

**Tangent Rural Fire District  
Board of Directors Meeting  
Minutes  
September 8, 2021**

**Board Members Present:** John Dunn, Scott Richards, Chris Meyer, Bruce Riley, Paul Strombeck  
**Staff Present:** Chief Wooldridge, AC Vonasek, BC Chapin, OA Conrad  
**Others Present:** Volunteer John Pegg, Volunteer Chris Hunt  
**Others Absent:** Volunteer Assn. President Walters

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Chair Dunn called the meeting to order at 7:02 p.m.

**I. APPROVAL OF:**

**Minutes – Regular Board Meeting – August 11, 2021**

**Action:** Strombeck moved to approve the minutes of August 11, 2021, as presented. Meyer seconded the motion. Upon vote, it passed unanimously (5-0).

**Financial Report – August 2021**

**Action:** Riley moved to approve the June financial report as submitted. Richards seconded the motion. Upon vote, it passed unanimously (5-0).

**II. STANDING REPORTS:**

**Volunteers Association** – In Assn. President Walters absence, Volunteer Pegg reported there will not be a pancake breakfast this year, but the Volunteers are interested in a community outreach event. Albany Fire is not doing their treasure hunt this year, instead are planning a “Drive thru” on October 2. There is a possibility the event will be at the fairgrounds with multiple agencies from throughout the county participating. We are looking to partake with an engine and handing out goodie bags which include fire prevention and educational material. The board suggests featuring this event on our website and Facebook for our Tangent community to be informed.

**Fire Chief’s Report** – (The following is the Chief’s written report as well as additional comments made at the meeting.)

**COVID-19:** The new mandate by the Governor of Oregon and AHA will have a significant impact on the fire service. Though they have ‘allowed’ religious exemptions, they are only creating a means for some people to lie to keep their jobs. Tangent Fire will not see a major impact at this time as we only have 1 member that is not vaccinated. I hope that all entities involved can find a better solution that will allow for people’s rights to not be infringed, yet not ask them to make false statements as a way to keep their jobs. Hoping for positivity.

**Linn County Radio System:** The project is 100% certain. We were informed that monies for the project will start showing up in October/November. At this time, I do not know the final amount that will be dedicated to the project. This is a major win in communications and the safety of our Fire and EMS people.

**Fire Season:** Fire season is here, and Tangent Fire has participated, in some fashion, in 6 conflagrations. Today we deployed one person to participate in the Cougar Peak conflag near Lakeview. Proud of the work we have done on fires and back here at the station. At the Devil's Knob fire, we were there for 3 days doing prep work, sprinkler systems in Ash Valley. We were pulled out because fire was not going to be there for days, as of today fire has reached Ash Valley, but there was not a request for structure resources. Which I assume means our work protected the structures. We put 23 sprinklers on one house. I have submitted all but the last deployment for reimbursement to the district.

**Tender 73:** Tender 73 is still at the body shop awaiting parts and repairs. We still do not have a timeline on repair time due to part delays and COVID back-ups.

**Linn County EM:** I am working with the new Linn County Emergency Manager to update our county plan. As we work through the project, I will insert TFD where feasible and where we can help. It's exciting to work with someone from out of the area that has a fresh set of eyes and ideas.

**Volunteers:** I have had some great and open discussions with a few in district volunteers. It was refreshing to have some volunteers open up to me, as we spoke as friends. I appreciate how they feel, their comments, concerns, and suggestions, and mostly the passion and emotions I saw from a few. There are good volunteers out there and some have already shown some positive movements in their attitudes since our talks. I will keep all names private, as they have indicated that was their preference and it gave them a feeling that they could speak freely, and I will honor that. (See additional discussion details in Old Business.)

**Asst. Chief/Training Officer's Report** – (The following is the Asst. Chief's written report as well as additional comments made at the meeting.)

### **FIRE & EMS TRAINING** –

- **In-House** – We are looking at restructuring the timeline of different topics for the new firefighters. We have observed that new members lose some of their competency by quickly jumping into another training topic before mastering their skills as a firefighter. We will integrate this into our next Firefighter 1 Academy. We will schedule the academy following volunteer interviews process.
- **Regional** – The Linn-Benton Fire Training Council is going down a path of separating itself from the College. This will make a stand-alone training council, which will give more flexibility, and lower the cost for training. There are many obstacles which still need resolving. With Division Chief Shawn Morgan of Corvallis Fire serving as the new President, I have stepped into a consultant role for the training council and will remain as a Admin. Support and Lead Instructor for the Training Council. Through a grant from DPSST, the LBFTC purchased a Forcible Entry Prop for regional use. This training prop will allow rural departments to help firefighter forcible entry training at various levels.

