

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

**Workshop Meeting Minutes
13 November 2019**

A Workshop Board meeting of the Crooked River Ranch Rural Fire Protection District Board of Directors took place on Wednesday, 13 November 2019 at 6:00 pm at the Crooked River Ranch Fire District Fire Station, located at 6971 SW Shad Road Crooked River Ranch, Oregon 97760.

Meeting Minutes:

1. Meeting Called to Order at: Called to order by Director Barbara Oakley who also announced for the record that our location is accessible to persons with disabilities and will be recorded.

1.1. Flag Salute: Led by Director Pahl

1.2. Roll Call by: Director Wilson: Director Pahl, Director Meredith and Director Green were present. Also at the start of the meeting present was: Fire Chief Harry Ward, Assistant Chief Sean Hartley and Administrative Assistant Dana Schulke. Also in attendance was: Staff Captains; David McDonald, Tom Fast and Alysha DeLorto. Responding Volunteers: Community Services Officer Dennis Senko, Michael McClellan, Emma Parker, Chase Wilder, Garrett Schweigert, M. Steward and Marta McGovern-Philpot. Support Volunteer: Tina Wilson. Public in attendance was: Bob Bengtson, Kay Norberg,

2. Purpose of the Workshop:

Director Oakley stated the purpose of the workshop is Director Wilson had submitted some items that all go along with the budgeting process, and that Chief had started this process with staff, so she thought this would be a good way to get some questions answered or for the Board to have some insight as to what the District is planning, knowing that they are not very far along in the process. Director Oakley brought up the first topic which was "How to increase our personnel both long and short term." Director Wilson brought up that he had been reviewing the strategic plan and from general discussion in our previous meetings that what we hear is we are really busy and we need more people and with volunteerism nationwide currently it is not the best. Director Wilson stated he did hear at the OFDDA conference that it depends on how you go about getting volunteers whether you increase or decrease your numbers. He heard of an organization that can assist you in obtaining volunteers, however they may not all be Responding Volunteers, but they would be what we call our Support Volunteers. Knowing if we get two calls we're done because of limited personnel, because we are scrambling to fill a second ambulance, so he questions what we can do to staff ourselves with more people, what options are out there, part timers year round. So he is asking what options are out there we have to increase our personnel either part time or full

time, what is that going to take and that kind of rolls this whole meeting subjects together of all three topics. Do we change our apparatus plan to allow us to hire more people, do we change our current contracts to allow more people. He stated being in it from a volunteer point of view and now being on the Board and not seeing the whole big picture, what options do we have? Do we feel we need more paid staff to maintain our level of service and as our level of service is being demanded on? What can we do to alleviate those demands? Director Green stated being here through past personnel and our apparatus, our goals and plans have changed multiple times. We have great attack tenders, we have a first out engine that came from TVF&R and is a great unit except it doesn't carry much water and asked Chief if he had ideas on what he would like to see changed in broad terms. Chief replied when he first started as fire chief he wanted to know what it would cost to put on three people, and three years ago it was \$300,000.00 a year and now he is guessing it is closer to \$400,000.00 with benefits and PERS and that's three full time personnel so that's out. So that will never happen just because our tax base will never cover it and he figured it out that we would need to be at \$4.00 dollars per \$1,000.00 for that to happen. He doesn't believe the residents of CRR would ever want it to go to that way. Now down the road, more development and maybe we can add a 40 hour person but right now he doesn't look at a full time person at all. Right now we have a full roster of volunteers, active volunteers and it's pretty easy to staff a second out ambulance right now depending on the day but most of the time we can staff a second ambulance pretty easily and we have enough volunteers now he doesn't have enough helmets for them. We have gear but we don't have helmets. He put together a roster of companies and handed them out to the Board. He put on four or five that were part timers who wanted to be full time volunteers with us. One of them or a lot of them are single role paramedics or EMTs or have changed jobs and are no longer in the fire service as career or they are part time with Redmond and want to keep up their fire certification and they want to help out here and he feels these are the most active volunteers he has seen since he's been here. Part of this is because of our grant we have here for volunteer retention and recruitment and that is an incentive but we also have people who are topped out with the stipends and they are still coming to pull shifts without that. On the subject of apparatus, Chief stated it is very expensive with a new engine being very close to \$500,000.00 like the one we have out there. Without a grant that will pay 90% of it, it is very hard to say we need to buy a new one. His focus is how do we look at the apparatus we have? So right now we can say in ten years or fifteen or twenty years we need to replace it, but if it doesn't go anywhere but two or three times in a month or even one time a month do we really need, or maybe we look at engine hours, so how much has it really ran? Has it been out pumping here or there? The ambulance on the other hand, the more miles we put on it the quicker they're going to wear out, so for us to look at different types of apparatus we need to look at different ways to determine length of service. So on an ambulance we look at how miles they get in a month or a year and is that increasing, but on an engine that don't run near as much are we looking at that as to what is length of service. At some point you have to look at

