Western Lane Ambulance District
Siuslaw Valley Fire and Rescue
Annual Strategic Plan and IGA Implementation Plan Update
2017 / 2018

WORKING TOGETHER FOR OUR COMMUNITY
Adopted by the SVFR Board of Directors on 04/18/2018
Adopted by the WLAD Board of Directors on 04/26/2018
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INTRODUCTION

On October 27, 2017, Western Lane Ambulance District (WLAD) and Siuslaw Valley Fire and Rescue (SVFR) conducted an annual review of their Strategic Plans and Intergovernmental Agreement (IGA). The goal of the annual review was to reflect upon the accomplishments of the previous years and review the objectives for the upcoming year, to ensure they are relevant and meet the needs of the District.

The review of the plans was accomplished simultaneously, because they consist of similar goals. This format enabled both Boards to discuss what’s next for their District and hear the input of the other Board. The review was facilitated by Don Bivins and Jack Snook of ESCI and was accomplished by both the WLAD and SVFR Board of Directors during a Public Workshop.

Prior to the Workshop, the Management Team met with every stakeholder group within both organizations, to obtain their input about what’s working, what needs improvement, and what the Districts should be working on in the upcoming year. The stakeholder groups consisted of all WLAD shifts, SVFR full time personnel, the SVFR Association, the Admin Team, and Chaplains. A summary of Stakeholder feedback can be found in Appendix-A, which contains the Executive Summary, provided to Board Members at the Strategic Planning Update Workshop.
MISSION, VISION, AND GOALS

When reviewing and updating Strategic Plans, it is important to focus on the Mission and Vision of the organization. A Mission Statement describes why an organization exists, while a Vision Statement describes how they want to be viewed in the future. The Goal of the IGA Implementation Plan was to define what WLAD and SVFR wanted to accomplish throughout the execution of the plan.

WLAD Mission Statement:
To provide quick, efficient, professional medical services, transport, and community education with the highest standards of excellence and compassion.

WLAD Vision Statement:
To provide superior and compassionate services to each and every community member through a forward thinking, highly trained team of professionals.

SVFR Mission Statement:
We proudly serve our community and visitors through safe, efficient, and effective delivery of emergency services supported by aggressive fire prevention and public education.

SVFR Vision Statement:
To assist our community and visitors with a situation they are unable to handle on their own with a team that is well trained, equipped, and caring.

IGA Implementation Plan Goal:
The Goal of this plan is to improve current and future service to our community by improving organizational efficiency, reducing redundancy, and better utilization of taxpayer money.
INITIATIVES AND OBJECTIVES

An Initiative is the largest overarching element of a strategic plan that is broad and contains multiple areas of focus. An Objective is smaller in perspective than an Initiative and focuses on a single area.

WLAD INITIATIVES

Initiative 1 – Administration/Finances:

Western Lane Ambulance District has been operating without a permanent executive director for almost a year. As such, many temporary administrative decisions have been made, but the continuity and direction provided by permanent leadership suffers. Members recognize that a permanent CEO may change some of those decisions, so are naturally tentative in committing to a temporary course of action.

As a primarily taxpayer-supported service, WLAD depends on revenue from a variety of sources, such as fees for transport services, Medicare reimbursement, subscription fees, a permanent levy, and a local option levy. The district must balance increasing expenses with uncertain revenue streams. As revenues are influenced by changes in reimbursement rates, such as potential changes in Medicare reimbursements, either expenses must be reduced or alternative funding must be identified. This initiative addresses administrative issues, as well as the balancing of revenues and expenses to maintain a sustainable operation.

Initiative 2 – Service & Community Outreach:

The services provided by Western Lane Ambulance District are critical to the vitality and livability of the communities served, yet little is known of the district by their constituents. As a largely retirement area, the district serves an aging population, which drives the demand for service disproportionately as compared to similar sized communities in Oregon. There is often a disconnect between the need for the services of the district and the impact of growing demands on the district’s ability to sustain services. The district must continually evaluate the services it provides, and communicate or educate its constituency. The district must engage the community to inform patrons of the services they are provided and the needs the district has to sustain that level of service.

