

MINUTES

Present:	Scott Blower, Charlie Chase, Bryan Hawkins, Janet Lancaster, Dave Mathews, John Maupin, Rick McClintock, Richard Wharton, Jeff Wolf, Dorothy Yetter, Austin Prince, Jason Folkstad – County Fire, Mike Shaw – Oregon State Fire Marshal, Commissioner Fowler – Liaison, Sara Rubrecht – Staff, Annette Sorensen – Staff, Charley Hurley – Public Consulting Group, Charley Hurley – Public Consulting Group
Absent:	Harry Mackin, Dave Larson – ODF, Mike McLaughlin – Fire Defense Board Chief
Public Attendees:	Mike W., Sue Densmore
Recorder	Annette Sorensen

1. Call to Order

Chair Wharton called the meeting to order 3:01 p.m.

2. Roll Call

Roll call taken by Annette Sorensen

3. Approval of Minutes from 6/23/20

Scott Blower made a motion to approve the minutes as presented, Rick McClintock seconded the motion. Roll call vote taken.

Approved: Scott Blower, Charlie Chase, Bryan Hawkins, John Maupin, Rick McClintock, Richard Wharton, and Dorothy Yetter

No Vote – Janet Lancaster, Dave Mathews, Jeff Wolf (not available at roll call)

4. Status Update

Public Consulting Group

Annette informed the group that she was in a meeting with the consultants on Monday. They have been doing research and listening to previous meetings. They are looking at venues and ways to connect with the public, possibly electronically. They were also sent the map showing the properties that are not part of a fire district. The consultants hope to have all the public comment completed by the end of July.

- **Timetable for contacting public and members**

Chair Wharton referred to the colored chart showing PCG's timelines. They will be contacting each of the members of the committee and stakeholders by the end of July.

- **Need to change public input due to COVID**

The ability to hold public meetings is limited due to the COVID restrictions. The option for Zoom meetings are being explored for townhall meetings. The consulting group was committed to coming to our town and holding several meetings with the public, but at this time it may not be feasible.

Ken Riddle answered John Maupin's questions about schedule and said they hope to get all the stakeholder and committee members by the end of July. They have prioritized a couple of interviews and spoke to the two fire protections providers to find out what their resources and data were. They were hoping to have public input in August or September. They are allowing at least an hour and an additional hour if needed.

Dorothy Yetter recommended to put together a schedule for interviewing each committee member. She also suggested that people need education regarding what a fire district is. She suggested having an outdoor meeting or zoom/outdoor combo meeting.

Commissioner Fowler confirmed that the contract includes a public outreach, but not a public education component.

Charley Hurley responded to Dorothy that they will not contact committee members at the last minute, he will send an email this afternoon, evening or sometime tomorrow asking to be provided a specific time sometime next week that they can call, with several options to choose from. One hour will be allowed for the first interview and if they feel additional time or a follow interview is needed, they will schedule another one.

John agreed with Dorothy about the public's need for education. He asked if the committee can provide outreach education. Ken Riddle agreed that it's obvious that a major public education campaign is needed. Their report will provide some public education along with the analysis and facts.

Scott Blower agreed and thinks it is important that if the consultant finds this is true, they put together some type of proposed education and media plan of how to educate to help this be successful. It's important to identify what is the general knowledge base by the general population and how to overcome that.

Charlie Chase asked if there was a sense of how accurate or valid the findings and survey will be since the means of polling and connecting with people during this virus time will be unique. In addition, how convincing will they be to Commissioner Fowler as he will be expected to go to the other two Commissioners to prove the point. Commissioner Fowler responded that data will be what it is and will have to be good enough. Commissioner Fowler said that if it is decided to put this on the ballot, they will have from January to May to provide education and he would appreciate the committee assisting with that process.

Ken Riddle said that in a previous district project, a series of fact sheets were provided to address the different issues. They were put on their website for the public to access. The committee has already identified several facts that should be shared made known to the public.

Janet Lancaster asked the consultant to verify County Fire and Rural Metro's vehicles which are ODOT approved and check County Fire training records. She also agreed with Dorothy about public education and outreach. She also thinks the committee should be more involved.

Chair Wharton thanked Sara for providing the consultants access to all the information the group has compiled and previous documentation.

Chair Wharton reassured the committee that the consultants will be reaching out and they will have an opportunity for input.

5. PCG request for written survey questions from Fire Protection Committee

The consulting group is asking the committee for help with survey questions for the public. Commissioner Fowler supports the committee helping the consultants if they agree to it.

