

BOARD OF DIRECTORS REGULAR MEETING MINUTES
La Pine Rural Fire Protection District
July 9, 2026

Open Meeting

Dir. Michael Vietzke opened the meeting at 9:02 a.m.

Roll Call

Directors Present: Chairperson Michael Vietzke, Dir. Robin Adams, Dir. Rex Lesueur, Dir. Jeremy Johnson, and Dir. Dan Robinette

Staff Present: Chief Erick Holsey, Deputy Chief Jeremy Mendola, Office Manager Joyce Engberg, Finance Director Andy Salata and Administrative Assistant Sandi Mickel

Staff Absent: None

Guests: Michelle Mendola

Union Representative: Paul Stevenson

Flag Salute and Reciting of the District's Mission Statement

“Promote and protect the health and welfare of our community through excellence in preparedness, collaboration, and delivery of emergency services.”

Approval of Consent Agenda

Changes to the Agenda

Chief Holsey requested that Grant Contracts be moved to New Business for review and discussion, including the Seismic Grant and the Deschutes County Wildland Fire Prevention Coordinator grant.dd

Open Forum for Public Comment

Bidding Process

Karen, representing a company interested in submitting a bid for the Station 102 septic project, asked for guidance on the bidding process, including how detailed the District would like the bid to be. It was noted that the scope of the project will most likely extend beyond a simple septic issue, and the full extent of the work will not be clear until the project begins. Chief Holsey explained that this is expected and that, until the County inspector comes out and determines what needs to be done, there is no way to know the full scope of the project. He advised that the company submit a bid that is as complete as possible, with reviews and adjustments to be made as the project progresses.

Employee Recognition:

- Swearing in of DC Jeremy Mendola
- Introduction of the new District Finance Director, Andy Salata

Review and Approval of minutes from June 11, 2026, Board of Directors Regular Meeting.

Accomplishments & Recognitions

Chairman Vietzke took a few moments to recognize and comment on the contributions Director Adams makes to the Board. Chief Holsey was also recognized for working with his administrative team to ensure the budget was in great shape.

Financials

Chief Holsey reported that this month's financial review is the closeout of the prior fiscal year. The District will begin the new fiscal year with new Caselle software and a new chart of accounts. It was also noted that the prior fiscal year was managed well. Overall financial management continues to be consistent with public budgeting law, and expenditures remained within budgeted amounts. A few individual line items were overspent; however, the overall budget categories did not exceed approved budget amounts and no transfer from contingency was required.

Revenue Overview

Chief Holsey reported that La Pine Rural Fire Protection District tax revenues ended slightly over projection by 4%. EMS revenues received exceeded the budget by 25%. Total revenues collected were over projection by 8%.

Expense Overview

Chief Holsey reported that overall expenditures are tracking within budgeted levels. Personnel services and overtime costs remain consistent with projections. Other line-item variances were presented for Board within the financial report for review. Overall budget categories remain within approved limits, and there is currently no need to consider a contingency transfer.

Monthly Expenses Paid

Due to the impact of outstanding expenses that have not yet been posted to the 2025–26 fiscal year, the Board discussed the financial statements and moved to table approval until the August Board meeting. This will allow staff sufficient time to ensure all year-end expenses are recorded and reflected accurately in the financial reports.

Motion: Dir. Lesueur

Second: Dir. Adams

Vote: Motion passed unanimously, 5 – 0.

Dir. Vietke presented a review of the key accomplishments achieved by the District over the past four years. Highlights included hiring a new Fire Chief, improving the District's financial position from a deficit to a reserve surplus, resolving litigation without financial settlement, successfully negotiating a labor agreement, and implementing post-retirement healthcare benefits. The District also expanded staffing levels, improved employee morale and retention, reorganized its leadership structure, and strengthened administrative services through the addition of a Financial Director and new technology systems.

Operational improvements included the purchase of a new ambulance, water tender, and Telesquirt fire apparatus, as well as the adoption of new financial, communications, and crew management software. The District also secured a multi-million-dollar grant for seismic upgrades, enhanced its reputation within the community and among regional partners, and successfully passed and renewed voter-approved levies to support ongoing operations and capital needs.

