

**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, April 22, 2021, 6:00 p.m.

The Zoom recording will be posted on SVFR & WLAD Websites

SVFR BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT: Directors Jim Palisi, Alan Burns (until 7:15pm), Ned Hickson, Sam Spayd
NOT PRESENT: Ron Green

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

WLFEA BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT: Directors Jim Palisi, John Murphey, Cindy Russell, Sam Spayd

STAFF PRESENT: Chief Schick, Dina McClure, Operations Chief House, Fire Marshal Tony Miller, Mary Dimon

Chief Schick called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m. Roll Call established quorums.

PUBLIC COMMENT:

- RJ Pilcher addressed the Western Lane Ambulance Directors about the Capital Replacement Fund. He submitted a document that was included in the board packet. He wants the Directors to get clarification on the Capital Reserve balance on the current month financials. Pilcher also voiced his concern about the phone questionnaire from Nelson Research, he believes the questions are leading and pointed to a pre-determined outcome.

CONSENT AGENDA:

- March 25, 2021 Joint meeting minutes taken out of consent agenda to be amended.
- Staff Reports: Chief, Operations Chief, Office Manager, and Fire Marshal
- Correspondence: RJ Pilcher Document
- Director Farnsworth asked to have the March 25 minutes taken out of consent agenda and amended. In the WLFEA discussion, the last sentence should read reserved for future PERS expenditures.

WLAD Director Farnsworth motioned to approve the amended minutes of March 25, 2021. Director Yecny seconded. Roll Call. All in favor, motion passed.

SVFR Director Burns motioned to Approve the amended minutes of March 25, 2021. Director Palisi seconded. Roll Call. All in favor, motion passed.

WLFEA Director Spayd motioned to Approve the amended minutes of March 25, 2021. Director Russell seconded. Roll Call. All in favor, motion passed.

REVIEW OF FINANCIALS – WLAD, SVFR, WLFEA:

- McClure noted that three quarters in the financials are tracking at 75% and are looking good for both districts. Personnel Services and Materials and Services are all under budget.
- \$8,400 for the sidewalk easement was transferred into the Western Lane Ambulance PERS savings account earlier this month.

OLD BUSINESS:**SVFR & WLAD Discussion: Local Government Investment Pool (LGIP) Account**

- Director Yecny and Director Webb abstained and left the meeting having a conflict of interest.
- McClure reported that LGIP answered the questions asked at the last board meeting. The agenda bill in the board packet gives the answers she received.
- After discussion, the Boards came to a consensus to allocate funds to the Local Government Investment Pool.
- McClure asked the Directors to decide what amount each district would like to have in the accounts, and she will present revised resolutions to the May 27 meeting.

SVFR Director Burns motioned to move \$1,000,000 into a Local Government Investment Pool (LGIP) Account. Director Spayd seconded. Roll Call. All in favor, motion passed.

WLAD Director Murphey motioned to move \$1,500,000 into a Local Government Investment Pool (LGIP) Account. Director Farnsworth seconded. Roll Call. All in favor, motion passed.

- Director Yecny and Director Webb rejoined the meeting.

SVFR/WLAD Update: Strategic Business Plan Process

- Chief sent out the final draft for the strategic plan process with LCOG and asked for a vote to start the process and approve appropriations to pay for it.
- Director Farnsworth said the process looked biased and presumptuous for a predetermined merger.
- Director Murphey asked about the work done by the Feasibility Committee. There was discussion about who was on the committee, when it was formed, and what they have been working on.
- Director Farnsworth said Chief's presentation was far beyond what he was asked to do. Chief disagreed and said this is what he was hired to do. Chief has already shown the directors that integrating the districts is legal, feasible, and other districts have done it.
- There was continued discussion between the directors regarding having separate or combined documents for the strategic plan. The WLAD Board came to a consensus to vote on approving the cost for the strategic plan process and, during the process, determine how many documents will come out of it.

WLAD Director Webb motioned to approve the authorization of \$10,000 for strategic planning. Director Russell seconded.

- Director Farnsworth said he was disappointed it looks like a WLFEA document instead of a strategic plan for each district. And, a Feasibility Committee was appointed but didn't report anything to the board.

Roll Call. Directors Murphey, Webb, Russell and Yecny voted yes. Director Farnsworth voted no. The motion passed 4 to 1.

- Director Hickson reminded the directors that they have been talking about consolidation long before Chief Schick was hired and that there is a difference between consolidating and merging. He said the strategic plan is not a final plan, but rather a look into what further consolidation would look like.
- Director Burns expressed caution when going down the consolidation path in the event it can't be undone if needed. Burns also wants the Feasibility Committee to report to the directors.
- Chief Schick said consolidation can be undone anytime. A vote from the public for a merger is years out.
- Director Spayd wants the board to have options in the consolidation process, continue to provide the best service to our community, and is in favor of proceeding with a joint strategic plan.

- Director Palisi says we have capable staff who can provide multiple functions by working together and wants to see the consolidation process move forward.

SVFR Director Burns motioned to authorize \$10,000 for strategic planning. Director Spayd seconded. Roll Call. All in favor, motion passed.

SVFR/WLAD: Approve Public Affairs Counsel Polling Questions

- Chief explained the public polling process and is looking for an approval of the polling questions at the cost of \$7,000 per district.
- Director Farnsworth said the questions are biased toward consolidating the districts. There should be pros and cons statements to each question to provide different views.
- Director Murphey questioned the cost. Director Yecny said the cost makes sense when preparation, conducting the poll, and preparing the results is accounted for.
- Director Yecny said maybe it's too early for the questions to address merger. Director Webb said the questions were proposed to get feedback on where the public stands on merger and levy renewal.
- There was further discussion between the WLAD directors. Director Murphey recommended a work session to go over the questions to reword them for what the board members want to ask.
- Director Webb suggested sending the questions back to the Feasibility Committee to revise.
- It was decided the directors would send their suggestions revising the questions to Chief. The Committee will meet to go over the questions and bring recommendations to the May meeting.

