

BANKS FIRE DISTRICT #13

13430 NW MAIN STREET, BANKS, OR 97106

REGULAR BOARD MEETING MINUTES

Meeting Date: Wednesday, May 10, 2023

Meeting Location: Banks Fire District #13, Banks Main Station 13 Training Room

Call to Order: Board Chair Rae Weaver called the meeting to order at 7:05 pm (Please note the Budget Meeting was held prior to the Board Meeting).

Board Members Present: Ed Ewing, Mark Standley, Jr., Rae Weaver and John Wren.

Board Members Absent: Kevin Henning

Approval of Agenda (Action Item): Ed Ewing made a motion to approve the May agenda. John Wren seconded the motion. Voting for the motion: Ed Ewing, Mark Standley, Jr. and John Wren. Opposed: None. The motion carried.

Approval of Minutes of Previous Regular Board Meeting (Action Item):

Motion by John Wren to approve the minutes from the General Session, April 12, 2023 as presented. Ed Ewing seconded the motion. Voting in favor of the motion: Mark Standley, Jr., Ed Ewing and John Wren. Opposed: None. The motion carried.

Treasurer's Report:

LGIP: \$1,821,494.75

General Fund: \$	823,887.62
Capital Funds: \$	640,691.43
Debt Service: \$	207,979.01
Bond Projects: \$	143,375.25

US Bank: \$19,735.72

Approval of Accounts Payable (Action Item): Motion by Ed Ewing to approve accounts payable as of April 30, 2023, in the amount of \$234,497.87. John Wren seconded the motion. Voting in favor: Ed Ewing, Mark Standley, Jr. and John Wren. Opposed: None.

Financial Statements Received by Board of Directors (Action Item): Financial statements were received and reviewed by the board. Motion by Ed Ewing to receive financial statements of the district dated April 30, 2023. John Wren seconded the motion. Voting in favor: Ed Ewing, Mark Standley, Jr. and John Wren. Opposed: None. The motion carried.

Information Items:

Chief's Report:

- The district had 60 calls in April which is slightly higher than normal call volume from last year. It appears that the district is trending to have the same volume of calls as last year.
- The two last minute grant requests submitted to Washington County (mentioned at last month's Board Meeting) were not approved. The police received the majority of the funds. There may be future funding opportunities available from this same resource.

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- Had joint officer and staff training with our HR specialist in April. Topics included leadership and employee interaction.
- Tualatin Soil & Water Conservation District will have a plan put together for the Hornshuh Creek Station stream enhancement project. A representative will give a presentation at a Board Meeting in the next month or two.
- There has been a change in leadership at Vernonia Fire. Chief Smith has left and Rob Davis has been appointed Interim Fire Chief.
- We are working with Ramsey Sign for an update of our front reader board sign at Station 13. We received a FEMA grant to update the current sign with a digital sign.
- The district was awarded two small grants last month. One from Oregon State Fire Marshall for Fire Prevention materials in the amount of \$5,500 and one from MACC for our annual shared internet (BUG) fees for approximately \$6,000.
- Board Member John Wren asked about all the recent out of district calls we've been receiving particularly in Vernonia. Chief Linz stated the calls we receive from Vernonia can be deceiving because when called communication takes place between shift officers and Chief Linz to determine if we have enough resources to go. Often, we move to Station 14 and many times we don't go at all it depends on the situation. If it is a 911 call and there is a patient or transport needed, we will respond. If it is a call to cover the town we will either staff in quarters at Station 13 or 14. Board Member Wren stated he does not like to see us use our resources to cover someone else's district as we would have no resources for our district. Chief stated he is aware of the issue and continues to make sure we have coverage for our district. Chief stated the only out of district calls we have been responding to are urgent 911 calls as we don't use our resources to respond to Code 1 calls. Code 1 calls are stacked in which they hold for a unit to become available. We did staff the district for Forest Grove last Saturday to cover for their awards banquet so there may have been a couple of Code 1 calls during that time.
- Board Chair Rae Weaver stated she had done some research on the Oregon Health Authority website and came across an application last quarter from Vernonia Fire and was curious what that was for. Chief Linz explained that Metro West was under contract with Vernonia Fire to provide service. Due to the shift in EMS services Vernonia Fire decided to transport themselves to cover their fees and supplement their staffing. Board Chair Weaver stated this should alleviate mutual aid to Vernonia. Chief Linz said it should but they don't have the staffing to accommodate this yet.

