

**AGENDA**  
**APPLEGATE VALLEY FIRE DISTRICT**  
**BUDGET COMMITTEE MEETING**  
**May 15, 2024 4:00 PM**

- 1. CALL TO ORDER**
- 2. ROLL CALL**
- 3. REVIEW MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING**
- 4. GENERAL DISCUSSION**
- 5. PROPOSED CHANGES**
- 6. MOTION TO APPROVE BUDGET**
- 7. RESOLUTION TO APPROVE BUDGET**
- 8. ADJOURNMENT**

# APPLEGATE VALLEY RFPD #9

## BUDGET COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES

April 16, 2025

Training Building, 1095 Upper Applegate Rd., Jacksonville, OR 97530  
and Conference Call



### 1.0 CALL TO ORDER

Budget Meeting called to order by Rob Underwood.

TIME: 4:01 PM

### 2.0 ROLL CALL

**PRESENT:** President Rob Underwood, Secretary/Treasurer Mike Blaschka, Director Doug Stewart, Vice, Budget Member Brad Barnes, Budget Member Megan Howell, Budget Member Christina Lehman, Budget Member Rebecca Maddox

**ABSENT:**

Vice President Julie Barry, Director Jeff Hoxsey, Budget Member Rex Garoutte

**OTHER STAFF & INVITED SPEAKERS:** Chris Wolfard (*Fire Chief*), Dave Blakely (Deputy Chief), Tallie Jackson (*Admin Chief*), McKenzie Turnbull (*Logistics Chief*)

### 3.0 ELECTIONS OF BUDGET OFFICERS

Nominations opened for president, vice president and secretary.

→ **Vote:** Mike Blaschka moved to elect Brad Barnes as president, Megan Howell seconded the motion.

Motion carries as follows.

**AYES** Underwood, Blaschka, Stewart, Barnes, Howell, Lehman, Maddox

**NAYS**

→ **Vote:** Rob Underwood moved to elect Rebecca Maddox as vice president, Megan Howell seconded the motion.

Motion carries as follows.

**AYES** Underwood, Blaschka, Stewart, Barnes, Howell, Lehman, Maddox

**NAYS**

→ **Vote:** Rob Underwood moved to elect Megan Howell as secretary, Brad Barnes seconded the motion.

Motion carries as follows.

**AYES** Underwood, Blaschka, Stewart, Barnes, Howell, Lehman, Maddox

## **NAYS**

### **4.0 REVIEW MEETING SCHEDULE**

Chief Wolfard explained the budget process and procedure of sending questions.

Questions to Secretary by May 1st.

Questions compiled and sent to Chief Wolfard by May 5th.

Chief Wolfard to respond to questions by 14th.

### **5.0 RECEIVE BUDGET**

Chief Wolfard informed the budget committee of the layout of the budget books.

### **6.0 AGENDA FOR NEXT MEETING**

Review of questions, resolution to approve the budget

### **7.0 ADJOURNMENT**

Brad Barnes adjourned the meeting at 4:27 pm.

The next scheduled Budget meeting will be held Wednesday, May 21, 2025 @ 4 pm. Training Building  
1095 Upper Applegate Rd.

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Minutes Submitted by Tallie Jackson  
Administration Chief

**RESOURCES  
GENERAL FUND**

APPLEGATE VALLEY RFPD #9

	HISTORICAL DATA		ADOPTED BUDGET	RESOURCE DESCRIPTION	BUDGET FOR NEXT YEAR 2025-2026		
	ACTUAL				PROPOSED BY	APPROVED BY	YTD
	2ND PRECEDING	1ST PRECEDING					
	YEAR 22-23	YEAR 23-24					
		THIS YEAR					
		2024-2025	Beginning Fund Balance	BUDGET OFFICER	BUDGET COMMITTEE	3/31/2025	
1			1.*AVAILABLE CASH ON HAND (Cash Basis) or				
2	1,486,257	2,447,033	1,919,400	2.*NET WORKING CAPITAL (Cash Basis)	1,800,000	1,800,000	2,042,293
3	48,143	48,431	52,000	3. PREVIOUSLY LEVIED TAXES	52,000	52,000	39,820
4	53,243	114,385	60,000	4. INTEREST EARNED	60,000	60,000	79,054
5				OTHER RESOURCES			
6	15,217	36,537	5,000	6. EMERGENCY FEES & RE-IMBURSEMENTS	35,000	35,000	86,921
7	16,065	10,640	10,000	7. DONATIONS	10,000	10,000	10,525
8	20,783	18,083	10,000	8. MISC. INCOME	10,000	10,000	15,369
9	1,019,658	175,681	300,000	9. GRANTS	280,000	1,458,000	393,178
10	0		0	10. TRANSFER FROM RESERVE	81,400	81,400	0
12	35,677	125	0	12. SALE OF ASSETS	0	0	0
15	6,688	8,600	8,400	13. RENTS	15,000	15,000	4,250
16	0	0	0	14. FUELS GRANTS	100,000	100,000	0
17				15			
18				16			
19				17			
20				18			
21				19			
22				20			
23				21			
24				22			
25				23			
26				24			
27				25			
28				26			
29	2,701,731	2,859,515	2,364,800	27. TOTAL RESOURCES, EXCEPT TAXES TO BE LEVIED	2,443,400	3,621,400	2,671,409
30			1,981,000	28. TAXES NECESSARY TO BALANCE BUDGET	2,070,000	2,070,000	1,912,602
31	1,713,742	1,788,846		29. TAXES COLLECTED IN YEAR LEVIED			
32	4,415,473	4,648,361	4,345,800	TOTAL RESOURCES	4,513,400	5,691,400	4,584,012