Director Russell made a motion to approve the funds but not the questions. Director Yecny seconded. Roll Call. All in favor, motioned passed.

- Director Hickson suggested that if they are going to be talking merger/consolidation, they need to take time to educate the public so that they understand the questions we are asking them. Hickson believes the survey should take place after the strategic plan.
- Director Murphey noted that if the SVFR Board decides not to move forward to approve the cost, the WLAD vote becomes null and void.
- Director Spayd agreed with Hickson and said he hasn't seen anything published about consolidation so the public isn't knowledgeable.
- Director Webb said, as a citizen, the districts need public input now, not later, in order to guide the strategic plan.
- Director Palisi agreed with taking another look at the questions but reminded the board that all the public cares about is having professionals respond when needed.
- Director Murphey said they should consider WLAD doing the poll without SVFR. He said they have this same conversation every few months and are not getting anywhere.
- The SVFR Board tabled the vote until the questions can be redefined.
- **The WLAD vote to approve funds was voided for lack of motion from the SVFR Board.**
- Chief said they will reconvene the committee to get a broader depth of questions to bring back to the board.
- Director Murphey asked the board members to email the Chief with suggestions for the questions.

NEW BUSINESS:

SVFR/WLAD/WLFEA: Approve Families First Coronavirus Response Act Extension of Sick Leave

- McClure reviewed the FFCRA and said the sick leave expired in March. The qualifying reasons an employee can use the sick leave are in the board packet. Staff recommends extending 80 hours of sick

leave for both full time and part time employees to September 30. The districts are not eligible for the tax credit and will have to pay back what was used. Chief noted that it is a minor impact to the budget.

WLAD Director Farnsworth motioned to approve the extension of the Families First Coronavirus Response Act for sick leave until September 30, 2021. Director Russell seconded. Roll Call. All in favor, motion passed.

SVFR Director Palisi motioned to approve the extension of the Families First Coronavirus Response Act for sick leave until September 30, 2021. Director Spayd seconded. Roll Call. All in favor, motion passed.

SVFR/WLAD: Approve ODOT Compensation for Sidewalk

- Chief explained that ODOT would like to compensate both WLAD and SVFR to put in a crosswalk on both corners of the properties belonging to each district. ODOT is proposing to compensate WLAD in the amount of \$750 and SVFR in the amount of \$8,900. There is more work to be done on the SVFR side with the replacing the retaining wall, the sprinkler system and some landscaping.

WLAD Director Farnsworth motioned to authorize Chief Schick to approve and sign the compensation offer in the amount of \$750 from ODOT. Director Webb seconded. Roll Call. All in favor, motion passed.

- Director Hickson asked if the project would have any impact on the apparatus being able to maneuver in and out of the station to respond to emergencies. Chief said it shouldn't have any impact.

SVFR Director Spayd motioned to authorize Chief Schick to approve and sign the compensation offer in the amount of \$8,900 from ODOT. Director Palisi seconded. Roll Call. All in favor, motion passed.

WLAD: Discuss Capital Reserve Funding

- Chief would like the Board to decide what the balance of the Capital Reserve fund should be and what the district should use that reserve fund for.
- Director Yecny believes we need a reserve in the range from \$300,000 to \$500,000 range.
- Director Webb agreed. It gives the districts an idea of what to budget to replenish the fund in the future.
- Director Farnsworth read a document the Chief wrote to the board a year ago that warned of financial hardship. Farnsworth recommended to maintain \$500,000 in the capital reserve fund. Chief referred to the document Farnsworth read and said revenues have increased since then.
- Director Murphey asked Chief Schick and House to present the board with a ten-year maintenance plan. Murphey added the Directors need to get serious about the land that they are not going to build on. If the property is sold the money could go into the Capital Reserve fund to help the district.

WLAD Director Farnsworth motioned for \$500,000 as a minimum balance in the Capital Reserve fund. Director Webb seconded. Roll Call. Directors Murphey, Webb, Russell, and Farnsworth voted yes. Director Yecny voted no. The motion passed 4 to 1.

SVFR/WLAD/WLFEA Discussion: What Does Consolidation Look Like?

- Chief shared his screen and presented a power point on goals, objectives, and tasks in getting all employees into WLFEA. Chief said the main benefit to operations integration is that we become much more efficient in our resources. Chief showed various staffing models.

DIRECTOR COMMENTS:

- Director Yecny said it's good that a lot of tough questions were addressed at this meeting. The intent for polling questions is to be unbiased and he encouraged everyone to look at the questions and submit their opinions to be considered.

- Director Farnsworth asked about the timeframe to have questions back. Director Yecny said within two weeks so they can have them at the next meeting.
- Director Farnsworth would like to see the WLAD directors discuss the staffing model at the next meeting.
- Director Spayd said he and Director Palisi attended a Burn to Learn at the state park and he learned a lot. He encouraged all the directors to attend a Burn to Learn.
- Matt House noted there will be an extrication training coming up May 23rd and has instructed Kyle Orozco to send out emails for future trainings so that the directors are aware.

Future Business: Regular Joint Board Meeting & Budget Hearing May 27, 2021 at 6:00pm

Meeting adjourned at 8:25 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Mary Dimon
Recording Secretary