

# PHILOMATH FIRE & RESCUE

June 13, 2022

## Budget Hearing

- I. CALL TO ORDER/ROLL CALL – The Philomath Fire & Rescue Budget Hearing was called to order at 15:01 by Board President Daphne Phillips. Board members present were President Daphne Phillips, Treasurer Ken Corbin (remote), and Vice President Rick Brand (remote). Board members not present included Doug Edmonds and Joe Brier. Staff members present were Fire Chief Tom Miller and Office Administrator (OA) Lillie Rodriguez.  
Guests: Guests present included Siren Melissa Miller, Volunteer Dan Kearn, “HKV Resident”, Deputy Chief (DC) Chancy Ferguson, Volunteer President Andy Loudon, Union President Andrew Licon, Volunteer Vice President Jessica Olsen, Resident Volunteer (RV) Cassidy Worthington, RV Sam Schmeusser, Brad Fuqua of Philomath News, Adam Ryan Chief of Hoskins-Kings Valley (HKV), and Jay Tappen Board member of HKV.
- II. BUDGET HEARING OPEN/PUBLIC INPUT – OA Rodriguez reviewed changes made to the Budget Document, recommended by the Budget Committee, moving \$7,000 from Small Tools and Equipment to Fuel & Oil. **Treasurer Corbin motioned to approve the budget as presented. Vice President Brand seconded. Motion passed 3-0.** Vice President Brand commended the Budget Committee on their work on the budget.
- III. RESOLUTION ADOPTING BUDGET AND TAX LEVY – OA Rodriguez read the entirety of Resolution 22-01 Resolution Adopting the Budget. **President Phillips motioned to adopt resolution 22-01 as read. Vice President Brand seconded. Motion passed 3-0.**  
OA Rodriguez read the entirety of Resolution 22-02 Resolution Levying Taxes. **President Phillips motioned to approve Resolution 22-02 as read. Treasurer Corbin seconded. Motion passed 3-0.**
- IV. ADJOURNMENT – **Treasurer Corbin motioned to adjourn Budget Hearing. President Phillips seconded. Motion passed 3-0.** Meeting adjourned at 15:09

## Regular Session Board Meeting

- I. CALL TO ORDER/ROLL CALL – All prior members present. Meeting called to order at 15:09. Doug Edmonds arrived at 15:22.
- II. CONSENT AGENDA – OA Rodriguez reminded the Board that this is the first month using the consent agenda. She reminded the Board that they had previously recommended approving the consent agenda as a whole, with one vote, rather than approving each item individually.
  1. Minutes – May 9, 2022 – Included in Board Packet.
  2. Minutes – May 19, 2022 – Included in Board Packet.
  3. Minutes – June 1, 2022 – Included in Board Packet.
  4. Bills – May 2022 – OA Rodriguez reviewed the bills for May 2022 including expenses under 6010 – Office Supplies, 6030 – Dues & Fees, 6040 – Publications & Elections, 6215 – Prevention, and 6250 - Uniforms. She reported the total for the May 2022 bills was \$29,959.51.
  5. Chief Vacation Hours – Included in Board Packet.
  6. Civil Service Appointment – OA Rodriguez reported that Van Hunsaker is due for a term renewal on the Civil Service Commission and he would like to continue, if the Board will reappoint him.**Treasurer Corbin motioned to approve the consent agenda items as presented. President Phillips seconded adding that she thinks the consent agenda is a great idea. Motion passed 3-0.**

III. PUBLIC COMMENT – OA Rodriguez read 4 questions sent in from Rory Loveland:

1. What is the staffing plan and associated budget for Wren?
2. Where will the money come from to fund the positions?
3. If Philomath is having trouble staffing volunteers (as most departments are) do you think you will be able to hire enough qualified “part time firefighters” to adequately staff the station?
4. Is there written document for auto and mutual aid to Lincoln County?

President Phillips thanked Mr. Loveland for his questions.

IV. STAFF REPORTS

1. Board Report

- Review Board Calendar – President Phillips noted that she would like Edmonds to report on the Board Calendar. OA Rodriguez noted changes to the Board calendar including the Chief Review process and “check-ins”.

