**WAMIC RURAL FIRE PROTECTION DISTRICT BOARD MEETING**

**JULY 20, 2024**

This meeting was called to order by President Larry Warren at 10:06am.

Board members present: Larry warren, Neil Senger, John Creel, John Ickes and Cindy Koch. Members of the audience: David Deurwaarder, Merle Hlavka, Jamie Magill, Chief Larry Magill and Sheridan McClellan, Emergency Management Service Manager for Wasco County, Oregon.

Board Members meeting: Larry Warren will continue to act as the President of the Board until his term has expired in July 2025. At that time, he will not be running for this position. The following will continue to be part of the Fire Board, if elected, Neil Senger as Vice President, John Creel as Treasurer, Cindy Koch as Secretary, and John Ickes as Member at Large. There will need to be a new President elected.

**Minutes of the June 15, 2024 meeting:** Motion to accept these minutes was made by Neil Senger. John Ickes seconded this motion. Motion passed.

**Correspondence:** None

**Treasurer’s Report:** See attached Profit and Loss Statement and Balance Sheet for June 2024.

**Chief’s Report:**

**Larch Creek fire, cause and debrief:**

This fire was human caused. A person of interest is now incarcerated, but on other outstanding warrants.

First day of fire: Eugene Walters saw the fire and called ODF. 45 Minutes after ODF received this call, Wamic Fire Dept was called to assist, and Tygh Valley fire dept and Dufer Fire Dept also came to mutual aid. These three fire departments arrived at the fire first. Then the 10 person Hot Shots arrived. John Goleman was caught in the fire. George Hatfield was John Goleman’s lookout. John was able to get out of the fire.

Second day of fire: Con Flag called. More assistance to fight the fire arrived. When Con Flag is called, we disengage, and the fire departments resume their regular duties. When the three local fire departments and Pine Grove Fire Dept were re-engaged, only 4 members of the Wamic Fire Dept were available for assistance: John Goleman, George Hatfield, Nedley Cole and Chief Larry Magill. All other volunteers were not available.

At 10am, there was a meeting to confirm fire status and set trip points for evacuations.

On day 2, about 2 million gallons of fire retardant was dumped on the fire. Planes, Helicopters and Dozers where additional equipment put into to play to assist in putting out this fire.

The community did really well on evacuations. John Goleman and Larry Magill took a head count of those that remained in the community that did not evacuate.

Third day of fire: Structure task force was on duty.

According to Chief Larry Magill, there were a tremendous number of lessons to be gained with handling of this huge fire. Unfortunately, those lessons will probably be needed, since we are still in a wildfire season and live in a potential wild fire community.

Due to the skills of all of the fire departments and all the assistance received to fight this fire:

* No inhabited structures were burned
* No one was injured

The Wamic Fire Department had tremendous donations of food and water during this time. Including, but not limited to donations from the community members generosity:

* Safeway donated enough food to make about 1000 sandwiches, water, and Gatorade
* Mike’s Pizza donated 75 frozen pizzas

There was so much donated, some of the excess was donated to the Food Bank, so it could be used promptly.

**Status of Vehicles:**

* 551 from Rock Creek is still in Tygh Valley. Needs mechanical work.
* P80 has mechanical issues
* 501 has electrical brain issues
* 6 x 6 is back from Clackamas and is now in service

**EMS:** There have been 82 call outs so far this year. This is a record number.

**Training:** Due to current events, training was put on hold temporarily.

**Communications:** Due to current events, communications were put on hold temporarily.

**Safety:** Practice of evaluating a situation through the windshield, before acting on it, is still in place.

**OLD BUSINESS:**

Generators are working as of the day before the Larch Creek Fire started.

All fire hydrants are operational.

**Grants pending or open:**

Cares act – FEMA LABOR - Oregon State Fire Marshall - Active

FEMA Building grant – Oregon Fire Marshall – Active

New Staffing Grant – Oregon Fire Marshall – Active

Wildfire Mitigation Grant – Approved.

**EMS and fire coverage of the district. Paid time vs volunteer time** under review

**NEW BUSINESS:**

Sheridan McClellan, Wasco County Emergency Management Services Manager, addressed the board:

He has never seen evacuations handled as well as the Wamic evacuations. The evacuations were calm and orderly. We did a fantastic job.

On October 19, 2024, there will be a South County Preparedness Fair held at the Wasco County Fairgrounds. He wants the Fire Department’s input on this fair and wants us to have a booth there also. It could be from 10 am to 2pm, or longer. Plans are still in process.

One of the primary issues to all is to get emergency information out quickly. A new company named Perimeter has been hired to assist in getting speedy information out to not only fire departments but to communities also. This could happen in the next month or two.

ODHS has requested a grant to get a consulting firm to assist in designing an evacuation plan so that everyone has the same plan and all contacts necessary to put the plan in to action.

**Banking issue from recent audit:** Not all our bank accounts are insured with our current Credit Union. We need to transfer some of our accounts to a National recognized bank, with greater insurance coverage. The plan suggested was to put the fire departments savings in a National Bank, but keep the current checking account with Rivermark Credit Union in place, since the balance is under the maximum of insurance they carry, and the payment of the fire department regular expenses can stay as they are in the same banking institution, and there would not be any added expense for checks etc. This needs to be done as soon as possible. A motion was made to locate a National Bank that can protect our funds by Neil Senger. Cindy Koch seconded this motion. Motion passed. This should be completed in the next few weeks.

**FAMILY FUN DAY DEBRIEF:**

This event was funded by the Wamic Fire Foundation.

Even in the extreme heat (104 to 107 degrees outside), we had between 650 and 750 people turn out. 46 bikes were won by the kids (all included helmets). The new company hired to supply not only the blow ups, but snow cone machine) and other items was amazing and is being hired for next year’s event. The Scrapbag Quilters did an outstanding job baking for the cake walk. There is a need for more communication in the community to help supply the bake sale. The number of items to sell at the bake sale was minimal.

We were reminded that the purpose of this event is not to make money, but to give back to the community.

**OTHER ITEMS OPEN TO DISCUSSION:**

Larry Warren brought up the unprofessional and not acceptable behavior and disparaging and slandering remarks made about a fellow fire chief and neighboring districts as to how the Larch Creek Fire was handled. Not certain how this will be addressed yet.

Dave Deurwaarder will not be available to handle the raffle or securing the raffle items for the Labor Day/Rendevous Days fire department breakfast. Someone else will need to take over this position for this event.

THERE WILL NOT BE AN AUGUST FIRE BOARD MEETING DUE TO THE WASCO COUNTY FAIR DURING THE REGULARLY SCHEDULED MEETING DAY.

JAMIE MAGILL TO TAKE THE SEPTEMBER MEETING MINUTES. CINDY WILL BE OUT OF TOWN THAT DAY.

Meeting adjourned at 11:32am

Prepared and Submitted by Cindy Koch.