what we drive and say are we defeating the purpose of by keeping this apparatus because it's twenty years old, technology is old, the suspension and everything is old and a new engine is so much better and safer so what's the tradeoff there, but again we can buy used for \$25,000.00 or we can buy brand new for \$500,000.00. So these are just real big ticket items. The best thing we can do right now is look at it and say we have this stock of apparatus what do we need to keep and what can we do to get by with, can we have three brush engines, of course the tenders are tenders. We need water, and because we don't have a good supply those are ideal. Then we look at the two engines we have, one is an interface and one is a structure engine and I think both work really well, we just had both the pumps tested and they came back and worked on two of the pump vacuum issues but now all the pumps have passed testing and everything is in top notch shape. With the good maintenance program that we've had and we continue to strive for I think we can make them last for a while, but at some point and he thinks Mark said this before that they get old enough you can't find parts for them or they're not going to make parts for them and if you do find parts for them you have to get them from Pierce and they have to go in a back corner somewhere and find this one part we need. So you have to look at all these things and he has read a couple articles and we have to just look at it to see how we're going to measure when it is time to replace, and can we refurbish it or do we have to buy new. So let's look at the chassis, can we put a new body on it or can we refurbish the truck chassis and how much more is it going to take to bring it up to standards that would probably be required to get it done. Those are all the things, I'm not really pushing but I think we have momentum on our grant writing right now, we have all our finances and our items we put in grants, our demographics and our ton of stuff is dialed in and is really good and with the right people looking at it right now I think we can be successful, and that's why I'd like to write the AFG grant for this next coming year for an engine. That engine would be a thirty year engine for us. If we build it right and make it what will serve this community unless there are mandates that come around and say you can't have that anymore. He thinks it can a twenty or thirty year engine. But that is the only way we are going to get a brand new engine. Director Green asked how old 521 was and Chief stated it was 19 years old. Director Wilson stated he talked with the Chief from Coquille and he is so happy because his apparatus is now 15 years old instead of 30 years old. Chief stated a lot of departments will take a 20 year old engine in a heartbeat because they are still driving antiques. He then stated we had talked about water and we have proved it on a couple of fires that if we apply water quick and in the right places we don't need as much. Now if it is fully involved it is going to be a tender shuttle show, so he thinks at least 750 gallons on a new engine. What he has seen is when you get to a 1000 gallons you start losing compartment space. One of the big things he doesn't like about this truck is the ladders are hanging out there and we rip junipers off with them all the time, so having them inside somewhere would be ideal. Director Wilson stated they do make a truck that has the ladders stored inside by notching the tank, they still carry a 1000 gallons of water and plenty of storage but they use the taller cab in the rear so you can

