

**BOARD MEETING MINUTES**  
**La Pine Rural Fire Protection District**  
**May 12, 2022 Regular Meeting 9:00 a.m.**

**Open Meeting** Director Cox opened the meeting at 9:05 a.m. and led the flag salute.

**Roll Call**

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

Directors Absent: Mike Thorne

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

**Open Forum for Public Comment**

<b>Name</b>	<b>Purpose for Attending</b>
<i>Kevin Leehmann</i>	<i>Local 3387</i>
<i>Ted Sommers</i>	<i>Support Services</i>
<i>Karen Sommers</i>	<i>Support Services</i>
<i>David MacLean</i>	<i>Support Services</i>
<i>Rex Lesueur</i>	
<i>Gary Young</i>	<i>Employee and Taxpayer</i>
<i>Corbi Young</i>	<i>Taxpayer</i>
<i>Andy Rigney</i>	<i>Captain on duty</i>

No public comment presented

Chief Supkis introduced members of the Support Services Team and gave an overview of the group's role supporting District staff.

**Grants Report**

Jerry Hubbard delivered the grants report. He submitted a \$13 million funding request to Senators Wyden and Merkley. Because funding is not available for personnel, Jerry requested \$500,000 to fund two medics, and submitted a \$3 million request to Congressman Schrader for expansion of Stations 101 and 102. He also submitted a request to the Deschutes County Board of Commissioners for \$252,000 to support twelve students attending COCC for thirty months. An additional request was made to Congressman Schrader for \$850,000 for a new tanker and new wildland engine.

He thanked the Union for their letter of support. To date, \$940,000 in grant funding has been approved, including a \$42,000 grant for P25 radios that the Chief obtained. Jerry is meeting with a budget expert at the Capitol next week to work through how to add a line item in the State budget in the amount of \$650,000 to enable the District to replace a twenty-eight year old fire engine.

### **Approval of Minutes**

April 14, 2022 Board of Directors Meeting, April 27, 2022 Board of Directors Special Session

**Action: Director Adams noted a grammatical correction to page 2 of the April 14, 2022 minutes. Director Adams moved to approve the minutes of the April 14, 2022 Board of Directors Regular Meeting and the April 27, 2022 Board of Directors Special Session with the noted correction. Second by Director Landles. All in favor. Motion passed on a 4-0 vote.**

Budget Committee Meeting Minutes April 21 & 27, 2022

Rex LeSueur requested a copy of the minutes and that the full Budget Committee be reconvened and allowed to approve those minutes. Staff noted past practice was the Board being part of the budget committee has been able to review and approve. Director Adams suggested this be tabled pending research regarding approval of committee minutes. Copies to be provided as requested. Board consensus.

### **Financials**

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

- 5030 – Prior Year Tax Revenue – Director Adams noted the shortfall in this line which is budgeted at \$50,000. Year-to-date only \$17,000 has been received. Chief responded prior year delinquent taxes historically have been paid close to the end of the tax year, and the projection should be accurate based on past years. Discussion regarding how the Deschutes County tax office pursues these past-due obligations. Chief noted it was a three plus year process.
- 6105 – Line Staff OT – Director Swails asked if staff knows where this line will be at FY end. Chief responded it has been a tough year and is very difficult to project; there is currently a lot of positional overtime due to all the staffing changes and to fill AIC roles, and there always may be the day-to-day life and stuff happens events that take staff off line.

- 8205 – Communication Repair – Director Adams inquired about this line which is over budget. Chief Daugherty responded some of that radio expense likely belongs in the Capital line. Staff will research and make any needed corrections.
- Director Swails asked what the District’s current cash balance is. Staff responded total of all accounts; it is currently just under \$2 million. Discussion regarding a potential TAN next fiscal year. If pending equipment grant funds are received before equipment arrives and needs to be paid for, those funds can be used as available cash flow until tax revenue is received, although all accounts need to be whole by year end.

### **Monthly Expenses by Vendor**

### **Monthly Expenses Paid**

**Action: Director Swails moved to approve monthly expenses presented from 4/15/22 – 5/12/22 in the amount of \$441,596.25. Second by Director Adams. All in favor. Motion passed on a 4-0 vote.**

Board discussion regarding an email from the City Manager regarding Urban Renewal (UR) to the District which did not answer the Board’s original question on impacts. Director Swails noted while this is scheduled to sunset, UR zones do not typically go away. Per the county tax collector, the District lost \$26,000 in tax revenue to the UR zone last year. Urban renewal law applies only to cities. Counties and other public agencies are not able to seek urban renewal funding.

### **Management Reports**

#### **Monthly Alarm Report**

Discussion regarding increase in service and EMS calls however total fire calls are down this month.

#### **Multiple Alarm & Building Permit/Valuation Report**

Multiple simultaneous calls are down for the month of April, but are thirteen percent higher than last year-to-date. So far this year, 178 times the District has had two crews out on alarms at the same time, creating a delay in responding to the next call.