Initiative 3 – Staffing/Craftsmanship:

Western Lane Ambulance District is an organization made up of full-time and part-time personnel serving a large geographic area. Obtaining and retaining well trained, appropriately certified personnel is a challenge. Use of part-time employees has been a personnel source to recruit from, but adequate staffing has been difficult to
achieve and maintain. The skills of those hired must be at the pinnacle of their profession since their responses are often remote. Development of cutting edge training programs is a must.
SVFR INITIATIVES

Initiative 1 – Services:

Service delivery will address the immediate and long-term needs of the communities served. These resources shall be allocated in a manner that ensures transparency and maximum effectiveness and efficiency.

Initiative 2 – Funding and Finance:

Financial services shall be provided in a manner that is in accordance with local, state, and federal requirements. These services will be benchmarked with industry best practices to ensure preferred business practices and economies of scale are maintained. The finance function should be completely transparent to internal and external customers.

Initiative 3 – Planning:

Develop planning documents and tools that ensure the District has clear direction in the way they conduct the District’s business and deliver service to the community.

Initiative 4 – Craftsmanship and Leadership:

The Fire District will operate in a manner that will recognize clear standards of performance, for all positions in the organization. Standards will be reasonable and developed in collaboration with the appropriate stakeholders. The organization shall encourage innovation and creativity in the manner they perform their duties.

Initiative 5 – Staffing:

Address the immediate and long-term staffing needs of the District. These resources will be allocated in a manner that ensures transparency, maximum effectiveness, and efficiency.
IGA IMPLEMENTATION PLAN OBJECTIVES

Financial:
Focus on the financial components of achieving the plan.

Administrative:
Involve implementing the needed administrative policies, procedures, and practices needed to achieve the plan.

Human Resources:
Involve implementing needed HR procedures and practices required to achieve the plan.

Logistical:
Involve the procurement, inventory, and maintenance of needed equipment, software, and supplies needed to successfully share administrative services.

Political:
Focus on matters of a political nature.

Training:
Involve the acquisition and implementation of training needed to successfully execute this plan.
WORKSHOP FORMAT

The Workshop began by opening two public meetings concurrently and describing the intent and schedule of the workshop. Directors of both Districts were then given a series of presentations by all three Division Chiefs, focusing on the accomplishments of the past year. The final presentation was given by the Chief / Director who provided an overview of the feedback obtained during Stakeholder meetings and his recommendations of future areas of focus.

After the presentations, each Board moved to individual breakout sessions located in separate rooms, with a facilitator to discuss their recommendations for the following year's goals. At the end of the breakout sessions, both Boards reconvened into a single meeting to present and discuss their findings and recommendations.
RESULTS

The following is a summary of the areas of focus each Board discussed after meeting in individual breakout sessions:

WLAD:

1. Financial forecasting and planning is essential to our long-term sustainability.
2. We need to continue to partner with other organizations, like SVFR and Peace Health.
3. It is time to begin researching options for replacing our District facility.
4. It is time to begin researching what an expanded affiliation with SVFR could look like.
5. It is time to begin the process of establishing what response standards we want for our District, through the adoption of a Standard of Cover.
6. We need to research and thoroughly understand what future impact the public retirement system could have on our District and our employees in the future.

SVFR:

1. Financial forecasting and planning is essential to our long-term sustainability.
2. We need to continue to partner with other Fire Districts and organizations like WLAD.
3. It is time to begin researching options for replacing Station-2.
4. It is time to begin researching what an expanded affiliation with the Ambulance District could look like.
5. It is time to begin the process of establishing what response standards we want for our District, through the adoption of a Standard of Cover.
6. It is time to begin planning for 24-hour staffing.
7. It is time for the District to have a greater role in EMS response.
8. Wildland Firefighting needs to become a priority to ensure our District is ready for a forest fire.

“If you fail to plan, you are planning to fail!”

- Benjamin Franklin
Comparison of the 2017 Recommendations to Current Strategic Plan Initiatives

Financial forecasting and planning is essential to our long-term sustainability.

WLAD Initiative 1 – Administration / Finance
   Goal 1-A
   Goal 1-D
   Goal 1-E

SVFR Initiative 2 – Funding and Finances
   Goal 2-A

We need to continue to partner with other organizations like SVFR and Peace Health.

WLAD Initiative 1 – Administration / Finance
   Goal 1-C
   Goal 1-E

WLAD Initiative 2 – Service and Community Outreach
   Goal 2-C

WLAD Initiative 3 – Staffing and Craftsmanship
   Goal 3-C

SVFR Initiative 1 – Services
   Goal 1-D

It is time to begin researching options for replacing the WLAD District Facility and SVFR Station-2.