Training Officer Report:

- Recruit Academy is going very well. Evaluations are Thursday. The district will have six new members.
- Wildland fire academy will be held next weekend.
- The district is sending a crew to an acquired structure burn this Saturday with Forest Grove Fire. Two of our members are working on completing their live fire instructor in their task books.
- The district sent some of our members to The Dalles this past weekend for various hands and lecture classes. The courses included The Art of Reading Smoke, Nozzle Forward and RIT/Fire Rescue.

Volunteer Coordinator Report:

- We currently have 5 paramedics that volunteer with Banks Fire. Lt. Perry is working on recruiting more. We have one paramedic's application in process.
- Lt. Perry and Lt. Kemper will be attending a fire officer conference later this month to obtain and strengthen their leadership skills.

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- We have one intern in paramedic school. We have one member working on passing their test and one member who recently passed their test and is a new paramedic.

EMS Officer Report:

- The district recently took delivery of our third LUCAS CPR device. This device will be deployed to Station 14 on Engine 14. This will give us expanded abilities to perform high quality CPR. Currently we have two devices at Station 13 (Engine 13 and UT14). Adding to Station 14 will give us better first out coverage.
- Washington County 911 contract update: Current negotiations with AMR are ongoing and the transition is taking shape. At the county level, the start date has been pushed back to August 1st instead of July 1st. There are still many unknowns with this and we are looking at options to stay self-sufficient should things take a drastic downturn.

Public Information Officer (PIO Scott Adams) Report:

- Last Monday a patient from a November call attended drill to thank the district. The patient was involved in a head-on collision and was extricated and life flighted to the hospital. She wanted to give her perspective from the patient's side of things. She stated that the crews were helpful, reassuring and comforting. The crew gained knowledge from hearing the patient's perspective during a call.
- Tomorrow Regional Meetings of the Columbia Pacific Economic Development District (ColPac) and Northwest Oregon Area Commission on Transportation (NWACT) will be held at Station 14. County leaders from Washington, Clatsop and Tillamook Counties will be in attendance of this regional meeting.
- There will be a retirement dinner for Chief Smith of Vernonia Fire on 5/22/23 to recognize his 20 years of service.

April Safety/Near Miss Report

- No safety issues to report.
- No damage to any of the apparatus.
- No COVID cases reported.

Old Business:

- Medic Update –
 - The district met with AMR last Friday. Questions and concerns were discussed regarding the transition from Metro West to AMR. AMR does not loan Medics to jurisdictions as is the current process with Metro West. Chief investigated the possibility of purchasing a used medic but there were no used medics available.
 - With the current crisis in the County, Banks Fire needs a Medic/Ambulance as Heavy Rescue 13 cannot transport. Metro West currently provides a car in 11 minutes, if available. Wait time at the hospitals is up to three hours. Banks Fire is listed in the eighth position in Washington County for transports. All jurisdictions need to work together through this crisis. Unfortunately, the system is failing and out of district transports continue to occur. For example, last Monday, the EMS call system had 15 cars available to transport. 19 calls came in and Banks Fire was called to Hillsboro for an ALS transport for a young child. Banks responded and transported the patient.
 - Chief Linz recommended that district purchase a medic. The district has the funding in the Apparatus Reserve Fund to purchase. A quote of \$264,000 was received to purchase the type of medic the district requires. If we order now, we will get locked into a schedule and will receive the medic in approximately 500 to 545 days from date of order. With the current market and prices continuing to increase Chief is afraid if we wait the district will pay more than the current quoted price.

