

**Western Lane Ambulance District
Siuslaw Valley Fire and Rescue
Western Lane Fire and EMS Authority
2625 Highway 101 North, Florence, OR 97439**

Joint Meeting Minutes, May 28, 2020, 6:00 p.m.

The Zoom recording will be posted on SVFR & WLAD Websites

SVFR BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT: Directors Jim Palisi, Sam Spayd, Ned Hickson, Ron Green and Alan Burns

WLAD BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT: Directors Cindy Russell, Rick Yecny, Larry Farnsworth, Mike Webb, John Murphey

WLFEA BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT: Directors Ron Green, Larry Farnsworth, Rick Yecny, Ned Hickson

STAFF PRESENT: Chief Schick, Dina McClure, Matt House and Mary Dimon

Chief Schick called the meeting to order at 6:05 p.m. Roll Call established quorums.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA:

1. **SVFR Director Burns made a motion to approve the agenda. Director Hickson seconded. Roll Call, motion passed unanimously.**
2. **WLAD Director Webb made a motion to approve the agenda. Director Russell seconded. Roll Call, motion passed unanimously.**
3. **WLFEA Director Farnsworth made a motion to approve the agenda. Director Green seconded. Roll Call, motion passed unanimously.**

PUBLIC COMMENT:

- RJ Pilcher introduced himself and reported that he prepared materials attached in the packet to help balance the budget. Pilcher explained that the Personnel Services are 58.69% of the total expenditures. He reviewed pay rates and benefits for Paramedics and EMT's and gave percentages for the State of Oregon. In conclusion he said that now is the time to take control and do the right thing for the public that the Western Lane Ambulance serves.
- Danielle Holmes, a WLAD employee, introduced herself and said she was currently off work and on leave due to Post Dramatic Stress Syndrome. Holmes went into detail on what she is going through and voiced how her experience as a critical care paramedic has impacted her life over the past 14 years. Holmes explained how the WLAD paramedics are highly skilled and the need for this skill level in our community. Holmes expressed concern that with the proposed cuts in the budget, the district would not be able to retain the valuable employees they have now.
- Dr. Danigelis introduced himself and agreed with Holmes. Danigelis explained there is no other district in the state of Oregon with the skill level that WLAD has. Danigelis said that our community has a unique situation with a higher admittance rate and the need for transferring care to higher skilled facility. Danigelis emphasized keeping the EMS care at the level it is. He explained his fear that if we do not reward the paramedics for having critical care training, we will lose them. The district needs to do everything they can to keep the level of care status quo.

- Mike Caven introduced himself as the Lane Professional Firefighters Association president, the union that is representing Western Lane Ambulance and Siuslaw Valley Fire in current labor negotiations. Caven noted that the IAFF has worked with previous management to increase service and reduce overtime. He has a history of being creative with agencies facing financial difficulties with a common goal of the interest and welfare to the public we serve. Caven is not a part of the bargaining team for the Western Lane Ambulance contract, but he has been updated by the vice president on some of the proposals at the table. Caven feels there is a clear breakdown in the relationship between the labor, management, and the elected officials, given the lack of information being provided to warrant the cuts presented to the Budget Committee. (SVFR Director Burns blew a raspberry)
- Vanessa Buss introduced herself and read a message from Dr. Foster, the Medical Director for the Emergency Department and Peace Health Chief of Staff. Dr. Foster is deeply concerned about the proposed changes regarding wages and benefits to the staff at Western Lane Ambulance. The current staffing has provided an excellent level of care to our community. The Emergency Department counts on these highly skilled paramedics to assist and provide this high-level skill to our community. Buss added she believes the District would be doing a great disservice if it disbands or repurposes the EMS that we currently have. Buss would like the Directors to realize what our EMS providers are contributing to our community.
- Cory Miner explained that Florence is a unique place and we have a responsibility to our community. The location of Florence changes the level of definitive prehospital care and Miner voiced his concern about the cuts in the budget. Not only do we have a fiscal responsibility to the taxpayers we also have a responsibility to the lives of our families and neighbors. Miner believes that if these budget cuts are made, we would not have the highly skilled personnel that we have now. Miner explains that yes, we need to have a balanced budget but need to take the decimation of the crews off the table. He believes we have the highest level of care in the Western United States. (SVFR Director Burns blew a raspberry)
- Terry Tomeny introduced himself and explained that he obtained some data to support his comments. He believes that there is a need to take a serious look at compensation and benefits and have a budget that is fair to the taxpayers and the employees. (see attached letter submitted for the record)

