

BOARD MEETING MINUTES
La Pine Rural Fire Protection District
December 9, 2021 Regular Meeting 9:00 a.m.

Open Meeting

Director Cox opened the meeting at 9:00 a.m. and led the flag salute.

Roll Call

Directors Present: Robin Adams, Doug Cox, Jim Landles, Dick Swails, Joel Witmer

Staff Present: Chief Mike Supkis, Assistant Chief Dan Daugherty, Office Manager Tracy Read

Open Forum for Public Comment

Name	Purpose for Attending
<i>Jerry Hubbard</i>	
<i>Bonnie Cox</i>	
<i>Courtney Ignazzitto</i>	<i>LCHC Appeals</i>
<i>Rex Leseuer</i>	<i>Citizen</i>
<i>Matt LaChance</i>	<i>Union Representative</i>

Rex Lesueur: Asked if either of the medical facilities have paid on any invoices to date and then how much the District has spent on legal fees? He speculated that the District will not be successful in collecting this money and that the only way the District will collect is if the District sues the facilities. He further opined that St. Charles is a billion-dollar goliath and regardless if the district is right or not the medical facility attorneys would "string this out" for three to five years before a decision is rendered by the court, and the District is not using its resources wisely. He recommended the District shift its focus from collecting on facility transfers to how to get more ambulances.

No other public comment made.

Annual District Audit Presentation

Glen Kearns of Accuity, LLC delivered the FY 20-21 Audit. He noted the assets to liabilities ratio of 3.3 : 1, which is a good indication of liquidity. Also noted was the ending fund balance at 3.5 months' worth of operating expenses. The ideal ending fund

balance would be six months, with a minimum of three. The remainder of financials was solid and unremarkable.

Glen then referenced the Report to the Board of Directors and discussed the three different levels of control deficiencies. The most serious is a material weakness. The audit revealed none. The next level is a significant deficiency, which as in years past the District does not have a staff person qualified to create the ability to recreate financials, which must be reported as a potential deficiency. This is a deficiency that is very common to smaller districts and will always be the case absent in house staff CPA with this very specialized skill level. The next level of deficiency is budget law non-compliance, or housekeeping issues, which are related to over expenditures or the budget document itself not footing (budget document totals did not add up correctly). Two other control-related items were payment made on an estimate documentation rather than an invoice – not meaning the expenditure was not properly validated, as that the validation invoice was attached to the reviewed the documents reviewed during the audit. There were also two instances where credit card charges were missing a receipt. Glen also noted student tuition reimbursements not being paid through payroll but as an expense must be closely reviewed to ensure it within tax law for volunteer reimbursements. Director Swails asked what the dollar amount of the potential payroll tax impact could be. Glen responded the school stipends were approximately \$2,000 - \$3,000 plus any interest and penalties if they did not meet IRS regulations.

Board and staff discussion regarding student stipends and tuition reimbursement. Chief commented that staff received the final audit report only yesterday, and the Board today and as such have had little opportunity to review the documents. He stated that two years ago, Accuity auditors recommended student responses be reimbursed and taxed as an employee (not a volunteer) and through payroll. The change was implemented immediately on that recommendation. Thus, students are employee interns of the District and responses are paid as such. However, academic scholarships stipends and tuition are documented, direct school cost expense reimbursements and staff feels confident those are being paid appropriately. Staff will follow up with the auditor on this item and if corrections are needed those will be made.

Chief stated total net worth of the District decreased \$600,000 this year. The previous year, net worth decreased \$300,000. The District has operated at a deficit the past two years. Much of this decrease is due to PERS liability but the District has also had a reduction in its cash fund balance the past two years which is very tangible.

Approval of Minutes

Director Cox called for review of the November minutes.

Director Adams commented on a sentence on page 5 regarding the P25 radio signal. Staff will make the necessary clerical correction.

No other comments made.

Action: Director Adams moved to approve the minutes of the November 11, 2021 Board of Directors Regular Meeting with the above correction. Second by Director Landles. All in favor. Motion passed on a 5-0 vote.

Financials

Monthly Revenue and Expenditure Statement. Staff answered Board questions regarding current revenues and expenditures.

