

Mosier Fire District Board Meeting

Thursday, June 12, 2025

Attendance:

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

Staff: Connor McKibben

Public: Rob Garrett, Kathi

Call to order at 1811

Agenda additions or corrections: None

Comments from the public: Letter from Dustin Posner in support of partnership with MCFR.

Consent agenda - Correction of Kris McNall's name in minutes; McNall requested that statement in 5/12/25 Budget Committee minutes regarding supplemental budgets include requirement of specific conditions being met to allow that. Re Carson bill, McNall will talk to Connor McKibben about it as well as correct classification of bills. **Motion** made by McNall to accept minutes with changes and approve bills; seconded by Rubin; unanimously approved.

Business:

1. Volunteer Report: Connor McKibben stated that volunteer engagement is good. Re training, everyone has completed the first half introductory wildland fire course. The second half will be covered at the next drill.

2. Operations Report from Connor McKibben: Calls are picking up; working on getting the fire danger signs up near Station 12 and Exit 69 to Mosier; intends to get all SCBA bottles refilled at Hood River; McKibben was asked about his take on volunteers' reception of a MFD/MCFR partnership. He stated that positives are seen, primarily training and access to facilities and equipment. The concerns are whether the volunteers would be given direction and supervision as much as would be provided by a local chief. They are open to a trial period.

McKibben reported a very positive experience working with MCFR on the Rowena Fire under Captain Kiyokawa and Chief Beckner.

3. Board

a. Board Representative to July drill - Rubin will go to a June drill; Reeves will go to July drill.

b. MCFR Update

i. Joint Board/Volunteer meeting debrief: Meeting went well and seemed appreciated by both board and volunteers. Goter noted the idea of a volunteer chief being emphasized in the discussion. McNall explained that the volunteer chief would primarily provide leadership for incidents, a model used by other departments.

The consensus of the Board was that the meeting did not significantly influence the Board's opinion of the proposal with MCFR.

It was noted that there seemed to be general acceptance from the volunteers that with the their stepping up their involvement, MFD can get through the fire season without an imminent decision on MCFR.

Reeves had a recent conversation with Chief Jensen who offered the benefit of a partnership with MCFR is that they would hire a full-time mechanic for apparatus from both districts. MCFR is facing delays in service, as is MFD.

The issue of needing expert guidance on negotiating the MCFR proposal was raised. Rubin reported that she's been unsuccessful thus far in reaching someone at SDAO for guidance, but she will continue her efforts.

ii. Discuss how to get more information out to the public: Discussion of accumulating metrics to offer to the public. Response information is tracked. It was suggested that Captain Charles Young may be able to access that information.

c. Staffing

i. Administrative Responder position: To discuss in Executive Session

ii. Additional Staffing: McKibben proposed hiring a part-time financial person (5-10 hours every two weeks) and a part-time training officer (10-20 hours every two weeks), which would relieve him of those tasks, allowing him to focus on operational duties. He recommended hiring internally from the volunteer cadre if possible.

McKibben was directed to gather data regarding the two positions and what they should be paid, then return to the board with results.

iii. Seasonal Firefighters: There are currently two seasonal firefighters and a lead on a possible third.

Discussion of the OSFM grant for seasonal wildland firefighters which would not allow for paying for duties typically done by a chief, but does pay for increasing firefighting capacity, and could even cover paying volunteers to pick up shifts working for the District. McKibben stated that there is interest among the volunteers for this.

iv. Chief: McKibben stated that he did not feel comfortable or qualified serving in a Chief's role for MFD and advocated for a volunteer chief. Reeves assured him that if no one from the volunteer cadre steps up to be the volunteer chief, the Board is satisfied for him to continue in that role for now and is happy with the job he's done so far.

v. Insurance Plan: To discuss in Executive Session

4. Financials

a. Auditor Search: McNall stated that if a financial person is hired, that should be the person to find an auditor for MFD rather than herself.

b. Audit: McNall stated that money spent in FY 2023-2024 did not rise to the level requiring an audit so the Report In Lieu of Audit form was appropriate. She requested and received authorization for McKibben to pay the state \$150 for the Report In Lieu of Audit.

c. Insurance Coverage: Our insurance coverage is currently too low; it's supposed to be equal to our expenses which are now more than \$250K. The increase will not affect our budget.

d. Quickbooks fee: Required fee of \$950 for First Business to continue to provide services to us.

McNall is working with First Interstate to clear up credit card issues (increase limit and correct authorized users).

5. JUF Update: The legislative session is scheduled to end on June 29 so we will know about funding by then.

6. Correspondence: See Public Comment above.

Comments from the public: None

Executive Session entered at 2027

Executive session pursuant to ORS 192.660(2)(i) "To review and evaluate the employment related performance of the Chief Executive Officer of any public body, a public officer, employee or staff member who does not request an open hearing."

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

Reconvene Regular Session at 2107

Motion made by McNall to hire Connor McKibben as Operations Administrator at \$24/hour for 40 hrs/wk through October 31, 2025. Seconded by Rubin; unanimously approved.

Motion made by McNall to notify SDIS that we want health insurance to continue and we are offering health insurance to Connor McKibben as required by law. Seconded by Miller. Unanimously approved.

Adjournment at 2109.