DETAILED EXPENDITURES  
GENERAL FUND

	HISTORICAL DATA		ADOPTED BUDGET	EXPENDITURE DESCRIPTION	NO. OF EMPS.	RANGE	BUDGET FOR NEXT YEAR 2025-2026				
	ACTUAL						THIS YEAR 2024-2025	PROPOSED BY BUDGET OFFICER	APPROVED BY BUDGET COMMITTEE		YTD 3/31/2025
	2ND PRECEDING YEAR 2022-23	1ST PRECEDING YEAR 2023-2024									
1				PERSONNEL SERVICES						1	
2	166,579	111,387	117,000	2. FIRE CHIEF			121,600	121,600	85,386	2	
3	74,532	84,312	92,500	3. OPERATIONS CHIEF			98,300	98,300	64,476	3	
4	65,678	72,116	78,000	4. LOGISTICS CHIEF			83,500	83,500	56,713	4	
5	56,154	71,272	81,000	5. ADMINISTRATION CHIEF			84,300	84,300	59,120	5	
6	63,978	44,358	64,000	6. SHIFT PERSONNEL #1			67,000	67,000	44,464	6	
7	60,665	64,488	71,000	7. SHIFT PERSONNEL #2			76,000	76,000	51,169	7	
8	72,954	62,737	69,000	8. SHIFT PERSONNEL #3			75,000	75,000	49,585	8	
9	209,721	272,797	350,000	9. MEDICAL INSURANCE			386,000	341,000	272,035	9	
10	0	1,390	8,000	10. UNEMPLOYMENT			8,000	8,000	1,247	10	
11	20,677	28,857	20,000	11. UNIFORMS			23,000	23,000	16,540	11	
12	15,245	64,180	30,000	12. OVERTIME			40,000	40,000	32,943	12	
13	0	33,526	30,000	13. RE-IMBURSEABLE WAGES & O.T.			30,000	30,000	93,840	13	
14	136,309	152,109	140,000	14. SEASONAL FIREFIGHTERS			145,000	145,000	113,738	14	
15	95,888	189,415	275,000	15. PERS (Retirement)			350,000	350,000	210,773	15	
16	21,414	37,397	40,000	16. MEDICARE/ FICA			50,000	50,000	30,391	16	
17	2,738	7,255	5,000	17. MEDICAL PHYSICALS			5,000	5,000	2,471	17	
18	11,882	11,552	20,000	18. VOLUNTEER SHIFT COVERAGE			15,000	15,000	10,845	18	
19	8,000	8,000	8,500	19. LENGTH OF SERVICE			8,500	8,500	8,500	19	
20	0	10,802	4,000	20. BENEFIT SELL BACK			10,000	10,000	3,672	20	
21	7,119	14,437	24,000	21. HRA VEBA			24,000	56,100	17,709	21	
22	10,030	16,858	18,500	22. OREGON GROWTH PLAN			21,000	21,000	15,953	22	
23	56,744	31,560	40,000	23. WORKER'S COMP.			80,000	80,000	66,813	23	
24	0	18,429	25,000	24. RECRUITMENT & RETENTION COORD.			26,000	26,000	16,548	24	
25	0	49,471	69,000	25. FIRE MARSHAL			76,500	76,500	51,843	25	
26	0	97,696	118,000	26. OSFM FIREFIGHTERS			124,000	124,000	82,489	26	
27	0	84,160	200,000	27. EMS APPRENTICE			200,000	200,000	150,568	27	
28	0	0	0	28. FUELS SPECIALIST			45,000	45,000	29,269	28	
29	0	0	0	29. VEHICLE STIPEND			13,200	13,200	2,200	29	
30				30						30	
	1,156,307	1,640,561	1,997,500	31. TOTAL PERSONNEL SERVICES			2,285,900	2,273,000	1,641,297		

DETAILED EXPENDITURES  
GENERAL FUND

	HISTORICAL DATA									
	ACTUAL		ADOPTED BUDGET				BUDGET FOR NEXT YEAR 2025-2026			
	2ND PRECEDING	1ST PRECEDING					THIS YEAR	EXPENDITURE DESCRIPTION	PROPOSED BY	
	YEAR 2022-23	YEAR 2023-2024	2024-2025		BUDGET OFFICER	BUDGET COMMITTEE	3/31/2025			
1				MATERIALS AND SERVICES						1
2	29,761	28,435	38,000	2. ELECTRICITY			38,000	38,000	27,307	2
3	14,009	16,694	30,000	3. TELEPHONE/INTERNET			25,000	25,000	17,474	3
4	21,697	16,730	30,000	4. BLDG. REPAIR & MAINTENANCE			30,000	30,000	17,339	4
5	40,224	47,093	50,000	5. VEHICLE GAS, DIESEL & OIL			50,000	50,000	32,498	5
6	49,582	63,378	50,000	6. EQUIP. REPAIR & MAINTENANCE			60,000	60,000	49,266	6
7	4,112	4,108	7,500	7. RADIO EQUIPMENT & MAINTENANCE			45,000	45,000	5,110	7
8	17,519	10,072	9,500	8. MISC. SUPPLIES			8,000	8,000	5,076	8
9	13,639	20,215	20,000	9. MEDICAL SUPPLIES			15,000	15,000	8,382	9
10	2,592	4,082	3,500	10. OFFICE SUPPLIES			3,500	3,500	3,298	10
11	1,882	805	4,000	11. POSTAGE & FREIGHT			2,000	2,000	1,613	11
12	8,444	6,318	7,500	12. DUES & SUBSCRIPTIONS			7,500	7,500	7,094	12
13	7,558	8,869	12,000	13. LAUNDRY, CLEANING & TRASH			12,000	13,500	10,096	13
14	13,155	10,592	20,000	14. INSTRUCTION & TRAINING			20,000	20,000	10,115	14
15	34,700	24,834	40,000	15. STUDENT FIREFIGHTER PROGRAM			35,000	35,000	8,890	15
16	34,650	32,773	40,000	16. VOLUNTEER PROGRAMS			10,000	10,000	1,455	16
17	50,541	52,057	55,000	17. DISPATCHING SERVICES - ECSO			60,000	60,000	41,254	17
18	35,029	17,482	24,000	18. PROFESSIONAL SERVICES			24,000	24,000	55,104	18
19	0	113	1,000	19. EQUIPMENT LEASE/ RENTAL			1,000	1,000	75	19
20	1,953	7,188	2,500	20. ELECTION & LEGAL PUBLICATIONS			2,500	2,500	0	20
21	44,691	51,813	60,000	21. DISTRICT INSURANCE-GENERAL			60,000	60,000	53,726	21
22	560	4,030	5,000	22. DRAFT SITE REPAIRS			5,000	5,000	8,401	22
23	12,191	14,320	12,000	23. GROUNDS MAINTENANCE			15,000	15,000	13,664	23
24	31,120	18,210	20,000	24. ADMINISTRATIVE EXPENSES			20,000	20,000	8,772	24
25	6,011	6,342	10,000	25. FIRE PREVENTION			5,000	5,000	11,201	25
26	1,875	1,875	2,200	26. EMT PHYSICIAN ADVISOR PROGRAM			2,000	2,000	1,875	26
27	672	1,990	5,100	27. TECHNICAL RESCUE EQUIPMENT			2,500	2,500	4,770	27
28	50,909	15,955	25,000	28. FIRE EQUIPMENT			25,000	25,000	15,533	28
29	0	0	5,000	29. FIRE ASSIGNMENT EXPENSES			5,000	5,000	1,859	29
30	64,664	19,140	0	30. GRANT EXPENDITURES			0	0	4,480	30
31	4,395	14,416	10,000	31. OFFICE EQUIPMENT/FURNISHINGS			15,000	15,000	2,557	31
32	13,500	16,395	16,500	32. HEALTH AND WELLNESS			16,500	16,500	10,188	32
33	1,202	2,570	5,000	33. BOARD TRAINING			5,000	5,000	0	33
34	14,295	22,388	30,000	34. INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY			35,000	35,000	28,183	34
35	2,219	1,480	8,000	35. VOLUNTEER RECRUITMENT & RETENTION			5,000	5,000	1,026	35
36	0	51,771	28,000	36. PERSONAL PROTECTIVE EQUIPMENT			35,000	35,000	23,358	36
37	0	22,487	17,500	37. EQUIPMENT TESTING & CERTIFICATION			20,000	20,000	10,274	37
38	0	0	0	38. FUELS EQUIPMENT & REPAIR			5,000	5,000	0	38
39	0	0	0	39. FUELS PPE			3,000	3,000	0	39
40	0	0	0	40. FUELS GRANTS			100,000	350,000	0	40
41	0	0	0	41. IMAGING & SIGNAGE			15,000	15,000	0	41
	627,132	637,020	703,800	39. TOTAL MATERIALS & SERVICES			842,500	1,094,000	501,312	

