

**Tangent Rural Fire District  
Board of Directors Meeting  
Minutes  
June 6, 2022**

**Board Members Present:** John Dunn, Chris Meyer, Bruce Riley, Paul Strombeck, Scott Richards  
**Staff Present:** IFC Stearns, AC Vonasek, BC Chapin, OA Conrad  
**Others:** Volunteer Assn. John Pegg  
**Citizens:** None present

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President Dunn called the meeting to order at 7:03 p.m.  
No citizens connected to the phone-in Zoom meeting tonight.  
Public Hearing – Open Public Hearing

I. **CITIZEN COMMENTS:** None

II. **PUBLIC HEARING TO ADOPT FY 2022-23 BUDGET (Resolution No. 2022-01):** President Dunn opened the public hearing to receive public comment, but no citizens were present. The Board did not have any further comments after the Budget Committee meeting held in May. Dunn then closed the public hearing and the following motion ensued:

**Action:** Meyer motioned to approve Resolution No. 2022-01 (Officially Adopting the FY 2022-23 Budget of the Tangent Rural Fire Protection District, Making Appropriations, and Imposing & Categorizing Taxes), such budget as approved and forwarded by the Budget Committee in the amount of \$2,327,485, which includes \$1,433,810 for all appropriations for all funds and \$893,675 for unappropriated ending balance and monies reserved for future expenditures; AND he further moved to impose a \$2.5739/\$1,000 tax rate upon the assessed value of all taxable property within the District. Riley seconded the motion, and, upon vote, it passed unanimously, (5-0)

**Minutes –Amended Budget Committee Meeting –May 2, 2022**

**Action:** Meyer motioned to approve the minutes of Amended Budget Committee Meeting Minutes for the May 2, 2022, as submitted. Strombeck seconded the motion. Upon vote, it passed unanimously (5-0).

III. **APPROVAL OF:**

**Minutes – Regular Board Meeting – May 11, 2022**

Board requested May minutes to be revised and resubmitted at the July Board Meeting.

**Financial Report – May 2022**

**Action:** Meyer moved to approve the March 2022 financial report as submitted. Richards seconded the motion. Upon vote, it passed unanimously, (5-0).

#### IV. STANDING REPORTS:

##### Volunteer Association – Pegg

Pancake Breakfast – June 18, 2022 - 7:00 to 10:00 a.m. Set up at 6:00 and would like the Board assistance with the breakfast, if available.

##### Interim Fire Chief – Stearns

(The following is the Interim Chief’s written report as well as added comments made at the meeting.)

##### **Meetings Attended:**

Three weekly staff meetings  
Three Tuesday evening drills  
TRFPD Board meeting.  
TRFPD budget committee meeting  
Emergency Telephone Agency budget meeting.

##### **Budget:**

Budget committee met and approved the fiscal 2022-2023 budget as submitted. Budget hearing and adoption is scheduled for June 6.

##### **Fire Chief hiring process:**

Application process ended May 20. Applications resumes and letters of introduction have been assembled into packets and given to the Board members for individual consideration. Board members have been asked to each select their top 5 candidates and submit them to me on the form provided. June 6 the Board will meet in Exec. Session to review and determine which candidates will be invited to move on in the process.

##### **OFCA Conference:**

May 4-6, I attended the Oregon Fire Chief’s Association Conference held in Bend. While at the conference I was able to meet with several prospective candidates for the Chief position. Three of the Chiefs I met with are applicants.

##### **Volunteer Benefits:**

At the June Board meeting we will be proposing Board action on two items that I feel we should be providing volunteers. The first item is the assumed wage for volunteers, currently if one of our members is injured on an emergency scene and can’t work at their normal employment our workers compensation assumes a monthly wage of \$800. The benefit is approximately 66% of assumed wage, so the monthly benefit would be approximately \$525. I feel we should raise the assumed wage to \$3000 thus raising the benefit to approximately \$1,980 per month. To increase the benefit would cost us about \$7,000 per year. The second item is including the volunteers in our Employee Assistance Program (EAP). Currently our EAP covers the paid personnel. To include volunteer access to the EAP would cost \$18.72 per person. We all respond on the same incidents and are called upon to see and do things that may be very stressful immediately or delayed. I believe providing an access to professional services for our volunteers is potentially critical to the organization. Cost to cover 20 positions would be less than \$400.

