

**BOARD OF DIRECTORS REGULAR MEETING MINUTES  
La Pine Rural Fire Protection District  
October 13, 2022**

**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, Mike Thorne  
Staff Present:            Chief Mike Supkis, Assistant Chief Dan Daugherty, Office Manager Tracy Read, Administrative Assistant Tammie Waters

**Open Forum for Public Comment**

<b>Name</b>	<b>Purpose for Attending</b>
<i>Charla DeHate</i>	<i>LCHC</i>
<i>Robin Mirrasoul</i>	
<i>Rex LeSueur</i>	

**Comment/Report by Kyle Lohner, President IAF Local 3387**  
None.

**Preplan Presentation – FF/Paramedic Joe Schumacher**

Chief Supkis introduced FF/Paramedic Joe Schumacher and provided an overview of the preplan process, stating the district received a SDIS light duty grant to provide funds to purchase this software and the laptop.

Joe delivered his report and provided a presentation illustrating the preplans of two local businesses. The program is developed based on NFPA codes and is available on all district apparatus and cell phones. This allows crews to prepare while enroute to a call by knowing where essential items such as sprinkler pipes, electrical boxes, water sources, hazards, gas shut offs, etc. are located, as well as occupancy type, square footage, building composition, business emergency contact information, special notes

and more. This enhancement to our response readiness will allow crews, including area mutual aid units, to be better prepared when arriving on scene.

### **Approval of Minutes**

September 13, 2022 Board of Directors Regular Meeting  
Director Cox asked for review, comments, changes. None.

**Action: Director Adams moved to approve the minutes of the September 8, 2022 Board of Directors Meeting. Second by Director Thorne. All in favor. Motion passed on a 5-0 vote.**

September 13, 2022 Board of Directors Work Session  
Director Cox asked for review, comments, changes. None.

**Action: Director Adams moved to approve the minutes of the September 8, 2022 Board of Directors Work Session. 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.

- 6100 – Overtime – Director Swails noted the excess OT expense, which is expected to continue due to staffing, life circumstances, and filling vacant positions. The district did receive a \$35K Grant for the past summer’s wildfire OT.
- 6220 – PERS – Director Swails asked if new PERS rates have been received. Chief responded they have this past week, and new rates will go into effect on 7/1/23. Rate increases for La Pine will vary from .75% - 1.5%.
- 6415 – Computers – Director Swails noted the rise in this line which is 59% percent over budget; Chief this is in part due to the new iPads being deployed and some of the expense will be offset by grant funds received for the SDIS preplan program and the OHA iPad grant for the medics.
- 8105 – Breakdowns – Director Adams noted this line looks much better than previous.
- 8409 – Rescue – Director Swails inquired about this line, asking whether additional expenses are anticipated. After review by staff, a portion of this expense (new tools) will be moved to Capital Expenditures where the expense was budgeted.

- 8454 – Career PPE – Director Adams inquired about this expense and asked whether grant funds are available to help offset any of this expense. Chief replied grants have been applied for this FY (as was in the past FY) however additional funds are not expected at this time. New staff has been hired and their PPE is a necessary expense. There are PPE funds budgeted in Capital to help offset some of this expense.

There was discussion regarding current fund balances. It will not be necessary to borrow money for this tax year due to the timely receipt of one-time grant funds. There was additional discussion regarding \$660,000 CDS grant funding. This is a reimbursement grant, so funds will not be received until the expenses are incurred and paid. This grant is good until the end of FY 2025. There are funds in the Capital account to reimburse any expenses that may be incurred before grant funds are received; this was approved during the budget process.

Director Landles asked about life expectancy and anticipated maintenance and breakdown expenses for the medics currently in service. Chief responded staff is considering options to determine whether two new medics will be ordered or if two current units will be rebuilt with new chassis. A decision should be made by January. Timelines are also a challenge as current production lead times are extensive and in 350-to-450-day range.

#### **Monthly Expenses by Vendor**

No questions or comments.

#### **Monthly Expenses Paid**

No questions or comments.

**Action: Director Swails moved to approve monthly expenses presented from 9/9/22 – 10/13/22 in the amount of \$541,827.84. Second by Director Adams. All in favor. Motion passed on a 5-0 vote.**

#### **Management Reports**

##### **Monthly Alarm Report**

Discussion regarding emergent v. non-emergent response designations from the medical facilities. While all medical responses are initially ALS, if appropriate a patient

may be transported as BLS if a BLS resource is available. Director Thorne asked how a fire response is coordinated if both medics are on medical calls. Chief stated this actually happened last week when all units were on medical calls and a structure fire was toned out. In this instance the Chiefs both responded to the fire call, the medics returning from the hospital came back in District Code 3; the lieutenant on duty was dropped off (from the previous call) at station 103 and responded on a tender, as the other crews responded back to the station and responded on fire apparatus. Although actual response time seemed reasonable, an effective firefighting force was much delayed. The structure was fully involved and was a total loss. Chief added he feels strongly that a full-time dedicated paramedic engine company be considered as soon as staffing allows. Currently crews are stretched very thin however are resourceful in attempting the quickest possible appropriate response to all calls.