DETAILED EXPENDITURES  
GENERAL FUND

	HISTORICAL DATA			EXPENDITURE DESCRIPTION			BUDGET FOR NEXT YEAR 2024-2025			
	ACTUAL		ADOPTED BUDGET				PROPOSED BY	APPROVED BY	YTD	
	2ND PRECEDING	1ST PRECEDING	THIS YEAR				BUDGET OFFICER	BUDGET COMMITTEE	3/31/2025	
	YEAR 2022-23	YEAR 2023-24	2024-2025							
1				CAPITAL OUTLAY						1
2	7,370	0	20,000	2. STATION CONSTRUCTION PROJECTS			0	600,000	20,000	2
3	0	0	5,500	3. OFFICE MACHINES			0	0	5,495	3
4	0	0	0	4. SHOP EQUIPMENT			0	0	0	4
5	0	0	14,000	5. NEW FIRE EQUIPMENT			5,000	5,000	0	5
6	25,000	311,295	100,000	6. EQUIPMENT ACQUISITION			75,000	75,000	77,791	6
7	16,872	0	0	7. APPARATUS UPGRADES			0	0	0	7
8	0	0	0	8. TRAINING & MEDICAL EQUIPMENT			15,000	15,000	0	8
9	33,540	51,500	0	9. CAPITAL GRANT EXPENDITURES			0	0	0	9
10	0	0	0	10. FUELS CAPITAL EQUIPMENT			0	328,000	0	10
11				11						11
12				12						12
13				13						13
14				14						14
15				15						15
16				16						16
17				17						17
18	82,782	362,795	139,500	18. TOTAL CAPITAL OUTLAY			95,000	1,023,000	103,286	18
19				19						19
20				20. DEBT SERVICE - PRINCIPAL						20
21				21. DEBT SERVICE - INTEREST						21
22				22. DEBT SERVICE TOTAL						22
23			0	23. TRANSFERS TO RESERVE FUND			0	0	0	23
24		0	190,000	24. CONTINGENCY			190,000	201,400	5,500	24
25				25						25
26				26						26
27				27						27
28				28						28
29	1,866,221	2,640,376	3,030,800	29. TOTAL EXPENDITURES			3,413,400	4,591,400	2,251,394	29
30	2,447,033	2,067,922	1,315,000	30. UNAPPROPRIATED ENDING FUND BALANCE			1,100,000	1,100,000	1,315,000	30
	4,313,254	4,708,298	4,345,800	TOTAL			4,513,400	5,691,400	3,566,394	

CAPITAL PROJECTS FUND

RESOURCES REQUIREMENTS

	HISTORICAL DATA			DESCRIPTION RESOURCES	BUDGET FOR NEXT YEAR 2025-2026			
	ACTUAL		ADOPTED BUDGET		PROPOSED BY	APPROVED BY	YTD	
	2ND PRECEDING	1ST PRECEDING	THIS YEAR		BUDGET OFFICER	BUDGET COMMITTEE	3/31/2025	
	YEAR 22-23	YEAR 23-24	2024-2025					
				Beginning Fund Balance				
1				1.*AVAILABLE CASH ON HAND (Cash Basis) or				1
2	447,067	562,387	526,000	2.*NET WORKING CAPITAL (Accrual Basis)	554,000		529,839	2
3	15,320	27,390	20,000	3. EARNINGS FROM TEMPORARY INVESTMENTS	20,000		20,141	3
4	100,000	0		4. TRANSFERS FROM GENERAL FUND	0			4
5				5				5
6				6				6
7				7				7
8				8				8
9	562,387	589,777	546,000	9. TOTAL RESOURCES, EXCEPT TAXES TO BE LEVIED	574,000		549,980	9
10	0	0	0	10. TAXES NECESSARY TO BALANCE BUDGET	0			10
11	0	0	0	11. TAXES COLLECTED IN YEAR LEVIED	0			11
12	562,387	589,777	546,000	12. TOTAL RESOURCES	574,000	0	549,980	12
13				REQUIREMENTS				13
14	0		0	1. Training Site Prep	0		0	14
15	0		0	2. POOL FEES	0		0	15
16	0	59,937	0	3. Purchase Staff Vehicle	81,400		0	16
17	0		0	4. Purchase New Apparatus	0		0	17
18			0	5. Purchase Manufactured Home	0		0	18
19				6				19
20				7				20
21				8				21
22				9				22
23				10				23
24				11				24
25				12				25
26				13				26
27				14				27
28				15				28
29				16				29
30				17				30
31	562,387	529,840	546,000	18. RESERVED FOR FUTURE EXPENDITURES	574,000	0	549,980	31
32	562,387	589,777	546,000	TOTAL REQUIREMENTS	655,400	0	549,980	32





## APPLEGATE FIRE DISTRICT

1095 UPPER APPLEGATE RD. JACKSONVILLE, OR 97530

PHONE: 541.899.1050 FAX: 541.899.9314

### RESOLUTION OF THE BUDGET COMMITTEE

#### TO APPROVE FY 2025/2026 BUDGET

**WHEREAS**, the Budget Committee of the Applegate Valley Rural Fire Protection District #9 desires to use the permanent tax rate as their basis to levy taxes; and

**WHEREAS**, the Budget Committee also desires to use the tax rate of the Local Option Levy approved by voters in November, 2023; and

**WHEREAS**, the Budget Committee has held all statutorily required hearings; and

**WHEREAS**, the Budget Committee recommends the attached budget of \$5,691,400, and additionally the Capital Projects Fund of \$655,400 for adoption by the governing body;

**THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED** that the Budget Committee of the Applegate Valley Rural Fire Protection District #9, at their budget meeting of May 21, 2025 hereby authorizes the District's permanent tax rate of \$1.6787 per thousand dollars of assessed valuation to be used to levy taxes; and

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, that the Budget Committee authorizes the District to use their tax rate for the Local Option Levy of \$1.25 per thousand dollars of assessed valuation to be used to levy taxes.

**ADOPTED** by the Budget Committee of the Applegate Valley Rural Fire Protection District #9 this 21st day of May, 2025.

ATTEST:

\_\_\_\_\_  
Budget Committee Member

\_\_\_\_\_  
Budget Committee Member

\_\_\_\_\_  
Ayes

\_\_\_\_\_  
Nays

\_\_\_\_\_  
Absent/ Abstain

PROUDLY SERVING  
*The Applegate Valley*

**TO:**

Chief Wolfard  
Applegate Valley Fire District #9  
1095 Upper Applegate Road  
Jacksonville, OR 97530

**FROM:**

Budget Committee Members  
Applegate Valley Fire District #9

**AVFD Budget Committee Questions FY 2025/2026**

**PERSONNEL SERVICES (page 7-12)**

**#5 Administration Chief:**

- On line #24 of the budget, it references a 4% COLA, but the actual increases listed for Chief positions vary, specifically this position is lower than the 4%. Could you please clarify? (MH)
  - **Budget Estimates vs. Actual Wages:** Just a reminder, the figures presented in the budget are estimates and not precise wage amounts. Historically, previous Budget Officers would budget for the highest possible step and COLA from the start of the budget year to ensure adequate funding, regardless of where each employee was on the pay scale or when step increases occurred. The current administration has been asked, and is now attempting, to provide more accurate projections by aligning budgeted amounts more closely with expected pay periods and step increases.
  - **Rounding Conventions:** Most budget line items are rounded **UP** to the nearest \$1000, to ensure compliance with Oregon Budget Law and to maintain a balanced budget. In an effort to accommodate the request during previous budget cycles, Staff has attempted to dial in these numbers closer. However, we still need to make sure that we budget **AT LEAST** enough to cover the projected wages for each position.
  - **Pay Period Variability:** Typically, there are 26 pay periods in a fiscal year, but this can vary. Some years may have 25 or 27 pay periods, affecting the budget calculations.
  - **Step Increase Timing:** Step increases occur on each employee's unique anniversary date. For example, let's assume an employee has an anniversary date of March 3rd. If a pay period does not align exactly with that date, the initial paycheck with a step increase may differ slightly from subsequent paychecks.
  - Now, let's address the specific positions:
    - **Fire Chief:** The budgeted increase is 3.93%, closely reflecting the agreed-upon 4% COLA. Last year's figure was slightly rounded up, leading to a marginal difference in the calculated percentage this year.

