

**Crooked River Ranch RFPD
6971 SW Shad Rd
Terrebonne, OR 97760-9250**

May 16, 2024

A Joint Public Hearing and Board meeting of the Crooked River Ranch Rural Fire Protection District Board of Directors took place on Thursday, May 16, 2024, at 6:00 pm, at the Crooked River Ranch Fire District Fire Station, located at 6971 SW Shad Road Crooked River Ranch, Oregon. The Public Budget Hearing started at 6:00 pm with the Board Meeting immediately following the hearing.

Public Budget Hearing Minutes

1. Called to Order by Director Norberg at 6:00 pm. Director Gayheart led the flag salute. Roll call was taken by Director Costigan and the following were in attendance: Director Norberg, Director Costigan, Director Pahl, and Director Gayheart. Director Palmer was excused. Also in attendance were Fire Chief Sean Hartley, Administrative Assistant Dana Schulke, Captain Adam Wiley, and Ryan Ahrendt. Members of the public in attendance were Bill Burt, Vicki Burt, Mike Dries, Russ Farrell, Arlene Farrell, and Robin Huber. Barb Oakley attended the hearing via Zoom.

2. Discussion on Increasing the Ambulance Rates for the District – Fire Chief Sean Hartley presented data gathered on current CRRFD ambulance billing rates and how those rates compare to other Districts around the state. The rates discussed are those billed for actual transport to a medical facility. He explained that several years ago the district split the rates into resident and non-resident rates because of the seasonal transient population. The rates are also divided into basic life support treatments and advanced life support treatments, as well as aid (non-transport) calls, which are billed at a flat rate of \$250. There is also a \$20 per-mile charge which helps offset the cost of maintenance and future ambulance purchases. These rates have not been reviewed since June 2021. Chief Hartley displayed a chart showing all the current rate breakdowns. He also presented the comparable ambulance billing rate survey done by Captain Delorto in February, which included data from 34 public agencies from across the state that do ambulance transport. Chief Hartley explained that since 2018, the district has been able to receive additional ambulance revenue from the Federal Ground Emergency Medical Transport Bill, which requires states to set up a program to reimburse for Medicaid patients. Our contractor then calculates an average transport cost in order to determine what the GEMT reimbursement rate will be, which is currently over \$3100. The survey found no other agency using that number. Our current billing rates put us in the bottom third of the agencies surveyed. Chief Hartley explained all of the factors in determining what the rates should be and then presented the proposed billing rate schedule change, which will go into effect on July 1, 2024, if approved by the Board.

3. Discussion/Action of the BOD – Director Costigan asked if the rope rescues without transport fall under the aid call category of billing, and Chief Hartley confirmed that they do. These rescues, as well as assistance at motor vehicle crashes, can be billed using the state’s mobilization plan rates for firefighters and apparatus. Director Costigan stated that the risk to first responders and the use of equipment in the rope rescues could merit a higher billing rate. In the interest of clarification for the public, Director Costigan asked for figures on typical expenditures of a residential call for cardiac arrest with the patient not being transported. Chief Hartley explained that the amount would be between \$600 and \$800. Director Costigan asked if the district will apply different rates for more routine non-transport calls where minimal assistance and supplies are used, and Chief Hartley responded that if an assessment results in no medication, no invasive procedure, and no transport to medical facility, then there would be no charge.

4. Comments from the Public – Russ Ferrell asked if the rate increases will affect the Fire Med insurance. Chief Hartley stated that program will remain the same, with the district billing members’ insurance and accepting whatever the insurance pays with no additional cost to the Fire Med member. Mr. Ferrell asked if the Fire Med rates will increase, and Chief Hartley explained that an increase has been under discussion with the Board. Director Gayheart then asked for clarification on an earlier statement about billing Medicare patients, and Chief Hartley clarified that the statement referred to Medicaid patients. Mr. Ferrell asked if there had been a study on how much money it has cost the district compared to what is actually received from the Fire Med program. Chief Hartley responded that a study is currently underway. Mr. Ferrell asked if it was known what the percentage of write-offs are compared to the amount billed, and Chief Hartley responded that the collection rate is approximately 60% of billed amount.

5. Adjournment – Director Norberg ended the Public Hearing at 6:26 PM.

Board Meeting Minutes

1. Called to Order at 6:26 pm. Roll call was taken by Director Costigan and the following individuals were in attendance: Director Norberg, Director Costigan, Director Pahl, and Director Gayheart. Director Palmer was excused. Also in attendance were Fire Chief Sean Hartley, Administrative Assistant Dana Schulke, Captain Adam Wiley, and Ryan Ahrendt. Members of the public in attendance were Bill Burt, Vicki Burt, Mike Dries, Russ Farrell, Arlene Farrell, and Robin Huber.

