Jackson County Fire District 1

Minutes – Board of Directors Regular Session
Meeting of June 10, 2026 at 7:30am

CALL TO ORDER:
The meeting was called to order at 7:30 a.m. by President, John Ellis.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGENCE

ROLL CALL:
John Foster, Randy Cort, John Ellis, Jim Stearns, Craig Berry, present.
Also in attendance: Mike Hammond, Jenna Kurzyniec, Jeni Darr and guests Tom Zimmer, Kenny Herinckx, Grace Howell, Brian Mortensen, Mike Gavlik and Delaney Richmond.

GOOD OF THE ORDER: Craig Berry raised concerns regarding a recent article in the Rogue River Press and a letter from the union regarding board decorum and "bullying." He requested that board decorum be added to a future agenda to make real progress on the issue.

EMERGENCY MANAGER: Delaney Richmond, Jackson County Emergency Manager, provided an update on new evacuation processes. She highlighted concerns about potential state resource shortages due to drought and fuel issues, noting that the county has staged 250 cots and supplies for local sheltering.
The county has implemented the "Genasys" zoning system, which uses AI to break the county into geographic zones. This system has reduced the time to issue evacuation alerts from 20 minutes down to two minutes.
Delaney explained that while law enforcement cannot force people from homes, they can close roads in "Level 3" zones. She also introduced the concept of "Temporary Evacuation Points" (TEPs) at county properties and local stores for short-term (1-2 hour) staging.
Board members questioned the accountability for residents who haven't evacuated; Delaney admitted there is no perfect system for door-to-door accountability in Level 3 rural areas, relying instead on community-level neighbor checks.

BUDGET HEARING: The board held a public hearing for the 2026-2027 budget. Jim Stearns made a motion to approve Resolution #R25-26-012 imposing tax rates of $1.9313 per thousand for the permanent rate, $0.80 for the local option tax, and $0.25 for the capital levy tax, Craig Berry 2nd. Roll call vote resulted in: John Foster-yes, Randy Cort-yes, John Ellis-yes, Jim Stearns-yes, Craig Berry-yes. Motion passed unanimously.

MINUTES:
-***Safety Committee Minutes of May 12, 2026*** – Craig Berry made a motion to accept the minutes, Jim Stearns 2nd. All in favor, motion passed.
-***Regular BOD session of May 20, 2026*** – Randy Cort made a motion to accept the minutes, Craig Berry 2nd. All in favor, motion passed.
-***Budget Meeting minutes of May 19, 2026*** – Randy Cort made a motion to accept the minutes, Jim Stearns 2nd. All in favor, motion passed.
- ***Special Session BOD minutes of June 1,2026*** – Jim Stearns made a motion to accept the minutes, Randy Cort 2nd. All in favor.

FINANCE:
Financial report reviewed. Hammond mentioned upcoming $9,200 Stryker bill for gurney hydraulic repairs and $4,200 in vehicle maintenance and pump repairs on Medic 40. Hammond also giving board members an update on where the district is at on name change with Columbia bank. Jim Stearns made a motion to accept the finance report of May 2026,

Randy Cort 2nd. Roll call vote: Craig Berry-yes, Jim Stearns-yes, John Ellis- yes, John Foster-yes, Randy Cort-yes. Motion passed.

CORRESPONDENCE: Randy Cort responded to the Unions letter to the Board of Directors at the monthly May meeting, defending the board's 32-year history of volunteer service and community involvement. He criticized the newspaper for "sensationalism" and stated that the board works hard without pay to maintain infrastructure and wages. John Foster and Randy Cort expressed that the issue was being blown out of proportion. They suggested that if the union has complaints, they should name specific individuals rather than the whole board.