WLAD Initiative 1 – Administration / Finance
   Goal 1-D
   Goal 1-E

SVFR Initiative 2 – Funding and Finances
   Goal 2-A
It is time to begin researching what an expanded affiliation between the two Districts could look like.

WLAD Initiative 1 – Administration / Finance
Goal 1-A
Goal 1-C

It is time to begin the process of establishing what response standards we want for our District, through the Adoption of a Standard of Cover document.

WLAD Initiative 1 – Administration / Finance
Goal 1-E(2)

SVFR Initiative 1 – Services
Goal 1-A

Each District had some recommendations that were unique to their organization. Below is a closer look at these recommendations and where they fit into the respective District’s Strategic Plan.

WLAD

We need to research and thoroughly understand what future impact the public retirement system could have on our District and our employees in the future.

WLAD Initiative 1 – Administration / Finance
Goal 1-A
Goal 1-E

NOTE: This was not mentioned by the SVFR Board, but it is relevant to this District as well.

SVFR

Wildland Firefighting needs to become a priority to ensure our District is ready for a forest fire.

SVFR Initiative 1 – Services
Goal 1-A
It’s time to begin planning for 24-hour staffing.

SVFR Initiative 1 – Services
Goal 1-A

It is time for the FD to have a greater role in EMS response.

SVFR Initiative 1 – Services
Goal 1-A
Goal 1-D
OBJECTIVES

The recommendations made by the Boards have been utilized to create a set of measurable Objectives. Below are the Objectives identified for each of the recommendations made by the Boards. For purposes of this document the end of the planning year is defined as December 31, 2018.

COMBINED RECOMMENDATIONS

Recommendation - Financial forecasting and planning is essential to our long-term sustainability.

Objectives:

1. By the end of the planning year, Staff will submit a formal capital improvement plan for each District to the respective Board of Directors for approval and adoption.
2. Staff will include a five-year financial analysis in the 2017 / 2018, Fiscal Year Budget Message.
3. By the end of the planning year, Staff will have completed a LifeMed financial analysis that determines its efficacy and long-term sustainability.
4. By the end of the planning year, Staff will have completed a performance analysis of Systems Design in comparison to other billing services.
5. By the end of the planning year, an administrative budgeting process will be created that tracks IGA related expenditures, costs, and savings.
6. By the end of the planning year, Staff will submit a list of options and recommendations to the WLAD Board of Directors, if the next levy fails.
7. Staff will include a Medicare forecasting analysis in the 2018 – 19 Fiscal Year Budget Message.

Recommendation - We need to continue to partner with other organizations like SVFR and Peace Health.

Objectives:

1. By the end of the planning year, both Districts will have entered into a third year of the IGA.
2. By the end of the planning year, Staff will have completed a 100% review of all their Mutual and Automatic Aid Agreements with their Mutual and Auto Aid partners; to include, Yachats, Swisshome / Dead wood, Mapleton, Gardiner, Reedsport, Winchester Bay, Lane County Fire Defense Board, and the Oregon Department of Forestry. This review will include training, communications, and the MCI plan.
3. By the end of the planning year, an Upriver and Florence EMR class will have been completed.
4. By the end of the planning year, a second EMT-Basic class will be planned and scheduled in partnership with LCC.
5. By the end of the planning year, a review will have been completed on the agreement with both Districts for the CTLUSI.
6. By the end of the planning year, a formal QI / QA process will be underway and include both WLAD and BLS QRT partners.

**Recommendation** - *It is time to begin researching options for replacing the WLAD District Facility and SVFR Station-2.*

Objective:

1. By the end of the planning year, Staff will submit an executive summary that provides a list of the considerations involved in the replacement the WLAD Facility and Station-2. This analysis will include the financial, political, and logistical considerations needed to move forward with this project.

**Recommendation** - *It is time to begin researching what an expanded affiliation between the two Districts could look like.*

Objective:

1. By the end of the planning year, staff will submit an executive summary that details the operational, financial, and logistical considerations involving an operational merger of the two organizations.

**Recommendation** - *It is time to begin the process of establishing what response standards we want for our District, through the Adoption of a Standard of Cover document.*

Objective:

1. By the end of the planning year, both Districts will adopt a Standards of Coverage Document.
**WLAD SPECIFIC RECOMMENDATIONS**

*We need to research and thoroughly understand what future impact the public retirement system could mean for our District and employees in the future.*

Objective:

1. By the end of the planning year, Staff will present a list of recommendations and considerations to the Board of Directors regarding the future impact PERS could have on our Districts.