2. Review of Agenda – Director Norberg reviewed agenda items. Chief Hartley noted that he will add 4.3 to the agenda to respond to previous questions regarding CDs.

3. Approval of the Board meeting minutes from April 18, 2024 –

3.1 The minutes were reviewed by the Board, and they had no corrections. Director Gayheart made a motion to approve the minutes as presented. Director Pahl seconded the motion. All voted aye; motion carried (4-0).

4. Financial Reports

4.1 The financials were in the Board packet. Director Pahl reported an ending net income of \$1,468,399.48. Director Costigan asked about the EMS Operations being over budget. Chief Hartley explained that there was an increase to the match fund for

the GEMT program, which will eventually be returned to the district. Director Costigan further noted that the Rope Rescue line item was also over budget. Chief Hartley explained that one of the ropes had reached its ten-year life span and had to be replaced. The overall total of Materials and Services is still under budget, and there is no anticipation of further rope rescue expenditures. Jeff Scheetz, a rope rescue technician, has gone over the equipment and updated the replacement schedule. Director Costigan noted that Personnel Services amount has remained the same, and Chief Hartley explained that it was due to the unfilled firefighter/paramedic position. It was noted that an audit will be done on July 30, 2024. Director Costigan made a motion to accept and approve the April 2024 financials as presented. Director Gayheart seconded the motion. All voted aye; motion carried (4-0).

4.2 Appointment of Board members to sign checks – It was decided that Director Norberg and Director Costigan will sign checks on Monday, June 10th, and Director Norberg and Director Palmer will sign checks on June 24, 2024.

4.3 Discussion on CDs – Chief Hartley explained that a question had previously been raised about whether the district could put some of the money from the Capital Reserve Fund into CDs, and he noted that a discussion with the auditor confirmed that was allowable. However, it was determined that the CD interest rates were not as high as those currently received from the local government investment pool through the State Treasury, which is 5.2%.

5. Unfinished business –

5.1 Discussion on Public Meeting policy revision/update and Board access to Vector Solutions for training. – Chief Hartley explained that Vector Solutions is the learning management system used to track our training. SDAO provides a package through Vector Solutions for free. Captain Wiley, District Training Officer, is working with them to determine if we are eligible for free access or whether we will have to obtain five licenses for Board members. There has been no response to date.

6. New Business –

6.1 Discussion/Approval of Resolution 2024-02 for unanticipated receipt of grant funds into the General Fund – Chief Hartley explained that the district had applied for the OSFM Wildland Fire Season Staffing Grant again, and the check for \$35,000 has been received. This will fund six additional part-time staff over the summer to increase the on-duty crews. Director Pahl made a motion to approve Resolution 2024-02 to accept and approve unanticipated funds from the OSFM Seasonal Staffing Grant as presented. Director Gayheart seconded the motion. All voted aye; motion carried (4-0).

7. Fire Chief's Report – His report was in the Board packet. Chief Hartley reported that three of last year's seasonal staff are returning for the summer, and Captain Wiley interviewed two promising candidates today. As of the end of April there were 185 calls, 41 fewer than at the same time last year. The Open House was a success, in spite of the bad weather. Jefferson County will begin testing the emergency alert system on the Ranch within the next week. None of the candidates for the firefighter/paramedic position passed the Assessment Center, so that position is being reposted. We have engaged with the National Testing Network to assist with recruitment. The new engine has been built, and delivery is

anticipated before June 1st. All other large apparatuses have had annual services. Wright Ford is leaving Redmond, so service on the District's Ford chassis vehicles will now be done at TS&S Ford in Madras. Jefferson County Commissioners have revisited the Defensible Space projects with Title III funds from the County. The sheriff's office can request some of those funds for search and rescue and patrol of federal lands within the county. There will be a joint meeting to clarify the eligibility piece, so as of now we are waiting to see how much of these grant funds will be for the fire districts in Jefferson County.

8. CERT Report – Chief Hartley reported that Dana has to plan a mock training as required by one of her certifications through the Oregon Fire Service Office Administrators Association. She is working with Captain Wiley and Linda Kay Widmer on planning the annual CERT drill. The next CERT training will be with the Jefferson County Sheriff's Office Emergency Manager, focusing on evacuation systems. The team has completed CPR/First Aid training.

9. Comments/Questions –

9.1 Public input on the current agenda – none

9.2 Public input on future agenda topics – none

10. Correspondence/Recognitions/Good of the Order – none

11. Adjournment by Director Norberg at 7:00 pm.

Respectfully submitted,
Dana Schulke, Administrative Assistant