

Board of Governance Meeting Minutes Valley Regional Fire Authority



Meeting Date: February 11, 2025
Time: 5:15 p.m.
Location: 1101 D St NE, Auburn, WA 98002

I. CALL TO ORDER

Chair Backus called the Valley Regional Fire Authority (VRFA) Board of Governance Regular Meeting to order at 5:15 p.m.

A. Flag Salute

Chair Backus led those in attendance in the Pledge of Allegiance.

B. Roll Call

Chair Nancy Backus, Vice Chair Troy Linnell, Member Vic Kave, Member Kerry Garberding, Member Lynda Osborn, Member Larry Brown (Excused), Member Bill Thomas, Member Tracy Taylor, Member Eric Petersen, and Alternate Hanan Amer.

Staff members present included Deputy Tim Day, Deputy Chief Rick Olson, CFO Mark Horaski, HR Director Sarah Borden, Legal Council Brian Snure, and Clerk of the Board Stefanie Harper.

C. Announcements, Proclamations, and Presentations

Chief Thompson recognized Member Osborn for her 18 years of service as a Board Member of the Valley Regional Fire Authority.

Chair Backus was honored for her 15 years of service as a Board Member of the Valley Regional Fire Authority. Chief Thompson presented her with a VRFA 15-year anniversary coin in appreciation of her dedication.

D. Appointments

There were no appointments.

E. Agenda Modifications

There were no agenda modifications.

II. PUBLIC HEARINGS, CITIZEN INPUT, AND CORRESPONDENCE

A. Public Hearings

There were no public hearings.

B. Audience Participation

There was no audience participation.

C. Update from IAFF Local #1352

Corey Wallace updated the Board on the Toys for Kids program, which provided gifts to 781 children over the holidays. He highlighted the strong partnership between cities, Local 1352, and administration, encouraging continued outreach to ensure more kids are signed up and taken care of.

Mayor Backus thanked the Local, noting how meaningful it is for families to have the opportunity to give their children gifts during the holidays.

Additionally, 28 members will participate in the Stair Climb on March 9th—the largest turnout yet. Corey Wallace marks his 14th year climbing, and Chief Barker ranks in the top 10 for most climbs completed. A link to the Local #1352 website was shared with the Board.

D. Correspondence

There was no correspondence.

II. BOARD COMMITTEE REPORTS

A. Finance Committee

Member Backus stated that the Finance Committee met this evening and recommended the Board approve Claims and Payroll.

IV. BOARD MEMBER REPORTS

There were no Board Member reports.

V. STAFF REPORTS

Deputy Chief Olson and Deputy Chief Day provided the Board with the following updates:

Last week, four firefighters completed post-academy training and are now back on shift. Their training included a visit to the White River Museum, a 40-hour Red Card class, and time with the Fire Marshal's Office to gain insight into its operations.

We also welcomed back five members from California, where they were deployed on a strike team. They successfully saved multiple homes before moving on to another mission. With California now anticipating heavy rainfall, preparations are underway for potential mudflows. One VRFA member is nearing completion of their Strike Team Leader training following this deployment.

Member Taylor commended the social media coverage of our firefighters' efforts in California, noting it was beautifully portrayed, highly engaging, and well done.

DC Day shared the strategic plan is set to expire at the end of the year. An agreement with CPSI is being finalized to facilitate a new plan, with the process beginning the first week of June and a draft expected by the end of June. Public engagement will take place in August, and a motion for approval will be brought to the Board when it's completed. The strategic plan is a key element of accreditation, incorporating risk assessment, standard of coverage, and the capital facilities plan.

The building permit for Station 36 was recently approved, and bid documents are being finalized for posting on February 18th. Groundbreaking is scheduled for May 7th, with a ceremony, to include the Board of Governance on May 1st at 3:00 p.m. at the Station 36 site.

Preliminary site work continues for Stations 38 and 31. Member Kave inquired about wetlands at Station 38, to which DC Day confirmed that work is ongoing with a wetland biologist. Additional geotechnical work and permitting are in progress, and the building's design is expected to have minimal impact on the wetlands.

Member Thomas requested an update on property sales, and DC Day shared that negotiations are progressing. One party has reached terms, while another is conducting internal reviews, both showing positive developments.

VI. CONSENT ITEMS

All matters listed on the Consent Agenda are considered by the Governance Board to be routine and may be approved by one motion.

A. Minutes

The minutes of the January 14, 2025, Regular Meeting were reviewed.

B. Vouchers

1. Claims

Check numbers 212519 through 212568 in the amount of \$503,260.68 and electronic payments in the amount of \$87,000.40 totaling \$590,261.08 dated February 12, 2025.

2. Payroll

Payroll electronic deposit transmissions in the amount of \$2,456,800.21 for the period covering January 1, 2025, to January 31, 2025.

There being no further discussion or questions, Vice Chair Linnell moved, and Member Osborn seconded the approval of the Consent Items.

Board member Vic Kave stated for the record at the February 13, 2024, Board meeting that his vote on consent agendas excludes any vote on the payment of his post-retirement medical benefit from which he abstains, so Board member Kave has abstained from Voucher # DFT0011662.

MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY 9 - 0

VII. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

There was no unfinished business.

VIII. NEW BUSINESS

There was no new business.

IX. RESOLUTIONS & MOTIONS

A. Fire Benefit Charge Appeals

CFO Horaski stated Under RCW 52.26.250, the Fire Benefit Charge (FBC) Appeals Board reviews taxpayer appeals regarding their FBC amount and makes recommendations to the VRFA Board of Governance. For the 2025 tax year, three appeals were received. After review, it was determined that the original FBC amounts, calculated using the voter-approved formula, should remain unchanged to ensure uniform application across all properties in the VRFA service area.

There being no questions or discussions, Vice Chair Linnell moved, and Member Garberding seconded to approve the recommendations of the FBC Appeals Board.

MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY 9 – 0

B. Extension of Senior Staff Employment Agreements

CFO Horaski stated that following Board approval on September 9, 2021, employment agreements were executed between VRFA and Senior Staff. To ensure continuity in planning

for VRFA, the Fire Chief and Senior Staff agreements may be extended for an additional three years through December 31, 2027. And no other changes to the terms will occur.

There being no questions or discussions, Vice Chair Linnell moved, and Member Amer seconded to authorize the Fire Chief to extend the employment agreements of Senior Staff members, with a new expiration date of December 31, 2027.

MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY 9 – 0

C. Extension of Fire Chief Employment Agreement

CFO Horaski stated that following Board approval on August 10, 2021, the Fire Chief's employment agreement was adopted. To ensure continuity in planning for VRFA, the Fire Chief, the agreements may be extended for an additional three years through December 31, 2027. And no other changes to the terms will occur.

There being no questions or discussions, Vice Chair Linnell moved, and Member Amer seconded to authorize the extension of the employment agreement between the VRFA and Fire Chief, with a new expiration date of December 31, 2027, and authorize the Chair to sign the extension agreement.

MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY 9 – 0

X. INFORMATION/DISCUSSION

There was no information or discussion

XI. EXECUTIVE OR CLOSED SESSION

There was no executive or closed session.

XII. ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business for the Committee, the meeting was adjourned at 5:36 p.m.

Dated this 11th day of March 2025

Nancy Backus
Nancy Backus
Chair

S. Harper
Stefanie Harper
Clerk of the Board

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