##### **Observation:**

We have a great group of volunteers and we ask a lot of them. Some find that work/family obligations just don't leave them enough time to meet the demands we place on them. With mandatory training requirements, staffing expectations, and emergency calls the time commitment we place on them is significant. The ones that are able to make the volunteer/life balance work are exceptional people and we need to take care of them and show them they are valued and appreciated.

**Assistant Chief/Training Officer** – Vonasek

(The following is the Assistant Chief's written report as well as added comments made at the meeting.)

**FIRE & EMS TRAINING** –

**In-House** – Will be preparing for Wildland firefighter refresher training in June.

**Regional** – Due to low interest in volunteerism across the region, Both Lebanon and Philomath fire Districts will not be holding spring Firefighter academies.

**State** – I sat in on the assessment center for the hiring of a new Field Training Coordinator for DPSST.

**OR-EMS** – No Report

**National** – Chuck was accepted into the National Fire Academy and will be attending the week of May 15<sup>th</sup>.

**HEALTH & SAFETY** –

**Safety Committee** – Is to meet May 10<sup>th</sup> @ 1800 Hours to conduct a Station safety audit.

**SCBA Grant Update** – No report, Announcement of Grant could come as early as July 2022.

**EQUIPMENT UPDATE** –

**Equipment** – No Report

**OTHER BUSINESS** –

**New Training Officer Laptop** – Received

**Insurance Services Organization Audit** – David Hyland of ISO came by May 18<sup>th</sup> to review our packet.

Things are looking okay, but there are some gaps we are going to work on in the next few weeks that could help maintain or maybe help our current fire classification.

**COMMUNITY OUTREACH** –

**Tangent Fire District Website** – May our webpage was accessed 12,269 times.

**Tangent District Portal** – Department members accessed the Portal 91 times.

**Tangent Community Blood Drive & Food Drive** – Next Red Cross Blood Drive is July 21<sup>st</sup>. The FISH of Albany food drive hosted by Tangent Fire District will begin July 18<sup>th</sup> and will run through the week till Friday. No-perishable food items can be dropped off at the station during normal business hours.

**ISO-** Met with Dave Highland Waiting on a few water districts for documentation. He believes the rural area's number will drop a point; now at a 9 and a 6 in town.

**Staff Battalion Chief's Report** – Chapin

(The following is the BC's written report as well as added comments made at the meeting.)

**Meetings Attended:**

- Two staff meetings

- NoDinx – Needs more information from the board for shirts, District shirt orders are completed.
- Sling Meeting (Timecard App)
- Training- May 14<sup>th</sup> through May 21<sup>st</sup> (New Executive Chief Officer class) – Great class. Everyone is dealing with the volunteering.
- Out of the office- May 22<sup>nd</sup> through 28<sup>th</sup>

**Fire Inspections-**

**Pre-Plans-** N/A

**Fire Public ED-** Haden Hewes, Levi Bursik, David Jakeman, and the Chief conducted a station tour and pub ed for Kindergarteners.

**Vehicle Maintenance-** E-71 foam system was repaired. E-72 air drum cylinder replaced. BC-71 received new tires.

**Volunteers-** I meet with several volunteers on the new volunteer policy and hour requirements.

**Training-** Worked on burn to learn plan and house prepping. Conducted wall breaching at the burn house.

**Activity Report:** Total YTD calls are 147 as of the month of April. This is 24 increase from 2021, 32 increase from 2020, down 5 from 2019 and up 8 calls from last month.

V. **OLD BUSINESS:** None

VI. **NEW BUSINESS:**

**MERP/VEBA** – Stearns

Last year a higher deductible health insurance was adopted with the savings being put into a Health Savings Account. The money in this account was to be used by the employees (for an approved medical or dental expense), this could be drawn from to offset the higher deductible. This is economical win for the district which saves the district money on the insurance and there is no additional cost for the employee to cover the higher deductible. None of the funds were used this year, therefore are able to fund this new HRA VEBA account with \$3000.00 for each employee. The HSA will continue with \$5000.00 in the account and fund the HRA VEBA at \$2500.00 per employee going forward. If personnel are added, this HSA account open and in that first year this pool of money is available to help with qualified medical & dental expenses. After the new employee has been here through a fiscal year, they will be eligible for the \$2500.00 in the next fiscal year.