One call during the structure fire was pended as no crews were available, not requiring an immediate response. That patient wound up going to the ER in Bend by private vehicle.

Discussion regarding classification of "Other Situations" on the Monthly Alarm Report. What falls into that classification? Staff stated calls that do not fall into the Fire, Rescue or EMS classifications. Examples are hazmat, gas leaks, dangerous buildings or situations.

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

No questions or comments.

#### **Building and Permit Activity**

No questions or comments.

#### **Chief's Report**

Discussion regarding multiple calls on 9/24 and 9/25. Chief reported there were thirty alarms and eighteen transports during this shift's 48-hour rotation. Personnel were beat and the math doesn't work anymore.

Directors asked regarding whether maintaining an ambulance transport service is feasible, to which Chief replied – Honestly, as a business - no, under current circumstances it is not. The way the medical system currently operates allowable

revenues are not sufficient to cover the costs of providing the transport services, especially with this community's very long transport to a ED. Combining resources with other area agencies to consider a metro-type service has so far not gained any traction. Larger agencies in larger communities while they provide many more transports, have a markedly shorter turnaround time.

### Correspondence/News

- A. Thank You – Wais
- B. Thank You – Tigar
- C. Thank You – NCL North Austin
- D. Thank You – Jackie, Taylor
- E. Thank You – Lucy, Lincoln
- F. Thank You – Ainee
- G. Thank You – La Pine Veterans
- H. Letter of ASA Appointment
- I. Resignation – La Chance
- J. Wise Buys – Board Meeting Notices (x2)
- K. Daily Dispatch – Position Notices
- L. KTVZ 21 – Oregon Hospitals – Record Financial Losses
- M. WPMI NBC 15 – Oregon Facing Critical Shortage of EMS, First Responders
- N. KEZI ABC 9 – Oregon Emergency Workforce Shortage
- O. NPR – Oregon EMS Provider Shortage
- P. Central Oregon Daily – Paramedics and EMT Wanted – Impacts Emergency Services
- Q. KTVZ 21 – Lightning Sparks Fire in La Pine Workshop
- R. Central Oregon Daily – Lightning Blamed for Workshop Fire
- S. KOIN 6 – Portland F & R Receives \$2.1 Million for Staffing Crises
- T. KATU ABC 2 – Federal Funds Help Local Fire Departments
- U. OFDDA Conference

Director Adams inquired about the possibility of grants for additional hires. Chief responded any grants for personnel are extremely rare. Three Oregon fire departments received SAFER grants this year – Portland, Albany and Scappoose. The District received a \$460,000 SAFER grant seven years ago that help grow the student program where it is today. While the District continues to apply each year for additional staffing, it is unlikely additional funds will be awarded soon. There are 340 fire departments in the State of Oregon, and once funds are awarded that department goes back down the list. The district will continue to apply. This year we received the Oregon State Fire Marshal wildfire staffing grant, which will be continued as legislative funding allows.

Staff noted there is also an ODF fire (wildfire) response camp/station being set up at La Pine State Park.

Director Adams asked about the Fire Chief Performance Evaluation and whether the district follows that OFDDA recommendation of an annual evaluation. There is not a written District policy, however evaluations have been done most years but not this past year.

Director Thorne asked about mutual aid with Sunriver – Chief responded by stating both agencies provide mutual aid where possible, and the two districts also have an automatic aid for certain incidents.

## **Old Business**

### **A. La Pine Rural Fire Protection District Operational Needs – White Paper, Continued Discussion**

Chief reviewed ballot measure options, citing revenue is not keeping up with growth and demand. Currently the District's tax rate is low to middle for Central Oregon fire districts. To get up to 18 firefighters the district's tax base would need to be at almost \$4.00/\$1,000 assessed value, and to staff nine positions it would need to be close to \$3.00/\$1,000. The current levies expire June 2024 and should be renewed no later than May 2024. The questions before the board are: does the district ask for more money? if so, how much and when? Should any new money be tied to old money? Should a new levy be placed on the ballot which would basically double the current one? Another option is to go out for an entirely new tax base which is a major undertaking. A new levy could be placed on the ballot this year, which would result in funds being received in July 2023. Then a year later, renewal on the current levy could be placed. This option would allow a simpler message to the voters and potentially make the measure more likely to pass.

The recent testing process included eleven applicants. With two recent resignations staffing is at 24 FTE. The question is: does the district hire new staff to bring staffing back to 25, or hire three to bring FTE up to 27? This would mean possibly going over budget by about \$280,000.

Property tax revenue projections from Deschutes County are expected soon, which will give a clearer picture of expected tax revenues next year which were budgeted last April projected to be approximately six percent.

The two elections where a double majority are not required are May and November, so a decision must be made in the next month whether to ask for more funding and how to do so.