- **Operations Chief:** The budgeted amount for FY 24/25 reflected the previous Ops Chief. The FY 25/26 amount is for the newly hired Ops Chief, who started at the top step, resulting in a variance.
- **Administration Chief:** The budgeted increase shows a 4.07% rise, aligning closely with the agreed COLA.
- **Fire Marshal:** The budgeted increase is 10.9%, accounting for both the 4% COLA and a step increase scheduled at the start of the budget year.
- **Logistics Chief:** The budgeted increase of 7.05% includes the 4% COLA and a mid-year step increase.
- For the reasons outlined above, the wage increases listed in the budget may not precisely match the actual amounts paid to individual employees during the fiscal year, nor will they necessarily align exactly with the calculated COLA percentages. Per Oregon Budget Law, we are required to present a balanced budget and cannot exceed the budgeted amounts in spending. Therefore, we round up as a safeguard to ensure compliance. Think of it like a parent sending their child to the store with money to buy groceries—they'll send the child with an amount expected to cover the cost, likely more than the exact total, to avoid coming up short. This conservative approach in budgeting ensures we have adequate funds allocated while maintaining fiscal responsibility.

**#6,7,8 Shift Personnel Positions:**

- YOY percentage increases for each salary range from 4-8%. Are these differences based on step progression, seniority, market adjustments, etc.? (MH)
  - **Step Progression:** Each employee has unique anniversary dates for step increases, leading to varying percentage increases based on when the step occurs during the budget year.
  - **Seniority:** More senior personnel may be closer to the top step of their pay range, resulting in smaller percentage increases compared to those still progressing through steps.
  - **COLA Adjustments:** The baseline COLA is set at 4%. However, when combined with a step increase, the total percentage increase can be higher, depending on the timing and magnitude of the step.
  - **Market Adjustments:** No specific market adjustments were made this year; however, discrepancies may also reflect minor rounding differences during budgeting, as discussed previously.
- Confirm the \$6K difference. Shift Personnel #1 and #2 are only showing \$4k-5K difference. Only verifying the numbers are correct, not details. (RU)
  - **Verification:** Yes, we have verified the numbers, and they are accurate as "Budget Numbers" as presented.
  - **Step Progression Timing:** One position received a step increase earlier in the fiscal year, resulting in a slightly higher overall wage projection. The number of pay periods each employee receives with the new step can vary slightly, affecting total compensation.
  - **Step Progression Differences:** There is actually a \$9K difference between #1 and #2. This is because #2 is several steps ahead of #1 on the pay scale. Additionally, #2 is one step

ahead of #3, but the pay difference is smaller as #3 receives additional incentive pay per the labor agreement for holding a higher EMT certification level.

- **Budget Rounding:** As previously mentioned, budget figures are rounded up to ensure compliance with Oregon Budget Law and to maintain a balanced budget.

#### #10 Unemployment:

- Have we paid unemployment in the past? The typical goal is to never pay unemployment when an employee separates. Can this be reduced more than ½ and the budget \$ used other places? (RU)
  - Yes, we have paid unemployment in the past, though it has been infrequent. The \$8,000 budgeted amount is a conservative estimate based on historical expenses. In previous years, we used \$8,000 when we only had 7 permanent full-time positions and 3 seasonal full-time positions. Given that our staffing levels have nearly doubled since then, maintaining or even increasing this allocation may be prudent.

It's important to note that unemployment expenses are inherently difficult to predict. The actual cost depends on various factors, such as the timing and nature of separations, individual claims, and state-determined benefit rates. When unemployment expenses occur, the costs are fixed and must be paid. Thus, while reducing this line item may be possible, it would carry a degree of risk that could impact our ability to cover unexpected claims.

#### #11 Uniforms:

- Can we add this from line 10 to incorporate the changes in new logos? (RU)
  - Staff does not recommend reducing line 10 (Unemployment). This line is intended to provide a financial buffer for potential unemployment claims, which are difficult to predict. Reducing this allocation would undermine our ability to cover such expenses should they arise.

Regarding line 11 (Uniforms), as indicated in the budget message on page 9, the proposed budget already accounts for the phased implementation of the new uniform and logo updates over the next two to three years. We have already made significant progress in the current budget year. Therefore, staff does not recommend increasing line 11 beyond the current proposed amount.

#### #12 Overtime:

- What are the benefits to "reclassifying" the positions? Is this a mandated change? (RM)
  - The potential reclassification of positions is not a mandated change but rather a proactive measure to ensure compliance with BOLI (Bureau of Labor and Industries) regulations. The objective is not to provide additional benefits but to align our job classifications more accurately with current labor laws and industry standards.

- We are currently evaluating whether adjustments are necessary to mitigate potential legal risks and to maintain consistency in how positions are defined, compensated, and managed.

### #13 Reimbursement:

- Could you explain the costs to the district that would accrue for work completed under the grants? (RM)
  - The Reimbursement line item primarily serves as a mechanism to track costs associated with personnel deployed for out-of-area assignments or working on external projects. This approach allows us to maintain a clear distinction between overtime expenses incurred for district business versus those reimbursed by external agencies.

#### Out-of-Area Fire Deployments:

- When personnel are deployed to large fires outside the district, overtime costs are paid from this line item. Once the deployment concludes, the hosting agency reimburses the district for those expenses.
- Administrative Assistance to Neighboring Districts:
  - Recently, our Administration Chief has been assisting a neighboring fire district with their administration and finance operations. Any overtime accrued for this work is paid out of this line and subsequently reimbursed by the requesting district.
- Grant-Related Work:
  - Occasionally, personnel accrue overtime when working on or administering grant-funded programs, particularly those related to fuels management. These costs are initially paid from this line item and later reimbursed by the grantor.

By isolating these expenses in the Reimbursement line item, we can accurately track overtime costs associated with district business separately from those incurred for external assignments, maintaining budget transparency and accountability.

### #15 PERS:

- Do we know what the PERS increase is aside from adding other staff? \$75k retirement increase is quite substantial. (RU)
  - Yes, we are aware of the specific PERS rate changes contributing to the \$75,000 retirement increase.
  - With the addition of four Apprentices, our workforce has increased by approximately 44%, bringing the total number of permanent, PERS-eligible positions to 14.
  - Employee Composition:
    - We have one Tier 2 PERS employee, whose rates have slightly decreased this year.
    - The remaining 13 employees are under the two OPSRP plans, which experienced a 6% rate increase.

- Ultimately, PERS determines our contribution rates, and we are obligated to comply. Aside from reducing our workforce, there are no feasible options to decrease these costs, as they are fixed obligations based on employee classification and compensation.

