

**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, September 24, 2026, 6:00 p.m.
The Zoom recording will be on the WLFEA Website.**

SVFR & WLFEA BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT:

Director Jim Palisi (via Zoom)

Not Present: Director Laurie Heppel, Director Stephanie Restrepo, Director David Carrillo, and Director Keith Stanton (excused to attend the Lane Council of Governments meeting)

WLAD & WLFEA BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT:

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

Not Present: Director Vanessa Buss and Director Linda Stent

STAFF PRESENT:

Fire and EMS Chief Rob Chance, Office Manager Trish Lutgen, Fire Marshal Michael Schick, and Recording Secretary Holly Lais

Chief Chance called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m. The flag salute was completed, and a roll call established a quorum for only WLAD. Because neither SVFR nor WLFEA had a quorum, those boards could not conduct official business.

PUBLIC COMMENTS:

None

PRESENTATION: WESTERN LANE CRISIS RESPONSE (WLCR):

Western Lane Crisis Manager Melissa House provided an update on the Western Lane Crisis Response group, reporting that they were fully compliant with OHA regulations. She announced that this was her final board meeting and that Cindy Gentry would take over in her role. House also introduced Alicia DeNicola as the new Youth Advocate. She announced that the Suicide Awareness Walk, the group's largest event of the year, would be held on Saturday, September 26, at Miller Park.

CONSENT AGENDA:

Meeting Minutes: Regular Meeting July 23, 2026

Staff Reports

Correspondence

Director Webb requested that the draft minutes of the July 23, 2026, regular meeting be amended to clarify that they, not the Union, could form a Political Action Committee (PAC).

The Consent Agenda was tabled until the October Joint Board meeting.

REVIEW OF FINANCIALS – WLAD, SVFR, WLFEA:

Office Manager Lutgen reported that the July and August financial statements were included in the board packet. The auditors completed their on-site work and departed earlier that day. The new payroll system has been set up, and they are testing, and training staff on how to complete their timesheets. Their first live payroll run will be on October 1. Lutgen also reported that most of WLAD's GEMT funds had been collected, with three additional deposits expected to bring the total above the budgeted \$80,000. WLAD received \$1,290.00 in unclaimed property from the State of Washington, LGIP interest rates were increasing to 4.10%, and Astound issued a refund check for \$19,471.16 reimbursing the districts for five years.

Director Webb asked about the decrease in call volume shown in the bar charts. Chief Chance said he would investigate.

Director Russell asked about the LifeMed numbers. Lutgen replied that applications were down by five hundred which is approximately one-third, but follow-up renewal letters had been sent, and additional inquiries were being received.

OLD BUSINESS:

1. Ambulance Service Area 2 Update:

Chief Chance reported that, in early September, the Lane County Board of Commissioners voted to permanently assign the District to Ambulance Service Area (ASA) 2, which encompasses approximately 122.49 square miles. The initial documentation identified WLFEA as the assigned entity. However, Chief Chance believes WLAD would be the more appropriate entity for the assignment and is working to have the designation corrected.

2. Arbitration Update:

Chief Chance provided an update on the arbitration proceedings involving two grievances. The first concerns FLSA overtime, for which the arbitrator ruled in favor of the Authority. The second grievance concerns the Conflagration pay for crews mobilized to California from the prior year, for which the arbitrator ruled in favor of the Union.

A full report is available for Directors who wish to review it. As a result of the ruling on conflagration pay, the District must recalculate payments for the California conflagration deployment for three individuals. The estimated difference is approximately \$1,100. Additional implications may include potential overpayments to other crew members. Mark Wolf is continuing to review the matter.

3. Policies reviewed from the July 24, 2026, meeting:

- a) 1004 – Position Descriptions
- b) 1005 – Tuition Reimbursement
- c) 1006 – Classification Specifications

- d) 1007 – Reporting for Duty
- e) 1008 – Fire Officer Development

NEW BUSINESS:

1. Vacant Civil Service Position:

Office Manager Lutgen informed the Board that Brenda Gilmore had resigned from her Civil Service position after moving out of state. As the position is appointed by the Board, Lutgen requested guidance on whether to advertise the vacancy on Facebook or in the newspaper and asked whether Board members knew of anyone who might be interested in the position.