stand up in it. Chief stated we have been bouncing stuff around like that for anticipating finishing writing the grant and they think about the taller but it is going to be hard to get into some places because people don't take care of their driveways and trim back the trees, so we have to kind of look at all those things. He stated we did go look at Cloverdale's Rosenbauer the other day and they let them drive it but it's enormous and it's four wheel drive but it's only 4" taller than Bends so the height wasn't an issue. It's a nice engine but it's massive and he doesn't think you buy anything that's not. Director Wilson stated it is interesting that the U.S. is still going bigger and in Europe everything is going smaller so they can get down their roads and then they send more personnel with two rigs and they are also starting to go electric power. Rosenbauer is making electric powered engines, not hybrid but full electric motor powered units. They said they don't see it coming to the U.S. anytime soon because everyone wants bigger units. Chief said a little bigger for here is good but it's the height that is causing the issue. Director Wilson stated when we add a third axle it effects the turning radius and that can cause an issue of access. Chief stated he wants it to be as tight turning as we can get. Director Wilson stated he knew when they had discussed as an apparatus committee that it would be better to get a four wheel drive structure engine when it was the right time to get a structure engine, but there again Chief had touched on it, if we had the money to purchase one. Director Wilson thinks he has gone through at least five fire chiefs since he has been here and every time there was a new plan we would buy attack tenders and they would be the first out apparatus and they were for a while and then another chief came in and said no we're not going to do that we're going to do this. Then we had the crew cab Freightliner that you needed a football field to turn around on with 1000 gallon tank and it was another one of those one off brand engine makes that you never heard of and then with the previous chief, that was when we are going to get a Pierce because it was cheap and this is what we need but we're forgetting what we have been buying all along for and just because we get a new chief does that mean we need to change our whole apparatus plan every time? That's what Director Wilson wanted to make sure we are looking at why we have what we have and if it was a good plan then is it not still a good plan now and why are we having to change anything. Chief stated he doesn't think he is trying to change anything here, tenders are tenders and if you want a tender to be a firetruck then you need to build it. You have an engine with three thousand gallons of water on it. He looks at it, that we pull up to a fire in a first out tender and we've got somebody hanging out a window and we don't have ladders, we don't have all the rescue equipment, we've got a hose and water. So for it to be a real first out engine it needs to have all that other stuff. So now you're talking \$200,000.00 to \$300,000.00 for a tender, now you're talking \$400,000.00 to \$500,000.00. Director Wilson stated that the last tender we bought has the provisions to add ladder racks and that was the whole idea of that tank design was to be able to mount ladders on it, but they chose not to at the time to save some money and at that time the chief figured we didn't need to haul ladders and if we do decide to we can add them later, and Director Wilson stated again that the tank is perfectly capable of

installing ladders on it. Chief then stated if we just maintain the fleet we have and we get chances to get grants so we can update the fleet as we need to that would be great, but keep putting money away, they were talking today that best time to buy is when the bond ends in fourteen years and then go out for another bond to replace large ticket items. That would be the ideal point in time because people's taxes wouldn't change and probably would be less money than what the building cost. That would be his recommendation in 14 years. Keep going for grants. The worse thing that could happen is another downturn. Director Oakley stated at least we have a new ambulance coming. Chief Ward stated that the idea with this body is since it is light we could probably re-chassis it because the way the box is built. There was mention about having two ambulances would be ours and our people can work in until some point you just can't. The white ambulance it would probably cost a ton to bring it up to national safety standards to re-chassis that box, correcting himself that it would be a re-box not a chassis, because the chassis is so old that they would have to bring everything up to today's standards. There was a little discussion on the age and when we purchased 572, Director Wilson stated it is a 1997 chassis and we purchased it in January of 2002. Director Oakley questioned that we are ok on personnel that we are in good shape right now. Chief said we are but, people come and go, he said he looked at a roster that he found in his office the other day and there was three people on it that are still here and four of those are paid staff. Director Wilson asked how many of the names on the list that had been handed out are students? The reply was six. Director Oakley asked if we have a recruitment program currently in place. Chief stated yes and went to talk about a person who is interested in being a volunteer but we are not going to recruit anymore until the spring when they can go right into the wildland academy and then so on and so forth. Director Oakley stated hiring full time staff is almost cost prohibitive and Chief replied yes, and his idea is keep the people we have and what he likes is the people are very active and they want to do good things for the Ranch, they enjoy what they're doing and he has given things to the lieutenants and say this is yours to take care of, like the limb dump he gave to the two lieutenants and said this is yours just tell me what you need and you guys put it together and he thinks they liked that. They like having the authority, but not necessarily the authority but I need you take care of this. We have lots of Support Volunteers who are handed a task, Jeff Sheetz, Dana gets a lot assessment or smoke detector thing she can send Dennis or Jeff an email and when he leaves the station at six he sees them working on a plan to install a smoke alarm and not in just the response stuff. They're excited. I told them the other night that if I could keep this core group I would keep them as long as I can because they're making his life easier. Director Green explained to the public present that the items we are discussing may sound pretty simple but as a Board we cannot sit down and ask Chief a question about something one on one because there has to be two Board Members present and then if they talk to Barb then we just had a meeting. So some of the clarifications and questions in a workshop like this is a simple way to get all of that out of the way and if Brad has a question he can ask the question and we are not violating any laws or regulations.