FY 2019 SVFR & WLAD Audit Presentation, Mark Housen, Emerald CPA Group

SVFR Audit Report: Mark Housen gave an unqualified opinion (appropriately presented and in compliance with generally accepted accounting principles) of the Siuslaw Valley Fire and Rescue Audit. Housen stated there were no problems with the audit, everything seemed to check out, and he saw an improvement since the last audit.

- **Director Hickson made a motion to approve the SVFR FY 2019 Audit. Director Palisi seconded. Roll Call, motion passed unanimously.**

WLAD Audit Report: Mark Housen gave an unqualified opinion of the Western Lane Ambulance District Audit as well. Housen stated the district is in compliance with state regulations and didn't spend as much as what was budgeted. He said there have been improvements since the last audit.

- **Director Yecny made a motion to approve the WLAD FY 2019 Audit. Director Murphey seconded. Roll Call, motion passed unanimously.**

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

- **SVFR MINUTES:** Director Green made a motion to approve the minutes of the Regular Meeting on April 23, 2020. Director Palisi seconded. Roll Call, motion passed unanimously.
- **WLAD MINUTES:** Director Webb made a motion to approve the minutes of the Regular Meeting on April 23, 2020. Director Russell seconded. Roll Call, motion passed unanimously.
- **WLFEA MINUTES:** Director Hickson made a motion to approve the minutes of the Regular Meeting on April 23, 2020. Director Farnsworth seconded. Roll Call, motion passed unanimously.

REVIEW OF FINANCIALS – WLAD, SVFR, WLFEA:

- McClure reported the 10 months into the fiscal year expenses are tracking at 84%.
- WLFEA received the Mobile Crisis Response reimbursement in the amount of 73,583.
- McClure has submitted a SAFER grant reimbursement in the amount of \$102,008.
- Director Webb asked about the payable liability on the balance sheet. McClure said she had just received audit journal entry corrections and will report at the next months board meeting.
- Director Russell asked if the Mobile Crisis Response pay is calculated per call and about the expenses to operate the program. McClure explained that they are paid a stipend per shift and that Western Lane Fire and EMS Authority is being reimbursed for managing the grant.

OLD BUSINESS: None**NEW BUSINESS:****4. SVFR: Discuss Reader Board & Public Messaging Policy:**

- Chief Schick explained that we get numerous requests to place things on our reader board and we do not have a policy in place. We have an unofficial policy that allows nonpolitical messages, no personal messages from the public and no private business messages. Chief gave some examples of what we have posted in the past. All messages are approved by a Chief Officer.
- Director Palisi suggested that the message board relay public safety messages 24/7 with true public safety info.
- Director Hickson agreed with Director Palisi and encouraged anything we can put on the board to stay safe and benefit the community.

5. SVFR: Discuss Holiday Pay for 24/7 Staff:

- Chief Schick explained that with our current 24-hour staffing employees that are required to work on holidays that would normally be a paid day off are now working these shifts. This does impact our current Collective Bargaining Agreement so we will require a signed memorandum of understanding. We need decide what to do with those firefighters who work on an approved holiday. Chief gave some examples of what he has seen in other agencies. Chief would like to recommend the approval of awarding of 8 hours accrued vacation time to each firefighter working on an approved holiday. **Director Burns made a motion to approve to add 8 hours of accrued vacation time to staff working a shift on a holiday that would normally be paid holiday off. Director Spayd seconded. Roll Call, motion passed unanimously.**

Chief Report:

- Chief reported that we are receiving direction from the State for COVID 19 Phase 1 and 2 reopening procedures. The EOC is still active and we are doing our best to be very cautious. We still do not have a

confirmed COVID case in Florence that we are aware of. The state is reporting cases within specific zip codes.