Cascade Medical Transit (CMT) is experiencing staffing shortages (like all fire and EMS agencies) and as a result has not been readily available in the district.

## **Building and Permit Activity**

### **Chief's Report**

Director Cox inquired about annual apparatus maintenance. Chief responded it went well and is very pleased with the work done by Hughes Fire. There was one tender that did not complete the annual pump test, due to a transmission overheat indicator. A repair was done on a gauge and sensor unit.

All staff training this year was ALS certification renewal. Chief Daugherty reported this was a standard process which went well. Later this spring, each shift will train separately on water rescue on the river. This year's rescue training will be more important as new staff needs to be trained to District standards. Chief Daugherty reported the Central Oregon Wildfire School (COWS) live training did not take place this year due to weather. There was one day of classroom training.

Chiefs Supkis and Daugherty attended the Oregon Fire Chiefs Annual Conference. National speakers addressed the topics of firefighter health and safety, women in the fire service, cancer, negotiations, mental health and more. It was also a great opportunity to share and network with other area and state fire chiefs who all have similar challenges.

### **Professional Firefighters IAFF Local 3387 Report**

No written report was submitted. In response to Director Swails' request last month to provide documentation regarding the eight points in the Union's recent letter, Lieutenant Kevin Leehmann provided each board member with a packet of documents.

Leehmann reported on two recent resignations – one member left the fire service completely to move to Hawaii, and a recent new recruit accepted a new offer in Vancouver. The recent new hire process brought three very good candidates to the District. He then reported on current staffing levels and AIC training needs.

Regarding signing of the ratified new collective bargaining agreement (CBA), there are a few typos remaining. He stated Union members would like time to review the corrected CBA prior to signing off on it. Chief Supkis reported the Union's attorney stated it has been ratified by all line staff as well as the District Board. Director Swails asked Lt. Leehmann for clarification on the Union's stance on ratification; in response Lt. Leehmann stated there are some small things that remain such as names being on uniforms and comp time. He also suggested language regarding lateral hires be added.



Leehmann requested a board member be involved in the grievance process. Director Swails stated the process is defined in the CBA and allows for mediation and arbitration and asked what part the board would play in this, and further stated the board is not involved in personnel matters. Captain Gary Young and Engineer Kyle Lohner reported the grievance process has not been followed by the District. Leehmann then stated the CBA is ratified and all the grievances and unfair labor practice claims go away.

Gary Young stated the Board has a responsibility to know what's going on in the fire district and that they are not upholding that responsibility by getting information only once a month at the board meeting. He further stated concerns are not being met through the chain of command, and that if they are not resolved at the board level threatened the next step is to go to the taxpayers.

Director Swails stated the board members will review the documents presented, and at some point will schedule an executive session to include management and union staff representation.

Young added that as a taxpayer he questions the legal fees the District has spent and asked if anything has been received as a result of the facility litigation.

Leehmann concluded by stating the Employee Relations Board mandatory training clause in the CBA will benefit all parties involved.

Chief briefed the board on the essential public employee collective bargaining negotiation process and how it works – it is a specific, detailed process, defined by the state. During the CBA process all information is to go through the negotiators at the bargaining table. There is an option to draft Memorandums of Understanding (MOU) to address items not part of the CBA and/or that are not currently under CBA negotiation. He has confidence in the process that it gets both side to a fair middle ground even though it can be slow, and cumbersome due to the required documentation of facts. Chief encouraged the board to follow that process as well. In addition, using professional negotiators for both labor and management for their expert guidance to keep all square with those processes.

### **Correspondence/News**

- A. Thank you – Oregon Fire Service Office Administrators
- B. Letter – Deschutes County – Wildfire Committee Reappointment
- C. Letter – Deschutes County – Tax Turnover Credit

Chief Supkis reported the District will see a small portion of the amount referred to in the letter as that is a County-wide amount.

- D. Firefree
- E. Wise Buys – Budget/Board Meetings; Firefree
- F. Wise Buys – Board Meeting
- G. KTVZ – Prescribed Burns Near Sunriver and La Pine

### **Old Business**

#### **A. District EMS Billing – Non Transport Fees**

Discussion regarding increasing revenue for providing services requested by taxpayers. It has been suggested by the District’s physician advisor and the CEO of the District’s EMS billing company that a non-transport fee be considered to recoup some of the additional reimbursement that may be possible in these instances. The question Chief posed is, is it appropriate for the District to bill when a paramedic provides a service – even if it is not a transport? Director Adams offered that when paramedics provide a service, a liability is created by the paramedic using their knowledge and skills, and it is appropriate for that service to be compensated.

Discussion regarding how billing works for insurances such as Medicare and VA that do not cover non-transport services. In those instances, the patient is billed and if the bill is not paid it is turned over to collections. This is a public policy decision which will affect the community.