#### #16 Medicare:

- Is this the total amount needed or the total after being reimbursed? (RU)
  - The budgeted amount for Medicare represents the full, gross amount expected to be paid out in Medicare taxes for the fiscal year. As this line item is on the Expenses side of the budget document, it should not and does not reflect reimbursements. Reimbursements from grants, cost-sharing agreements, or other funding sources are accounted for on the Resources side of the budget, helping to balance overall expenditures and revenues.

#### #19 Length of Service

- Which employees does this cover? Other lines you state full-time/part-time, this one just says employees. (RU)
  - The Length of Service Awards policy, as outlined in District Policy #3.21, specifically applies to full-time employees only. While the language may appear ambiguous, the intent is to recognize and promote longevity among full-time staff members. Part-time employees are not included in this award structure, as these awards are based on annual length of service.

#### # 20 Benefit Sell Back:

- Are sick leave and vacation benefits the only two lines items covered under the Benefit Sell Back policy? (BB)
  - Yes, under the Benefit Sell Back policy, only sick leave and vacation benefits are eligible for sell back. Comp Time, while it can be converted to overtime, is addressed under a separate line item and is not included in the Benefit Sell Back policy.

#### #22 OR Growth Plan

- Confirm technology, is this the Oregon Savings Growth Plan? Aren't all new employees in this system and nor PERS? Do we need to break out the difference of the two? (RU)
  - To clarify, the line item in question is for Deferred Compensation, not PERS. The District offers a Deferred Compensation plan through the Oregon Savings Growth Plan (OSGP), which is separate from PERS.

Per District Policy #3.7.3, any employee may elect to participate in the Deferred Compensation plan, with the District providing a matching contribution of up to 2% of current wages to the 457-plan established through OSGP.

New employees are enrolled in PERS (either Tier 2 or OPSRP) based on their eligibility, but they may also choose to participate in the Deferred Compensation plan. Thus, PERS and OSGP serve different purposes and are accounted for as separate line items in the budget.

### #23 Worker Compensation:

- This is a massive hike. Can we look into another provider, shop workers comp? (RU)
  - The significant increase in workers' compensation costs is a direct result of the legal recognition of Presumptive Cancer for Firefighters. This change has led all but one provider, SAIF, to discontinue workers' compensation coverage for fire districts in Oregon. This issue was extensively discussed at the OFCA Fire Chiefs' Roundtables in January and again at the OFCA Conference last week. Both insurance brokerages we work with—SDIS and WHA—confirmed that SAIF is currently the sole provider offering coverage to Oregon fire districts. Additionally, SAIF has been conducting workers' comp audits on all fire departments in Oregon, further reinforcing their position as the only viable provider at this time.
- Does the District hold regular safety meetings, and could these support eligibility for potential premium discounts through SAIF? (MH)
  - Regarding the potential for premium discounts through safety programs, the District does need to revisit and revitalize our Safety Committee program. However, SAIF does not currently offer a discount for holding regular safety meetings.

### #24 Recruitment & Retention Coordinator:

- What is the current number of volunteers? (RM)
  - We currently have 28 personnel on our roster who can be classified as volunteers in various capacities. Their roles may vary throughout the year, including Volunteer Firefighter, Volunteer Tender Operator, Volunteer EMS Responder, or Student Firefighter. During fire season, we typically fill our seven full-time seasonal firefighter positions from this volunteer roster, allowing us to utilize trained personnel who are already familiar with district operations and procedures.
  - In addition to the volunteer roster, our staffing structure includes:
    - 4 grant-funded full-time Apprentice positions,
    - 2 grant-funded full-time Firefighter positions, and
    - 8 full-time "permanent" positions.

### #25 Fire Marshal:

- Is this the amount before the grant? (RU)
  - The budgeted amounts for wages in the Fire Marshal position represent the full, gross amounts expected to be paid out in wages for the fiscal year. As this line item is listed under Expenses, it does not and should not reflect reimbursements. Reimbursements from grants, cost-sharing agreements, or other funding sources are accounted for on the Resources side of the budget to maintain a balanced financial structure. Thus, the figure presented is the total budgeted wage expenses before any grant funding is applied.

### #26 OSFM Firefighters:

- Is this the amount before the grant? (RU)

- The budgeted amounts for wages in both of the OSFM Firefighter positions represent the full, gross amounts expected to be paid out in wages for the fiscal year. As these line items are listed under Expenses, it does not and should not reflect reimbursements. Reimbursements from grants, cost-sharing agreements, or other funding sources are accounted for on the Resources side of the budget to maintain a balanced financial structure. Thus, the figure presented is the total budgeted wage expenses before any grant funding is applied.

**#27 EMS Apprentices:**

- Are these 4 positions mentioned under line item 15, PERS? (RM)
  - Yes, the PERS-related calculations in line #15 do include the four EMS Apprentice positions referenced in line #27. These new positions account for the majority of the increase in that line item, as adding PERS-eligible staff has a direct impact on overall retirement contributions.

**TOTAL FOR PERSONNEL SERVICES (Page 12)**

- Is there a better way to show the final total including grant reimbursement? (RU)
- *Referencing Personnel Services & Material and Services:* In the future it would be nice to see a breakdown of in dollar amounts that are being partially funded by grants and the amount funded by the Fire District. (BB)
- I appreciate the suggestion to provide a clearer breakdown of grant-funded personnel expenses versus district-funded expenses. As explained during last month's budget presentation and in the introductory letter on page 4 of this year's budget document, we plan to undertake a comprehensive revision of the budget document next year, including separating out major grant-funded programs. This approach will provide a more transparent view of how grant funds impact both Personnel Services and Materials & Services.

For this year, the budget presentation follows the same structure we have always used, which aligns with Oregon Budget Law and Generally Accepted Accounting Principles (GAAP). Implementing these changes now would require substantial time and effort, but we are committed to making these adjustments in the next budget cycle to enhance clarity and transparency.

**MATERIALS AND SERVICES (Page 12-17)**

**#5 Gas:**

- Should there not be a reduction in this with the change in the chief vehicle agreement? (RU)
  - Staff did consider reducing this line item based on the chief vehicle agreement and the fact that fuel prices are down approximately 6% from last year. However, we also factored in the addition of four Apprentice positions and the continued growth of our Fuels Management Program, both of which will likely increase fuel consumption.



Additionally, we reviewed current spending patterns and attempted to project future fuel costs. It is also worth noting that fuel prices no longer consistently align with crude oil trends, making them more difficult to predict accurately.

Given these variables, staff believes it is prudent to maintain the proposed amount to ensure adequate funding for fuel expenses throughout the fiscal year.

#### #13 Laundry:

- The decrease in line 8 is \$1500, the increase in line 13 is \$4500. The line states the increase is due to a shift from 8 to 13. Numbers aren't matching. (RU)
  - Good catch. This is indeed an error in the budget document.
    - In FY 2024/25, we budgeted \$12,000 for Laundry, Cleaning, & Trash.
    - For FY 2025/26, the budget should have reflected an increase to \$13,500, not a reduction.
  - The noted \$1,500 decrease in line 8 and the \$4,500 increase in line 13 do not align as stated. This discrepancy will need to be corrected prior to budget approval to accurately reflect the intended budget allocation.

