

Board of Governance Meeting Minutes Valley Regional Fire Authority



Meeting Date: March 10, 2026

Time: 5:00 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 5:00 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 Tim Fairley, 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

There were no public hearings.

B. Audience Participation

There was no audience participation.

C. Update from IAFF Local #1352

Ryan Simpson reported to the Board on the annual Stair Climb supporting Blood Cancer United, noting that IAFF Local 1352 had 17 members complete

the climb at the Columbia Center. The team placed 31st overall out of 300 teams for time and is currently ranked 28th overall in fundraising.

D. Correspondence

There was no correspondence.

II. BOARD COMMITTEE REPORTS

A. Finance Committee

There is no Finance Committee at this time.

IV. BOARD MEMBER REPORTS

There were no Board Member Reports

V. STAFF REPORTS

Chief Thompson opened by wishing Member Linnell a very happy birthday and congratulated IAFF Local 1352's stair climb team, especially Ryan Simpson, for his long standing leadership supporting that effort.

Chief Thompson shared the following update:

Recruits are performing well in the academy and oral boards for the next firefighter group are scheduled for mid-April. HR Specialist Marisa Jonson is also supporting several specialist promotional processes and the Captain promotional exam, with strong participation from staff reflecting a healthy organization. And the CARES team will be interviewing potential team members in the coming days.

DC Day provided an update on the Capital facilities projects.

VRFA Chief Thompson notified the Board that he will be retiring on July 1, 2026. He recommended that the Board consider identifying the next Fire Chief from within the organization's ranks.

Chief Thompson referenced the Board's direction in 2021, when HR Director Sarah Borden led the internal process that resulted in his appointment. With a recommendation from the Board, he indicated that he, CFO Horaski, and HR Director Borden could begin working on a similar internal selection process to identify his successor.

Discussion ensued.

There being no further discussion or questions, Vice Chair Linnell moved, and Member Amer seconded to approve Chief Thompson, CFO Horaski, and HR Borden to start the internal recruitment process for the next Fire Chief.

MOTION PASSED 8 - 1, with a "no" vote from member Kave.

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 February 10, 2026, Regular Meeting were reviewed.

B. Vouchers

1. Claims

Check numbers 213488 through 213560 in the amount of \$773,066.20 and electronic payments in the amount of \$1,584,238.19 totaling \$2,357,304.39 dated March 11, 2026.

2. Payroll

Payroll electronic deposit transmissions in the amount of \$2,688,372.59 for the period covering February 1, 2026, to February 28, 2026.

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 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 # DFT 0014575.

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. Continuity of Operations Plan & Delegation of Authority

DC Day stated the Continuity of Operations Plan (COOP) was developed by the Emergency Management Coordinator to guide the continuation of essential functions during and following a disaster. The plan was prepared in alignment with

recommendations from the Commission on Fire Accreditation International, as well as RCW 38.52, RCW 42.14, and WAC 119-30.

The COOP includes formal Delegations of Authority for the Fire Chief, Chief Financial Officer, and Risk Manager, ensuring continuity of essential legal, financial, and administrative operations if those positions become incapacitated during a disaster.

There being no discussion or questions, Vice Chair Linnell moved, and Member Amer seconded to approve the COOP.

MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY 9 – 0

B. Christensen Fuel Contract

DC Day reported that the contract with the legacy fuel delivery provider was expiring and several alternative vendors were reviewed. Through this process, staff identified renewable diesel (R99) as a preferred option due to its lower emissions, potential reduced maintenance costs, and health benefits for staff, the community, and the environment. R99 is also currently used by several neighboring agencies and the cities of Auburn and Seattle.

Following vendor evaluation, staff determined that Christensen provides R99, competitive pricing, and additional services including remote tank monitoring and emergency fueling, along with strong local references.

There being no discussion or questions, Vice Chair Linnell moved, and Member Petersen seconded to approve Chief Thompson to enter into a fuel delivery contract with Christensen Inc .

MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY 9 – 0

C. Fleet Replacement

DC Day stated that VRFA staff was requesting Board approval to spend up to \$2,600,000 for the purchase of two fire pumpers. The request follows a quantitative fleet health review identifying three pumpers that received an “F” rating, indicating strong consideration for replacement. Staff recommended replacing two pumpers at this time, noting the third can safely remain in reserve status.

The review methodology and suppression fleet overview were included in Attachment A. If approved, delivery of the apparatus is anticipated in late 2028.

Discussion ensued.

There being no further discussion or questions, Vice Chair Linnell moved, and Member Kave seconded to approve the purchase of two fire pumpers as described in Attach. A.

MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY 9 - 0

D. Resolution #215 Surplus Items

DC Day stated the Valley Regional Fire Authority disposes of public property in accordance with Policy 6501 and RCW 39.33.010, which authorizes municipalities to dispose of property no longer of value or use. Attachment A identifies the items determined to be surplus.

Discussion ensued.

There being no further discussion or questions, Vice Chair Linnell moved, and Member Petersen seconded to approve Resolution #215.

MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY 9 - 0

E. Lumen Network as a Service Contracts

CFO Horaski stated that subsequent to last month's Board approval but prior to implementation of the direct internet access contracts, Lumen introduced new technology known as Network as a Service (NAAS). This service will provide connectivity to all VRFA locations at a significantly reduced cost.

This connectivity supports staff in accessing essential data and systems for completing patient and incident reports, conducting inspections, and accessing training materials.

There being no discussion or questions, Vice Chair Linnell moved, and Member Amer seconded to approve the NAAS contract with Lumen.

MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY 9 - 0

F. Puget Sound Energy Grant

Chief Thompson stated it was being requested retroactive Board authorization allowing him to accept a \$36,000 grant from Puget Sound Energy and expend up to \$65,000 for the installation of three Level 2 EV charging stations at Station 32. The project was inadvertently approved and completed prior to Board authorization due to personnel transitions and miscommunication.

The grant was awarded through PSE's Up & Go Electric for Workplace program following an application submitted in early 2025. Installation costs not covered by the grant included trenching and new electrical circuits at Station 32. The project supports staff commuting needs, maintains equity across facilities, and aligns with state energy code requirements that will include EV charging infrastructure at future stations.

Discussion ensued.

There being no further discussion or questions, Vice Chair Linnell moved, and Member Fairley seconded to approve Chief Thompson to accept the PSE grant and expend up to \$65,000 to complete this project.

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 5:49 p.m.

Dated this 14th day of April 2026



Nancy Backus
Chair



Stefanie Harper
Clerk of the Board