Ken Riddle shared that the questions are an opportunity to start public education. It would be helpful to have an introductory paragraph, 1-3 sentences to explain the question then have objective questions that data can be extracted from. They have had some success in other projects with this process. Due to the committee's expertise and knowledge they felt the committee was in a better position to develop meaningful questions. Ken said providing the questions to them by the end of July or mid-August. Charley wants to emphasize that the questions are prefaced with some information, a short paragraph, that frames the questions and gives the public a general understanding of what is being talked about.

Ken answered Dorothy's question that the survey will be electronically through a website or internet access. Dorothy and Janet have concerns about limiting the access to electronic only. Scott Blower would like to see information on responses that show where in the county people are at and what they represent without having a name and physical address to insure they are willing to provide a response. He feels people are more electronically connected due to pandemic issues. Richard agree with the geographic concern and this could be possible put it in local community newspapers. This could help identify the area of response.

Bryan Hawkins suggested working with utility company's adding the questionnaire to their monthly billing. Darin suggested adding something to the November ballot envelope with the questionnaire or address to the website. Ken mentioned that they plan on being done with the report before November.

Sara Rubrecht suggested doing a targeted mailer to those properties identified on the map as not being part of a fire district. They can have option to complete survey online or mail it in. Sara's office could create the survey and post on the website. This would geo-reference their location and answers. Dorothy added it there must also be a mail-in option for those without internet.

The group agreed to come up with simple but quantifiable question that can be sent directly to the consulting group by Wednesday. Annette will send out their email addresses. Sara will coordinate with GIS to get information out to the public. Ken said they will evaluate the questions and if they feel they are biased will re-write to a more neutral format. When the consultants have completed with the questions, they will be sent back to the committee to verify it meets their needs.

6. Fire Coverage Map

Annette provided a map showing the properties that are not part of a fire district to the consultants and the committee. Charlie Chase mentioned that the map illustrates that there are some areas that will never be serviced due to their location. Chair Wharton said that this will be addressed depending on the type of delivery system. It would be important to get an overlay showing in the seasonal fire aspect, where the jurisdictions are (USFS, BLM, ODF). Sara let the group know that Josephine County GIS webpage will let you overlay many options. Annette will send the link to GIS to the group.

7. Matters from Committee Members

Scott Blower announced that he has accepted the District Ranger position with Wild Rivers with Forest Service beginning August 3, 2020. He will be resigning from the committee as of today. A copy of the resignation letter will be sent to the committee after the meeting. He will be a stakeholder as the Forest Service representative. Chair Wharton personally thanked Scott and appreciated working with him.

Chair Wharton notified the group that he was notified just before the meeting that Mike Jones has resigned from the committee. He wanted to extended his thanks to Mike for his participation.

Charlie Chase stated that with declining number of members it will be harder to obtain 100%. Commissioner Fowler said the quorum number moves with the number of people on the committee.

8. Ex Officio Member Update

Austin Prince congratulated Scott on the new job assignment.

Jason Folkstad would like to extend an invitation to anyone within this group, member, ex officio or anyone listening to visit the fire station in Merlin. He is also willing to do a virtual tour. He would like all of us to be on the same page when it comes to factual information when it comes to departments. Jason was receptive to Chair Wharton suggestion to doing a visual presentation for the public as well.

9. BCC Liaison Report

Commissioner Fowler reviewed that he will look into a timeline of putting an advisory question on the November ballot and the structure allowed for that. He will help Sara come up with a cost for a mailer if they do a direct mailer before the ballot in November and see if the BCC is willing to approve and pay for that. He feels we are in the best phase with the consultant and committee members on board and fully engaged. He would like to present this to the community in the most acceptable way so they can understand what they are voting on, what the questions is and what the benefits are on the services that is going to be provided. He thanked the committee for their hard work and thanked them for taking on the questions.

Meeting ended at 4:14 p.m.

WORKSHOP –

Workshop began 4:14 p.m.

- **Principles of Agreement**

Principles of agreement is working from the 7 alternatives identified and deciding what the committee thought the public had to see in any form of mechanism before they would vote for it, accept it or allow it to continue. Dorothy made revisions and additions to the principles of agreement based on the committee's feedback. This will be continued at the next meeting.

Meeting adjourned at 5:02 p.m.

Next Meeting will be Thursday July 30, 2020 at 3:00 via Zoom.