OLD BUSINESS:

-Solar Grant- The district received four proposals for the solar grant RFP. Craig Berry was assigned to work with staff to review these proposals and ensure they meet minimum requirements before presenting them at the next meeting.
A discussion occurred regarding "USA-made" components. Randy Cort insisted that the board was guaranteed USA-made equipment to avoid low-grade foreign parts. Craig Berry explained that using USA-made components and finishing by July 1st would allow the district to receive federal refunds/grants of approximately $700,000. He noted that while panels and racks are typically USA-made, inverters might only be assembled in the US.

-Board Meeting Times – The board discussed the possibility of moving meeting times from the morning to the evening to increase public participation. Craig Berry advocated for evening meetings, noting that the district is an "outlier" compared to other agencies. Staff and other board members expressed a preference for morning meetings to avoid overtime costs and accommodate personal schedules. The board decided to defer this decision until a new fire chief is hired.

- Chief Contract- Updated documents for recruitment was presented to the board. Jim Stearns made a motion to approve a six-month contract extension for Chief Hammond (July 1 to December 31, 2026) to allow time for recruitment. The contract includes a 2.7% COLA and adjusted vacation accruals, Randy Cort 2nd. Roll call vote: Craig Berry-yes, Jim Stearns-yes, John Ellis- yes, John Foster-yes, Randy Cort-yes. Motion passed.

-Chief Hiring Process- Randy Cort made a motion to approve benefit package, timeline, job description and final documents for Fire Chief recruitment process, John Foster 2nd. All in favor, motion passed.

-Resolution #R25-26-01 – Craig Berry made a motion to approve #R25-26-011 for represented employee's salaries and benefits, reflecting 2.7% cost of living adjustment for FY2026-27, Jim Stearns 2nd. Roll call vote: John Foster-yes, Randy Cort-yes, John Ellis-yes, Jim Stearns-yes, Craig Berry-yes. Motion passed unanimously.

CHIEF COMMENTS: Chief Hammond updated the board on grant updates. The district was not awarded the grant for the reader board. He also reported that the district is in the process of hiring one of the summer firefighters as a full-time employee, pending the departure of a current employee. Additionally, the district is actively seeking another summer firefighter to fill the resulting vacancy.

MONTHLY REPORTS:

Monthly captain's reports were reviewed. Captain Gavlik reported on the annual hydrant testing. While most are flushed yearly, full flow tests occur every four years. Several "poor performers" (orange hydrants) were identified at dead-end mains, particularly on North River Road and West Evans. Three or four hydrants were found to be broken with "frozen stems." These have been reported to the city's Public Works department for repair and are currently marked with black bags. The city's upcoming water storage project is expected to significantly improve pressure and volume for the distribution system. Craig Berry made a motion to approve the monthly reports as presented, Randy Cort 2nd. All in favor, motion passed.

PUBLIC COMMENT: Guest Kenny Herinckx suggested having the public involved in the upcoming Chief recruitment process. Jim Stearns presented the timeline for hiring the new chief, which includes a "meet and greet" on September 23rd and formal interviews on September 24th. The process will involve a technical panel of area chiefs and a community panel.

ITEMS THAT CAME UP AFTER AGENDA POSTED: None

EXECUTIVE SESSION:
Regular session closed at 8:51 a.m. for Executive Session
Regular session reopened at 9:32 a.m.

Following an executive session on labor negotiations, the board reconvened to vote on staff raises. John Ellis made a motion to accept an annual 7% raise plus CPI for the Finance Manager (36-month term) and the Administrative Assistant (24-month term). Roll call vote resulted in: John Foster-yes, Randy Cort-yes, John Ellis-yes, Jim Stearns-yes, Craig Berry-no. Motion passed. No other actions taken.

SUGGESTED FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS: Board Decorum and annexation.

ADJOURNMENT: Motion to adjourn at 9:35 a.m. by Randy Cort, 2nd by Jim Stearns. Motion passed.

Jenna K

Jenna Kurzyniec
Clerk to the Board

Craig Berry

Craig Berry
Secretary/Treasurer - Board of Directors