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- Chief explained when the system is stressed the goal is to take care of our own citizens, but we can't predict 100% what will occur. We want to provide quality care to all including citizens outside of our jurisdiction when necessary. We as a system need to work together to resolve the EMS crisis. Banks Fire is one of five agencies in a system that needs to work together. We as a district need to be proactive and look to the future of our district.
- Board Member Ed Ewing asked when the district would have to pay for the new unit and if we could back out after it is ordered. Chief stated we pay upon delivery of the unit and could back out up until modifications are completed.
- Board Member John Wren was concerned about sending Banks Fires' resources out of the district and not responding to our own district. He stated that he sees it as Banks Fire District subsidizing Hillsboro Fire, Forest Grove Fire and Tualatin Valley Fire. He stated that the district is going out of the district a lot. He is concerned that if we purchase a new medic that it won't be used appropriately and will be used on mutual aid calls outside of our district. Mr. Wren also stated we may need to save our apparatus dollars for a new engine. He suggested waiting a little longer until the AMR contract is complete.
- Board Chair Rae Weaver has had discussions with several people in our community and outside of our community regarding the EMS services in our county. The main concern and statement she heard repeatedly is that the EMS System is broken. Citizens both in and outside of our district are mainly concerned with the time it would take for a medic to respond and less concern was focused on the cost of the medic.
 - Ms. Weaver conducted research and found an article dated the end of 2022 that surveyed 21 agencies in the State of Oregon and surveys indicated that there were 158 paramedic vacancies. Nationally, 55% of paramedic positions remain unfilled.
 - Ms. Weaver spoke with someone from Tualatin Valley Fire & Rescue and was told they are in the process of obtaining more medics.
- Chief Linz added that there has been a significant change in Washington County. Prior to this crisis, transports were a paramedic system. In November of 2022, the county enacted a two-tier system to include ALS (Advanced Life Support requiring a paramedic) and BLS (Basic Life Support not requiring a paramedic). Banks Fire District runs 70% EMS calls and cannot refuse to transport a patient. Multnomah County is also moving to this system. The EMS system will be seeing more and more of the BLS transports and Banks Fire will be able to assist with this process.
- Board Member John Wren asked if we would have to transport these calls 100% of the time. Chief Linz stated it depends on the call. Mr. Wren stated in the past 25 years the fire departments have not wanted to get into being a transport agent because then the department could be required to respond to a lot of these types of calls.
- Chief Linz explained that the way the county has set up the private public partnership is when the system becomes overloaded then the private public partnership is enacted. The Fire agencies takes the pressure off of the EMS system to get the patients to the hospital. Trends are showing that transport requests are increasing due to an increase in overall calls to the EMS system. He stated we as a system (all the agencies in the county) work together; when they need help we help them and when we need help they help us.
- Lt. Chris Perry added that when an agency brings on paramedics the agency has to commit themselves to help paramedic patients whether it is in or out of our district. We need to look at it as we are providing care to our people. Our crews need to be cognizant of the fact that not all transports need to take a paramedic with them. If the patient can be taken care of by an EMR or EMT there is no reason why the paramedic needs to go on the transport.

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- Chief Linz stated that when there is a fire and mutual aid is requested, we never have an issue with responding. He said there should be no difference to us responding on medical calls particularly if it is to respond to a 911 call to save someone's life. He is not sure why we keep having the discussion about the Medic responding to out of district calls.
- Board Member Wren responded that is not just about the Medic. He stated we continue to go on calls to Forest Grove and he asked how many calls does Forest Grove respond to of ours?
- Chief Linz stated our district averages 4 calls per day and Forest Grove averages 14 calls per day and Cornelius averages 7 calls per day. Both Forest Grove and Cornelius are overtaxed. The return of them responding to us is very low. Chief continued that we can move to not respond to the other agencies but is this what we want Banks Fire to be known as? He stated we are in the business as a player in a system and we need to respond accordingly when the system is stressed.
- Board Member Wren stated he is not stating we should not go on mutual aid calls, but we need to be reasonable. It needs to be occasional not on a daily basis.
- Chief Linz stated to the board what he is asking the board for is a decision on a piece of equipment. He said he has presented them with the facts and is unsure of what other information they need to make the decision. He said with the EMS crisis he believes we should be proactive and purchase the medic.
- Board Member Mark Standley asked to speak. He stated that transportation is key in an organization be it a fire station or a business. When he heard that the transportation contract for the EMS services had been turned over to a new agency it made him nervous. He stated in today's society the task of taking over as transport agent is going to be a difficult task to overcome and there are more than likely going to be some difficult times. He thinks as a Board they really need to look at it. He said with the high volume of medical calls we respond to we need to consider it. He stated that our community when they call 911 doesn't see AMR or Metro West as the responders, they see Banks Fire. If no one shows up they will be calling and asking what is going on and why aren't we responding? If we have the money and the manpower why don't we move forward.
- John Wren stated, "do we have the manpower"? He stated right now we are subsidizing with high school students and interns. He said that the question is can we handle this or how much longer will we be able to keep the volunteers? He then asked how many true volunteers we have.
- Chief Linz stated that he needed to correct Board Member Wren's statement and that Banks Fire is not subsidizing any staffing with high school students. The high school program is students learning about firefighting they are not volunteers.
- Mark Standley stated that none of us know what the outcome of the EMS crisis will be but he stated we need to move forward as build times for these units is long or we will be way behind.
- Board Member Ed Ewing stated that he felt like the board had heard all the facts and wanted to know is there some reason that doesn't make sense to move forward with making a motion to move forward.
- Chief Linz said what he needed from the board was a motion to move forward to enter a contract with Braun NW not to exceed \$267,000 which includes the list price of \$264,239 plus room for the cost of modifications. This medic will be a complete unit with a new Ford gasoline chassis, four-wheel drive, almost comparable to the current Medic 13. Next month there will be a final approval. This will lock us into a build time of approximately 18 months.
- Ed Ewing made a motion to enter a contract with Braun NW not to exceed \$267,000 for the purchase of a new Medic. Mark Standley, Jr. seconded the motion. Voting in

