

**DEPOE BAY RURAL FIRE PROTECTION DISTRICT  
&  
NORTH LINCOLN FIRE & RESCUE DISTRICT #1**

**Joint Board of Directors Workshop - Minutes  
June 5, 2020**

**\*\*\* APPROVED \*\*\***

<u><b>Attendance:</b></u>		
<b>Board Members:</b>	<b>Staff:</b>	<b>Guests:</b>
Ron Woodard – NLFR	Rob Dahlman – NLFR Fire Chief	Scott Stanton – Umatilla County Fire Chief
Alan Lee – NLFR	Bryan Daniels – DBF Fire Chief	Kenny Banner – NLFR
Jamie Wright – NLFR	Doug Strange – NLFR Deputy Chief	Brian Nordyke – NLFR
Danny Curler – NLFR (GoToMeeting)	KrieAnn Kudar – NLFR Admin. Assist.	Sam Anderson – NLFR
Janel Gifford – DBF	Ed Ulrich – NLFR Fire Marshal (GoToMeeting)	Joshua Roberts – NLFR
Paul Erskine – DBF		GoToMeeting:
Robert Batty – DBF		Brandon Hamilton
Barbara Leff – DBF		Jason Spano
Richard Krolak – DBF (GoToMeeting)		Fred Hertel

Chief Dahlman called the Joint Board of Directors Workshop to order at 10:02 a.m. and all present stood to recite the Pledge of Allegiance. Due to COVID-19 concerns, two of the 10 Board members as well as several guests/staff members attended the meeting via GoToMeeting.

The purpose of the workshop was to hear a special Reformation Presentation by Chief Scott Stanton from Umatilla County Fire District #1 (UCFD1) on the dissolution of Hermiston Rural Fire Protection District and Stanfield Rural Fire Protection District, and the formation of Umatilla County Fire District #1.

- UCFD1’s history prior to reformation
- First Vote – challenges, what they learned, next steps
- Second Vote – what went right
- Boundaries, rates, documents, procedures, PAC (Political Action Committee), and members
- What they have learned since
- Needs for the future

**UCFD1’s History prior to reformation**

Hermiston RFPD was formed in 1907 and covered 140 square miles; Stanfield RFPD was formed in 1912 and covered 158 square miles. There was also “no-man’s land” (unprotected) between the two districts, which were six miles apart. At the time that the two Districts started looking at coming together, they were losing millions of dollars through Urban Renewal, and it was tough to keep volunteers.

The Districts jointly hired ESCI to do a feasibility study at a cost of \$50,000. It was determined that the two Fire Districts should become one but that they would need a good tax rate. Moving forward, they began training together every week and mirroring their SOGs and placement of equipment (RIT, etc.) on their apparatus.

### **First Vote – challenges, what they learned, next steps**

They were on the November 2014 ballot, but even though the Measures to dissolve the two fire districts passed, the Measure to form a new department with a tax rate of \$2.00 per \$1,000 failed in Hermiston, passed in Stanfield – all three Measures must pass in the same election.

- Challenges:
  - Property tax statements came out a week before the election
  - Lack of PAC funding and campaigning
  - Lack of participation
  - General area historical ballot measures
  - Their Measures for the new District:
    - Dissolution Measures x 2
    - Form and fund new Measure
- What they learned:
  - Never go out for a November election! Go out in May, know who else is going up against you for voters' tax dollars and have a good relationship with those on the ballot at the same time your Measures are (the school district, for instance).
  - Must have PAC funds (\$1,000 per 1,000 population or \$1.00 per person), need at least 12 months to build PAC funds and to campaign.
  - Their messaging wasn't good enough – they needed to hire help.
- Next steps:
  - In March 2015, they hired Liz Loomis Public Affairs. They paid \$5,000 for a one-day consultation and she built a 12-month communication plan for them.
  - They decided to try again in May 2016.