- Chief was happy to report that at the last Peace Harbor Community Board meeting there was a fantastic recognition of our Mobile Integrated Health Paramedic, Wendy Sullivan. She caught a medication error for one of her patients. This is just one of the many examples why this program is so important to our community.
- Chief reported that we have been very active in our employee recognition effort's especially since we had to cancel our annual banquet. We provided burritos for the fire and EMS crews we had some gifts during EMS week and there were helmet lights for our firefighters.

Operations Chief Report:

- House reported that April call volumes for no patient transports were up.
- Western Lane Service and Ambulance annual recertification is completed and awaiting the service license from Oregon Health Authority.
- The Mobile Integrated Healthcare continues to be a strong program to the community and bridge necessary gaps in healthcare.
- As we continue to navigate the COVID world, most training is done in house with shifts. EMS focused on annual proficiency reviews and target solutions training.
- Fire focused on training during shifts to company evolutions. Siuslaw has numerous certifications to hand out that is within the training report. We anticipate doing these when COVID restrictions are lifted.
- House reported that the Ambulances and Fire apparatus has been routine maintenance with nothing drastic to report.
- Last month, Director Palisi requested more information regarding SVFR doing the hydrant testing. Attached in the board packet is an explanation from Captain Miller. House explained that while Prevention has been on shift, they have been able to install many smoke detectors, install address signs, and join meetings remotely. There was one fire investigation that occurred in April.
- House reported that the Community Support Team continues to do great work.
- Last month Director Palisi had questions about recruiting and retention. House has attached a report with a graph and related information. House has learned that over the existence of the program we have recruited a total of 47 firefighters and 19 remain active.

Office Manager Report:

- McClure reported the computer replacement project is underway. StepUp IT has replaced 3 of the 4 leased computers to be returned to Dell. Other workstations will be replaced, and some old computer's will be repurposed to outlying stations and the upstairs training room. Director Farnsworth asked if the outlying stations had anti-virus protection. McClure said they have protection with Windows 10 and the outlying stations are not connected to the network.
- Director Farnsworth asked about the MIH Grant amount of \$50K still owed to the district. McClure will research it and report back.
- McClure reminded the WLAD Directors that Board Practices Assessment will take place June 25th and reviewed other upcoming meetings.
- Director Green suggested making the Zoom meetings an option once regular meetings resume.

Correspondence: EMS Donation, Kalea, staff thank you notes, and letters of concern

DIRECTOR COMMENTS:

- Director Palisi thanked everyone who addressed the Boards tonight.

- Director Russell thanked everyone from the public who spoke to the Boards tonight. Russell expressed the need for quality over numbers. She explained that our community expects and deserves quality care and does not want to see that diminish. Russell added that she supports our EMS.
- Director Murphey recommended that we start our strategic planning and meet before July 10th.
- Director Farnsworth thanked everyone. With the challenges we have ahead of us, he expressed his interest in going forward with the strategic planning as well.

FUTURE AGENDA BUSINESS:

- WLAD Budget Committee Meeting Thursday, June 4, 2020 5:00 pm
- SVFR Budget Hearing Thursday, June 11, 2020 5:00 pm
- WLAD Budget Hearing Thursday, June 18, 2020 5:00 pm
- WLAD Board Practices Assessment w/SDAO Thursday, June 25, 2020 4:00 pm
- Regular Joint Board Meeting Thursday, June 25, 2020 6:00 pm.

Chief Schick adjourned the meeting at 8:07 pm.

Director Yecny read the Executive Session notice.

WLAD entered Executive Session per ORS 192.660 (2) (d) Labor Negotiation Discussions and did not plan to return to open session to take action.

Respectfully submitted,
Mary Dimon
Recording Secretary