- 1220 – Property Tax Revenue – Director Adams asked if all tax revenue has been received. Chief responded that no, to date about 90 percent of the projected revenue has been received, and based on previous year payment trends confident this line will meet and exceed the projected revenue budget.
- 5104 – GEMT Revenue – Director Adams inquired when this will be received. Staff responded the CCO portion per the OHA will be received before the end of this calendar year. The FFS GEMT will come in next Spring, the cost report was submitted recently.
- 5100 – EMS Receivables – Director Landles inquired about this revenue line for transport payments. Staff responded the District is currently at 40 percent of revenue projections, and we are 40 percent through the fiscal year.
- 8105 – Breakdowns – Director Landles commented on the heavy use the medics are seeing and how that is resulting in this line being far over expended. Board and staff discussion regarding fleet rotation to alleviate the demand on the most heavily used apparatus. Director Swails noted that the total of line 8100 is only at about half of what was budgeted. The total line will likely exceed budget. Director Cox asked if the new medics will come equipped with snow tires. Chief responded they will come with all season traction. However, those new tires will be swapped out with the newer winter studded tires on 171 and 174 and the new original replace back in the spring. The two oldest medics that will be decommissioned will have old “throw-away” tires put back on. Chief credited staff’s resourcefulness for this planning. The new medics will have new boxes, and boxes will be refurbished for

the next replacement. Medic lifespan has gone from about seven years down to three due to heavy use and mileage.

Monthly Expenses by Vendor

Reviewed.

- Director Swails asked about the GEMT Agency fee. Staff responded these funds will be reimbursed with the CCO GEMT payment. Blake Jamison assists the District with its GEMT-related reporting.
- Director Adams asked for clarification on payment to firefighters for House Fund. Staff replied this is funded by payroll deduction and then paid back to the Firefighter's House Fund. The money is used by the firefighters to keep kitchen food staples stocked etc. District provides soap, towels etc.

Monthly Expenses Paid

Action: Director Swails moved to approve monthly expenses presented from 11/12/21 – 12/9/21 in the amount of \$485,812.37. Second by Director Adams. All in favor. Motion passed on a 5-0 vote.

Management Reports

Monthly Alarm Report

It was noted there is an increase of 553 alarms over this time last year.

Director Adams asked what an EMS Assist Non-Billable is. Staff responded these are normally service calls, anything toned out as EMS where the patient is not transported normally falls into this category. Year to date is almost 2,000 as compared to 1,400 last year. Chief noted law enforcement has requested medic responses more often, possibly due to new LE staff.

Multiple Alarm & Building Permit/Valuation Report

Up significantly over last year. With median housing prices in Bend at over \$730,000, the La Pine area will see continued growth.

Director Swails asked how much of the Commercial permit activity is in the Urban Renewal zone. Chief responded looks to be about 25 percent of this month's new permit activity.

Chief's Report

- Twelve Code 99's in November. Director Adams commented on two responses to an address where there was a Code 99 three days later. Chief noted although we do not have the specifics on this call it is not uncommon for people with chronic conditions to be seen by and even transported by the paramedics multiple times then to see a code 99. These folks are sometimes very sick and obviously not getting all the care they need.
- Three calls within several hours in one day on the same street. One of these addresses had a Code 99 later in the month. Director Cox noted some patients continue to call 911 because they will not or cannot seek care elsewhere.
- Director Landles noted there was one CMT transport in November. This was not a critical transport and the patient agreed to be transported by CMT. Director Adams asked about response times. Chief responded did not have a response time in this report. Discussion regarding CMT response times, staff responded this has been addressed in the PPP agreement. CMT will have a La Pine dedicated unit once the agreement is in effect. The response time will also be faster once they are dispatched through 911. The November call was a direct-dial response. Discussion regarding triage of calls, and that the agreement with CMT is just one part of the solution to the capacity shortfall.
- Director Landles asked if all facilities upgrade projects have been completed. Chief responded that yes, with the exception of a roof leak at 102 from a new plumbing vent which is being addressed. Additional discussion regarding aging facilities and planning for replacement. Most district facilities are over 45 years old and the newest is 25.

Professional Firefighters IAFF Local 3387 Report

This report is expected to be on the monthly agenda going forward.

Chief introduced outgoing union representative FF/Paramedic Matt LaChance, a written report was provided by the new Professional Firefighters Local 3387 President Kevin Leehmann in the Board packets.

- LaChance thanked the Board for the opportunity to speak, stating Kevin was unavailable today. He stated the union's overarching goal is to protect the public and to provide the Board with the union's perspective. Stated that morale is at an all-time low and many people are close to burn-out as a result of the current staffing crisis along with the increase in run volume. In addition to manpower, the District

has suffered a huge loss in experience loss. He stated those that left felt they had no choice and felt they had gotten themselves into a corner.