2. Fire Chief – Chief Miller reviewed his included Chief’s Report.

Treasurer Corbin asked of the current Resident Volunteers (RVs), how many are entry certified. Chief Miller stated that 6 RVs are currently certified, three new RVs are onboarding, one with certifications while the other two will be certified in September. Treasurer Corbin stated that he has questions about how to staff Station 202. OA Rodriguez noted that Corbin had previously sent her an email asking about the budget for Station 202 staffing. She noted that the Fiscal Year 22-23 budget includes \$8,000.00 for “extra hire” staffing, equating to about 56 days of coverage at the current part-time rate of \$15.73. She added that Chief Miller submitted and was awarded a Staffing Grant in the amount of approximately \$32,500.00. Edmonds thanked Chief Miller for the clarity and composition of the Chief’s report.

3. Board Secretary –

- Revenue/Expense Report – OA Rodriguez presented the May 2022 Expense Reports, noting the Profit & Loss Budget versus Actual additional revenues received and the current expense totals for the Personnel, Materials & Services, and Capital Outlay funds. She reminded the Board that excess tax revenue will become part of the cash carryover for Fiscal Year 22-23 and has been calculated as part of that budget. She also noted that she reached out to the GO Bond Debt Services manager about paying off the bonded debt early and determined that this is not an option for the District for these bonds.
- Review of Check Register – OA Rodriguez reviewed the deposits to the Citizens Bank account. She also noted a voided check, check # 33096, which was destroyed in transit. She added that a check will be reissued for Annas Consultants to replace the one that was damaged in the mail.

V. REPRESENTATIVE REPORTS

1. Volunteer Association – Volunteer President Loudon distributed paper copies of the prior Staffing For Response and Minimum Staffing Guidelines to accompany his report. He reiterated that the Volunteer Association is committed to help the organization and they are charged to support the Fire District by promoting and advocating for the volunteers. He stated that the Volunteer leadership believe that the volunteers should not be put into a position where insufficient training and abilities infringe upon the individual safety of the members. Volunteer President Loudon reviewed his report with the Board and expressed concern over not having access to financials related to Staffing Station 202. OA Rodriguez clarified that she had advised President Loudon and Treasurer Corbin to discuss the finances of Station 202 with Chief Miller directly. Chief Miller confirmed that neither had come to him with these questions. Edmonds asked the District to consider developing a “readiness indicator” relating to Staffing Station 202. Chief Miller noted that after the meeting discussing Station 202 staffing he understood that there was an agreement on qualifications and

training needed for personnel to be stationed in Wren. President Loudon noted that the addition of a qualified officer was required at that time for sufficient coverage, noting that DC Ferguson's class was a good start, but not an end, to the personnel development. President Loudon expressed sincere concern that the District does not have policies and practices sufficient to protect the personnel to be stationed in Wren. He added concern for the current and planned structures and remodels at Station 202. President Loudon noted concern for the current "temporary structure" at Station 202 and the septic system on the property. President Loudon expressed his appreciation to Brad Fuqua for his impartiality in writing the recent article relating to the Wren Station. President Loudon quickly reviewed the attachments to his report. He reiterated that the Volunteers are focused on wanting to help the District to move forward in a focused and safe manner. Chief Miller asked what the Volunteer Association is doing to recruit volunteers in Wren. President Loudon reviewed the steps the Association has taken including Resident Volunteer recruitment, as well as using local volunteers to perform outreach to the Wren community and also to understand any barriers to volunteerism. President Loudon noted that in Fiscal Year 22-23 the Volunteer association plans to use their activity funds for recruitment messages via radio and print media. Chief Miller noted that despite President Loudon's statements, Resident Volunteers respond on calls as qualified personnel and that two of the District's current paid professionals were once Resident Volunteers. Volunteer Secretary Schmeusser noted that the RVs were in agreement regarding President Loudon's statements about their qualifications to lead. President Phillips encouraged Chief Miller to work with the Volunteer Association to resolve these operational concerns. Edmonds reiterated President Loudon's ideals; for the personnel to move forward safely and in a well-planned manner to serve the community and that all parties need to consider how the District will move forward from this current discussion. Treasurer Corbin asked about the power supply for Station 202 and Vice President Brand asked to focus on the topic at hand and to return that question once the group gets to that issue.

2. IAFF Local 4925 – Union President Licon distributed the Letter of Understanding, signed by him and Chief Miller, and read it in its entirety to the Board. He requested that the Board appoint members to act on a Labor Committee with the Union. President Licon also asked the Board to consider appointing official signers for the District, including the Board Chair and Fire Chief, as well as at least one alternative, on recommendation from the Union legal advisors. Edmonds requested Union President Licon bring a proposed motion regarding these items to the July meeting.