The past two funding ballot measures presented by the district resulted in the highest voter approval passages in the State. This has shown in the recent past, that local voters are attuned to the needs of the district, how it operates resourcefully, and responded by their support.

A positive vote in May along with increasing property tax revenue, could ease the financial constraints and allow the district to hire the needed additional personnel.

**Action: Director Adams moved to authorize Chief to hire three new firefighter/paramedics. Second by Director Thorne. All in favor. Motion passed on a 5-0 vote.**

***Roll Call Vote:***

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

Board consensus that the action taken today is based on the understanding that a funding measure will be placed on the May ballot and that an additional nine staff will be hired should that measure pass.

Chief reminded the Board it is important to file the measure early to ensure a higher position on the ballot.

**B. Adopt Updated Fire Chief/CEO Job Description**

General discussion regarding the Job Description took place including clarification of some of the language. No changes were made to the draft worked on by the Board in the last workshop. Director Cox called for a motion.

**Action: Director Landles moved to approve the Fire Chief/CEO Job Description. Second by Director Adams. All in favor. Motion passed on a 5 – 0 vote.**

***Roll Call Vote:***

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

**C. SDAO Executive Search and Recruitment Assistance and Timetable**

Director Adams suggested the proposed SDAO timetable dates all be pushed out by one month, opening the recruitment process mid-November leaving the remaining dates about one month later.

Chief and Board members agree with this suggestion.

**Action: Director Adams moved to approve the Special Districts Association of Oregon Consulting Services Agreement, with fees not to exceed \$5,000, with noted timeline changes. Second by Director Thorne. All in favor. Motion passed on a 5 – 0 vote.**

***Roll Call Vote:***

***Adams: Aye***  
***Cox: Aye***  
***Landles: Aye***  
***Swails: Aye***  
***Thorne: Aye***

**New Business**

**A. Motion for Director Thorne to be a District signatory with WaFed Bank, Remove Past Director Joel Witmer**

Director Cox asked for comments. None.

**Action: Director Adams moved to add Director Mike Thorne as a signatory on the District’s WaFed account and to remove past Director Joel Witmer. Second by Director Landles. All in favor. Motion passed on a 5 – 0 vote.**

***Roll Call Vote:***

***Adams: Aye***  
***Cox: Aye***  
***Landles: Aye***  
***Swails: Aye***  
***Thorne: Aye***

**B. Fire District Employee Handbook**

Director Adams asked whether this is a new document or a revision to a previous handbook. Chief responded that while the handbook is new, it is a compilation of existing District policies and practices. This was reviewed by HR Answers, the human resources firm who works with Special Districts of Oregon. The handbook also clearly



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

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<b><i>Cox:</i></b>	<b><i>Aye</i></b>
<b><i>Landles:</i></b>	<b><i>Aye</i></b>
<b><i>Swails:</i></b>	<b><i>Aye</i></b>
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states that wherever there is conflicting language between this handbook and the Collective Bargaining Agreement (CBA), the CBA will take precedence.

Directors asked if the firefighters union had seen the draft. Answer was yes, but some in the union did have issues with some of the content. Tammie Waters noted that most all agencies have an employee handbook acting as its managements best practice. No changes were made to any district policy, and reiterated if there was a conflict with the CBA with the union, the CBA prevails.

Director Swails noted two typo corrections, one on p. 12 paragraph 3 line 4 – should be “if a non-exempt”. Another on p. 31 line 4 should read “should *be* brought”.

**Action: Director Adams moved to accept the proposed handbook with above-noted corrections. Second by Director Thorne. All in favor. Motion passed on a 5 – 0 vote.**

***Roll Call Vote:***

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

### **C. SDAO 2022 Best Practices Program**

Chief reviewed the Best Practices Program which provides the district with up to a ten percent reduction of fees. The district has already completed many of the items throughout the year. To receive full credit, all five board members need to attend one board training each. Additionally, a new component requires that at least two board members enroll in the Board Member Certification program. This must be done by November. Directors Adams and Swails both agreed to sign up.

Some of the trainings are available online and on CD, which can be completed at Board members' convenience.

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

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

**Special Meetings and Workshops**

**Good of the Order**

**A. Fire District Fall Tour and inspections – October 25<sup>th</sup> 1 pm.**

Chief invited any interested Board members to join him in this semi-annual inspection.

**B. OFDDA Conference, Hood River - November 3,4, & 5**

Chief invited any interested Board members to let him know if they wish to attend.

Chief Daugherty and the Board extended best wishes to Charla DeHate on her retirement from La Pine Community Health Center. Chief Supkis congratulated her on the work and progress she has made over her time there.

Next Regular Meeting: November 10, 2022, 9:00 a.m.

Regular Board Meeting adjourned at 11:34 a.m.

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

*Date Presented to Board and Approval*

*Board Secretary*

*Board President*

November 15, 2022  
[Signature]  
[Signature]