



**Novato Fire District Board of Directors  
Special Board Meeting and Retreat Minutes  
February 18, 2026**

Location: Best Western Plus Novato Oaks Inn  
215 Alameda del Prado, Novato CA 94949

1 The meeting was called to order by President Hadfield at 8:00 a.m.

2

3 **ROLL CALL**

4 Present: President Mike Hadfield, and Directors Lj Silverman, Bill Davis, and Bruce Goines.

5 Absent: Director Shane Francisco

6

7 **STAFF PRESENT:**

8 EMS Billing Analyst Shannon Wager, HR Manager Gretchen Felciano, ASM Jennifer Crayne,

9 IT Manager Azar Mashintchian, Fire Marshal Lynne Osgood, Battalion Chief Marc Teldeschi,

10 Training Captain Mario Bernardini, Acting Deputy Chief Mike Taul, Finance Director Joe

11 Valenti, Prevention Specialist Lauren Galli, VMS Program Manager Sarah Labberton, and Fire

12 Chief Dan Peters

13

14 **OPEN TIME FOR PUBLIC EXPRESSION**

15 None.

16

17 **NEW BUSINESS**

18 1. State of the District- Fire Chief Peters

19 Fire Chief Peters reported on the overall state of the District and plans for the upcoming  
20 year.

21 Key Takeaways:

- 22 • EMS demand continues to increase, driven by growth in elderly care facilities and  
23 ongoing challenges in accessing timely primary healthcare.
- 24 • Across California and much of the western United States, year-round wildfire  
25 preparedness is now the standard, with increasingly complex, large-scale incidents  
26 affecting entire communities.
- 27 • This year's colder, wetter winter has contributed to higher-than-normal numbers of  
28 structure fires and traffic accidents
- 29 • Periods of social and civil unrest have also required increased situational awareness to  
30 protect responders and the public.

31 Progress & Growth:

- 32 • We hired 5 people into our organization
- 33 • 5 members have left the organization (2 retired, 3 separated)
- 34 • Added or replaced 6 units to the apparatus fleet
- 35 • Added 1 utility trailer to the pool fleet
- 36 • Improvements to the Admin building include security fencing, a security gate, and fob  
37 entry
- 38 • IT upgrades at stations 65,64,63, and 61

39 Where we stand today:



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- 40 • Two labor group contracts have been ratified, and individual employment agreements and  
41 NSAS are scheduled to be ratified at the March BOD meeting  
42 • There has been an increase in labor participation at Board meetings and in the recruitment  
43 and retention processes  
44 • The District remains active in community events, including the New Year's Eve Bouncy  
45 Ball Drop, the Art & Wine Festival, the 4<sup>th</sup> of July Parade, Paint the Town Red, and the  
46 Holiday Tree Lighting Ceremony.  
47 • The command team is operating with greater efficiency and cohesion. A renewed One  
48 Team approach has strengthened engagement, participation, and overall organizational  
49 energy.

50 Path Forward:

- 51 • Moving forward towards a faster pace of training and education for younger members in  
52 anticipation of a greater need for succession planning  
53 • We are positioned for more regional training with other agencies in Marin and Sonoma  
54 Counties  
55 • We are positioned to communicate at a higher level with our community around wildfire  
56 mitigation and education. The upcoming Community Wildfire Protection Plan (CWPP)  
57 will provide our community with plans for enhanced tools to prioritize projects in our  
58 wildfire-adaptive communities.  
59 • We will be moving towards a more efficient mode of accounting and budgeting through  
60 innovative software.

61 There was no public comment.

62

63 2. Reports from Division Heads and Support Staff

64 Division Heads and support staff will provide the board with brief updates for their  
65 division and future projects.

