

Bodega Station – Response Area 87 Members

We are providing this update to inform members of Response Area 87 about ongoing negotiations between the Bodega Volunteer Fire Department (BVFD) and Goldridge Fire Protection District. This information is being shared both at this meeting and on the website.

Background and Timeline

May 22, 2025 – Initial Meeting

Goldridge representatives included Chief Shepley, Darren DeCarli, Bill Adams, and Board President Robert Gloeckner. BVFD representatives included Steve, Dave, Sara, James, and Bob Haroche.

At this meeting, Goldridge stated that 24/7 staffing was allocated for Bodega budgeted for fiscal year 2025–2026. Goldridge proposed a \$1/year lease for the station and transfer of fire apparatus ownership to Goldridge (Attachment #1).

July 8, 2025 – Follow-Up Meeting

Chief Shepley and Darren DeCarli met with Eric K. on behalf of Bodega. An agreement was discussed for 24/7 staffing with one stipend position. This was later confirmed publicly at a community meeting attended by Chief Shepley and Board Member Chris Tachouet, who stated that Chief Shepley had authority to negotiate on Goldridge's behalf.

July 10, 2025 – Lease Agreement

BVFD entered into a one-year lease with Goldridge. The station did not reopen until ownership of the fire apparatus was transferred, which required FEMA approval. BVFD then required Goldridge to sign an agreement committing to remain in the Bodega service area for the useful life of the apparatus.

Despite these steps, no staffing improvements were implemented. Term sheets continued to be exchanged (Attachment #2).

January 2026 – Septic System Agreement

BVFD and Goldridge agreed that Goldridge would design and install a standalone septic system for the station. An interim solution included installation of a 4,000-gallon holding tank to allow immediate operation if the existing system became overloaded. All costs were to be covered by Goldridge.

A site meeting was held on January 23 with BVFD and Goldridge representatives to determine tank placement. As of today, no plans have been submitted to Sonoma County. Goldridge has indicated it is working with consultants to begin design. BVFD sent a follow-up letter in March confirming responsibilities and expectations (Attachment #3).

Goldridge Response

Goldridge responded that it intends to continue under the existing lease, but with a proposed extension to 15 years plus a 15-year option. They also stated they are re-evaluating staffing for the West County area and, at this time, will not pursue additional wastewater capacity at the Bodega station (Attachment #4).

Current Situation

As a result of this response, there is no guarantee of staffing at the Bodega station. Volunteer numbers have now plummeted, and several current volunteers are employed by other districts. For more than 45 years, the community relied on a consistent and dependable on-site response, largely due to the dedication of Ron Albini, who was always there when the community needed him. Approximately two months ago, Ron resigned from his volunteer position due to irreconcilable differences.

At the time of consolidation, the Bodega station was led by Fire Chief Ron Albini and supported by approximately 15 active volunteers. The station maintained a strong and visible presence in the community, with personnel frequently on site. Regular Thursday night trainings, apparatus checks, and maintenance activities reflected a high level of commitment and operational readiness.

The community was assured that consolidation would enhance the level of service provided by the Bodega station.

Summary of Negotiation Terms

Goldridge requested:

- \$1/year lease (currently a one-year agreement)
- Extension to a 15-year lease with a 15-year option
- Transfer of fire apparatus ownership (completed July 2025)

In return, Goldridge indicated it would:

- Provide 24/7 staffing
- Modify the station for residential staffing (with permitting)
- Pay property taxes on both parcels
- Maintain insurance for all buildings (including McCaughey Hall and the Post Office)
- Maintain the fire station in its current condition and cover all associated costs

- Install and maintain septic infrastructure, including a holding tank and standalone system

To date, several of these commitments remain incomplete (e.g., generator servicing and septic system progress).

Community Impact

At the time of consolidation, the Bodega station had an active volunteer base and regular presence at the station. The community was assured that service would improve.

Today, we must ask: **Is Bodega better served?**

Bodega Station remains the closest facility in West County capable of full operation, but it currently lacks the staffing levels that were repeatedly promised. Without those resources, there is concern it could become similar to other minimally staffed or unstaffed stations in the region.

The nearest staffed Goldridge station is located approximately 10 miles away on Watertrough Road at Pleasant Hill, requiring travel over O'Farrell Hill.

Next Steps

We ask all members to review this information and provide input on how you would like to see BVFD proceed.

Bodega Volunteer Fire Department Board

00:13:25

I have staffed firefighters in the firehouse. So that's what we're trying to get to. You can't staff it until you do TI, right? Yeah. Okay, so you're not going to staff it July 1. When do you think you can staff it by? If today we came to an agreement, I'd have construction tomorrow. Yeah, I don't know what it takes. It wouldn't take much. It would take putting up some walls and maybe punching out another one.