**SVFR SPECIFIC RECOMMENDATIONS**

*Wildland Firefighting needs to become a priority to ensure our District is ready for a forest fire.*

Objective:

1. By the end of the planning year, Staff will present a list of recommendations to the Board of Directors that identifies what steps need to be taken to better prepare our District for a conflagration.

*It’s time to begin planning for 24-hour staffing.*

Objective:

1. By the end of the planning year, Staff will present a list of recommendations and considerations to the Board of Directors that identifies what steps the District needs to take to prepare for 24-hour staffing.

*It is time for the FD to have a greater role in EMS response.*

Objective:

1. By the end of the planning year, Staff will present a list of recommendations to the Board of Directors that identifies how the District will increase participation in EMS response.
CONCLUSIONS

Most of the recommendations made by both groups of Directors were very similar and, in some cases, nearly identical. These similarities underscore the reality that both organizations share a similar mission and deliver very similar services to our community. Additionally, both organizations pride themselves in providing an exceptional level of service and ensuring the service level does not decrease. Finally, both Districts understand that planning and preparing for their long term financial needs is at the heart of maintaining and building upon the high quality of service delivered to our citizens.

Because of these realities, it becomes obvious that both WLAD and SVFR should continue to work together and creatively find ways to prepare for our long term financial, operational, and logistical needs.

“Working Together for Our Community”
APPENDIX-A
2017 Strategic Plan Update
Executive Summary

Introduction
As we prepare for the 2017 Strategic Plan and IGA Implementation Plan update, it is important to consider how all three plans work together towards similar common goals. Therefore, you will see that I am providing you feedback from both stakeholders and myself that is inclusive of the three plans. Also included in this document are a list of accomplishments to provide you with tangible information that details what your management team has been working on and the progress they have made over the past year.

WLAD Accomplishments to Date (Prepared by Chief House)
1. **Staffing:** We increased our staffing to 5 full-time employees on each shift. We’ve increased the part-time staff to 8, and continue to evaluate more candidates. Finally, we have hired an Operations Manager who has the ability to provide leadership and operational backup.
2. **Succession Planning:** Darrek was promoted to District Supervisor, Rob promoted to Training Coordinator, and each shift has an Acting in Capacity Supervisor. We have also issued AIC Task Books to other members to prepare them for future roles.
3. **Training Committee:** We have started a training committee this past year to ensure our craftsmanship is not stagnate and continues to progress. With this committee, we’ve started working on a QA/QI program that includes Dr. Holbrook reviewing charts. Our goal is to decrease our liability and improve patient care. We have also joined CARES (Cardiac Arrest Registry to Enhance Survival).
4. **Basic/Emergency Medical Responder classes:** With the help of SVFR, we have 17 students currently enrolled in an EMT-Basic class. An EMT-Basic class has not been taught in Florence since 1994. Earlier this year, Chief Dickerson taught an EMR class in Florence while Zach simultaneously taught another EMR class in Mapleton. We are planning for more of these important training opportunities in 2018.
5. **Mobile Integrated Healthcare:** By partnering with PeaceHealth, we are anticipating the hire of a new employee to fill this position and begin training in early November. Our goal is to have the MIH Paramedic interacting with patients in December.
6. **Electronic Patient Care Report:** Our staff is currently training on ImageTrend, and by November, we will be completely transitioned to this software for ePCR’s.
7. **CAD Integration:** For the first time, we will have CAD integration to our ePCR’s, meaning that all dispatch information will automatically populate into the ePCR. This is time saving for staff, decreases workload for WestComm, and is more efficient for QA/QI. This progress had been made possible by working closely with our WestComm partners, SVFR, and Florence Police Department.

8. **Accounts Receivable/Payable:** With the addition of Karin, the Operations Manager and Division Chief of Administration developed a process to ensure bills are paid on time and coded correctly to budget line items.

9. **Facility Improvements/Seismic Upgrade:** Chief/Director Langborg has been instrumental in assisting WLAD on moving forward with the bay expansion and seismic upgrades to our facility. While he continues to work with the architects, it is anticipated we will break ground in January/February 2018.

10. **Operative IQ (inventory management software):** Though we are behind schedule with this project, we will be rolling out the daily Medic Unit check offs before the end of this year. Darrek has worked hard on this project, and we anticipate gradually adding more modules in the future. This new system will help us save money and manage our medical inventory with greater accuracy.

