Board of Governance Meeting Minutes
Valley Regional Fire Authority

Meeting Date: July 14, 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 Tim Day, Deputy Chief Steve Zehnder, Deputy Chief Jason Herman, HR Director Sarah Borden, CFO Mark Horaski, 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

There was no update from IAFF Local #1352

D. Correspondence

There was no correspondence.

I. BOARD COMMITTEE REPORTS

A. Finance Committee

There is no Finance Committee at this time.

IV. BOARD MEMBER REPORTS

Member Kave shared that significant work is anticipated along the river in Pacific and wanted to make crews aware so they can plan for emergency response access and operations in the area.

Member Thomas expressed his appreciation for the opportunity to attend Chief Thompson's retirement celebration and tour the new Station 36. He noted the symbolic passing of the torch from Chief Thompson to incoming Chief Tim Day and commented that the event was very well organized.

Chair Backus thanked VRFA personnel for their response and dedication during the Fourth of July holiday. She noted that their presence throughout the community did not go unnoticed and expressed her appreciation for their commitment to keeping the public safe on the holiday.

V. STAFF REPORTS

Chief Day opened the meeting by wishing Member Amer a happy birthday and offering early congratulations to Member Thomas on his upcoming retirement. He also introduced the Board to VRFA's new Owl recording system.

Chief Day shared that this was his first Board meeting as Fire Chief and expressed his appreciation to the Board for its confidence and support. He noted that Chief Thompson's retirement celebration was a great success and was pleased that attendees had the opportunity to tour the new Station 36.

Deputy Chief Jason Herman was introduced and provided a brief overview of his career. He began his fire service career with the City of Auburn in 1998, served on the Technical Rescue Team, and was promoted to Captain after 16 years. He later served as a lead instructor with the South King County Fire Training Consortium for four and a half years before being promoted to Battalion Chief and returning to the Consortium in a training leadership role. He shared that he is honored to serve as

Deputy Chief and looks forward to working alongside Chief Day and the Executive Team. Chief Day added that DC Herman is also a Marine Corps combat veteran and founder of a nonprofit organization that supports fellow veterans.

Chief Day announced the promotion of Battalion Chiefs Gustafson and Smith and Captains Laidlaw and Alway. Noting that each brings years of experience and expressed confidence that the communities served by VRFA will benefit from their leadership.

Three recruits graduated from the fire academy last week and are currently completing post academy training before reporting to shift assignments at the end of July. We are also in the final stages of the hiring process with five recruits for the August 2026 Fire Academy. One candidate accepted a position with another agency, and that vacancy will be filled during the February 2027 Academy.

VRFA responded to 131 calls on the Fourth of July, an increase from 85 calls during the same period last year. Crews responded to three fireworks related injuries on the holiday and a significant hand injury on July 11th that required air transport to Harborview Medical Center. He thanked the Auburn Police Department for its assistance in applying a tourniquet prior to transport. VRFA's annual Fourth of July upstaffing proved valuable in managing the increased call volume.

15 VRFA personnel were deployed to assist with nine regional wildland fires. He highlighted the continued success of VRFA's Wildland Program, noting that it provides valuable experience for personnel while making a meaningful contribution to regional wildfire response.

Station 36 is nearing completion, with VRFA expected to take possession within the next several days. The Headquarters project has received its building permit, and the contractor is scheduled to begin work on July 20th. Construction on Station 38 in Pacific is expected to begin soon.

Planning for the Station 31 PFAS remediation project continues. VRFA is working closely with its environmental consultants and the Department of Ecology, with steady progress being made. The project is anticipated to go out for bid during the first quarter of 2027.

Member Taylor asked whether Board members who were unable to attend the Station 36 tour would have an opportunity to visit before the station becomes operational. Chief Day confirmed that the Board will be invited to a behind the scenes tour prior to the station opening.

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 June 9, 2026, Regular Meeting were reviewed.

B. Vouchers

1. Claims

Check numbers 213798 through 213885 in the amount of $1,450,242.50 and electronic payments in the amount of $3,227,051.19 totaling $4,677,293.69 dated July 15, 2026.