Director Oakley added we can all hear the answers and are part of the discussion. Director Green continued stating this was just so the public knew why we're doing what we are doing in this workshop. Director Oakley asked Chief if we are coming up on union contract negotiations. Chief stated he thinks we will start this spring. He believes the contract is up in June. Director Wilson stated that was one of the reasons he brought up this was so we could see this stuff and he was hoping to get copies prior to this workshop meeting to allow time to review them and maybe have more questions to avoid having to do another workshop and just for multiple reasons. Director Wilson continued that when the last union contract was negotiated and thought McLaren was chief and they had talked about how they could grow our staff and be able to afford it, because everything goes up, health care goes up, wages go up and so he was wondering if there is a way we can get it under control of like instilling a grandfather clause so that anybody hired after "X" date, and using the terms of the medical carrier he deals with is you have the Cadillac plan, the Chevrolet plan and the Volkswagen plan. So you have been here you get grandfathered in you get the Cadillac plan, you're coming in as an EMT- Firefighter you get the Chevrolet plan and if you are coming in as either an EMT or a Firefighter you get the Volkswagen plan and have the ability to work up but you would never be able to make it to the Cadillac plan to allow us to keep the cost down even when the economy goes up or down. Chief Ward agreed. Director Wilson stated our plan is pretty lucrative because we have had good financial times but in 2007 when it crashed our expenses were not as high as they are now. Obviously medical expenses go up and all that type of stuff, so how do wrap your arms around it to be able to afford to hire more people and he is thinking long term because at some point in time this fire department is going to need more paid staff, period. So we need to figure out how we are going to do that, so it's fair to our citizens / taxpayers, fair to our employees but manageable. He is trying to look at that we are not going to hire three people next year, but what do we do to get to the point that we could hire three people. He added nobody ever wants to talk about cuts and Chief agreed and stated his thought and Director Wilson had brought this up two years ago that we look at the pay structure and say this is what everybody gets and that's that. Now let's look at if you were hired in 2021 this is what you get and added we have been looking at that and discussing that and maybe in five ten years and we are running tons of calls we may have to look at a merger. He thinks at some point there will be a Central Oregon fire department or Deschutes County. Director Green stated that one of the things that concerns him is at CRR we don't have any way to expand our boundaries. Chief Ward agreed adding the best thing that could happen is if they put a bunch of commercial stuff in and around adding he actually asked the HOA board president if they had thought about leasing a piece of property a company to come in and put up a lodge. Director Meredith asked how that would help. Chief stated commercial property brings in more money than residential. Director Wilson replied depending on how it is controlled and Chief agreed and Director Wilson stated he had talked with Chief Huff and was told Madras has been booming but they are not getting any increase in taxes because the incentives to build