- **State** – Reached out to DPSST to request the following training at Tangent Fire: Flammable Liquids and Gases training, Vehicle Fire Safety & Training. Also, a Traffic Incident Management Training through ODOT.
- **OR-EMS** – Working on getting Dr. Trey Woods, our current physician advisor, to come in to meet our EMTs and have a Case Review training.
- **National** – The National Fire Academy has continued to remain open for classes on the Emmitsburg, MD campus during the upswing of COVID-19 cases.

#### HEALTH & SAFETY –

- **Safety Committee** – The Safety Committee will hold a regular monthly meeting, and minutes are posted.
- **Policies – NEW Or-OSHA Temp. Rule – Heat Illness Prevention**, came into play following heat wave in June in which the PDX airport hit 116 deg. on June 28<sup>th</sup>. Temp. Rule in place with training by August 1<sup>st</sup>. Our intro to Heat Illness Prevention held July 20<sup>th</sup>. Updating new COVID procedures, also updating Respiratory Protection and for District specific policies
- **Respiratory Protection** - SCBAs received their annual flow-test in June
- **SCBA Update** – Looking for grant writers, the search has expanded to four grant writers. “Interviewing each of them” – deciding which will provide us the best opportunity for us to succeed in applying for the AFG grant.

#### EQUIPMENT UPDATE –

- **Equipment** – Bunker Gear – We ordered new turnouts for a few people. Due to COVID, we expect the structural fire PPE ordered, will be delivered in October.

#### COMMUNITY OUTREACH –

- **Tangent Fire District Website** – Is holding its own very well.
- **Tangent Community Blood Drive** – Next Red Cross Blood Drive is October 14<sup>th</sup>.

**Staff Battalion Chief's Report** – (The following is the Staff Battalion Chief's written report as well as added comments made at the meeting.)

**Fire Inspections-** Completed a new fire alarm test for Tangent Elementary School, which passed. They will need to install one smoke detector that is on backordered. South Albany Storage is now in compliance with all inspections. I have worked with Pillar Consulting on a kitchen hood project for the Camless property on Rolland Dr.

**Pre-Plans-** Working with FlowMSP to finalize our new pre-fire plan software and mapping with dispatch. Hoping this project will be complete by the end of the week.

**Fire Prevention/ED-** We will send an engine crew to Albany to participate in the 9/11 Ceremonies this Saturday.

**Vehicle Maintenance-** E-73 had the front axle realigned, axle was ½ inch off. E-71 received new tires, and had its alignment re-checked. Engine 71 had new tires and alignment. A discussion of tire wear, curved roads, and camber angle of the tires with a conclusion of rotating the tires more frequently to reduce uneven wear. I have completed some minor repairs on loose bolts on E-71 & E-73 and minor equipment repairs.

**Building Maintenance-** Nothing to report.

**Volunteers-** We have processed 5 new applications for volunteers. Two of the applicants are in district. We hope to have them on board by middle of September. This will allow them time to do all mandatory trainings prior to fire academy. Three of the new recruits were interviewed last night. This will bring the count to 6, one from earlier is interested again. I have been working on a Volunteer requirement handbook. I have been in touch with several departments and compiled it together to start the conversation of removing the “In-district/Out of district” differences and added a few things that other districts have found successful. There was a discussion among the board and staff of Chapin ideas. One example, a portion of future EF recovery funds could be used for a cell phone stipend like some other districts are doing. Because of Chapin’s schedule he has not had the opportunity to talk with the Chief or the Volunteer Officers. Once Chapin has talked to them, he will then take this information to the Volunteer Association meeting to discuss it with the volunteers. Everyone’s input is important for these changes and we must all work together.

**Resident Students Volunteers-** All three of our RVs are accepted in Chemeketa Community College Paramedic program. The RVs are continuing their weekly drills on Fridays. The RVs and a couple of volunteers were given the chance to go over to the Corvallis Drill Tower; learning how to deploy hoses to standpipes and how to attack a fire in a high-rise building. Our department is being called to assist Corvallis more often. If we get a call to respond to an OSU campus fire on the 6<sup>th</sup> floor of a building, we need to know how to approach that type of fire. In basic academy it is talked about, but very seldom in our area is it practiced; there are not a lot of 6 story buildings in district. We went over 4 different approaches for this type of fire. It is likely we could be called to support Corvallis in doing their own operation; but if we do not have an idea of how that works, then we will not know what to do to support them. We need to know how to help if the need arises. The RVs came back with great feedback and want to go back over to get more training. I plan on setting up more Friday drills at Corvallis to help facilitate different learning techniques that we cannot facilitate here.

**Wildland-** I went on the Middle Fork Complex, I was gone for 7 days.

**Activity Report:** Total calls were 254 for the month of August, up 56 from 2020 and 13 from 2019 and up 10 calls from last month. September is seeming to be slower with the cooler weather. Responders receive a pre-alert medical or fire page from Active 911. As more detailed information is obtained, an official tone out goes out to our department. This gives the information needed to respond to the call, what exactly and where. The big rig goes out to all MVA, this way we are prepared for the worst-case scenario. We can down grade, as necessary. EF Recovery is a company that retrieves uncollected funds for out of district MVA. We are in the process of allowing EF Recovery access our infers (reports). They can go back one year and analyze these reports, collect the information needed for them to invoice the insurance company. After the chief approves the invoice, EF Recovery submits it. EF Recovery adds 10% to the billable amount for their work. Other small departments in the Willamette Valley have recovered over \$20,000.