Management Reports

Union Report

None

Chief's Report

Chief Holsey welcomed attendees to the July 2026 Board meeting and recognized the retirements of Assistant Chief Daugherty and Office Manager Joyce Engberg. He expressed appreciation for their years of dedicated service and noted their significant contributions to the District's operations, financial stability, and organizational success.

Chief Holsey also welcomed Deputy Chief Mendola and Finance Director Andy Salata to the District. He highlighted their extensive experience and expressed confidence in their ability to support the District's continued growth and operational excellence.

The Chief reported on ongoing community outreach efforts related to fire prevention and defensible space, including participation in a Newberry Regional Partnership video promoting Firewise principles and wildfire preparedness.

Updates were provided on facility maintenance, fleet management, and long-term station planning. Staff will continue working with WRK Engineers to evaluate facility needs, gather member input, prioritize project goals, and explore financing options for future improvements.

Chief Holsey also reported on current grant activity and ongoing participation in the SB454 committee, which continues to explore legislative solutions and funding opportunities for rural fire districts throughout Oregon.

At the time of this report, there are no wildfires threatening the District. The District is entering the new fiscal year with revenues expected to be slow initially; however, a forthcoming GEMT payment is anticipated to meet or exceed budget projections. Fund carryover remains sufficient to support operations until property tax revenues are received in November. Several capital projects are also scheduled to begin early to take advantage of favorable summer weather.

During the month, Administration focused on operational readiness, financial planning, training, and community engagement. Key activities included the deployment and training of new BK VHF radios, submission of an AFG grant application, discussions with the Oregon State Fire Marshal's Office regarding tank farm issues, and meetings related to minimum staffing agreements. Staff also participated in numerous leadership, EMS, and fire service meetings and trainings.

The District maintained a strong community presence by supporting the Frontier Days Breakfast, Fourth of July Parade and fireworks, and other local events. Additionally, representatives attended the opening of Idanha-Detroit Fire District's new station, which was rebuilt following the 2020 Lionshead Fire. Overall, District operations remain stable and focused on maintaining readiness, supporting personnel, and serving the community.

Correspondence/News

The Chief presented items listed below for Board review:

- Public Service Announcements sent to media, posted to reader board, and South County shopper
- AFG Engine Grant Submission
- AFG Radios Grant Submission
- Statesman Journal Article on Property Tax

Old Business

Chief Holsey reported that he is still gathering additional information regarding the

proposed fuel tank.

Policy 200.28 – Debt Service Policy was presented for Board review. Discussion followed.

Resolution 26-03 – Adoption of Debt Service Policy was read by Director Adams. A motion was made and the resolution was adopted.

Motion: Dir. Adams

Second: Dir. Robinette

Vote: Motion passed unanimously, 5 – 0.

New Business

Chief Holsey provided the Board with a copy of the draft amended TA 2026–2028 Collective Bargaining Agreement (CBA), which included proposed changes to minimum staffing requirements associated with the addition of a Battalion Chief position, for Board review, discussion, and consideration.

Following discussion, Director Adams moved to approve the TA 2026–2028 CBA amendment related to the Battalion Chief addition and the corresponding changes to minimum staffing requirements, incorporating the revisions discussed by the Board. The motion was approved.

Motion: Dir. Adams

Second: Dir. Johnson

Vote: Motion passed unanimously, 5 – 0.

The Board moved and approved removing Joyce Engberg and Dan Daugherty as authorized signers from the three WaFd bank accounts ending in 1293, 8919, and 8272. The Board further approved adding Deputy Chief Jeremy Mendola and Finance Director Andrew Salata as authorized signers on those same accounts.

Motion: Dir. Adams

Second: Dir. Johnson

Vote: Motion passed unanimously, 5 – 0.

Special Meetings and Workshops

- Ops/Management TBD on 6th
- SB 454 July 16th, 2026
- SST First Aid Training August 11, 2026
- COFCA August 12, 2026

Good of the Order

None

Next Regular Meeting

August 13, 2026, at 9:00 a.m. at Station 101.

Regular Board Meeting Adjourned at 11:05 a.m.

Respectfully Scribed and Submitted
La Pine Rural Fire Protection District

Sandi Mickel

Date Presented to the Board: August 13, 2026