

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

Board Workshop Meeting  
September 22, 2022

A Board Workshop meeting of the Crooked River Ranch Rural Fire Protection District Board of Directors took place on Thursday, September 22, 2022, at 6:30 pm, at the Crooked River Ranch Fire District Fire Station, located at 6971 SW Shad Road Crooked River Ranch, Oregon.

### **Board Workshop Minutes**

**Flag Salute:** Director Wilson led the flag salute.

**Called to Order** by Director Norberg at 6:30 pm.

**Roll Call by Director Oakley:** Director's Norberg, Wilson, Oakley, Pahl and Green were present. Also present was Fire Chief Harry Ward (who arrived later), Assistant Fire Chief Sean Hartley, Administrative Assistant Dana Schulke. Captain David McDonald, Volunteer Adam Wiley and Frank Iovino arrived later due to a call they attended to. Public in attendance was Joe Costigan, William Burt, Mike Dries and Tina Wilson who arrived later.

**Discussion on the Fire Chief position for the District:** Director Norberg stated the Board has been meeting with several individuals, including employees. She stated that after speaking with everyone there are lots of things going on, mainly the District being short on money and short on staffing. Director Wilson stated he has spoken with Redmond Fire contacts and there is an option/idea of possibly utilizing them for calls and personnel. He would like to "throw out" the idea of using Western Fire Chief's Association for utilizing their hiring process due to having a "cap fee" which was \$6,000 and an additional fee of 20% of the annual salary of the Chiefs wage if the Chief is hired for one year. He suggested to the Board that if we are not legally bound to go out for hiring a Fire Chief, he would like to appoint Chief Hartley as the full time Fire Chief of the District. He feels we would be stupid if we do not utilize his talents for the position. Director Wilson stated the Board should focus their efforts on getting response personnel for the District. Chief Hartley stated we have a conditional offer out to the one candidate who applied for the 40-hour a week position. Director Wilson stated we should look at other adjustments that the District can make to hire another Captain, once Captain Fast leaves.

Director Oakley stated that if the Board is looking at utilizing & considering Redmond Fire for staffing, etc., we should run this idea past the community of Crooked River Ranch. We are heading into our 5 – year Levy which would give us plenty of time to see what the Board can come up with to increase funding and find other options for staffing. This timeframe would give us an opportunity to speak to the residents as to what we are up against at the District. Director Wilson and Chief Hartley both indicated that in the future we might see a bigger umbrella of having all the fire districts under one District like what Tualatin Valley Fire & Rescue did a couple years ago, for Central Oregon. It was discussed that relying on students for response personnel will be few and far between in the future.

Director Norberg agreed with Director Oakley and Director Wilson as far as Chief Hartley be the full time Fire Chief for the District. She said she is greatly concerned about money and having the number of personnel we need to accommodate the number of calls we are getting.

A discussion ensued about having the position of an Assistant Fire Chief and if it is necessary. That current salary could be utilized towards other personnel and staffing. That decision would be up to Chief Hartley.

Director Norberg asked Captain McDonald to speak on his concerns on the District. Captain McDonald stated that our District needs at least two people per shift. As the years have progressed, we have had students and volunteers fill positions, however, some years things go well with utilizing the students and some years do not. He said the District needs a second career person to assist the Shift Captains on duty. Personnel wages are low compared to the surrounding fire districts. He said we are looking at \$900K for wages to include a 2<sup>nd</sup> career employee which is still below par compared to everyone else. He basically painted a picture for the Board as to what we are looking at financially. He tossed out what options the District would have considering our circumstances. There is no win-win situation for what we are in right now. Options for additional personnel were discussed between Director Wilson, Captain McDonald, and Chief Hartley. Part-time staffing was mentioned at \$25-\$30 an hour. The options discussed were stated as just "band aids" as we only get busier.

Tina Wilson stated Bend Fire was on the local news channel today. She stated that students are being hired away from the fire districts even before they graduate. There was discussion between the Board and staff about how fast students are landing jobs and how much the salaries are.

Resident, Joe Costigan threw out some "food for thought" for the Board. He said as a citizen, he wants people to show up at his door and he did not care who it was. He said if the Board is looking at hiring more people, he suggested a Paramedic because they hold more weight. Any position that the Board looks at adding on, there will be roll up costs involved which are huge, especially if they are married and have a family, (46%). He stated other Districts are paying considerably more than this District. He suggested looking outside the box and be open to consider all options. He suggested utilizing Part-time people as the roll up costs will not be so much. Joe stated that if the Board/Chief Hartley do not fill the Assistant Fire Chief position and put on an additional 40-hour a week FF/Paramedic, it would cost about \$48,000 a year which would save the District money. He also suggested looking at the current budget and see where we can squeeze out a little bit more money to add people.

Director Wilson stated that he foresees the District merging with another in the future. He does not want to see a company like AMR come in and take over. Chief Hartley stated that if we ask for more money, we have to have all our information/data ready to inform residents of what is truly going on, but at the same time we do not want to threaten them. Chief Ward stated that his plan while he was here, was to eliminate the Assistant Fire Chief position and get more people employed as "boots on the ground" employees to help with 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> out calls that we are getting. Discussion ensued about definitely having a 2 person, per shift plan.

Director Pahl asked if the Board was obligated to go out to find a Fire Chief position. Chief Hartley suggested they run everything by SDAO to make sure we follow all proper procedures. Director Pahl asked if Chief Hartley was ready and was able to step up as a full time Fire Chief for the District. Dana Schulke asked about the segregation of duties and who would be doing payroll if she was not around. Director Pahl stated that he and someone else needs to be on a negotiating committee, Director Wilson stepped up and stated he will assist Director Pahl in doing the negotiating. Director Norberg stated she would like

this to be taken care of before the next Board meeting. It was decided that October 3<sup>rd</sup> would be a good date to meet with Chief Hartley on negotiations.

The Board gave an assignment to Chief Hartley, such as reviewing different budget options to add the 2<sup>nd</sup> person on each shift and add an additional 40-hour week FF/Paramedic. Chief Ward suggested also looking at full time, part-time personnel, rather than just having them in the summer months.

Director Norberg stated that Director Oakley reminded her that no decisions should be made in the Workshop and Director Wilson stated none were made, only discussions. Director Norberg will check with SDAO on if the Board is obliged to go out and find a Fire Chief, or if they can just appoint Chief Hartley.

Chief Hartley reminded everyone that we are having a Farewell Party for Chief Ward on Thursday, September 29<sup>th</sup>, from 4:00 pm – 6:00 pm.

William Burt made a comment that he has worked with Chief Hartley over the past 4 or 5 years and has done a great job and foresees him to continue doing a great job.

Adjournment by Director Norberg at 7:27 pm.

Respectively submitted by:

Administrative Assistant, Dana Schulke