### III. **OLD BUSINESS:**

**Volunteer Hours and Participation:** (Refer to Chief Wooldridge reports – Volunteers) Chief Wooldridge spoke with a few volunteers and he asked these three questions:

1. Why don't you respond?
2. What could make you respond?
3. How do you feel about making no "in-district" "out of district" and everybody have the same hours?

The majority responded:

1. The students are already here and fill the seats in the rig. It used to be that the on-duty student would get a seat but would save the other seats for the volunteers and if there was still room the other students could fill the open seats. The volunteers are coming to the station and seeing the seats are full and not wanting to have that confrontation just let the students have the seats. Which leads to, "Why should I go down to the station when a call come in?"

The morale of the volunteers is bad, a lot of gossip going on at the station. They feel, they do not want to be a part of that.

2. There were not any suggestions on why or what could change to have them come down.
3. They are concerned starting the hours all at once, the in-district people would not be interested. A step-up process should be set in place for adding the hours.

Chief was impressed that these volunteers still have passion for firefighting, and they want to be here.

Concerns from the board were if the students waited until all the volunteers came in to fill the seats, what would that do to the call times? The chief asked for the computer screen be put back up about a month ago.

This allows to see the active responders and the number of responders. Everyone can see who is on their way to the station for the call. We do not want to jeopardize anyone's health or care, so the volunteers can have a seat on the rig; all along we have encouraged them to bring another piece of apparatus.

Discussion continues regarding the hours of in and out of district volunteers and tabled for now.

**Flagpole Discussion Update:** Chief Wooldridge researched the flagpole and suggested a 40 foot above ground pole, internal fly (the pulley, rope etc. everything is inside the pole, thus protected from the weather and secures it). The cost is about \$3100.00. There is other prep work that would be needed, the base, electricity, or a solar light for the top. There are a lot of options. This is just a portion of a bigger project

we'd like to do. This is in the early stages of the design of the flagpole. Board member Richards volunteered to chair a committee. Volunteers will be asked if they would like to participate on the committee at their next meeting. The committee is asked to present findings prior to the next budget year.

**IV. NEW BUSINESS:**

**Posting Board Meeting Minutes:** It was brought to Conrad's attention that because the minutes are not posted until after the following months meeting, the citizens are not able to follow what is happening in the meetings in real time. Example, if something is brought up at August's meeting, which was not on the agenda, they do not know about it until after the September meeting. Conrad has investigated if unapproved minutes could be posted and found it is allowed. After a discussion, minutes will now be posted as "Proposed Minutes" after written and added to the website. After approved by the board, Conrad will be posting the minutes as "Adopted Minutes" the day after the follow month's meeting.

**GOOD OF THE ORDER:**

- Next Regular Board Mtg. – October 13, 2021 – 7:00 p.m.

**I. EXECUTIVE SESSION PER ORS 192.660(2)(b):**

At 8:02 p.m. Chair Dunn recessed the meeting into Executive Session per the above listed ORS.

**II. RESUME REGULAR OPEN MEETING:**

At 8:25 p.m. Chair Dunn resumed the regular Board meeting and the following action was taken.

**Action:** Board Member Meyer moved to accept the resignation of Fire Chief Larry Wooldridge effective September 30, 2021. The motion was seconded by Strombeck and it passed unanimously (5-0).

Discussion of Chief Wooldridge purchasing the 2-year-old Macintosh laptop computer he has been using while here at Tangent Fire.

**Action:** Board Member Dunn moved to allow Chief Wooldridge to purchase his Macintosh laptop computer for \$750.00, once it is verified there is no Tangent Fire business files on the computer, and it is not part of inventory for Tangent Fire. The motion was seconded by Richards and it passed unanimously (5-0).

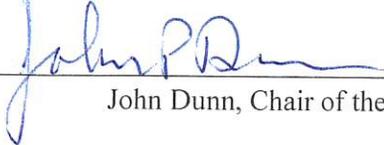
Discussion of obtaining an Interim Chief candidate looking internally or outside of the department and asking SDAO if there is a list of candidates. Board members will reach out to possible internal candidates. Also, a discussion of what steps need completing prior to the conclusion of Wooldridge employment with Tangent Fire. The board is considering holding a special meeting in the next couple of weeks.

Chair Dunn adjourned the meeting at 9:10 p.m.

Proposed Minutes submitted by Denny Conrad.  
Office Administrator

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APPROVED BY:



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John Dunn, Chair of the Board

10-13-2021

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Date