00:14:00

So, 60 days to get the TI completed. I mean, that's ambitious, but that would be our goal. I think it's doable. We have people who work for us all the time. And that's just down the road. Well, I've never been in a new station before. This is my first day. Even though I've been around here, I've attended either breakfast or fundraisers, but I can see that there's a lot of community support and I can also see that you're very, very much attached.

00:14:32

to what you've done here. Just as we were in the community of Epso or the guys from Hills, or wherever. It's always the same thing. And there's always those volunteers who say, oh, you can get paid staff here, and then you won't need volunteers. Yes, partly that is true, but I'll tell you what, there is a big fire. We need everybody. Not just the paid staff, but everybody involved here that can get it right away. And the paid staff would always be here.

00:15:03

They'd be there to do training for any of the volunteers any time they're available for the course of the time. So there's a lot of big pluses having people in that station. In our budget for Golden Ridge Fire District, the number one biggest expense is salaries. All right, Mark. So it's not just a simple little thing to put the staff in there. It's a big item. You figure out what the firefighter costs.

Attachment 2

July 8, 2025

Notes re: Meeting this date with Eric Koenigshofer and Chief Shepley Schroth-Cary and Division Chief Darrin DeCarli at the Gold Ridge FPD main offices at Hessel Station.

Subject: Gold Ridge FPD and Bodega Volunteer Fire Department non-profit organization serving the Bodega community. On the lease of the Bodega fire station.

ISSUES ADDRESSED:

The text which follows anticipates both a lease of real property and an associated Memorandum of Understanding which would elaborate on the overall agreement between the parties, Gold Ridge and Bodega.

This document addresses several key issues and sets the stage for Gold Ridge to reopen and operate the Bodega Fire Station.

Not every issue is addressed or **resolved here** but the main issues which need to be clarified are addressed. The issue of rent is not resolved here. The issue of rent will be further considered in the weeks ahead.

LEASE EXTENSION:

GRFPD has agreed to a **one year lease** at the rate of **one dollar per month**. GRFPD has further agreed to **reopen the Bodega Station** once Bodega has accepted the terms stated herein.

PROPERTY TAXES AND INSURANCE:

GRFPD to pay property taxes and insurance on all three buildings covering two parcels. On this point the parties have previously agreed. Details of coverage types and amounts to be determined.

TRUCKS/VEHCILES:

Trucks/vehicles as described below will **remain in Bodega** and will be utilized **to the end of their useful life**. **Transfer of ownership** from Bodega to GRFPD will be done **within 5 days of this agreement being**

accepted by both parties. This transfer of ownership is consistent with the requirements of FEMA in compliance with FEMA grant terms.

Vehicle

8792: Water Tender

8782: Type 1 Engine

8762: Type 3 Engine

UTV

STAFFING BODEGA STATION

Staffing is **included in** the recently adopted **GRFPD budget** for the fiscal year **2025-2026**. The **positions assigned to the Bodega Station** will be a **Captain and an Engineer**. Staffing may also include a **third person** under **stipend of \$240 per shift** drawn from the pool of volunteers or qualified interns.

Staffing will be 24/7 and will be six Full Time Equivalent positions rotating in a three platoon system.

FACILITY MODIFICATION - HOUSING

In order to add resident staffing the station must be modified to meet various code and employee requirements. The modifications must be approved by Permit Sonoma before work can commence.

GRFPD agrees to design the proposed modifications and to submit required application materials to Permit Sonoma **within 90 days** of the execution of this agreement.

GRFPD will be bound to implement the modifications and staffing on executed of a final agreement.

Within 30 days of approval by Permit Sonoma GDFPD will commence the process to fill the required positions.

SEPTIC SYSTEM

It is believed there are two septic systems serving the three buildings on the holdings of BVFD, Inc. One of the systems service the fire station. Both systems are treated as one for the purposes of this agreement. In the event either septic system fails effort to expand or repair the system(s) on-site will be explored. If an on-site solution is not feasible according to Sonoma County requirements a replacement system will be developed.

In the interim the failed system(s) will be pumped at a frequency necessary to continue use of the facilities impacted. If the system serving the fire station fails the cost of pumping will be paid by GRFPD. In the event the system serving McCaughey Hall fails the cost of pumping will be paid by BVFD.

In the event a new system is required to serve the several buildings both parties will cooperate in the development of such a system. The cost of such a system will be shared by the parties with each party paying a percentage of the total cost based on the percentage of system capacity assigned to each use.