11. **Implementation of Active911:** We’ve implemented Active911, which is a cellular alerting system. Realizing our employees did not want to carry their pagers off duty, Active911 provides us the alternative of alerting them on their cell phones. Another advantage to Active911 is the navigation component which is done through Google Maps. Our goal is to install tablets in the cab of every ambulance to assist our crews in finding addresses. This application also has technology that will assist us in tracking our response times with more accuracy.

12. **Building & Maintaining Relationships:** Over the past year, WLAD has been able to extend into all divisions of government to network and build relationships. We are now involved in the EMS Section Chief’s quarterly meetings, the Oregon State Ambulance Association meetings, was appointed by the Governor of Oregon to EMS Advisory Committee for Children, appointed Region 3 Area Trauma Advisory Board, participate in monthly Lane County Medical Control Board meetings, and most importantly, have built solid relationship locally. The relationships locally are all working better than I’ve ever experienced at WLAD. These improved relationships have and will continue to result in better patient care.

13. **New ambulance purchase:** Ronnie has been working with Horton on purchasing a new Medic unit for transfers. We are anticipating moving forward with the purchase after November.

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**SVFR Accomplishments to Date (Prepared by Chief Dickerson)**

1. We have developed and assisted with the implantation of in house Emergency Medical Responder Training and Emergency Medical Technician training programs. This training will improve our on-scene capabilities.

2. We are currently implementing Active 911 and CAD Dispatching to be used on member phones and on mobile devices located in command vehicles. In time
mobile devices will be located in all response vehicles and will improve our efforts to accurately navigate to incidents and obtain response data.

3. SVFR is now an AHA CPR Education and Testing Center. This will improve our efforts to train members and enable us to partner with WLAD during public education events.

4. We have upgraded our Resident Intern Program to improve their educational opportunities and expand our response capabilities.

5. Through the SAFER Grant and other partnering opportunities, SVFR has worked hard to assist MFD and SH/DW in recruiting, retaining, and training their firefighters. To date we have recruited 27 new combat volunteers and 10 auxiliary volunteers. Our work is not done with this project, but we have made significant progress.

6. We have created a tiered intake process for new volunteers and employees that ensures all administrative, HR, and other requirements are met when they come on board as new members.

7. We continue to develop a series of Company Level and Individual Level Evolutions to standardize our training and expectations of Combat Firefighters.

8. We have developed and rolled out a new Officer Development Class that focuses on leadership beyond the fire ground in an effort to assist our current officers and to prepare future officers for their leadership roles in the District.

9. We continue to make progress in the creation of a formal apparatus and equipment replacement plan to assist in planning for our future capital needs.

10. We now have two full time members enrolled in Fire Science Degree programs.

11. Our Operations Chief has been accepted into the National Fire Academy’s EFO Program.

12. We have reached out to the USCG, ODF, USFS, and LCSO to increase our SAR capabilities. The improved relationships with our partners had a significant impact on the successful rescue of Heather Davis earlier this year. Within twenty-five minutes of our arrival she had been rescued from a seawall cliff and was in the care of ALS personnel.

13. We have facilitated and assisted with three basic recruit firefighter academies and we have a fourth in progress. These academies have included personnel from SVFR and SH/DW Fire Districts.

14. We have made improvements in our security systems and facilities engineering monitoring systems.

15. We have several new members certified as Blue Card Incident Commanders.

16. We are currently designing a new Duty Chief Vehicle. The current vehicle is very old and has been due for replacement for many years. Our goal is to create a vehicle specifically designed to be used as an Incident Command post at type-5 and Type-4 incidents. Additionally, we recognize that our Volunteer Duty Chiefs should have a vehicle that they can be proud of and will meet the needs of the work we ask them to do.

17. SVFR has participated in three Lane County Task Forces sent to Conflagrations, with one crew being part of a first ever task force sent to California.
18. We have created an inland marine inventory intended to better suit our needs and anticipate our future needs.
19. We have lead the way in the purchase of 40 new sets of Bunker Gear that has been issued to members of SVFR, Mapleton RFD, and SH/DW RFD.

20. We are in the progress of implementing a member wellness and fitness program by contracting with a PHD who specializes in Kinesiology for a Wellness program for fire and EMS personnel.
21. We have made significant improvements in our coordinating with the OSFM and West Com to improve our ability to obtain response data.
22. We were awarded an AFG grant for the purchase of over 40,000' of fire hose that will be shared with Mapleton RFD, and SH/DW RFD. Additionally, SVFR will be purchasing and implementing a large diameter supply hose which has been considered the industry standard for several years.
23. We have worked closely with our mutual aid partners and are actively assisting them with training and any operational needs that they have.