- Matt reviewed the recent work that union members have done to help the family of a pediatric patient with serious health concerns. \$25,000 was raised which was short of the \$75,000 goal, but still enough to be a considerable help to the family. Staff is currently focused on operations, upcoming promotions and academy, as well as ongoing training.
- Matt extended an invitation to all Board members to contact new union President Leehmann, Kyle Lohner, Travis Harrison, him or other union members to meet and have discussions at any time. Director Cox reminded everyone of the importance to observe the chain of command. Matt replied he completely agrees, however due to time constraints and staff being out or unavailable, sometimes that isn't practical. Morale, staffing, succession planning are top concerns currently. He reported that the new radio system is working very well. Concerns with St. Charles issues, use of sick time and communication are also of concerns. Director Cox also stressed the importance of union leadership communicating to the rest of the staff; Matt agreed this has been a huge issue in the past.
- Director Swails asked what the union's biggest issues are with regard to St. Charles. Matt replied the first is staff feels their reputation is being trashed by the medical facilities in the media, and that staff doesn't know all what's going on or what is going to happen next, and that if they could know more, they could be a greater help. In response to Director Swails' question of has the union looked at the district ordinances, Matt stated that yes, staff is aware of and has access to the ordinances. Matt stated they have more or less been told the lawyers are handling it and not to talk about it (not a direct quote but that's what has been inferred). Director Swails noted that facts have been slanted throughout the media, and everyone is frustrated at the District's lack of ability to publicly defend itself against the facility mudslinging with regard to the ongoing litigation that was brought on by the facilities. He stressed that at issue is simply who pays the bill, which has nothing to do with the work and care of paramedics or providing the emergency transport.
- Director Witmer agreed that communication is huge, and part of the challenge to accurate communication is there are three shifts working and at three separate locations. There have been public meetings as well as meetings with staff regarding litigation matters that can be discussed. He suggested if there is a synopsis of where we are today, that may answer some of the questions. Witmer offered that the upcoming operations meeting might be a good forum and also stated everyone bears responsibility for generating that conversation, while respecting the chain of

command. He appreciates the union taking the initiative to represent themselves at board meetings.

- Director Landles reminded staff of the importance of recognizing burnout and encouraging one another, and that often the outside causes for burnout are not controllable but internal attitudes are. Matt replied that while this is true, often the causes are controllable and they are working to address those. He also stated every person who has left the department did so feeling that leaving their employment was their only option.
- Board consensus this will be a good addition to monthly reporting.

Correspondence/News

- A. Deschutes County Assessor – Tax Appeal Distribution Withholdings (3)
- B. Health Resource and Service Administration - Grant
- C. Wise Buys – Board Meeting

Chief Supkis briefed everyone on the County tax appeal process and the recent grant award.

Old Business

A. Fireworks

Chief presented the revised draft correspondence to the City and the Board of County Commissioners requesting they consider fireworks regulations after the success of this year's experiences. He reviewed the state regulations governing fireworks – which agencies have the authority to ban or restrict fireworks use – the State Fire Marshal nor local fire districts (all fire agencies) do not have regulatory authority over fireworks by State law.

In response to Director Adams' question, Chief stated the correspondence does not address specific timeframes (i.e., Summer - 4th of July/Winter – New Year) for possible restrictions and that decision was left for the governing agency. Board consensus the letter should be sent with no suggested timeframe. It was noted the Board's position and letter does not attempt to restrict professional fireworks displays.

Action: Director Swails moved to send the letter as presented to the City of La Pine and the Deschutes County Board of Commissioners. Second by Director Adams. All in favor. Motion passed on a 5 – 0 vote.

New Business

A. Review Board Policy 300.01 – Residency

Director Swails asked what the union's preference is. Matt LaChance responded union's stance is that the requirement goes away. Chief Supkis reviewed the history of the District Policy and how it affects recruitment and response times. The residency requirement is also part of current labor agreement with our firefighters. Due to ongoing contract negotiations – in which residency was not put on the table by either party – if the Board rescinds Board Policy 300.01 and all parties are in agreement to a change, the collective bargaining agreement (CBA) can be modified or rescinded via a Memorandum of Understanding.

Discussion regarding the one percent optional residency incentive in the CBA and that the incentive can remain. That is a separate issue from the mandated residency policy.

Action: Director Witmer moved to repeal Board Policy 300.01, Residency Requirements. Second by Director Adams. All in favor. Motion passed on a 5 – 0 vote.

B. SDIS Best Practices Survey

Chief reviewed the recently-completed survey, which illustrates the importance of the Best Practices items. Director Adams asked about the Fire District Directors Association (FDDA). Chief replied the district is not a full member as the assessment for affiliation in that organization is based on the district total assess value which is quite large and Special Districts is more economical and offers the exact same benefits. The FDDA does good work and has an annual conference which the district can and does attend we just have to pay the full conference rate.

