

Josephine County Rural Fire Protection District Board Meeting: August 4, 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 (Remote Attendance), Vincent Ownbey, Mark Jones, Tom McGowan, Ralph Weidling (Telephonic)

Members Absent:

Recorder: Kassie Austin

Guest Presenters: None

General Public: Austin Prince, Rural Metro;

1. Call to Order

- a. The meeting was called to order at 10:01 a.m.
- b. The Board recited the Pledge of Allegiance.

2. Approval of Agenda

The board reviewed today's agenda items. Director Ownbey made a motion to approve the agenda as listed. The motion was seconded by Director McGowan. Upon roll call; Director Ownbey – yes, Director McGowan – yes, Director Hauser – yes, Director Weidling – excused, Director Jones – yes. Motion carried 4-0.

3. Approval of Minutes

The board reviewed the meeting minutes for the date of July 28, 2025. Director Jones requested that the names of the current Chair, Vice-Chair, and Secretary be listed in the minutes for bank signing authority, in addition to the positions on the board. Director McGowan made a motion to approve the amended draft minutes. The motion was seconded by Director Ownbey. Upon roll call; Director McGowan – yes, Director Hauser – yes, Director Weidling – excused, Director Ownbey – yes, and Director Jones – yes. Motion carried 4-0.

4. Financial Report

Director Weidling is excused from today's meeting. Discussion held on which bank may be beneficial for the district to use. The board narrowed down the banks to Rogue Community Credit Union, and Evergreen Federal Bank. Director McGowan recommended Evergreen Federal as the bank. Director Jones agreed that Evergreen Federal Bank would be the best option. Discussion was held regarding what documentation the bank may be needed from the district to get the account set up. Director McGowan made a motion to set up the bank account with Evergreen Federal. The motion was seconded by Director Ownbey. Upon roll call; Director McGowan – yes, Director Hauser – yes, Director Weidling – excused, Director Ownbey – yes, and Director Jones – yes. Motion carried 4-0.

5. Public Comment

None heard.

6. Old Business

a. District Telephone Number

Director Ownbey briefed the board that he did put in an application to Verizon Wireless to determine if they will make the district pay a deposit for a phone line. He will hear back next week.

b. Administrative Assistant Contract

Director Jones explained that Kassie Austin has worked on the formation of the district while working at Josephine County. Mrs. Austin has been assisting the Josephine County Rural Fire Protection District Board while the board gets established. The work for the district will be outside of Mrs. Austin's employment with Josephine County.

Director McGowan made a motion to enter into the contract with Josephine County. The motion was seconded by Director Ownbey. Upon roll call; Director McGowan – yes, Director Hauser – yes, Director Weidling – excused, Director Ownbey – yes, and Director Jones – yes. Motion carried 4-0.

7. PUBLIC HEARING: Proposed District Name Change

Pursuant to notice through the media and in conformance with Public Meeting Law, Director Jones opened the public hearing at 10:17 a.m.

Director Jones briefed the public on the history of the district name and how the name was determined by the Josephine County Board of Commissioners in 2024. The district board of directors have discussed how the name could be confusing, and how citizens may think that the district name implies coverage for the county in its entirety. The district name change is more efficient to go through the name change as the district is becoming established, in lieu of changing it later down the road. The proposed name for the district is Mid Rogue Fire District .

Public Testimony:

None Heard.

The board deliberated on the benefits of changing the name of the district to Mid Rogue Fire District.

Director McGowan made a motion to approve Board Resolution Number 2025-002; In the Matter of Authorizing the name change of Josephine County Rural Fire District to “Mid Rogue Fire District”. The motion was seconded by Director Ownbey. Upon roll call; Director McGowan – yes, Director Hauser – yes, Director Ownbey – yes, Director Weidling – excused, and Director Jones – yes. Motion carried 4-0.

The public hearing closed at 10:23 a.m.

8. New Business

a. Committee Reports

Director McGowan briefed the board on the fire chief position. He has been in touch with SDAO. The board needs to determine what the district needs are in a fire chief. Director Ownbey explained that he would like to see a fire chief working with the EOC, as well as acting as the district PIO, assisting with policy work for the district, in addition to working with Rural Metro. Director McGowan stated he will reach out to SDAO and continue working with them to fulfill the fire chief position. The remaining committees will present an update at the next scheduled meeting.

b. Resolution 2025-003; In the Matter of Approving or Adopting the Josephine County Rural Fire Protection District Public Records Request Policy

Director Jones explained that at the last meeting, the proposed policy was read in its entirety. It was stated that the district will need to amend the resolution in 30 days once the district name change takes effect. Director McGowan made a motion to approve the board resolution No. 2025-003; In the Matter of Approving and Adopting the Josephine County Rural Fire Protection District Public Records Request Policy. The motion was seconded by Director Ownbey. Upon roll call; Director McGowan – yes, Director Hauser – yes, Director Ownbey – yes, and Director Jones – yes. Motion carried 4-0.

c. Resolution 2025-004; In the Matter of Approving or Adopting the Josephine County Rural Fire Protection District Purchasing and Contracting Rules Policy

Director Jones explained that the board also approved the policy as amended at the last meeting. Director McGowan made a motion to approve the board Resolution No. 2025-004; In the Matter of Approving or Adopting the Josephine County Rural Fire Protection District Purchasing and Contracting Rules Policy. The motion was seconded by Director Ownbey. Upon roll call; Director McGowan – yes, Director Hauser – yes, Director Ownbey – yes, and Director Jones – yes. Motion carried 4-0.


9. Correspondence

None heard.

10. Additional Matters of the Board

Director McGowan briefed the board that he was presented with potential office space located within the the Merlin Industrial Park. The building owner seemed encouraging to the idea of the district using the building. Director McGowan requested to follow up on the potential office space. Director Ownbey discussed that Rural Metro posted on social media public safety information outlets to keep the community informed. Director Jones will touch base with SDAO regarding a website for the district. Director Jones updated the board regarding the Information Technology purchases in the amount of \$3,158.16 The most cost-effective options were found on Amazon. The purchase will take place after the district obtains a bank account at Evergreen Federal Bank. Discussion was held regarding workshops with other districts. It was determined that the district will wait to hold workshops until they obtain a fire chief.

The meeting adjourned at 10:49 a.m.



Kassie Austin, Recorder