Admin Team Accomplishments to Date (Prepared by Chief Brown)

1. Through the delegation of duties, we have improved succession planning to ensure the future needs of both Districts are being met.
2. We have provided additional training to our administrative team members to ensure they have the skills they need to work with today’s software and technology. This training has also been made available to other employees to assist them with their needs.
3. We have created and are in the process of rolling out an Employee Portal to assist our members with everyday needs.
4. We have created a joint monthly newsletter intended to improve communication among our members.
5. We now have a completely paperless filing system to include financials and employee files.
6. We continue to find ways to improve the LifeMed process to ensure better fiscal and membership management and with the goal of ensuring that we manage this program in a fashion that meets our long-term needs.
7. We have utilized our partnership to jointly purchase items and services with the goal of reducing the cost of these items for both organizations.
8. We have begun an extensive review and overhaul of both Districts’ Policy Manuals. They are now organized and available through the Employee Portal. This will be a long-term process, but significant progress has been made.
9. We have begun separating SOGs from policies and are actively building SOG manuals.
10. We have instituted several financial management practices and policies to ensure we are following best practices and are accountable and transparent to our members and constituents.
11. We have worked closely with both operational divisions to ensure we have a streamlined employee and member in processing procedure.
12. We have assumed many of the duties once overseen by field personnel enabling them to focus on the operational portion of their jobs.
13. We have created several procedures followed throughout the year to ensure our audit process is less cumbersome and labor intensive.
14. We continue to find ways to improve administrative efficiencies and streamline our work processes.
15. We have instituted several financial processes that ensure oversight and improve internal controls to avoid problems in the future.
16. We have created a team of 3.5 full time employees to serve the administrative needs of both Districts.

Chief / Director Comments
After carefully considering our stakeholders’ comments, the accomplishments of our Divisions, and my personal observations, I am making several recommendations for our Board of Directors to consider as they determine what we should focus on in the next year.

1. Most importantly I want to remind our Board Members that your Management Team has undertaken a tremendous challenge with the goal of improving service levels to our community and opportunities for our members and employees. There have, and will continue to be challenges as we navigate through this process. To expect there will not be mistakes or problems is unrealistic. The accomplishments identified earlier in this summary provide you with proof that we can accomplish far more working together than working apart. Our job has been to create efficiencies, improve service, and find ways to save taxpayer money. We have accomplished these goals.
2. The Fire District needs to take a greater role in EMS. The members of our Fire District want this and our community expects it. It is unusual for a Fire District not to be more actively involved in the delivery of EMS. It is time that SVFR reconsider our involvement in EMS and determine what our role should be.
3. The Ambulance District facility does not meet our current needs. The replacement and/or remodel of this facility has been discussed for years. Additionally, SVFR Station-2 is located in the tsunami zone which makes it ineligible for a seismic retrofit. SVFR Station-2 houses critical equipment that will be needed in a Cascadia earthquake event. It is my recommendation that both Districts work together to address these problems by creating a joint facility.
4. We need to continue to find ways to prepare our future leaders for the roles they will fill in the years to come. Succession planning needs to continue being a priority for both Districts.
5. Financial planning, accountability, transparency, and accuracy are key to our future success. We need to continue developing formal capital plans, budgeting in a progressive fashion, and finding ways to save for our future needs.
6. It is my opinion that the IGA is successful. Both Districts have made tremendous gains this past year and service levels are improving. I believe it is time to begin
discussing our future and determine what our future could look like if the two Districts were to move towards a greater consolidation of services.

Conclusions

Currently both the Fire and Ambulance District are financially sound and provide superior levels of service to our communities. This is the result of the hard work of our predecessors and the dedication of our current employees and volunteers. Nevertheless, in a world that is changing rapidly and a political environment that has created uncertainties, it becomes imperative that both Districts continue to find ways to do more with less, plan, and seek out opportunities that will prepare us for the future.
Stakeholder Feedback

Stakeholder feedback was obtained during a series of meetings with all stakeholder groups within the two Districts. These meetings were driven by discussions based on current accomplishments, upcoming objectives, and challenges faced throughout the year.