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favor of the motion: Ed Ewing, Mark Standley, Jr. and Rae Weaver. Opposed: John Wren. The motion carried.

- Chief Linz suggested that perhaps before the next Board Meeting that he could meet with Board Member Wren and other concerned members regarding the Forest Grove Mutual Aid issue. Perhaps they could give some suggestions for a resolution. Chief Linz stated that he is very proud of Banks Fire and our self-reliance. He stated other agencies have commented on the fact that we are self-reliant, and we are primarily a volunteer department.

New Business:

- **Resolution 05102023A – Resolution approving grant funds (Action Item)** Banks Fire District received \$5,000 in grant funds from AgWest Farm Credit Small Community Grant for the purchase of a Lucas Chest Compression System. Ed Ewing made a motion to approve Resolution 05102023A in the amount of \$5,000. John Wren seconded the motion. Voting in favor: Ed Ewing, Mark Standley, Jr. and John Wren. Opposed: None. The motion carried.

Audience Response:

- Sheila McGonigal, Hillsboro, OR – suggested a field trip for the Board Members to Washington County Consolidated Communications Agency (WCCCA) to see how the EMS system works. The Board was interested in this and Chief Linz stated he would get something set up.
- Sheila McGonigal, Hillsboro, OR – thanked Board Chair Weaver for doing research on the whole health care crisis. She thanked Board Member Standley for his comments on the topic as well. She stated that when an agency shows up for a 911 call the patient does not care who provides the transportation, they just want the option to be transported. She thanked the staff of Banks Fire for all the grants that have been pursued and received.
- Clint Jackson, Banks, OR – stated that he was unsure how the new transport agency, AMR, would make a difference in the EMS crisis as they have already made changes to their proposal. Chief Linz agreed that many promises were made, and the outcome is uncertain. AMR promised 30 staffed units to Washington County in their proposal which is a significant number of units. The outcome is unsure.

Good of the Order:

- Marsha Kirk, Banks, Oregon stated that Chief Linz would be speaking to ODOT tomorrow to inquire about getting a flashing light installed at Station 14 the meeting being held at Station 14 tomorrow. She asked about the protection contract that Banks Fire has with Stubb Stewart State Park and if that also includes the Banks Vernonia Trail. Chief Linz said he would have to look at the contract but either way Banks Fire responds to trail calls. She asked if the Salmonberry nonprofit had contacted the district about a contract. Chief Linz stated they had not. Ms. Kirk suggested it could possibly be a way for more resource revenue for the district.
- Board Member John Wren asked when the new website would be up and running. He also wanted to state the importance of making sure more detail is on our reader boards regarding the Board Meetings. Chief Linz stated the new website is under construction and should be available soon. We underestimated how much work was involved in transitioning to the new site.
- Board Chair Rae Weaver thanked the Budget Committee and Board for their input at the meeting. She also wanted to state that Banks Fire cares deeply about our neighboring communities, but we also care very deeply about our community of Banks and we not only want to be fiscally responsible, but we also want to be good neighbors.

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Adjourn Meeting: There being no further comments, Board Chair Rae Weaver adjourned the meeting at 9:35 pm.

Ed Ewing
Secretary

Kari Erwert
Recording Secretary