

Josephine County Rural Fire Protection District Board Meeting: July 21, 2025

1:00 p.m. – In Person, Grants Pass Fire Rescue, Parkway Station – 800 E. Park St

Rural Fire Protection District Attendance:

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

Members Absent: Tom McGowan

Recorder: Kassie Austin

Guest Presenters: None

General Public: Steve Nelson, Rural Metro; Cody Breeze, Rural Metro; Austin Price, Rural Metro; Trevor Johnson

1. Call to Order

- a. The meeting was called to order at 1:01 p.m. The Board called roll.
- b. The Board recited the Pledge of Allegiance.

2. Approval of Agenda

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

3. Approval of Minutes

The board reviewed the meeting minutes for the date of July 14, 2025. No amendments were made. Mr. Ownbey made a motion to approve the draft minutes as presented. The motion was seconded by Mr. Hauser. Upon roll call; Mr. McGowan – excused, Mr. Hauser – yes, Mr. Weidling – yes, Mr. Ownbey – yes, and Mr. Jones – yes. Motion carried 4-0.

4. Financial Report

Mr. Weidling briefed the board and stated he has an appointment this Friday July 25, at 9:00 in the morning. They plan on discussing the grant funding and what is left in the fund. Mr. Weidling will find out if Ms. Nelson is able to write checks in the meantime while the board investigates getting a bank account. Mr. Weidling also has obtained a PO box for the district.

5. Public Comment

None heard.

6. Old Business

a. District Name

It was confirmed that the required public noticing has gone out to the local newspaper. The public hearing is scheduled for 10 a.m. on August 4, 2025. The first notice has already gone out, with the required second notice being in the paper by July 29th. Staff has confirmed the newspaper has the notice and has confirmed the 29th date.

b. Meeting Location

Mr. Jones explained that statutory requirements state that the board meetings shall be held at a location within the district. The Merlin Community Park has offered facilities for the board to meet there. The next board meeting will take place at the Merlin Community Park. The next two meetings will be held at 10 a.m. through the August 4th meeting. The board will discuss a potential time change in the future.

c. Insurance Coverage

Mr. Jones briefed the board that the district insurance policy is in the under-writing stage. SDIS informed Mr. Jones that in order to proceed they need the district's TIN (Tax Identification Number). Mr. Weidling will work with Mr. Jones to obtain the TIN number as soon as possible.

d. SDAO and OFDDA Memberships

Mr. Jones gave an update to the board that SDAO prorated the rate in the amount of \$179.00. Once the payment has been received, the district is considered a full member.

e. P.O. Box

Mr. Weidling explained that he checked with the Merlin Post Office, and the rate was a much lower cost of \$55.00 for 6 months, instead of a PO Box in Grants Pass where the district was quoted \$99.00 for 6 months. The official mailing address for the district is PO Box 635, Merlin OR 97532.

f. Phone Number

Mr. Ownbey gave the update to the board, he received a quote from Verizon Wireless of \$36.99 for a two-year contract with unlimited service. The district cannot proceed with obtaining a phone number without the district having a TIN. Discussion held regarding the best way to move forward. With the District being brand new and not obtaining any credit history, there may be a deposit. The board agreed without objection to wait until the district receives a TIN to move forward. Mr. Weidling explained that he did set up a Gmail account for the district under Midroquefiredistrict@gmail.com. Jocorfpd@gmail.com is the current email address until the district name hearing takes place, and the new name is in effect.

7. New Business

a. Committee Reports

Mr. Hauser explained that the staffing committee has not been able to work on the staffing needs at this time. It is currently fire season. The board was provided a draft contract for the district to contract with an administrative assistant. The staffing committee will review the draft contract. The communications committee is working on the YouTube live streaming the district meetings. In the future the meetings will be livestreamed at [YouTube.com/@JCRFPD](https://www.youtube.com/@JCRFPD). Email address and PO boxes are secured.

b. New Committee

The board agreed without objection to rename the "Service Provider Committee" to the "Consideration Committee" which contains Mr. Weidling and Mr. Jones. Per language in the contract with Rural Metro, the district will determine what the district needs are, and work with Rural Metro to help with those needs.

c. Streaming Meetings

The district is working on providing streaming meetings to the public. It is estimated by the next meeting that the district meetings will be live streamed via YouTube.

d. Zoom Membership

Mr. Jones explained the difference between the pro membership and business membership. The only difference between the two memberships is the cost, and the allowance of how many individuals can be on the zoom meetings. The Pro membership is less costly. Mr. Ownbey made a motion to continue with the pro membership. Seconded by Mr. Weidling. Upon Roll Call; Mr. Hauser – yes, Mr. Weidling – yes, Mr. McGowan – excused, Mr. Ownbey – yes, Mr. Jones – yes. Motion carried 4-0.

e. Temporary Employment

This matter was tabled.

8. Correspondence

Mr. Jones explained that there was only one email received by a business owner that inquired how to donate food to first responders. Mr. Jones directed the individual to reach out to Rural Metro.

9. Additional Matters of the Board

Mr. Ownbey discussed the Board Shanty fire and thanked all the agencies effort on the fire. Mr. Weidling also thanked everyone's efforts.

The board recessed at 1:37 p.m.

Mark Jones, President called for executive session at 1:43 p.m.

Additional Attendees: Kendell Ferguson, District Counsel.


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 2:12 p.m.

Agenda Item 10a.: The Board directed legal to send a follow up letter to individuals regarding today's ruling.

The meeting adjourned at 2:12 p.m.


Kassie Austin, Recorder