#### #27 Technical Rescue Equipment:

- Is this decrease due to less anticipated use? (RM)
  - The decrease in the Technical Rescue Equipment line is not necessarily due to anticipated lower use. Last budget year, we revised the equipment carried on our primary rescue unit and replaced several sections of expired rescue rope (rescue rope has a defined service life and must be replaced periodically).

While we do anticipate some equipment additions and replacements this year, the scope is less extensive than last year, resulting in the budget reduction.

#### #29 Fire Assignment Expenses:

- Are these expenses reimbursed by the Oregon State Fire Marshal's office or any other State or Federal Agency? (BB)
  - Yes, expenses in this line item are reimbursed by the specific incident in which they are incurred. This budget line is inherently challenging to predict, as it is entirely dependent on fire season deployments, which can fluctuate significantly from year to year.

#### #32 Health and Wellness:

- What items need to be replaced? Is this still a well-attended program? (RM)
  - The majority of the funds in this line item are allocated for contracted services, specifically CrossFit instruction conducted at our location. The remaining funds are designated for the addition or replacement of small workout equipment as needed. While we do not have any specific items identified for replacement at this time,

maintaining this budget provides the necessary flexibility to address equipment needs as they arise.

Yes, this program remains very well attended and is a vital component of our health and wellness initiatives, promoting overall fitness and injury prevention for our personnel.

#33 Board Training:

- Can we modify this to say Board Training – Misc Items? I would like to be able to utilize this for board items to include uniforms for board members. (RU)
  - Staff does not recommend modifying this line item. Expanding it to include miscellaneous items would reduce transparency and could potentially complicate tracking and reporting of training expenses.

Additionally, we already have a designated Uniforms line item that can be utilized for board uniforms if necessary. Maintaining distinct line items for training and uniforms ensures clarity in budget tracking and reporting.

#34 Information Technology:

- Line 31 already has computers. Should computers be under IT not office equipment? (RU)
  - As in previous budget cycles, we have categorized computers under Equipment and software programs under Technology. This approach maintains consistency in our budget structure and aligns with how we have historically tracked these expenses.

#41 Imagine & Signage:

- What specifically is the money being spent on under this line? Seems this is a lot of money to spend on re-imaging and re-branding. (BB)
  - The Board of Directors has identified Imaging and Branding as a priority to address long-standing inconsistencies in our branding and to establish a more recognizable and uniform image across the district. Over the years, we have struggled to maintain a consistent and professional appearance, particularly as vehicles have been added to the fleet without corresponding signage updates.

This year's allocation is intended to address several key areas:

- Vehicle Imaging: We currently have several vehicles that have been in service for up to 2.5 years without any imaging or branding. The plan is to re-image 3 to 5 vehicles annually, aiming to complete the project within 5 to 7 years, factoring in ongoing vehicle replacements.
- Station Signage: Updating station signage to ensure consistent branding and improved visibility across all district facilities.
- Branded Assets: Addressing other branded assets such as apparatus identification, public information boards, and safety signage.

The goal is to implement a phased approach that allows us to catch up on deferred imaging while maintaining fiscal responsibility. This method ensures that we can present a professional, recognizable, and cohesive appearance across the district, aligning with the Board's stated priorities.

## **CAPITAL OUTLAY (Page 12-17)**

### **#3 Office Machine:**

- Would this line be for replacement of computers instead of 31 or 34 of Personnel Services? (RU)
  - It appears the reference to Personnel Services was intended to refer to Materials and Services. This is a valuable opportunity to clarify the distinctions between these categories:
    - **Personnel Services:** Includes wages, benefits, and other employee-related expenses. It does not include equipment or technology purchases.
    - **Materials and Services:** Includes routine operating expenses such as office supplies, equipment, and software. Consistent with past practice, we have categorized computers under Equipment (Line #31) and software programs under Technology (Line #34) to maintain clarity and consistency in our budgeting structure.
    - **Capital Outlay:** Reserved for larger, more substantial purchases (over \$5,000) of assets with a longer lifespan, such as vehicles, major equipment, or facility upgrades.

Regarding the specific Office Machine line item under Capital Outlay, we did not budget for any Office Machine replacements this year. Last year, we allocated \$5,500 to replace the copier at headquarters. The previous copier was relocated to Station 51, where it remains in good serviceable condition and continues to meet operational needs.

### **#6 Equipment Acquisition:**

- Thought this line was eliminated due to the change in Chiefs vehicle agreement and we wouldn't need to replace a vehicle since there was now a viable spare? (RU)
  - One of the primary goals of the Chief's Vehicle Agreement was to reduce the size of our fleet by one staff vehicle, resulting in cost savings on fuel, maintenance, repairs, insurance, and depreciation. Following direction from the Board, we recently sold the 2004 Trailblazer, effectively reducing the fleet as planned. Consequently, there is no "viable spare" vehicle available.

However, the proposed vehicle acquisition addresses two critical needs:

- Fire Marshal and Fuels Management Program:
  - The current ½-ton vehicle assigned to the Fire Marshal is inadequate for towing essential equipment, including the Chipper, Flatbed with Mini

Excavator, fully loaded dump trailer, and anticipated remote-controlled masticators.

- The proposed acquisition is a 1-ton pickup capable of safely towing these assets and enhancing operational effectiveness.
- Additionally, we have applied for a federal grant to fund a 200+ gallon slip-in unit that would be compatible with the new pickup, further supporting the Fuels Management Program.
- Fleet Replacement:
  - In keeping with our objective to maintain a safe and reliable fleet, we also plan to replace a 20-year-old ½-ton vehicle with over 200,000 miles. This vehicle is no longer cost-effective to maintain and poses reliability concerns.

The proposed acquisitions align with our strategic goals of fleet reduction, operational efficiency, and maintaining vehicle safety standards.

#### #8 Training:

- Didn't we already do this upgrade in FY 24-25? (RU)
  - Partially yes and no. Since the FY 25-26 Proposed Budget was presented on April 16th, we have been able to place a 20' shipping container (which was already owned by the district) on top of the training prop. However, much of the planned work and associated expenses are still forthcoming.

These remaining expenses include:

- Construction and Fabrication: Adding doors, windows, stairs, and safety railings to ensure safe and functional training scenarios.
- Vent Prop Features: Installing vent prop features to simulate realistic fire and smoke conditions for more effective training.
- Structural Enhancements: Additional modifications to improve the overall durability and versatility of the training prop.

While some progress has been made, the budget allocation for FY 25-26 reflects the continued investment necessary to complete the project and bring the training prop to its intended operational capacity.

#### #35 Volunteer Recruitment & Retention:

- Given the reduction in this line item, does the current funding level still support the District's stated priority of increasing volunteer recruitment? (MH)
  - The reduction in this line item reflects the cyclical nature of the SAFER grant, which is the primary funding source for these expenses. Simply put, we have \$5,000 in grant funds to allocate for the upcoming fiscal year.

While the funding level is lower than previous years, we are strategically focusing these resources on targeted recruitment initiatives and maximizing the impact of the

remaining grant funds. The commitment to increasing volunteer recruitment remains a priority, and we will continue to seek additional funding opportunities to support these efforts.

## **TRANSFERS, DEBT, CAPITAL PROJECTS FUND & CONTINGENCY**

### Contingency

- Is the contingency amount based on historical needs, projected risk factors for the upcoming year, or is it simply a standard 4-5% of the total budget as a precautionary measure? (MH)
  - The contingency amount is primarily based on past years' usage and ensuring that we maintain a reasonable buffer without unnecessarily inflating the budget. If we had specific projected risk factors, those would be accounted for within the budget itself rather than relying on contingency.

