

Josephine County Rural Fire Protection District Board Meeting: July 1, 2025
1:00 p.m. – In Person, 500 NW 6th Street, Grants Pass, OR; Room 157

Rural Fire Protection District Attendance:

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

Members Absent: N/A

Recorder: Kassie Austin

Guest Presenters: None

The meeting was called to order at 1:00 p.m.

1. Oath of Office for Elected Board Members

Rhiannon Henkels, Josephine County Clerk, administered the Oath of Office for all elected board members present. (Originals filed with the law office of Sorenson, Ransom & Ferguson, LLP)

2. Board Officer Elections for 2025-2026

Bill Ransom, District Counsel, discussed the statute requirements regarding terms for the elected positions. Mr. Jones recommended that positions 2 and 4 to be 2-year terms initially and for positions 1,3,5 to be 4-year terms. Mr. Jones made a motion to make positions 2 and 4 to be 2-year terms initially, and for positions 1,3,5 to be 4-year terms. Mr. Weidling seconded the motion. Upon roll call; Mr. Ownbey – yes, Mr. McGowan – yes, Mr. Hauser – yes, Mr. Weidling – yes, and Mr. Jones – yes. Motion carried 5-0.

3. Positions for Board Members

Mr. Ownbey nominated Mr. Jones as President. Seconded by Mr. Weidling. Mr. Jones accepted the nomination. Upon Roll Call; Mr. Ownbey – yes, Mr. Hauser – yes, Mr. Weidling – yes, Mr. McGowan – yes. Nomination carried 4-0.

Mr. Weidling nominated Mr. Ownbey for vice-president. Seconded by Mr. Hauser. The nomination was accepted by Mr. Ownbey. Upon Roll Call; Mr. McGowan – yes, Mr. Hauser – yes, Mr. Weidling – yes, Mr. Jones – yes. Nomination carried 4-0.

The board without objection combined the treasurer and secretary position into one.

Mr. Hauser nominated Mr. Weidling for the Treasurer/Secretary Position. Seconded by Mr. Ownbey. Mr. Weidling accepted the nomination. Upon Roll Call; Mr. Ownbey – yes, Mr. McGowan – yes, Mr. Hauser – yes, Mr. Jones – yes. Nomination carried 4-0.

4. Contract for Personal Services with Sorenson, Ransom & Ferguson, LLP

Mr. Ransom, explained the contract and the services that the law firm has provided to the district thus far. The board agreed to continue the service until the next scheduled meeting, giving the board time to review the current contract. It is estimated the current service levels for the district will not be as needed in the future. Mr. Ownbey made a motion to continue the contract for 0 dollars due this month, and bring the contract back to the board once the members have had time to review it. Seconded by Mr. McGowan. Upon roll call; Mr. Ownbey – yes, Mr. McGowan – yes, Mr. Hauser – yes, Mr. Weidling – yes, Mr. Jones – yes. Motion carried 5-0.

5. Policy and Procedure Sub-Committee Creation

Mr. Ransom explained that this being the first meeting, it would be beneficial for by-laws or procedures to be created. Mr. Ransom explained that only two members could be appointed to the sub-committees. In depth discussion was held regarding the first steps of the district, to be compliant with Oregon Revised Statutes. After discussion it was determined that the following sub-committees be created, and the members were appointed:

Sub Committee:

Securing Fire Protection District Services
Mandatory Personnel
Establishing Policy and Procedures/Bylaws, etc.

Board Members:

Ralph Weidling, and Mark Jones
Tom McGowan, and Roy Hauser
Vincent Ownbey and Mark Jones

Mr. Jones was appointed to reach out to SDAO (Special District Association of Oregon) to discuss insurance requirements.

6. Scheduling Meetings

Mr. Jones requested to meet weekly to get the district functioning. The board agreed to hold meetings every Monday for the month of July at 10:00 a.m. Excluding the July 21st meeting will be held at 1:00 p.m.

Mark Jones, President called for executive session at 2:06 p.m.

Additional Attendees: Bill Ransom, District Counsel, and Kendell Ferguson, District Counsel.

7. 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 3:14 p.m.

The meeting adjourned at 3:15 p.m.

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