there was a promise of no taxes. Chief Ward stated Crook County had run into that when they put in all those big server farms and they were not getting any tax revenue so now they worked out a user fee. Assistant Chief stated it is a service fee. Chief went on to say they have been buying trucks and hiring people right and left, but we're talking multimillion dollar companies there. Director Wilson stated since we are land locked the only way we are going to increase our tax revenue is if people are allowed to subdivide their lots and he doesn't think the HOA is going to go for that. Director Green stated he sees it increasing in commercial and used the property right behind the station as an example and adding more commercial down below and as it ever so slowly changing out here when people are changing house styles and he is seeing a slow increase of new stick built houses or new manufactured homes going in in place of the older homes and this is causing the tax base to increase but in our purposes here those increases are pretty small. Chief agreed. Director Green stated the last thing he would like to see is a merger and anybody here doesn't want to see that. Chief then stated what it may look twenty or thirty years down the road and what is it going to look like here. So if the property behind the station gets developed and they put in a clinic, we won't be able to staff an ambulance enough to go pick up people at that clinic every day. Director Green agreed. Chief said so now do we go to them and say hey, this is awesome and say if you call us and you could have called an Uber then we bill you not the patient. So this is happening in Lapine and they are putting an ordinance together for that in their District. Director Green stated he thinks this is some of the reasons on why we are sitting in this meeting tonight. Using examples of how can we avoid that, and looking down the road fifteen years let's start throwing out the ideas now so something might make sense. Chief said he did not go to a meeting and said they are talking about light commercial here and then maybe a school and then maybe some other stuff. Director Green joked that we need a 7-11 and a minimarket and Chief added a Dollar General would be good. Director Meredith stated they put one at Culver. Director Oakley stated they put one in at Madras too. Chief stated there are lots of things that could happen yet there are a lot of people who live here that don't want anything to change. Director Meredith stated he has heard that time and again. Chief Ward shared a story about his home town and two railroads and how his town didn't want it so they are pretty much dying, yet the town that had the railroad move to them is booming. Director Wilson asked if we could get copies of the contracts. Chief said yes they can get them to us. He added you can also go to the unions web page get the contract and he has it to so he can send it to Director Wilson if he chose. Tom Fast stated that there are tier levels and to go through the process to get raises is spelled out there and if you go to low you are not going to get applicants. He used Redmond for an example that they only had eight applicants for an opening and went on saying something about Sisters Fire but is unintelligible. There was something about them being gone in a year. Director Green stated right now the market is on the employee side and they are in control and that the employer is struggling at this time. Chief stated that some districts are just a revolving door. Director Pahl stated that turnover is a killer. Chief stated that if you look to our neighbors to the

north they have a revolving door and he learned at his management class recently human capital and how much we have invested in those people and to have them leave that takes a big hit and now you have to train new people. We can't give them the world but, Director Meredith added we need to incentivize, Chief continued we have a pretty good benefit package and we were able to look at in the last two years, our insurance as far as health insurance we are in a pool with OFCA so when we got all together we upped and moved to a different insurance carrier and this dropped our premiums and we were looking at an 11 percent increase but we are nowhere near that now. Director Wilson stated that was when the HRA was introduced and this exposed the district instead of the premiums and we would save this much money if the employees did not use the insurance, but that is not the case, because when the employee does use the insurance the district is picking up the deductible difference from \$500.00 to \$3000.00. Chief stated last year we paid out \$3397.00 in that reimbursement, and this year we haven't paid out anything because there have been no surgeries. Director Meredith asked how we are doing as a whole. Chief started to explain about GEMT program that we are trying to get into for reimbursement funds. Assistant Chief started explaining what GEMT is and how we get more money. Chief stated they had looked at our numbers and said we could get between \$20,000.00 to \$30,000.00 a year from the program and the fees for the individual who is presenting it would come out of that money. Chief said a lot of people are not pursuing it because the spread sheet is the size of the table and it is really complicated. Director Wilson stated he had sat in a class about the GEMT program and there are other companies out there who do this so we could do some shopping for a program. There is one particular instructor who spoke and everyone decided he is the person everyone in Central Oregon is using. Lots of discussion about the true amount of money we could see and what has been happening in Central Oregon. Director Green asked if we were already pursuing this and Chief said yes and said this individual also writes grants and would help us with our grants. Director Pahl asked if we needed to look for budget committee people. Chief replied yes and Administrative Assistant stated we need two.

Adjournment- With no further business, Director Oakley adjourned the workshop at 6:50 p.m.

Respectively submitted by,
Mark W. Wilson
Secretary, Director Position # 5
Crooked River Ranch Rural Fire Protection District Fire Board