Director Webb recommended advertising on Facebook. Chief Chance stated that interested individuals could visit the office to discuss the position. Director Russell asked about the qualifications for the position, and Chief Chance said he would provide them for her.

2. Surplus Computers:

Office Manager Lutgen informed the Board that Director Stanton and Josh McWhorter, an individual who is working with someone in the school district, had expressed interest in some of the surplus computers. Lutgen explained that McWhorter repairs computers and donates them to local schools. She asked whether the Board would consider donating the computers to the school with a formal letter.

The Board discussed concerns about the appearance of preferential treatment if the surplus computers were provided to Director Stanton. To ensure transparency and fairness, the Board discussed disposing of the computers through the State Auction process. Chief Chance said he would review the applicable policies regarding surplus equipment disposal.

The Surplus Computers discussion was tabled until the October Joint Board meeting.

3. WLAD: Resolution 2026-06 Calling for Levy Renewal:

WLAD Resolution 2026-06 was presented to the Board. The resolution replaces the previous resolution regarding the increase of levy and restores the levy to its original rate.

WLAD: Director Webb made a motion to approve WLAD Resolution 2026-6 Calling for Levy Renewal. The motion was seconded by Director Russell. A roll-call vote occurred; all WLAD Directors voted in favor, and the motion passed.

4. WLAD 2026-07 Budget Adjustment:

WLAD Resolution 2026-07 was presented to the Board. The resolution amends the 2026–27 budget by \$10,000 to account for refunds resulting from ambulance service overpayments.

WLAD: Director Webb made a motion to approve WLAD Resolution 2026-07 Budget Adjustment. The motion was seconded by Director Holbrook. A roll-call vote occurred; all WLAD Directors voted in favor, and the motion passed.

5. WLCR – Meadow Outdoor Proposal:

Chief Chance explained that WLCR's one-year contract with Meadow Outdoor for the billboard along Highway 126, just outside of town, was nearing expiration. WLCR would like to renew the contract at a slightly increased rate. The WLCR team indicated that the billboard has been beneficial to its outreach efforts.

Meadow Outdoor requested a response by October 1. Chief Chance will contact Meadow Outdoor to request an extension until the Board can review the proposal at its October meeting.

The WLCR – Meadow Outdoor Proposal was tabled until the October Joint Board meeting.

6. Ballot Drop Box:

Chief Chance informed the Board that Lane County had approached him regarding installing a ballot drop box at Station 1 but had since withdrawn the proposal, opting instead to install a drop box in Mapleton. He asked the Board for input on whether Station 1 should be considered as an alternative location if Lane County revisited the idea. Potential challenges discussed included drive-up access and determining the most suitable location, either in the gravel area across the street once it is paved or in the employee parking lot.

Director Russell expressed surprise that Lane County planned to install a second drop box so close to the existing drop box near the Police Station. Director Webb indicated he would support Lane County if they reconsidered Station 1 as an additional ballot drop box location.

Chief Chance stated that if Lane County approaches him again regarding the proposal, he will bring the matter back to the Board for further discussion.

7. Policies for Review:

- a) 1009 – Career Tracks
- b) 1010 – Overtime
- c) 1011 – Emergency Recall
- d) 1012 – Personnel Complaints
- e) 1013 – Wellness Program
- f) 1020 – Uniform Regulations

DIRECTOR COMMENTS:

Director Webb commented that he was impressed by the Swisshome Deadwood Board meeting he attended earlier with Chief Chance. Chief Chance agreed and expressed his appreciation for the partnership with Swisshome Deadwood.

Director Palisi informed the Board that he would be unable to attend the next several Board meetings due to health-related issues. Chief Chance wished him well and encouraged him to reach out if he needed any assistance.

FUTURE BUSINESS:

The next regular Joint Board Meeting is scheduled for October 22, 2026, at 6:00 p.m.

ADJOURNMENT:

The regular meeting adjourned at 6:34 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Holly Lais, Recording Secretary