In the event a new system is required, GRFPD is bound to participate only if a 15 year lease is in place.

RENT

This subject will be determined at a later date. Both parties agree to continue discussions on this matter. A "cooling off" period of 30 days will be in effect prior to resumption of talks regarding rent.

Attachment 3

March 23, 2026

Darrin DeCarli
Gold Ridge Fire Protection District
4500 Hessel Rd
Sebastopol, CA 95472

RE: Bodega Fire Station Lease and Staffing

The parties, Gold Ridge Fire District (“GR”) and Bodega Volunteer Fire Department (“Bodega”), agree to the following proposed lease provisions related to staffing the Bodega Fire Station (“Station”) on a 24-hour basis, as well as the capacity and performance of the existing septic system, which currently serves both the Station and the Post Office.

GR will submit building modification plans to the County of Sonoma (“County”) for review, approval, and issuance of any required permits necessary to support round-the-clock staffing of the Station. As part of this process, Bodega and GR anticipate that the County may evaluate whether the capacity of the existing septic system is sufficient to accommodate continuous staffing of the Station while maintaining occupancy and use of the Post Office building, or any equivalent future use of that building.

Regardless of whether the County determines that additional septic system capacity is required, GR will seek approval to install holding tank(s) on the leased premises and to implement a program for periodic pumping and lawful disposal of wastewater at an approved treatment facility.

In the event the County requires increased septic system capacity, GR may satisfy such requirement through the use of on-site holding tank(s) as part of a County-approved plan, including regular pumping and transport to an approved treatment facility, and/or through the installation of a new off-site septic system.

Upon development and implementation of a new off-site septic system, GR shall no longer have any right to use the existing septic system serving the Station and Post Office.

All costs associated with the implementation of the above improvements, including but not limited to permitting, installation, maintenance, pumping, and any related infrastructure, shall be the sole responsibility of GR.

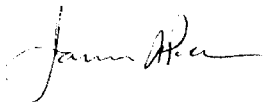
If GR is in agreement with the terms outlined above, Bodega would like to proceed with establishing a formal long-term lease. Please advise whether GR will prepare the lease

document based on these agreed-upon terms, or if GR would prefer that Bodega prepare the initial draft for review.

Additionally, we would like to note that the heater at the Station has not yet been repaired. We recommend North HVAC Services, a local small business whose owner resides in the community. North HVAC Services can be contacted at 415-845-6910.

We appreciate your cooperation and look forward to working together to finalize these arrangements.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "James Piazza". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a prominent initial "J" and a long, sweeping underline.

James Piazza

Bodega Volunteer Fire Department Secretary



GOLD RIDGE FIRE PROTECTION DISTRICT

Proudly serving the communities of Hessel, Twin Hills, Freestone, Fort Ross, Camp Meeker, Bodega, Valley Ford, Bloomfield, Two Rock, Wilmar, San Antonio, Lakeville, Monte Rio and Sebastopol

April 10, 2026

Bodega Volunteer Fire Department
PO Box 28
Bodega, CA 94922
Attn: David Hamilton
James Piazza

RE: Bodega Lease Term Sheet Dated March 23, 2026

Dear Mr. Hamilton and Mr. Piazza,

This letter is a follow-up to the lease term sheet dated March 23, 2026, and received by me via email on the same date. I've had an opportunity to review the items outlined in the term sheet document and have had the opportunity to review with our board of directors. At this time, we would like to continue our existing lease under the same conditions with the exception of extending the lease to 15 years with an additional 15-year option. We are re-evaluating our staffing plan for the west county area which at this time would preclude the district from pursuing additional wastewater capacity at the Bodega Station.

I have been in contact with a contractor to determine what it would entail to convert the existing training room into a dormitory with storage. We have engaged an architect (Greg LeDoux & Associates, Inc.) to draw up plans that can be reviewed with the building official at Permit Sonoma to determine what would be needed for a tenant improvement plan submittal. I have also made contact with the county as it relates to the holding tanks for wastewater and from what I have gathered, this will need to involve multiple layers of review. We have continued with this process so it can be used in assistance in determining the appropriate location for staffing.

Please let the Fire District know how you would like to proceed. If the terms as outlined above are amenable, we can use the previously drafted lease, change the start date and include the verbiage of it being a 15-year lease with a 15-year option.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Darrin DeCarli", written over a horizontal line.

Darrin DeCarli
Deputy Chief
Gold Ridge Fire Protection District
(707) 823-1084
darrindecarli@goldridgefire.org