SVFR Day Crew Comments

• We need to focus more on our wildland hazards. We need more training, and more interaction with partner agencies such as ODF. This will ensure better on-scene communications.
• We need to continue to send our people to conflagrations and encourage them to pursue higher levels of training and certification. This will help our District if we experience a large wild fire.
• We need to continue to work and train with our mutual aid partners. We want to get to know them better and know about their equipment.
• The full-time day crew is also interested in participating in occupancy inspections. This helps with succession planning as well as improving firefighter safety by getting us into the buildings.
• When thinking about replacing stations, it’s important to consider road miles between stations and if this impacts our ISO rating. It’s also important to consider if we actually need a new station.
• We need to continue pursuing other types of volunteers such as Driver/Operators who can operate and pump a fire engine but may not be interested in or best suited to perform interior structural firefighting.
• There needs to be more Engineer (pump operator) training for everyone, including the full-time members. We want to improve our engineering skills.
• Involvement in EMS should include more EMS related training that is based on protocols and how to assist ALS personnel on-scene.

SVFR Volunteer Comments

• The District needs to consider and prepare for the transition to 24-hour staffing in at least one of our fire stations in the future. This does not mean that the volunteers will not be needed. We realize that the volunteers are very important and are needed to
handle fires. It means that faster response in certain situations can make the emergency safer for our firefighters and our community which is important and better service.

- The District needs to become more involved in EMS. We want to run more calls and we want to use the skills we are taught in EMR and EMT training. We realize that this is a change but we feel that it is an important part of our mission. We are an all hazards emergency service provider. We know we can make a difference and we want to support WLAD.

- The District needs to continue to prepare for disasters like a Cascadia earthquake and wildfires. We can no longer avoid the reality that a wildfire could be devastating to our community. We need more wild land training and better equipment. Our mutual aid partners also need more training and equipment. We should continue our involvement in conflagration activations to give us experience fighting big fires and working within a large ICS structure.

- Training and succession planning are important. For instance, we should reconsider the Lt. program and create sequential processes that enables a firefighter to know exactly what is needed to progress to the next step. We also need to continue to have more scenario-based hands on training to build our skills.

- Training in the District has improved but we need to continue placing an emphasis on it because it is very important to our safety and ability to be good firefighters.

- Communication is a challenge. We need to consider the use of multiple forms of communication to ensure people are aware of changes and training opportunities.

- Our Chaplain program is important and the development of it is good. We need to remember the needs of our members and the effects that PTSD can have on them. Our Chaplains should be trained to help us with PTSD.

- We need to continue finding ways to recruit and utilize non-suppression volunteers. They can be used to help our prevention and administration divisions.

- The District should continue to plan and prepare for our capital needs. We must plan for the replacement of fire apparatus and Station-2.

**Chaplain Comments:**

- When thinking about the location of a new fire station-2 and ambulance district building please keep in mind that a safe location away from hazards such as a tsunami should be considered.

- Training our volunteer firefighters is important. Our community wants to know that enough people with proper training will show up to handle their emergency without getting hurt.
• The improvement in technological dispatching capabilities is very important. Mapping and electronic notes are very useful. When we receive limited information on our text message or during the dispatching process it is challenging knowing what you are responding to.
• Our citizens expect both Districts to plan and prepare for the future. If mutually beneficial agreements achieve this, both Districts have a responsibility to do it.

**WLAD A-Shift Feedback**

• We still agree that the identified strengths in the SWOC analysis are relevant but we need to remember they must be retained and not lost.
• If a new District were created, could there be another tax rate set that is inclusive of all Districts.
• Our Chaplains need to interact with the WLAD crews more.
• We should renew our operations meetings so we don't lose ground on progress like size-ups.
• We need to continue working on integrated training with SVFR and other QRT agencies. This should also include finding creative ways to train our personnel while on-duty.
• We should consider having another open house. We need to prepare more for this and use it as an opportunity to bring people in.
• We need to improve our internal communications and should develop a plan to address how we are going to do this.
• We need to continue updating and improving our mutual aid agreements with our partners. This should include SOGs for personnel and including the SOGs in our task books for new employees.

**WLAD B-Shift Feedback**

**SWOC Analysis Feedback:**

• The lack of financial forecasting can be considered a weakness. We need to do more in depth financial forecasting
• Communication from within the organization as we progress through changes has been lacking and is a weakness. We need to find ways to improve this.
• There continue to be errors in payroll. This needs to stop.
• It appears that the IGA only benefits the FD. We need more information about how it positively affects the ambulance district.