## VI. OLD BUSINESS

1. Review Board Policies – OA Rodriguez reminded the Board about prior review of these policies. She noted that in Article VI, Sections 3 and 4, she combined the responsibilities of the Secretary & Treasurer and worked to ensure that the listed responsibilities are more reflective of the current practices. The Board asked OA Rodriguez to return the Board Policies for a 2<sup>nd</sup> reading at the July meeting.
2. Chief Review Process – President Phillips noted that the members of this group all felt unwell over the prior month and noted that little progress has been made on this. She asked to discuss this further at the July meeting, noting that she feels that this process is close to completion. Edmonds recommended reviewing the calendar again, in July, as well.
3. Hoskins-Kings Valley (HKV) Contract – Chief Miller reported that the final draft of the contract was included in the Board packet, adding that it has been pared down significantly. Chief Miller summarized that the purpose of the IGA is to help HKV improve their training by providing Chief-level support. Chief Miller noted that the contact amount includes 1/3 of the

costs to support Station 202 plus 32 staff hours, as an average per month, shared between himself and DC Ferguson. Chief Miller added that he will work for one day per week from Station 202 and DC Ferguson will work another one day per week at Station 202 with part-time personnel covering the other 3 days per week. Chief Miller clarified the mutual aid agreement for Hoskins-Kings Valley, emphasizing response as personnel are available. Edmonds stated that he had questioned Chief Miller about the IGA prior to the meeting, topics relating to managing the HKV budget, hours committed to HKV, Chief Miller's focus while at Station 202 and encouraged Chief Miller to report hours at Station 202 to the Board monthly, as well as having both Boards meet at the initiation of the contract, as well as annually. Vice President Brand asked about how the automatic aid agreement relates to staffing Station 202. Chief Miller noted that the two agreements are different. Vice President Brand suggested removing "response from Station 202" from the HKV contract. Chief Miller emphasized that the response from Station 202 would be dependent upon availability. Edmonds noted that he interprets the idea to be well-intentioned adding that the contract does not need to be modified. Treasurer Corbin agreed that Station 202 staffing does not need to be included in the contract. Chief Miller reiterated that staffing Station 202 isn't just for HKV it is also for the individuals who live in Wren. Treasurer Corbin recommended striking Station 202 response from the contract. President Phillips asked if this discussion could wait until Chief Miller gives his staffing report later in the meeting. Treasurer Corbin expressed concern sending personnel out-of-district with no volunteers covering the District. Chief Miller confirmed that personnel are to respond out-of-district only if there are enough personnel to cover the District. President Loudon stated that there are times when Station 201 is left unmanned. President Loudon expressed concern regarding not having an in-district staffing policy or standard. Chief Miller clarified that the District has automatic aid with other districts to cover any staffing shortages for the Philomath Area. President Phillips expressed concern that the personnel and leadership seem to have a gap in their understanding relating to response protocol. Licon asked, as a taxpayer, why it is ok for the response to the city of Philomath to come from Corvallis, 6.2 miles away, in order to staff Philomath personnel in Wren, 7 miles away from the city center. President Phillips thanked Licon for his question. President Phillips expressed concern that there is a division between the Chief and the personnel regarding response in the Fire District. She encouraged leadership to review the practices of the department. President Phillips stated that the Philomath Fire Board will follow up with a meeting with the HKV Board before signing the proposed contract at the July meeting. Treasurer Corbin repeated that he does not believe the response to HKV and Blodgett calls has been sufficiently covered. President Loudon asked Chief Miller to provide a copy of the written staffing plan for Station 202.

The Board took a break from 17:09 to 17:15.

4. Levy Discussion – OA Rodriguez noted that the Levy Needs Breakdown by Fiscal Year is included in the Board Packet. She noted that an addition of a part-time administrative assistant was added as well as annual increases for raises and additional hours for personnel was factored in. She noted that this breakdown and adjustment takes the Levy Needs total from approximately \$8 million to about \$6.5 million. Chief Miller thanked OA Rodriguez for her work on this breakdown. Chief Miller stated that this breakdown can help the District take their needs messaging to the public. Treasurer Corbin stated that he has concerns about adding more paid personnel which he believes will negate the volunteer response. Treasurer Corbin also noted his reservations about pursuing a levy at this time, expressing concern about the current publicity relating to conflicts within the department. OA Rodriguez stated that, regardless of the timing of the levy, it is important for the District to start having this conversation with the public. Vice President Brand noted that he believes that all the

personnel have the right motivations in mind which will help the District move forward. Edmonds mirrored the sentiment that all members can work together despite varying personalities and opinions.