C. SDIS Annual Insurance Renewal

Coverages were carefully reviewed and adjusted where needed with WHA and SDIS. Chief Supkis said the district insures with full liability and umbrella coverages. Replacement coverages are for big items (stations and apparatus) and newer items. The district is not 100% insured as that would not be cost efficient and so the district does carry some self-risk. End of financial life or minor marine equipment the district balances the would-be premium with just budgeting in the capital replacement plan. Premium increase is about 10 percent this year. Chief reviewed grant opportunities available through SDIS where the District is able to recoup some of the money it spends on premiums.

Discussion regarding annual conference. This year's conference in February is in Eugene and will also be offered remotely. There is also one day quarterly trainings and workshops around the state.

Appeals (Ordinance 2021-01)

Packet 1

A. St. Charles appeal to the Board – Invoice 123 – Call 02076

Director Cox confirmed the appeal packet information provided by St. Charles and District was reviewed by members of the Board and asked for any further questions. There were none.

Action:

Roll Call Vote:

Swails:	Deny
Witmer:	Deny
Cox:	Deny
Landles:	Deny
Adams:	Abstain

Appeal denied on a 4-0 vote.

Director Swails provided an overview of the appeal process for the benefit of union members in attendance.

B. St. Charles appeal to the Board – Invoice 123 – Call 02082

Director Cox confirmed the appeal packet information provided by St. Charles and District was reviewed by members of the Board and asked for any further questions. There were none.

Action:

Roll Call Vote:

Swails:	Deny
Witmer:	Deny
Cox:	Deny
Landles:	Deny
Adams:	Abstain

Appeal denied on a 4-0 vote.

C. St. Charles appeal to the Board – Invoice 123 – Call 02094

Director Cox confirmed the appeal packet information provided by St. Charles and District was reviewed by members of the Board and asked for any further questions. There were none.

Action:

Roll Call Vote:

Swails:	Deny
Witmer:	Deny
Cox:	Deny
Landles:	Deny
Adams:	Abstain

Appeal denied on a 4-0 vote.

Packet 2

D. St. Charles appeal to the Board Invoice 130 – Call 02199

Director Cox confirmed the appeal packet information provided by St. Charles and District was reviewed by members of the Board and asked for any further questions. There were none.

Action:

Roll Call Vote:

Swails:	Deny
Witmer:	Deny
Cox:	Deny
Landles:	Deny
Adams:	Abstain

Appeal denied on a 4-0 vote.

Packet 3

E. La Pine Community Health Center appeal to the Board Invoice 131 – Call 02305

Director Cox confirmed the appeal packet information provided by La Pine CHC and District was reviewed by members of the Board and asked for any further questions. There were none.

Action:

Roll Call Vote:

Swails: Deny
Witmer: Deny
Cox: Deny
Landles: Deny
Adams: Abstain

Appeal denied on a 4-0 vote.

Packet 4

F. La Pine Community Health Center appeal to the Board Invoice 132 – Call 02342

Director Cox confirmed the appeal packet information provided by La Pine CHC and District was reviewed by members of the Board and asked for any further questions. There were none.

Action:

Roll Call Vote:

Swails: Deny
Witmer: Deny
Cox: Deny
Landles: Deny
Adams: Abstain

Appeal denied on a 4-0 vote.

Special Meetings and Workshops

Special Districts annual conference in February – information will be included in the January packet.

Good of the Order

None.

Next Regular Meeting: January 13, 2022, 9:00 a.m.

Regular Board Meeting adjourned at 11:12 a.m.

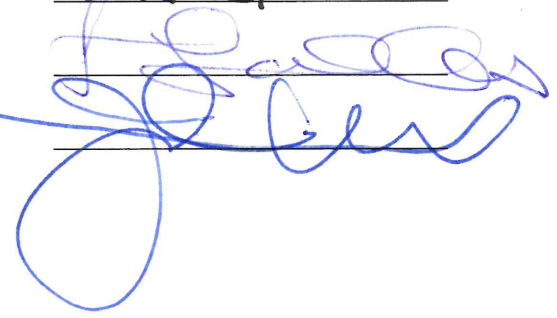
Respectfully Scribed and Submitted
La Pine Rural Fire Protection District
Administrative Staff

Date Presented to Board and Approval

Jan 15, 2022

Board Secretary

Board President

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to be "John A. [unclear]", written over three horizontal lines. The signature is highly stylized and cursive.