**Considerations for Next Year's Objectives:**

• We need to include researching alternative funding models in our planning. This has been discussed in the past but it’s time to look at this again and see if there is a better and more secure way of funding our District and securing its financial solvency.
• We need to continue finding ways to ensure we pass our next operating levy.
• We need to address the ambulance district building and the property across from the Fire District. We keep talking about it but nothing ever gets done.

WLAD C-Shift Feedback

**SWOC Analysis Feedback:**

- We should consider adding planning and progressive thinking as a District strength in the SWOC analysis. We do this well and should encourage the continuance of this practice in everything we do.
- We should reconsider listing our tax base being small and having to go out for the local option levy as a weakness. In many ways, it could be considered a positive because it reminds everyone the importance of maintaining a high level of service. It may be more appropriate to list it as a challenge in the SWOC analysis.
- There is not enough part time and full-time staff. It has improved but is still a weakness and should be a consideration in the future. This item could be considered more of a challenge now as opposed to a problem.
- We must remember that preparing for disasters (i.e. earthquakes and wildfires) are an ongoing challenge for our District.

**Considerations for Next Year's Objectives:**

We need to continue the work that has been done with the EMT and EMR training. This is very important because it works as recruiting tool and most importantly improves patient care. We depend upon it in the outlying areas.

We should encourage SVFR to participate in EMS more. It would help us on-scene and improve patient care. It would be very beneficial to be able to rely on them more and have them embrace EMS as part of their job.

WLAD should look for ways to continue to support QRT responders from the outlying area. This is very important because we want them to continue to be engaged and respond on calls. We should consider finding ways to reward the individual responders who show up on QRT calls.

**Admin Team Feedback**

- We want to know how we can better serve or internal and external customers. We are driven to serve and support both Districts with their various and unique projects.
- We have outgrown the current WLAD facility. It makes sense to have joint facilities because it saves money and shows that we are being fiscally responsible.
• Mutual aid with our partners is important and should stay on the forefront of our objectives.

• Communications can be challenging and at times frustrating. We need to ensure that there is good communication between the divisions to ensure we know how to support them. Examples of some ideas that could be helpful is use of the Outlook calendar and a daily email.

• The Employee Portal we are creating should be a helpful tool in inter-district(s) communication.

**Management Team Feedback**

• Wildland is important and should be addressed at every level to include suppression, training, and prevention. We should look into grants to help fund our needs and the needs of our mutual aid partners. We should also continue to send our personnel to conflags. Involvement in conflags should be publicized because it tells the members of our community that we care about this and are taking steps to prepare for a large fire in our District.

• We need to emphasize the training of our middle managers. This is important for succession planning as well as improving communication and leadership abilities. The middle managers that we should focus on are WLAD Supervisors, Volunteer Officers, and full-time SVFR Captains.

• The Districts are primed for change, and we need the Board’s support to implement it. Change is a policy level decision that starts from the top down. Without this recognition and support it will be difficult to move forward and get mid management support. We need to not fear change and accept it as part of our evolution. Relying on “that’s the way we have always done it” holds us back.

• Communication is a challenge at all levels. We feel that more transparency provided to the mid management level could improve communications.

• We notice that almost all of the stakeholder feedback with the exception of the Admin Team is centered on operations. What does this tell us?

• We need every Director to understand what their role is, and they must work within the established policies of the District. When Directors take complaints directly from employees and form opinions from these complaints without coming to the Chief/Director for clarification, it causes problems. Directors should also not make complaints to employees. They should express their concerns to the Chief/Director. Doing this puts our employees in difficult and uncomfortable situations. It also creates problems within the organization that take time away from important tasks we are focusing on.
• It’s time to discuss whether or not the two organizations should consider a full merger. This doesn’t mean that we are committing to a merger but everyone from the top down wants to know what’s in the future. It’s time to ask the question and explore if this is the right thing to do. This doesn’t mean we’re committing to anything, it just means we’re asking and researching the question that is on everyone’s mind.

• We need to address the ambulance district facility. We believe it makes sense to combine and share facilities. This is what our taxpayers expect of us. Again, we’re dancing around the subject that everyone knows needs to be answered.

• It is difficult to know what your job is without clarity. We need the Board members to recognize the Chief/Director position as the head of each organization. When this does not happen it also puts people in difficult positions and negates why the IGA was created.