

# Board of Governance Meeting Minutes Valley Regional Fire Authority



**Meeting Date:** December 9, 2025  
**Time:** 5:15 p.m.  
**Location:** 1101 D St NE, Auburn, WA 98002

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## 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 (excused), Member Vic Kave, Member Kerry Garberding (excused), 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

VRFA Chief Thompson recognized Member Osborn for her dedicated service on the VRFA Board of Governance since 2007. He described her long tenure as a model of steady leadership and trusted guidance, noting that her service on the Finance Committee has helped ensure VRFA remains financially strong and transparent.

Chief Thompson expressed appreciation for her professionalism and thoughtful approach, which continues to exemplify what it means to serve the community with Selfless Service and Integrity. On behalf of the VRFA staff, Board of Governance, and the communities of Algona, Auburn, and Pacific, he extended sincere gratitude and congratulations to Member Osborn on her retirement from service.

### 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**

Cory Wallace addressed the Board and provided an update on the upcoming toy drive scheduled for December 20th at Auburn High School, beginning at 7:00 a.m. He invited anyone interested in volunteering to join the effort.

Wallace shared that he has reached out to local news outlets to help highlight the positive impact of the event and the community's spirit of service. He noted that organizers are exploring ways to deliver toys and essential items to families unable to attend in person. Members of the Local will also be stationed at Fred Meyer, collecting donations through the day of the toy drive.

**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, Resolution 213, and the 2026 Fee Schedule.

**IV. BOARD MEMBER REPORTS**

Member Peterson reported on his review of VRFA's service levels and call volume in the Muckleshoot area.

Discussion ensued. There was no directive from the Board on this matter at this time.

**V. STAFF REPORTS**

Chief Thompson opened with an update on regional flooding, noting that all three cities are experiencing river levels not seen in some time. He assured the Board that VRFA is prepared and closely monitoring conditions, with Deputy Chief Zehnder coordinating alongside Emergency Manager Terhune, and Battalion Chief Herman staffing the City of Pacific EOC.

Chief Thompson provided a year-end summary, thanking the Board of Governance for its leadership and oversight. In 2025, VRFA hired two recruit firefighter classes, expanded the CARES program with new rapid referral services, and led the King County Fire Chiefs Recruitment Event at Green River College, hosting more than 200 participants.

Capital milestones included breaking ground on Station 36, advancing design work for Stations 31 and 38 and the new headquarters, and placing the River Rescue apparatus in service. VRFA also adopted the 2025–2030 Strategic Plan, reinforcing its commitment to continual improvement.

Looking to 2026, VRFA will open Station 36, adjust operational resources based on data-driven analysis, and begin re-accreditation through the Center for Public Safety Excellence, engaging all divisions in the self-assessment process. Chief Thompson concluded by wishing a happy birthday to Member Tracy Taylor.

**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 November 12, 2025, Regular Meeting were reviewed.

**B. Vouchers**

**1. Claims**

Check numbers 213253 through 213327 in the amount of \$1,496,353 and electronic payments in the amount of \$3,602,974.17 totaling \$5,099,327.17 dated December 10, 2025.

**2. Payroll**

Payroll electronic deposit transmissions in the amount of \$2,569,642.74 for the period covering November 1, 2025, to November 30, 2025.

There being no further discussion or questions, Member Taylor moved, and Member Peterson 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 # DFT0013749*

**MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY 7 - 0**

**VII. UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

There was no unfinished business.

**VIII. NEW BUSINESS**

There was no new business.

**IX. RESOLUTIONS & MOTIONS**

**A. Resolution No. 213**

CFO Horaski stated this resolution amends the 2025 general fund budget for board-approved fleet acquisitions, expenditures related to reimbursable services, and prior year expenditures for goods and services that were budgeted in 2024 but not received nor invoiced until 2025.

There being no discussion or questions, Member Taylor moved, and Member Thompson seconded to approve Resolution No. 213.

**MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY 7- 0**

**B. 2026 Fee Schedule**

CFO Horaski stated to ensure equity and consistency, VRFA bills the same rate for ambulance transports as our ambulance contractor, and recommend an update to the 2026 fee schedule to harmonize 2026 transport fees between VRFA and Tri-Med.

There being no discussion or questions, Member Kave moved, and Member Amer seconded to approve the 2026 Fee Schedule.

**MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY 7- 0**

**X. INFORMATION/DISCUSSION**

There was no information or discussion

**XI. EXECUTIVE OR CLOSED SESSION**

CFO Horaski requested an executive session to include himself and Board members to review the performance of a public employee as authorized by RCW 42.10.110(g). Anticipated the session will last twenty (20) minutes and there may be action at the conclusion.

Chair Backus convened the executive session at 6:00 p.m. The session was extended by thirty-five (35) minutes, for a total duration of fifty-five (55) minutes, and concluded at 6:55 p.m. The Board returned to regular session at 6:57 p.m., allowing additional time for excused members to return to their seats.

Member Kave moved to amend the compensation of Chief Thompson, effective January 1, 2026, to include an adjustment of 4.7% based on the 2025 base salary and providing an additional 20 hours of executive leave. Member Peterson seconded.

**MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY 7-0**

**XII. ADJOURNMENT**

There being no further business for the Committee, the meeting was adjourned at 7:00 p.m.

Dated this 13<sup>th</sup> day of January 2026

  
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Nancy Backus  
Chair

  
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Stefanie Harper  
Clerk of the Board