

Board of Governance Meeting Minutes Valley Regional Fire Authority



Meeting Date: November 12, 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 (excused), Member Kerry Garberding, Member Lynda Osborn, Member Bill Thomas, Member Tracy Taylor, Member Eric Petersen, and Member Hanan Amer.

Staff members present included Chief Brad Thompson, Deputy Chief Tim Day, Deputy Steve Zehnder, CFO Mark Horaski, HR Director Sarah Borden, Legal Counsel Brian Snure, and Clerk of the Board Stefanie Harper.

C. Announcements, Proclamations, and Presentations

There were no announcements, proclamations, or presentations.

D. Appointments

There were no appointments.

E. Agenda Modifications

There were no agenda modifications.

II. PUBLIC HEARINGS, CITIZEN INPUT, AND CORRESPONDENCE

A. Public Hearings

1. 2026 Annual Budgets

There was no public comment(s) submitted prior to the meeting, nor was there anyone from the public in attendance to comment.

2. Assessed Valuation Levy

There was no public comment(s) submitted prior to the meeting, nor was there anyone from the public in attendance to comment.

3. Fire benefit Charge

There was no public comment(s) submitted prior to the meeting, nor was there anyone from the public in attendance to comment.

B. Audience Participation

There was no audience participation.

- C. Update from IAFF Local #1352**
There was no update from IAFF Local #1352

- D. Correspondence**
There was no correspondence.

II. BOARD COMMITTEE REPORTS

- A. Finance Committee**
Member Backus reported that the Finance Committee met this evening and recommended Board approval of Claims and Payroll.

IV. BOARD MEMBER REPORTS

Member Thomas thanked the VRFA for attending ribbon cutting for David E. Hill Memorial Wetland in Algona and for the crews' quick response to a recent plane crash.

Chair Backus thanked the VRFA for their attendance in their annual Veterans Day Parade.

V. STAFF REPORTS

Chief Thompson provided the following update:

There are five recruits currently in academy, preparing for multi-company operations and live-fire training, an important milestone where their skills will be tested in real-world scenarios. Five additional recruits have accepted offers to join the next class.

Chief Thompson, along with Deputy Chiefs Day and Zehnder, will roll out the 2025–2030 Strategic Plan to all staff later this month. The plan will be introduced first to the Captains group, with a virtual session available for all employees to provide an overview of organizational goals for the next five years.

The new CAD system, Versaterm, will go live on November 18th. Operations personnel have been training extensively to prepare for the transition, which replaces the outdated system no longer supported by its vendor. Chief Thompson noted he has seen several CAD replacements throughout his career and anticipates minor adjustments but an overall smooth implementation.

In facilities updates, Station 36 foundation and structure are complete, with visible progress each day as crews work toward drying in the building by mid-December. Station 31's design committee continues collaborating with architects to finalize layout details and refine design elements. For Station 38, permit review is underway for a new section of water main on Ellingson Road, with plans to bid the work before year-end. The station's design is nearing completion, with construction expected to go out to bid in late Q1 or early Q2 2026, alongside the Headquarters project.

Chief Thompson also attended several recent community events, including the Auburn Food Bank celebration and the David E. Hill Memorial Wetland dedication, where a nearby emergency airplane landing briefly interrupted but did not diminish the significance of the event. He also participated in Auburn's Veterans Day Parade, escorting Battalion Chief and Marine Corps veteran Jason Herman, who currently leads the regional recruit academy for 15 fire agencies. Chief Herman, a Marine Corps combat veteran of Operation Desert Storm, was recognized for his 27 years of service to the community and his ongoing leadership in fire training.

From Cory Wallace - the Local 1352 Toy Drive will take place on December 20th. If you have any families in need, please have them reach out to the Auburn Food Bank to get set up. If you know of any business in the area that would like to donate and take part of this event, please have them reach out to Cory Wallace. If any Board members are interested in signing up to help on December 20th, the time will be 0700 – 1300 with toy distribution from 0900 – 1200.

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

1. The minutes of October 14, 2025, Regular Meeting were reviewed.
2. The minutes of October 28, 2025, Special Meeting were reviewed.

B. Vouchers

1. Claims

Check numbers 213166 through 213252 in the amount of \$589,408.01 and electronic payments in the amount of \$1,100,455.42 totaling \$1,689,863.43 dated November 13, 2025.

2. Payroll

Payroll electronic deposit transmissions in the amount of \$2,986,396.38 for the period covering October 1, 2025, to October 31, 2025.

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

Board member Vic Kave stated for the record at 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 #DFT0013544

MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY 8 - 0

VII. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

There was no unfinished business.

VIII. NEW BUSINESS

There was no new business.

IX. RESOLUTIONS & MOTIONS

A. Resolution No. 210

A Resolution of the Governing Board of the Valley Regional Fire Authority adopting the Valley Regional Fire Authority Budgets for the year 2026.

There being no discussion or questions, Vice Chair Linnell moved, and Member Osborn seconded to approve Resolution No. 210.

MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY 8-0

B. Resolution No. 211

A Resolution of the Governing Board of the Valley Regional Fire Authority certifying the levy of regular, and voter approved excess property taxes by the Valley Regional Fire Authority for collection in 2026.

There being no discussion or questions, Vice Chair Linnell moved, and Member Osborn seconded to approve Resolution No. 211.

MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY 8- 0

C. Resolution No. 212

A Resolution of the Governing Board of the Valley Regional Fire Authority establishing and imposing a fire benefit service charge by the Valley Regional Fire Authority for collection in 2026.

There being no discussion or questions, Vice Chair Linnell moved, and Member Amer seconded to approve Resolution No. 212.

MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY 8- 0

X. INFORMATION/DISCUSSION

There was no information or discussion

XI. EXECUTIVE OR CLOSED SESSION

Chair Bakus requested an executive session to include Board members, Chief Thompson, Deputy Chief Day, Deputy Chief Zehnder, CFO Horaski, HR Director Borden, and Legal Counsel Snure to discuss potential litigation as authorized by RCW 42.30.110(1)(I). Anticipated the session will last twenty (20) minutes.

Chair Backus convened the executive session at 5:32pm with Board members and VRFA members. The executive session was extended by five (5) minutes at 5:52pm. The executive session was then extended for one (1) minute at 5:57pm. The executive session concluded at 5:58pm. The Board returned to their regular meeting.

XII. ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business for the Committee, the meeting was adjourned at 5:59 p.m.

Dated this 9th day of December 2025



Nancy Backus
Chair



Stefanie Harper
Clerk of the Board