**Action:** Meyer motioned to approve Resolution No. 2022-02, The adoption of a Health Reimbursement Arrangement (HRA) Plan, which provides tax-free, defined contribution accounts for employees to reimburse qualified medical, dental vision and tax qualified long-term care premiums and non-covered Healthcare expenses of the employees and their dependents. Richards seconded the motion. Upon vote, it passed unanimously (5-0).

**Workers' Compensation:** - Stearns

Currently we carry workers' compensation on our volunteers. Since the volunteers do not make an income here, our carrier bases it on \$800 per month. Typically, if disabled for a period of time, 66% of the wage is compensated. Our volunteers would receive about \$500 per month. The proposal is to raise the assumed wage to \$3000.00 per month. This would provide our volunteers with about \$1980 per month. The cost for the district is about \$7000 a year. This wage is something that may need to be reconsidered for the budget next year or every other year.

**Action:** Riley motioned to approve Resolution No. 2022-03, Extending Workers' Compensation coverage to volunteers increasing the assumed monthly wage to \$3000.00. Strombeck seconded the motion. Upon vote, it passed unanimously (5-0).

**Public Safety Employee Assistance Program - (EAP)** – Stearns

Currently, we have an EAP through SDAO which covers our paid career employees. For \$18.72 per volunteer per year, we can include our volunteers into this EAP and give them access to all the benefits that come with it. With the prevalence of post-traumatic stress and things that are out there today; where our volunteers are dealing with the job that we asked them to do for nothing. Stearns recommends paying the \$18.72 per person and give the volunteers access to these benefits offered through EAP.

**Action:** Riley motioned to cover Tangent RFPD Volunteers in the Public Safety Employee Assistance Program. Meyer seconded the motion. Upon vote, it passed unanimously (5-0).

Board asked about our Chaplin. Tangent does not have one currently. Dean Aithwaite is now the Chaplain for Corvallis and Albany Fire Departments. Staff should consider contacting him. Riley will send Chapin his contact information.

**Wildfire Readiness & Response Grants** - Chapin

Offered by Oregon of State Fire Marshal are several grants available. Chief Stearns submitted for the Oregon Fire Mutual Aid SAFER Grant. Three positions for three months through the summer, granting up to \$35,000 per organization including up to 10% administrative fee. We requested \$34,020 which included a 5% administrative fee. This was based on \$15 per hour, 3 people working rotating shifts with 10 shifts a month each; this is about \$360 per shift. If his math is correct: 10 shifts at \$360 = \$3,600 times 3 people times 3 months = \$32,400; plus, admin fees is about \$34,000.

This program can fund about 128 departments in the state.

Wildfire season start is dependent on the weather. The wildfire banner should go up soon to bring awareness to the community. Chaplin will work on getting the material to hang the banner. We also have flyers to give out at the pancake breakfast.

President Dunn concluded regular Board meeting at this time to move into the **Executive Session per ORS 192.660(2)(a)**—To Consider employment of a public officer, employee, staff member or individual agent at 7:36 p.m.

President Dunn resumed the meeting into regular session at 8:30 p.m.

**GOOD OF THE ORDER:**

- A. Meet ‘n’ Greet with Semi-finalists Fire Chief Candidates – June 28, 2022 – 6:00 to 7:00 p.m.**
- B. Interviews with Semi-finalists Fire Chief Candidates - June 29, 2022 – 8:00 a.m. at Central Electrical Training Center**
- C. Staff appreciation and Board BBQ – July 9, 2022, time to be determined.**

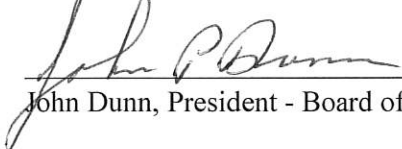
Discussion and clarification of the Interview Day schedule ensued.

President Dunn adjourned the meeting at 9:06 p.m.

Minutes submitted by Denny Conrad.  
Office Administrator

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APPROVED BY:

  
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John Dunn, President - Board of Directors

7-13-2022  
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Date