

Mosier Fire District

Board Meeting Minutes

Thursday, March 13, 2025

Attendance:

Board Members: Carol Goter, Kris McNall, Rob Miller, Todd Reeves

Staff: Chief Michael Carlson

Public: Steve Fisher, Steven Banks, Kevin Nalder, MCFR

Call to order at 1804

Agenda additions or corrections: McNall: transfer of funds and format of special meetings.

Comments from the public: None

Consent agenda - McNall suggests moving Lexipol bill to training. **Motion** made by Goter to approve Consent Agenda, seconded by Reeves, unanimously approved.

Business:

1. Volunteer Report - None

2. Board

a1. Format of special meetings: Special meetings will be limited to discussions of Chief hiring, Fire District, and possibly JUF if there is something urgent needing to be discussed. They will include executive sessions if needed and public comment.

a. Board Representative to April drill: Goter will go.

b. MCFR partnership: Discussion of document provided by MCFR for Mosier services. Chief Carlson that MFD covers most of this already. We don't do mitigation services related to Wildland, but that has been built into a grant recently submitted by Chief Carlson.

Chief Jensen of MCFR discussed their vehicle maintenance process-- they use contractors. They have a captain specifically assigned to vehicle maintenance for the district. They use PSTrax, also used by MFD. They have an operations chief in charge of all maintenance for facilities and vehicles.

Reeves provided a summary of his meeting with MCFR:

- Ambulance services would stay with Hood River.
- MFD volunteers and MCFR would respond to fire calls, with our volunteers ideally getting here first. MCFR's standard is that they are out the door in 80 seconds for a fire call.
- If there was a serious medical call they would also send out support staff for that as well.
- All calls to Mosier would be responded to by MCFR. MCFR would treat all calls in the Mosier District the same way as they would in their current area. They triage calls to determine how many people are needed for an effective response.
- MCFR would deal with most administrative details.

MCFR would not have someone stationed in Mosier. Chief Jensen said that there needs to be additional fact finding regarding financial needs and that MCFR would need to know what MFD's resources are before they could make a commitment of staff. When they have wildland personnel available, it will be easier for them to have people near the district and available for response.

Chief Jensen was asked about acceptance of volunteers, that is, non-union firefighters, in the stations at MCFR. He stated that volunteers work out of the stations and train with the crews jointly. When it comes to the wildland crews, they are encouraged to be out in the field, providing mitigation, rather than being at the station. He acknowledged that with more career personnel available, their volunteer program has changed. In Mosier volunteers would be essential for responses to calls. MCFR also supports volunteers with the Fire Academy, acknowledging their importance in the surrounding areas.

If they were to take a larger role in MFD fire protection, MCFR would be involved in volunteer training to keep operations and training aligned. The location of volunteer training would be a mix between Mosier and MCFR. Operations Chief Beckner voiced an awareness of the Mosier community and having Mosier volunteers train here is important for community awareness.

McNall and Chief Carlson suggested going to the community and apprising them of the possibility of a change in service and try to get their feedback. McNall also suggested having another meeting with MCFR to discuss budget and capital issues.

Chief Jensen suggested a joint MCFR/MFD board meeting after MCFR has had an on site assessment and the sharing of MFD capital outlay plans. He also suggested getting input from one of the greater Portland area departments who've gone through this kind of a partnership.

Reeves spoke with Chief Borton (Wy'East) to get information on their department and feedback regarding a potential change in Mosier. They want to help, but suggest MFD would need a local point person (volunteer) to be a leader. Reeves spoke to Tom Oswald about stepping back into a role with MFD to help with operational training. He was open to it, but would not want to return to being Interim Chief.

MFD (Reeves and McNall) and MCFR agreed to meet in the next few days, followed by an MFD board meeting on 3/19/25 (Zoom only) if needed.

c. Chief Carlson part time employment letter approval: Discussion of options -- partnering with MCFR, hiring a full-time chief (if there are viable candidates), hiring an interim chief. Chief Carlson is willing to work Sundays and Mondays for MFD at 30% of his normal contract. The agreement can be terminated with a 2-week notice by either party. During the rest of the week, we would still have our volunteers and get ambulance and fire assistance from Hood River and MCFR, as well as our mutual auto aid partners, as is the case now. **Motion** by McNall to authorize Reeves to sign this contract with Chief Carlson, seconded by Miller, unanimously approved. Contract was signed.

d. District Harassment Incident Reporting Policy: Discussion about keeping the reporting of an incident mandatory or allow for informal resolution. **Motion** by Goter to approve both policies with the edits stipulating that reporting must take place, seconded by Miller, unanimously approved.

3. Financials

a. Review of budget big picture: McNall presented the budget in a pie chart format and highlighted the following points:

- Increasing tax revenue by the extra 10 cents per thousand assessed value that we could charge would bring in \$17K-\$18K per year
- About a quarter of our budget for the 2024-2025 year goes to capital expenses
- Our annual loan obligation for the Business Oregon loan (JUF) will be \$36K-\$37K, which will decrease the amount available for capital expenses.

b. Future Budget Expectations: If we go ahead with an agreement with MCFR, our budget will be very different from the budget being prepared now. Our budget process normally begins mid-April, but we could delay it by a couple of weeks. The 2025-2026 budget must be signed off by 6/30/25.

b1. Transfer of money from LGIP to Interstate Bank: Will do this in April.

4. JUF Update: There will be meeting on 3/20/2025.

5. Chief's report: In addition to Chief Carlson's written report (included in packet):

- New turnouts have been received
- Wildland Firefighter 1 course was taught. All firefighters in attendance who were eligible to upgrade did so.
- Chief will continue to work on the Community Wildfire Meeting scheduled for April 19.
- Hoping to hear about the wildland staffing grant as early as tomorrow.
- Note that the current P & L does not include the Supplemental Budget info as the bookkeepers did not have that documentation in time.

a. District Wildland Strategic Plan presented by Steven Banks.

Our greatest threat is Mosier Creek drainage. There are 18 residences in that area. It's very high risk to put personnel in the area. There is a lot of vegetation and it's determined that fire would move through the area very rapidly. Also, with narrow driveways and hair pin turns, it would be very difficult to get an engine up there. Chief Carlson is already working on a plan to get a 15,000 gallon tank in that area. There are a couple of resources to get funding for fuel reduction. He also added that the Wilson Road Bridge currently would not support a Type 1 engine and needs to be upgraded. Green Diamond is also working in the area and has interest in the bridge being improved. Mr Banks suggested the possibility of a partnership to put in a new bridge.

Another area discussed was Paradise Ridge Road where, although they have a firewise community set up, there is one property owner who has not participated so that could put the other properties in danger.

Mr. Banks will be doing more analysis and running several fire behavior models. He advised getting the residents to buy into the suggested changes and educating the crews on what not to do if called to the area.

6. Correspondence: None

Entered Executive Session at 2022

Executive session pursuant to ORS 192.660(2)(a) "To consider the employment of a public officer, employee, staff member or individual agent."

Reconvened Regular Session at 2028

As a courtesy, McNall will compose an email for Reeves to update potential interviewees.

Comments from the public: None.

Chief Carlson was contacted by Wasco Co Elections to remind us that nominations are due 3/20/25 and they'd only received one submission from our district.

MFD and MCFR will meet 3/17/25 at 1 pm

Adjournment at 2031

Next board meeting is scheduled for March 19, 2025 via Zoom only