- 66 • Chief Taul provided information on the upcoming Academy, the Accredited Local  
67 Academy application process, and facility projects, including the sewer project and multi-  
68 use annex building at S62  
69 • Training Captain Bernardini provided a summary of the Training Division, including:  
70 ➤ Identifying a person to backfill the Training Captain position for the academy  
71 ➤ New Training Props- commercial vent prop, Class A burn prop, residential vent prop  
72 ➤ Setting aside a dedicated training engine  
73 ➤ New SCBA fill station  
74 ➤ ALA certification  
75 • Chief Teldeschi provided an update on the EMS Division. There were 7,532 total calls in  
76 2025: 6,371 were EMS-related calls (2,416 ALS and 2,630 BLS). He noted that the  
77 Exposure Control Plan Manual is being updated, and annual physicals (ultrasound,  
78 expanded cardiovascular blood test, full body MRI) have been completed, there are 2



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- 79 new certified CPR instructors (Farris and Vandervoort), 5/14/26 is the Marin County  
80 Survivors Reunion, and the Health & Wellness Committee will meet on 3/24/26.
- 81 • Fire Marshal Osgood provided a comprehensive overview of the Prevention Division and  
82 the various projects the team is currently undertaking.
  - 83 • VMS Program Manager Labberton presented an overview of MWPA projects over the  
84 past year and a preview of upcoming projects
  - 85 • ASM Crayne presented a summary of the projects she has completed and those she plans  
86 to complete this year. These include finalizing the Admin Career Development Guide,  
87 enhancing the records retention process, implementing a new Financial Management  
88 Information System (FMIS), improving succession planning and cross-training, and  
89 striving to achieve the CSDA District of Distinction award.
  - 90 • HR Manager Felciano shared important statistics on recruitment, retention, and  
91 retirements from the past year. She also outlined new recruitment strategies and plans to  
92 establish two academies this year.
  - 93 • IT Manager Mashinchian provided a comprehensive overview of the IT and  
94 communications division, highlighting the importance of cybersecurity and staff training.  
95 She outlined several key projects completed by her team last year and offered a preview  
96 of upcoming projects.
  - 97 • Finance Director Valenti presented a detailed report on the Finance Division,  
98 emphasizing achievements and upcoming projects.

99  
100 There was no public comment.

101

102 3. Standards of Coverage Analysis Update- Final Report Brief

103 Sam Mazza, Senior Fire & Emergency Services Specialist with Citygate Associates, LLC, will  
104 present the Standards of Coverage Analysis Update – Final Report Brief.

105 Sam Mazza presented the most recent Standards of Coverage Analysis, providing key  
106 points and highlights. The District retained Citygate Associates, LLC to update the  
107 District’s 2022 Standards of Coverage (SOC) analysis specifically to examine current  
108 workload unit and response performance from which the District can make informed  
109 decisions regarding the current and near-future delivery of fire and emergency medical  
110 services. A copy of the SOC is attached to the minutes for reference.

111 There was no public comment.

112

113 4. Discussion Items

114 The board had a lengthy discussion on each of the following items.

- 115 • Capital Improvement Projects: The Sewer Extension and the Station 62 Annex
- 116 • Fee Schedule for EMS Billing
- 117 • Strategic Plan Update



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- 118 • Parental Leave
- 119 • IT Security and Passwords
- 120 • Administrative Succession Planning
- 121 • Financial Policy on Reserves
- 122
- 123 5. Future Board Meeting Items
- 124 List any items to be included on future regular board meeting agendas
- 125 • The Board asked for a one-page project paper outlining the various uses of the new S62
- 126 Multiuse Annex Building
- 127 • Planning for the EMS Billing fee schedule ordinance and public hearing
- 128 • Cost analysis of paid parental leave for the District
- 129 • Finance Committee to establish best practices for undesignated reserves and rainy-day
- 130 reserves and policy updates. The recommendation will go to the full board for
- 131 consideration.
- 132

133 **ADJOURNMENT**

134 There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 4:17 pm.

135  
136 Respectfully Submitted,

137 *Jennifer Crayne*

138 Jennifer Crayne

139 ASM/Clerk of the Board