amendment, and the Town of Ross has been allocated $357,222 in annual savings, each Member agency's cost-share formula will change as follows, effective July 16, 2026: San Anselmo from 40.53% to 41.99%, Fairfax from 23.30% to 24.14%, Sleepy Hollow from 12.80% to 13.26%, and the Town of Ross from 23.37% to 20.61%.

The Third Amendment to the JPA, reflecting the Town of Ross's cost savings, took effect July 1, 2025, coinciding with the closure of Station 18, at which time the Department began transitioning Captain and Engineer positions to Firefighter Paramedic positions and removed one fire engine from the vehicle replacement schedule, with these anticipated savings built into the FY 2025–26 budget. Because the final personnel transition was not completed until an individual was onboarded on July 16, 2026, the Third Amendment savings carried over into FY 2026–27 as the point at which the full savings were finally realized.

To develop the funding formula for the Fourth Amendment, the Department built the FY 2026–27 budget using the existing cost-share percentages of San Anselmo 40.53%, Town of Ross 23.37%, Fairfax 23.30%, and Sleepy Hollow 12.80%, while the Wildfire Preparedness Coordinator position continued to be funded under its separate established formula of San Anselmo 45.00%, Fairfax 32.50%, Town of Ross 11.25%, and Sleepy Hollow 11.25%. The Third Amendment savings from the personnel transitions and the reduced vehicle replacement schedule were then applied against the Base Contribution and Vehicle Replacement Fund lines, and because the Third Amendment is now final with the full savings realized, those savings were fully reflected in the budget rather than phased in; this produced a total current-authority cost of $13,005,578, allocated as $5,460,734 to San Anselmo, $3,140,134 to Fairfax, $1,724,161 to Sleepy Hollow, and $2,680,548 to the Town of Ross. Dividing each agency's share by that $13,005,578 total yields the new Fourth Amendment cost-share percentages of San Anselmo 41.99%, Fairfax 24.14%, Sleepy Hollow 13.26%, and Town of Ross 20.61%, which reflect the finalized, fully realized Third Amendment savings and will become the basis for allocating fire service costs among the Member agencies going forward. (See Attachment #4)

This amendment will also create a budget revision for each Member agency to reflect the final Firefighter Paramedic start date of July 16, 2026. This adjustment was necessary because the individual started with the Department after July 1, 2026, when the salary adjustment took effect under the Firefighters Association Memorandum of Understanding. As a result, the overall savings to the Town of Ross for FY 2026–27 will be reduced from $367,329 to $357,222, increasing the Town's contribution by $10,107. This will also impact the other Member agencies, reducing their FY 2026–27 contributions as follows: San Anselmo by $5,346, Fairfax by $3,073, and the Sleepy Hollow Fire Protection District by $1,688.

ATTACHMENTS:

Attachment #1 - Amended and Restated 2010 JPA and Amendments 1, 2 & 3
Attachment #2 - Fourth Amendment to the Amended and Restated JPA
Attachment #3 - Savings Calculations Sheet
Attachment #4 - Funding Formula Sheet