Director Swails asked if an income limit could be considered where a patient would not be billed. Insurance regulations require all like services be billed at the same rate, in the same manner. Discussion regarding discretion being given to paramedics to make the determination as to whether a call is a service call v. an EMS call. Providing additional background, Chief Supkis stated that a few years ago the District made the decision to allow the paramedics to make the call in the field of whether to transport a patient immediately or direct them to a better care option for the situation. This also resulted in patients calling 911 because they realized the value of a paramedic providing what amounts to a consultation, but now raises the question does the public recognize that service to the point where they would understand receiving a bill.

Discussion regarding dedicated response resources and funding. Chief Daugherty stated this has been attempted in other communities with little success.

Consensus this discussion will continue at future board meetings.

### **New Business**

**A. Resolution #22-01 – A Resolution Authorizing a Transfer from the General Fund Contingency Line to the Materials and Services Category**

Chief reported on the need to move funds as outlined in the proposed Resolution.

**Action: Director Swails read the Resolution into the record. Director Landles moved to adopt Resolution #22-01 – A Resolution Authorizing a Transfer from the General Fund Contingency Line to the Materials and Services Category. Second by Director Adams.**

***Roll Call Vote:***

<b><i>Landles:</i></b>	<b><i>Aye</i></b>
<b><i>Swails:</i></b>	<b><i>Aye</i></b>
<b><i>Cox:</i></b>	<b><i>Aye</i></b>
<b><i>Adams:</i></b>	<b><i>Aye</i></b>

**Motion passed on a 4-0 vote.**

**B. Non-Union Staff Wage COLAs**

Chief delivered the report requesting consideration, as has been past practice, that administrative, non-exempt staff and two exempt staff be given increases in line with those of the recently ratified CBA. He stated the board has three options on this matter:

- Take no action;
- Approve the requested increases of 4.5%, 4% 4%, retroactive to July 1, 2021; or
- Amend and adopt another increase plan for non-represented staff.

Director Adams asked for clarification on whether these increases are included in the new budget. Chief Supkis responded yes, they are in the most current FY budget projections, as well in the proposed FY 22/23 budget that was approved by the budget committee. Director Landles stated his support to follow the CBA wage increases for exempt and non-exempt administrative staff.

**Action: Director Landles moved to approve staff increases of 4.5%, 4%, 4% retroactive to July 1, 2021 for administrative exempt and non-exempt personnel. Second by Director Adams.**

***Roll Call Vote:***

<b><i>Landles:</i></b>	<b><i>Aye</i></b>
<b><i>Swails:</i></b>	<b><i>Aye</i></b>
<b><i>Cox:</i></b>	<b><i>Aye</i></b>
<b><i>Adams:</i></b>	<b><i>Aye</i></b>

**Motion passed on a 4-0 vote.**



Director Adams disclosed to the board and staff that she has a personal connection to one of the newly hired firefighter/paramedics. She will recuse herself from any discussions that directly affect that person. Chief Supkis thanked her for that disclosure, and referenced earlier discussion that the board is not typically involved in personnel and staffing matters. Also, per best practice because of that separation there is no nepotism or direct conflict of duties.

### **Appeals (Ordinance 2021-01)**

Paused per Tolling Agreement annuary 26, 2022 Sussman Shank LLP/Hart Wagner LLP

### **Special Meetings and Workshops**

None.

### **Good of the Order**

#### **A. Recruitment Updates – Firefighter/Paramedic, Student Reserves**

- Chief Daugherty reported the three new hires begin academy on May 18. One is entry-level and two come to the District with previous experience. He thanked those involved in the training process and stated the new hires should be ready to go by the end of May or beginning of June.
- Lt. Leehmann reported on student joint recruitment. The process was live this year for the first time since the Covid emergency was declared. Offers were extended to six candidates. He stated he is excited to run this program, and that the District's reserve program is considered the best in the state. Discussion regarding requested financial support from the City of La Pine for the student program. Jerry Hubbard reported recently that he has not heard anything from the City, however he feels the City would be agreeable to consider sponsoring one student. Director Swails asked Lt. Leehmann if he would be willing to speak to the City Council if placed on their agenda.

#### **B. Annual Spring Facilities, Apparatus, and Equipment Inspection Report**

Chief Supkis reported that he and Chief Daugherty along with members of the Support Services Team completed the inspections late last month. While not the A+ as in years past (as there have been many distractions for all staff these past few months), facilities, apparatus and equipment still looked very good. A few small things that need attention



such as light bulbs and other maintenance items. Plymo-vent replacement for one station is budgeted for the FY 22/23.

C. Firefree is May 21 – June 4

Next Regular Meeting: June 9, 2022, 9:00 a.m.

Regular Board Meeting adjourned at 11:20 a.m.

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

*Date Presented to Board and Approval*

*Board Secretary*

*Board President*

JUNE 9, 2022  
  