2. Payroll

Payroll electronic deposit transmissions in the amount of $2,694,894.08 for the period covering June 1, 2026, to June 30, 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 June 9, 2026, 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 # DFT0015481

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. Strategic Plan Revision

Chief Day stated that, in June 2025, the VRFA contracted with the Center for Public Safety Excellence to facilitate the development of a new strategic plan. Although the original intent was to begin work immediately, Board approval was delayed until October 2025, resulting in a later project start.

Chief Day explained that staff have since reassessed the project timeline and determined that the current Strategic Plan will remain in effect through 2030 to allow completion of the remaining objectives. As a result, he requested Board approval to update the new strategic plan as the 2026 to 2030 plan rather than the original 2025 to 2030 Strategic Plan.

There being no further discussion or questions, Vice Chair Linnell moved, and Member Kave seconded to adopt the VRFA 2026-2030 Strategic Plan.

MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY 9 – 0

B. 2027 Fee Schedule

Chief Day stated the proposed 2027 VRFA Fee Schedule, which includes a 4.5% increase to professional service fees to account for rising service delivery costs. He noted that an additional amendment may be brought forward later in the year once the 2027 Basic Life Support (BLS) ambulance transport rates have been finalized.

VRFA has assessed fees for development plan reviews, construction inspections, ambulance transport services, and public records requests since the Authority's formation in 2007. While VRFA is supported by tax revenue within its jurisdiction, not all services are taxpayer funded. Fees help ensure that customers receiving direct services, such as construction permits or ambulance transport, pay a portion of the associated costs rather than distributing those costs across the entire taxing district.

There being no further discussion or questions, Vice Chair Linnell moved, and Member Amer seconded to approve the 2027 Feed Schedule.

MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY 9 – 0

C. St. 35 Septic System

Chief Day stated that, in February 2026, staff discovered a blockage in the sewer line serving Station 35. Following an extensive investigation, it was determined that the sewer line had failed and could no longer accommodate solid waste.

Working in collaboration with the City of Auburn and the project contractor, staff evaluated several repair options and determined that installing an underground wastewater holding tank with routine pump out service was the most practical solution. After coordinating with city, county, and state agencies, VRFA received approval to proceed with installation of the new wastewater system.

There being no further discussion or questions, Vice Chair Linnell moved, and Member Amer seconded to authorize Chief Day to contract with West Coast Mechanical for the installation of the wastewater holding tank at St. 35.

MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY 9 – 0

D. Aid Car Purchase

Chief Day stated that a quantitative assessment of the aid car fleet identified two units that received an "F" rating, indicating they should be prioritized for replacement. He requested Board approval to authorize the expenditure of up to $900,000 for the purchase of two aid cars, including power assisted stretchers and powered stair chairs. If approved, the new aid cars are expected to be delivered in late 2027.

There being no further discussion or questions, Vice Chair Linnell moved, and Member Kave seconded to authorize Chief Day to purchase two aid cars as described in Attachment A.

MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY 9 – 0

E. Resolution No. 218

Chief Day stated that the original Community Risk Assessment/Standards of Cover (CRA/SOC) was adopted in 2019 through Resolution 150 and has since received annual updates to maintain accreditation. As part of the 2026 reaccreditation process, the document was comprehensively revised to reflect organizational changes, reassess community risks, and update response time benchmarks. Resolution 218 will adopt the updated CRA/SOC, establish the revised response time benchmarks, and supersede Resolution 150.

There being no further discussion or questions, Vice Chair Linnell moved and Member Amer seconded to approve Resolution 218, adopting the updated CRA/SOC.

MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY 9 – 0

XI. INFORMATION/DISCUSSION

There was no information or discussion.

XII. EXECUTIVE OR CLOSED SESSION

There was no executive or closed session.

XIII. ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business for the Committee, the meeting was adjourned at 5:43 p.m.

Dated this 11th day of August 2026

Nancy Backus
Nancy Backus
Chair

S. Harper
Stefanie Harper
Clerk of the Board