Additionally, contingency provides flexibility to take advantage of unexpected opportunities, such as needing matching funds for a grant award or addressing unanticipated but beneficial projects.

Typically, we aim to keep this allocation within the 4-5% range of the total budget, which has proven to be an effective balance based on historical usage and the need for financial adaptability.

### **MISCELLANEOUS QUESTIONS:**

- Do you anticipate tariffs to affect any budget items, i.e.: parts, replacement items, building projects? (RM)
  - At this time, we do not anticipate any significant impact from tariffs on budgeted items, including parts, replacement items, or building projects. However, it is worth noting that supply chain disruptions, inflation, and market fluctuations can still affect pricing for certain goods and materials.

To mitigate potential cost increases, we will continue to monitor pricing trends and maintain flexibility within applicable budget line items to address unforeseen cost adjustments. Additionally, we have included contingency funding to provide a financial buffer should any unexpected and excessive price increases occur.

LB-31 Personnel Services. 1 through 8.

When was the last time there was a salary comparison between Districts done?

### Salary Comparisons – Last Review Dates and Evaluation Schedule:

The timing of salary comparisons varies based on the position:

- **Shift Officer Positions (3 positions):** Last reviewed in the **Winter of 2022/23** in preparation for labor agreement negotiations. These will be reviewed again this winter.
- **Deputy Chief and 3 Division Chiefs:** Last reviewed in the **Fall of 2023**. It is the administration's intent to evaluate these four non-represented chief positions every three years.
- **Fire Chief:** Last reviewed in the **Summer of 2023**. Per contract, the Fire Chief position is eligible for annual COLA adjustments equivalent to those received by the other four chief positions.
- **OSFM Firefighters and Apprentice Firefighters (6 positions):** Compensation is based on a percentage of the Shift Officer wage scale, which is reviewed periodically.
- **Seasonal Firefighters (7 positions):** Evaluated **annually** to align with current market rates and operational needs.

Are these 8 positions paid hourly or Salary?

### Hourly vs. Salary – Exempt and Non-Exempt Positions:

The question appears to be asking about the exempt/non-exempt status of these eight positions in addition to whether they are paid hourly or salaried. Here's the breakdown:

- **Fire Chief, Deputy Chief, Fire Marshal:** Salaried and **Exempt** from overtime.
- **Admin Chief, Logistics Chief:** Salaried but **Non-Exempt**, meaning they are eligible for overtime pay.
- **Shift Officers (3 positions):** Due to their 48/96 schedule and specific FLSA pay structure, they are best described as **hourly** employees.

This classification structure ensures compliance with BOLI and FLSA regulations while aligning with the operational needs of the district.

Are they putting in more hours on the job to warrant the pay increase?

### Explanation of Pay Increases:

Pay increases are determined based on three primary factors: Step Raises, Cost of Living Adjustments, and, in some years, market analysis and salary comparisons with other districts. This year, no market-based adjustments were made.

- **Step Raises:** Newer employees who are not yet at the top of their pay scale are eligible for step raises as long as they meet performance expectations. These step raises are part of their established pay progression and are not contingent on additional hours worked.

As employees gain experience in their roles, they become more efficient, effective, and capable of handling increased responsibilities. Step raises serve as recognition of that growth and a reward for demonstrated competence and continued commitment to the district. This structured pay progression is considered a best practice in public service

employment and is a standard approach to promoting employee development and retention across the fire service and other governmental agencies.

- **Cost of Living Adjustments:**
  - **Shift Officers (Union Employees):** Pay adjustments for these positions are based on negotiated annual pay adjustments as outlined in the labor agreement.
  - **All Other Positions:** Cost of Living Adjustments are determined annually by the Board of Directors, with recommendations provided by the Fire Chief. Typically, the Chief presents options to the Board prior to budget preparation, considering factors such as the **November-to-November Consumer Price Index for All Urban Consumers (CPI-U)** and the negotiated pay adjustments granted to union members that year. The CPI-U measures the average change in prices paid by urban consumers for goods and services over time and is a standard metric used to assess cost-of-living increases.
- **Market Analysis:** While no market-based adjustments were applied this year, these are typically evaluated periodically to ensure competitive and fair compensation.

Therefore, the pay increases reflected in the budget are not due to additional hours worked but are based on the established pay structure, including step raises, negotiated annual pay adjustments, and cost of living adjustments as outlined above.

## LB-31 Medical Insurance

What 2 positions are we covering their family members and shouldn't this be a benefit instead of a pay increase?

### Medical Insurance – Clarification on Coverage and Budgeting:

The line item in question, **#9 Medical Insurance**, reflects the budgeted amount for district-paid medical insurance for all 14 eligible full-time employees. This line item is not related to pay or pay increases; it strictly pertains to medical insurance costs.

The increase in this budget line is due to two primary factors:

- **Insurance Premium Rate Increase:** The medical insurance provider has implemented a 5.5% increase in premium rates for the upcoming fiscal year.
- **Change in Coverage Composition:** Last year, 7 of the 14 eligible employees required full family coverage, while the other 7 required individual coverage. This year, that composition has shifted, with **9 employees now requiring full family coverage** and only **5 employees requiring individual coverage**. This change significantly impacts the overall cost of medical insurance, as family coverage is substantially higher than individual coverage.

Medical insurance is a district-provided benefit, not a form of additional pay. The increase in this line item is a direct result of higher premium rates and expanded family coverage, not a salary adjustment.

## LB-31 Overtime

Do the salary employees get overtime? Are you considering employees that you hired because of a Grant permanent employees now and what happens when the grant money runs out if you are?

### **Overtime and Grant-Funded Positions – Clarification:**

The district follows **BOLI (Bureau of Labor and Industries)** regulations regarding overtime. Currently:

- **Exempt Employees:** Three salaried employees (Fire Chief, Deputy Chief, and Fire Marshal) are classified as exempt from overtime.
- **Non-Exempt Employees:** All other full-time and part-time employees are considered non-exempt and are eligible for overtime pay as required by BOLI.

Regarding the grant-funded positions, “permanent” may not be the most accurate term. Of our 14 full-time and one part-time “year-round” positions:

- **6 full-time and 1 part-time position are grant-dependent.** When the grant funding concludes, these positions will be eliminated, and the affected employees will be laid off. Each of these employees has signed an employment agreement acknowledging this contingency.
- **8 full-time positions are funded by the district’s permanent tax rate and temporary tax levy.** If the levy is reduced or eliminated, the district would need to reevaluate which positions would be retained and which could be eliminated to align with available funding.

The intention is to remain transparent about the duration and funding structure of these positions to manage expectations effectively.

### **LB-31 PERS**

How much of the \$75,000.00 is being covered by grants? and what happens when the grant money runs out? Who pays?

**PERS** determines our overall liability without breaking it down by individual employees. Therefore, we are unable to accurately determine how much of the \$75,000 increase to our **PERS** liability is specifically associated with grant-funded positions versus tax-funded positions.

Additionally, a significant factor impacting our overall **PERS** liability is the continued obligation to cover costs associated with previous (retired) employees.

When the grant funding concludes, the affected grant-funded employees will be laid off as outlined in their employment agreements. Theoretically, this should reduce our **PERS** liability proportionately as the number of active **PERS**-eligible employees decreases. However, the precise impact will depend on the overall employee composition and any remaining **PERS** obligations for retirees.

