

Josephine County Rural Fire Protection District Board Meeting: July 28, 2025
10:00 a.m. – In Person– Merlin Community Park - 100 Acorn Street, Merlin Oregon
Live Streamed at www.youtube.com/@JCRFPD

Rural Fire Protection District Attendance:

Directors Present: Roy Hauser, Ralph Weidling, Vincent Ownbey, Mark Jones, Tom McGowan

Members Absent: N/A

Recorder: Kassie Austin

Guest Presenters: None

General Public: Steve Nelson, Rural Metro; Austin Prince, Rural Metro; Mike Shaw, Oregon State Fire Marshal; Sam Lastkey, Oregon State Fire Marshal; Lance Shaw, Rural Metro

1. Call to Order

- a. The Board experienced technical difficulties with live streaming the meeting. The meeting was called to order at 10:12 a.m.
- b. The Board recited the Pledge of Allegiance.

2. Approval of Agenda

The board reviewed today's agenda items. Director McGowan made a motion to approve the agenda as listed. The motion was seconded by Director Hauser. Upon roll call; Director Ownbey – yes, Director McGowan – yes, Director Hauser – yes, Director Weidling – yes, Director. Jones – yes. Motion carried 5-0.

3. Approval of Minutes

The board reviewed the meeting minutes for the date of July 21, 2025. No amendments were made. Director McGowan made a motion to approve the draft minutes as presented. The motion was seconded by Director Weidling. Upon roll call; Director McGowan – yes, Director Hauser – yes, Director Weidling – yes, Director Ownbey – yes, and Director Jones – yes. Motion carried 5-0.

4. Financial Report

Director Weidling briefed the board that there was a meeting with Ruth Nelson, County Finance Director. It was determined that \$50,000 of interest has accrued on the district funds. \$325,000 was budgeted for this fiscal year (2025-2026). At this rate, the fund is sustainable for 5 more years. The current balance is for the fiscal year is \$249,637.02. It is unclear what the interest rate is. Discussion was held on what kind of bank account is best for the board to create. Ms. Nelson will do more research on the history of the funds, and get back to Director Weidling. Discussion held on where the interest that should have accrued has gone.

5. Public Comment

None heard.

6. Old Business

a. District Telephone Number

Director Ownbey will contact Verizon Wireless today to proceed with obtaining a phone number.

b. Temporary Employment

The board discussed in depth the different possibilities to obtain an administrative assistant. The board agreed to proceed with the individual contract without objection. Director Jones read the proposed draft contract in its entirety. Discussion was held regarding a monthly stipend or with an hourly rate. The board approved the hourly rate without objection. It was discussed that the contractor not to exceed 40 hours per month. The board approved the rate at \$25.00 per hour with an average work week of 8-10 hours a week. The contract takes effect on August 10, 2025. Ownbey made a motion to approve the contract and move it forward for legal counsel to review. The

motion was seconded by Director Hauser. Upon roll call; Director McGowan – yes, Director Hauser – yes, Director Weidling – yes, Director Ownbey – yes, and Director Jones – yes. Motion carried 5-0.

7. New Business

a. Authorized Bank Signers

Director Jones explained that the bank needs to have approved minutes showing authorized bank signers. It was discussed that moving forward the authorized bank signers shall always be the board of director positions of Treasurer, Vice – President, and President. The directors that hold those titles are as follows:

Treasurer – Director Ralph Weidling

Vice-President – Director Vincent Ownbey

President – Director Mark Jones

Director Ownbey made a motion that the treasurer, vice-president, and be president be the authorized bank signers. Director Hauser seconded the motion. Upon roll call; Director McGowan – yes, Director Hauser – yes, Director Weidling – yes, Director Ownbey – yes, and Director Jones – yes. Motion carried 5-0.

b. Meeting Procedures

Director Jones provided the board with Roberts Rules and a reminder of how to run the meetings and keep the meetings professional.

c. Committee Reports

Communication committee: Director Weidling recommended starlink internet for the board. Expenses are estimated at \$500 for the equipment and a recurring \$50.00 a month for the service. It is fast, and reliable. The board approved looking into that option. Director Jones confirmed that zoom, and YouTube is up and running for live streaming videos.

d. Purchasing/Contracting Policy Review

Director Jones, stated that this policy is required for the district. The policy helps keep the district in compliance and transparency. Director Jones read the policy in its entirety. Mr. Ransom gave his input regarding the competitive bid process. The proposed policy is lower than what state statute requires. The board agreed to leave the policy limits as written. The policy is to be reviewed and amended as needed every three years. Director McGowan made a motion to approve the purchasing/contracting policy as amended. The motion was seconded by Director Weidling. Upon roll call; Director McGowan – excused, Director Hauser – yes, Director Weidling – yes, Director Ownbey – yes, and Director Jones – yes. Motion carried 5-0.

e. Public Records Policy Review

Director Jones reviewed the draft policy. This policy ensures that the district is in compliance with the Oregon Revised Statutes for public records requests. Director Jones read the policy in its entirety. Director Ownbey made a motion to approve the Public Records Policy as amended. The motion was seconded by Director McGowan. Upon roll call; Director McGowan – excused, Director Hauser – yes, Director Weidling – yes, Director Ownbey – yes, and Director Jones – yes. Motion carried 5-0.

f. Purchase of Technology Equipment

Director Jones explained that he has researched a couple options for the board meetings regarding a computer, and a camera/microphone. It is estimated that the cost to be for a laptop to be \$1,000, a camera and microphone, to be \$2,000, with an additional cost of monitors, and other cords for meetings. The board approved the purchase of technology equipment without objection.

g. Fire Department Identification Number (FDID) Checklist

Discussion was held with Oregon State Fire Marshal, regarding the contract agreement with Rural Metro. The agreement needs to be amended to state Rural Metro to give them the authority to ORS. The fire chief and physical headquarters are keeping the district from obtaining an FDID number. Discussion held regarding the importance of the FDID number for the district, and how Rural Metro will do the reporting and what number they would report under. SDAO is willing to help obtain an interim fire chief for the district. The board approved without objection for Director McGowan to reach out to SDAO and have them provide the district with an interim Fire Chief. Discussion held on the possibility of a headquarters.

h. Legal Counsel Attendance

Bill Ransom, stated he does not feel it is necessary for legal counsel to attend every meeting. They are available per agenda items.

8. Correspondence

Director Jones, explained the district did receive an email referring to HB3940, and it is something that the board should keep in mind.

9. Additional Matters of the Board

Once the minute of today's meeting are approved, the board can proceed with obtaining a bank account. The bank requires the minutes showing the authorized signers. Discussion held regarding the scheduling of meetings. Director Ownbey discussed the emergency management notification system, and their concerns.

Mark Jones, President, called for executive session at a.m.

Additional Attendees: Bill Ransom, District Counsel.

Director Jones called for executive session at 11:57 a.m.

10. Executive Session

a. Applegate Valley Rural Fire Protection District #9 vs. Josephine County and Josephine County Rural Fire Protection District – Case No. 24cv59327 – ORS 192.660(2)(h)

Executive Session adjourned at 12:34 p.m.

Agenda Item 10a.: The board received an update.

The meeting adjourned at 12:34 p.m.