

**Western Lane Ambulance District  
Siuslaw Valley Fire and Rescue  
Western Lane Fire and EMS Authority  
2625 Highway 101 North, Florence, OR 97439  
Joint Board Meeting Minutes, June 27, 2024, 6:00 p.m.  
The Zoom recording will be on the WLFEA Website.**

**SVFR & WLFEA BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT:**

Director Laurie Heppel, Director Tim Mendolia, Director Jim Palisi (via Zoom), and Director David Carrillo (via Zoom)

**Not Present:** Director Keith Stanton (attended LCOG meeting)

**WLAD & WLFEA BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT:**

Director Cindy Russell, Director Mike Webb, and Director Adam Holbrook

**Not Present:** Director Vanessa Buss and Director Linda Stent

**STAFF PRESENT:**

Fire and EMS Chief Michael Schick, Office Manager Trish Lutgen, Training Division Chief Rob Chance, and Recording Secretary Holly Lais (via Zoom)

**Chief Schick called the meeting to order at 6:01 p.m. Roll Call established quorums.**

**PUBLIC COMMENT:** None

**CONSENT AGENDA:**

Meeting Minutes: Regular Meeting May 23, 2024

Staff Reports

Correspondence

**REVIEW OF FINANCIALS – WLAD, SVFR, WLFEA:**

Office Manager Trish Lutgen informed the financials for all three entities are wrapping up for the fiscal year-end. She is switching credit card companies. US Bank has partnered with the State of Oregon to offer a commercial card program that is for local government. The new credit card benefits include a rebate/cash-back program. Staff will have the ability to adjust credit limits immediately as well as authorize payments on transactions that are declining for potential fraud. The cards are built for government entities with a 45-day grace period, they provide cash back to the entity on purchases, and they provide Emergency cards that can be used during Conflagrations. Debit Cards have been eliminated from all three entities.

**OLD BUSINESS:**

1. Policies from May 23, 2024:

Chief Schick explained these policies were provided at the last meeting. The Directors had no questions.

- a) 300– Incident Management
- b) 301 – Emergency Response
- c) 302 – Fire Ground Accountability
- d) 303 – Rapid Intervention/Two-In Two-Out

**NEW BUSINESS:**

1. Merger Discussion – Swisshome-Deadwood

Chief Schick introduced Kristi Guse and Brent Carlton, Swisshome-Deadwood Board Members who were in attendance from the Swisshome-Deadwood Rural Fire Protection District. He informed the Board that Mapleton Rural Fire Protection District was invited, but he had not heard from them. Chief Schick presented a PowerPoint Presentation regarding Emergency Services in Western Lane County. He stated, "The question is, do we want to do anything with our neighbors? WLFEA would always provide services to these districts, but we should look at what would benefit all of the districts." He gave a brief history of SVFR, WLAD, and WLFEA.

Chief Schick explained that there were a few options to consider:

- Staying status quo. WLFEA would continue to operate both SVFR and WLAD.
- The health district (WLAD) would dissolve, SVFR would awarded the ambulance service area (ASA), and the tax rates would not change.
- The health district would dissolve, and SVFR would annex territory within the former health district, excluding Mapleton and/or Swisshome – Deadwood Rural Fire Protection Districts.
- Mapleton and/or Swisshome – Deadwood Rural Fire Protection Districts consolidate into WLFEA (enter into an IGA with a formal consolidation at some point).

Chief Schick presented the benefits of becoming one entity. He stated that merging with Swisshome-Deadwood and Mapleton Rural Fire Protection Districts was just in the discussion phase and was looking to see if there was any interest. Director Webb stated that this discussion aims to find solid funding for the health district instead of relying on the levy, which would benefit all of the fire districts. Director Russell asked if an easier avenue would be to apply for grants. Chief Schick agreed that a state staffing grant would make funding easier.

Director Palisi asked if WLFEA could reach out and meet with state representatives, as Jefferson County has similar issues consolidating its EMS and Fire District. Director Russel felt the legislation would not change the state laws as we are the "exception to the rule." Directors Palisi, Heppel, Webb, and Holebrook will work together and meet with a state legislature representative. Director Russell would like to be a backup substitute. Chief Shcick will reach out to Mapleton to see if they would be interested in participating in the discussion.

Swisshome-Deadwood Directors Guse and Carlton voiced their concerns regarding an unknown growing demographic in their area and not having volunteers.

Director Russell reiterated that forming a stronger alliance with Swisshome-Deadwood and Mapleton Rural Fire Protection Districts needs to be done in baby steps. Chief Schick said forming an IGA is a good step and is easy to get out of if it doesn't work. Director Palisi feels that everyone serves a purpose and that coming together makes us stronger.

## 2. Policies for Review

Chief Schick informed the directors of the below policies. The directors will review and discuss them at the next meeting.

- a) 304 – Urban Search and Rescue
- b) 305 – Tactical Withdrawal
- c) 306 – Response Time Standards
- d) 307 – Aircraft Operations

### **DIRECTOR COMMENTS:**

- Office Manager Trish Lutgen reminded the Director to complete their SDAO online training.
- Director Russell asked what a COA (certificate of approval) was in the WLCR report. Chief Schick explained that the state requires the WLCR staff to have specific certifications. He said the WLCR program is looking more promising and able to maintain.

**The Directors took a short break at 6:52 p.m. prior to the executive session.**

**Per ORS 192.660(2)(f) to consider information or records that are exempt by law from public inspection, the directors went into executive session at 6:56 p.m. The directors did not return to the regular meeting which ended at 7:05 p.m.**

**FUTURE BUSINESS:**

The next Regular Joint Board Meeting and Budget Hearing is scheduled for July 25, 2024, at 6:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,  
Holly Lais, Recording Secretary