### **LB-31 Volunteer Shift Coverage**

Are you asking for an additional \$5,000.00 for overtime shouldn't that be covered in the request \$10,000.00 for overtime?

### **Volunteer Shift Coverage vs. Overtime – Clarification:**



The **Volunteer Shift Coverage** line item and the **Overtime** line item are completely unrelated and serve distinct purposes:

- **Volunteer Shift Coverage:** This line item is used to compensate volunteers who pull shifts, and it is not considered overtime pay. We are actually budgeting **\$5,000 less** in this category compared to last year.
- **Overtime:** Overtime is reserved for full-time employees who work more than 40 hours per week. The **\$10,000 increase** to the overtime budget is due to employee retention and tenure, as explained in the budget document.

Therefore, the increase in the overtime budget is not related to Volunteer Shift Coverage, and the two lines should not be conflated.

#### LB-31 Benefit Sell Back

This seems like a huge jump, can you please explain why?

#### **Benefit Sell Back – Explanation for Increase:**

The increase in the **Benefit Sell Back** line item reflects staff's assessment of potential benefit sell-back requests from eligible employees for the upcoming fiscal year.

- **Assessment Process:** Staff reviews the amount of accrued benefits each employee is eligible to sell back and inquires whether they anticipate making a sell-back request.
- **Current Budget Year:** For the current budget year, only one employee anticipated a small sell-back request, resulting in a lower budget allocation.
- **Upcoming Fiscal Year:** This year, we are anticipating and budgeting for more potential sell-back requests based on employee feedback and accumulated benefits.

It's important to note that this line item can fluctuate from year to year depending on employee intentions and the amount of eligible accrued benefits.

#### LB-31 Oregon Growth Plan

You are requesting \$75,000.00 increase for PERS, why do we need to raise the Oregon Growth Plan?

#### **Oregon Growth Plan – Clarification on Budgeting and Purpose:**

The \$75,000 increase for PERS is not a discretionary request—it is a required expenditure based on PERS calculations, and we are obligated to budget for and pay it.

Regarding the **Oregon Growth Plan** line item, it may be more appropriately labeled as **Deferred Compensation** to better reflect its purpose. This program is a voluntary benefit that allows employees to defer a portion of their wages pre-tax.

- **District Match:** Per district policy, the district matches up to **2% of an employee's wages** as part of this program. Most, if not all, eligible employees participate by deferring at least 2% of their wages to receive the district's 2% match.
- **Additional Contributions:** While employees may choose to defer a higher percentage of their wages, the district's match is capped at 2%.

Therefore, the budgeting for the Deferred Compensation program is distinct from the PERS obligation and is based on anticipated employee participation and the district's matching contributions.

## LB-31 Workers Compensation

SAIF is the most expensive workers compensation carrier, have we thought of exploring different carriers for workers compensation?

### Workers' Compensation – Carrier Options:

I've inquired with **Wilson Heirgood Associates (WHA)** (our broker for medical insurance) and **Special Districts Insurance Services (SDIS)** (our previous Workers' Comp carrier). As of January, **SAIF** was the only carrier offering workers' compensation coverage for firefighters in Oregon. This may have changed in recent months; however, neither **WHA** nor **SDIS** is aware of any districts moving away from SAIF.

Some context on the current situation:

#### 1. Presumptive Conditions Impacting Coverage:

- Due to the increased risk and costs associated with firefighter presumptive conditions such as cancer, PTSD, and heart/lung issues, workers' compensation coverage for fire districts has become significantly more expensive and less accessible.
- These conditions have led to several insurers, including **SDIS**, discontinuing workers' comp coverage for all participants, not just fire districts, effective July 1, 2023.

#### 2. Self-Insurance and Large Entities:

- While larger districts like Tualatin Valley Fire & Rescue (TVF&R) are self-insured, they have dedicated personnel to manage their programs effectively. For smaller districts like ours, the administrative burden and financial risk of self-insurance would be prohibitive.

#### 3. SDIS Background and Transition:

- **SDIS** was established in 1985 as a self-insured trust to stabilize insurance costs for public entities in Oregon. It operates as a pooled resource, allowing members to jointly self-insure for property, liability, auto, health, and dental coverage.
- In 2023, **SDIS** discontinued workers' comp coverage due to the high cost and risk associated with firefighter presumptive conditions. Instead, **SDIS** partnered with **SAIF** to create a group program that includes our district, securing the best possible rate under current market conditions.

#### 4. Benefits of Remaining with SAIF through SDIS:

- **Rate Stability and Programs:** SDAO is actively working with **SAIF** to develop new programs, including risk management initiatives specifically for fire districts (e.g., Struggle Well).

- **Risk Management Services:** By participating in the SDIS/SAIF group, we also receive risk management services, which we would lose if we opted to leave the group.
5. **Future Considerations:**
- We will continue to monitor the market and attempt to obtain competitive quotes over the next year. However, given the current insurance climate and the significant risk associated with firefighter presumptive conditions, I do not foresee a reduction in costs or a change in carrier that would warrant a budget adjustment. For budgeting purposes, the current allocation remains appropriate and necessary.

## LB-31 Fire Marshall

Who is a our Fire Marshall?

### Fire Marshal – Position Overview:

Our Fire Marshal is **Brian Mulhollen**, who was hired in 2023 as the district's first Fire Marshal. This position was initially partially funded by grant funds. However, in anticipation of the grant funds expiring, the Board elected to request an increase in the temporary tax levy to retain the position. The voters overwhelmingly approved the levy increase, ensuring continued support for fire prevention, inspection, and code enforcement services.

I noticed that most of the money is going to Personnel Services \$288,400.00 and Capitol Outlay is being downsized by \$44,500.00 and Materials and Services are \$138,700.00. Why?

### Budget Allocation – Personnel Services, Capital Outlay, and Materials & Services:

The allocation of funds across these categories reflects current operational priorities and strategic planning:

#### 1. Personnel Services:

- This category encompasses all staffing-related costs, including wages, benefits, and contributions to PERS. It also includes medical insurance coverage for employees and their families, as well as compensation for grant-funded positions.
- As an emergency service organization, we rely heavily on personnel to maintain operational readiness. Unlike other industries, we cannot schedule our workload; we must always be ready to respond at a moment's notice. This readiness comes at a cost, making personnel expenses a substantial component of the budget.
- Despite this, Personnel Services accounts for approximately 50% of our general fund, which is significantly lower than most fire districts, where personnel costs typically represent 75% or more of the budget. Maintaining this balance ensures we can effectively manage resources while still meeting service demands.

#### 2. Capital Outlay:

- This year's focus is on maintaining essential operational assets rather than major capital investments.

- Certain capital purchases have been deferred to align with anticipated grant funding and scheduled fleet replacements, allowing the district to allocate resources strategically while still addressing priority needs.

### **3. Materials and Services:**

- This category supports daily operational expenses, including fuel, utilities, equipment maintenance, and training programs.
- Careful budgeting and cost management help ensure that essential services are maintained without unnecessary expenditures.

The overall budget structure prioritizes maintaining operational readiness, supporting personnel, and strategically planning for future capital needs while aligning expenditures with available funding sources. This approach allows us to respond effectively to emergencies while maintaining fiscal responsibility and long-term stability.