### **Second vote – what went right**

- Membership participation – they went to the unions, told them that if the vote passed, union membership would increase. Got them on board and the local union went to the IAFF, which gave them \$5,000 seed money.
- PAC funding – State of Oregon rules. They started January 2015, went to large farms, small corporations, and individuals, and raised \$24,000 to \$25,000. Bulk of the money went for direct mailers and video.
- Campaign:
  - Door-to-door by about 100 union members and volunteers
  - direct mailers went out to registered voters – the post office agreed to place the mailers right on top of the ballots

- YouTube videos – CBS affiliate came and made videos, put together 15-second clips as unskippable ads
  - Social media – report run numbers for the day on Facebook
  - Annual reports available on-line and about 100 hard copies to hand out
  - 4' x 8' signs, then yard signs last if money left
  - Messaging – reformation would result in a better use of money, not necessarily save the voters money, i.e. right size fleet of apparatus. ISO ratings were a big part of this; citizens understood that lower insurance rates couldn't be promised, but were possible.
- Tax rate – went out for \$1.75 per \$1,000 as opposed to the previous \$2.00 per \$1,000, with the understanding that the lower rate wouldn't go as far as the higher amount and they may have to go out for a bond or levy five to ten years later.
  - Timing – if the Measures pass in November, there is more time until the July 1<sup>st</sup> transition, but May is still better. Because of the shorter time period, have preliminaries done and already in place with vendors for patches, logos on business cards, etc. Have the new District name ready to go; they had three choices and did run them by the stakeholders, but the final decision was made internally.

### **The Details**

- Boundaries – annex some unprotected land to legitimize the change (they added the six miles between the two districts). They worked with the County GIS to create a new legal description. Chief Dahlman reported that the Dept. of Revenue told him this had to be done and approved by March 31<sup>st</sup>.
- Documents – County and City Resolutions:
  - Jerry Herbage from Lincoln Country Legal Counsel can speak with Doug Olsen at UCFD1
  - To create a new Fire District, a Resolution from each city is necessary – the attorneys will help with that
- Rates and Sustainability (Escalating costs – labor, contracts)
  - PERS froze their rates for 2 years, and UCFD1's rate almost doubled when it resumed
  - UCFD1 built in a 3% increase every year for the Union
  - Any MOU, IGA, ASA, etc. must be redone
  - A board meeting was held at 8 a.m. on July 1<sup>st</sup> to adopt new by-laws, waiver for budget
- Unions and Volunteer Associations can be left separate. They had only one union going into reformation. Union presidents and fire chiefs need to get together and go over the contracts section by section. Do whatever it takes for unions to equalize; i.e. wage freeze one until the other catches up, etc.
- Separate budgets must be prepared just in case the Measures don't pass.

- Keep one FDID number
- Back taxes go into a savings account

### **What we have learned**

- Have a plan
- Steps to take forward – get budget right
- Market ourselves:
  - Aggressive, well-maintained, audited social media
  - Have membership in civic groups – hand out annual report at their meetings
- PAC fund:
  - \$1,000 per 1,000 people (population, not voters)
  - Look at big contractors to PAC funding
  - Go to local unions (for instance, carpenters) for contributions
  - Go door-to-door
- Attorney - having a good attorney is essential. The County's legal Counsel was a big help to them, as well.
- County elections and council help
- Membership
- Feasibility Study
- Options
- Pride & Ownership

### **Future Needs**

- Funding – what are our needs for the next 30 years, i.e. stations, rolling stock, etc.
- Personnel – decrease response times
- Logistics – stations, apparatus, equipment

### **Misc.**

- Build good relationships with your community and stakeholders – speak with as many people as possible, i.e. civic groups such as Rotary Club, etc.

- Hiring a third party (such as ESCI) brings credibility to the project – data, logistics, and the financial pieces.
- Hermiston Fire’s likability with the public was 93% at that time, but likability doesn’t necessarily mean anything when it comes to tax increase votes.
- Regionalization is the future for efficiency and effectiveness of tax dollars.
- Form a committee for the process.
- Reduce the redundancy.
- A first step if not going all out now might be forming a Fire Authority. Each District would retain their own Board of Directors plus there would be a Fire Authority Board of Directors.
- Hold town hall meetings, stakeholder meetings, set up surveys.

*FM Ed Ulrich asked Chief Stanton if the Umatilla tribe was a significant voice of influence in his community or in the process he went through, and the answer was no.*

The Joint Board of Directors Workshop was adjourned at 11:55 a.m.

*The minutes were taken, transcribed, and submitted by KrieAnn Kudar, NLFR Administrative Assistant*

**Depoe Bay Rural Fire Protection District / North Lincoln Fire & Rescue District #1**

**Joint Board Workshop**

**Roll Call**

**Date: 6-5-2020**

	Present	Absent	GoToMeeting	
Robert Batty	X			
Paul Erskine	X			
Richard Krolak			X	
Barbara Leff	X			
Janel Gifford	X			
Chief Daniels	X			
Alan Lee	X			
Jamie Wright	X			
Ron Woodard	X			
Tim Beatty		X		
Danny Curler			X	
Chief Dahlman	X			