5. Board Self-Evaluation – Moved to July.
6. Strategic Plan – Moved to July.

VII. NEW BUSINESS

1. Cost Of Living Adjustment (COLA) Recommendation – Chief Miller recommended extending a 6% COLA for the non-represented employees, effective July 1, 2022. OA Rodriguez reminded the Board that there was a wage recommendation discussion a few months back but that this is a specific motion relating to the annual COLA to align non-represented staff with Union personnel. **President Phillips motioned to adopt the 6% COLA adjustment for the Deputy Chief and Office Administrator. Edmonds seconded. Motion passed 4-0.**
2. Standard of Coverage – Moved to July.
3. Staffing Grant and Station 202 Staffing Plan– Chief Miller reported that the Fire District will receive a grant for approximately \$32,500 for up-staffing during the fire season. He added that he is soliciting applications for this opening with a prospective start date for July 1. Chief Miller stated that his intent is to add two part-time personnel to cover the District during the high-fire season adding that they can help cover staffing for station 202 as well. Edmonds noted that the grant will end in November, stating that the District will need to consider how to cover personnel after that funding has been exhausted. Chief Miller added that these part-time, summer-hires can help back-fill for personnel deployed on conflagration. Chief Miller stated that the part-time hires will be from internal postings. President Phillips asked how these personnel will supplement the Station 202 staffing. Chief Miller clarified that Station 202 will not be staffed unless there are 5 firefighters on-duty within the District, otherwise it will remain unstaffed. Treasurer Corbin clarified that this covering will include weekends and Chief Miller agreed and added that it includes any time after-hours. Chief Miller stated that a “qualified leader” would be station at 202 and that individual would have apparatus operator and EMS certification as well as DC Ferguson’s initial tactics class. Chief Miller stated that ongoing staffing, after the grant funds run out, will be furnished through extra-hire wages currently budgeted. Chief Miller added that the intention is to include a paid person staffing with a part-timer, RV or Volunteer at Station 202. Chief Miller expressed surprise that there is a misunderstanding that the Philomath area would be un-manned in order to respond to calls out-of-district. President Phillips expressed concerned about the lack of communication between the Chief and the volunteers and encouraged Chief Miller to provide clarity about this staffing plan. President Phillips encouraged Chief Miller to work with the personnel moving forward to avoid any surprises. Chief Miller stated that his door is always open and President Loudon has not taken up his offers to connect. President Phillips added that the expectation of the Board is that all the personnel understand the plans moving forward. Edmonds noted that all parties need to be involved and work through this issue in order to move forward together. Chief Miller stated that he has gone to numerous volunteer meetings and read his report and the District Staffing plans, and has had question and answer sessions, including 8 listening sessions with the personnel, adding that the plan has not changed and has been in writing, which is why he is surprised by the confusion from the personnel. He added that there are issues relating to the volunteers going around him and straight to the Board and that this is causing complications. President Phillips stated that it is not the role of the Board to guide the Chief on how to manage the day-to-day staffing and operations. Edmonds stated that the Board members need to work together as well, and guide personnel

complaints to the Chief, per the chain of command. Volunteer Vice President Olsen stated that the Volunteers are working to be as transparent as possible and are not receiving follow up from Chief Miller. President Phillips encouraged all members to work together to sort this out. Treasurer Corbin again noted concern relating to response out-of-district. Vice President Brand noted that Chief Miller's prior comments indicated that the leadership have discretion to make decisions to respond out-of-district. Edmonds encouraged Treasurer Corbin to meet with Chief Miller with his questions relating to staffing and response. DC Ferguson stated that Fire Service as a system is dependent upon mutual aid and flexibility. President Phillips stated that the Board expectation is to have this staffing issue wrapped up with resolution to be presented at the July meeting.

4. Annual Review of Board Documents for Disposal – Moved to July.
5. Juneteenth – OA Rodriguez proposed establishing Juneteenth as a recognized holiday for non-represented staff since it was included as a holiday in the recent Union contract update. **President Phillips moved to adopt Juneteenth as a holiday for non-represented personnel. Treasurer Corbin seconded.** OA Rodriguez noted that this would be the 12<sup>th</sup> paid holiday for the personnel and not a floating holiday. **Motion passed 4-0.**

VIII. ACTION ITEMS – None.

IX. NEXT MEETING – The next regularly scheduled Board Meeting will be July 11, 2022.

X. ADJOURNMENT – Meeting adjourned at 17:44.

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Board President Daphne Phillips

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Board Member