MINUTES
Mid-Columbia Fire and Rescue
Budget Committee Meeting
In Person / Virtually Held
1400 W 8th Street, The Dalles, OR 97058
May 19, 2026

1. CALL MEETING TO ORDER

President Bailey called the Mid-Columbia Fire and Rescue Budget Committee meeting to order at 5:30 p.m.

2. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

President Bailey led the Pledge of Allegiance.

3. ROLL CALL

Directors Present: Diana Bailey, Corey Case, Walter Denstedt, Dick Schaffeld. Chris Schanno out ill.

Budget Committee Members: Tom Ashmore, Mike Hamilton, Jerod Sawyer, Kiel Nairns, and John Willer.

Confirm a Quórum – Quórum confirmed.

Staff Present: David Jensen Fire Chief, Josh Beckner Operations Chief, Adam Cole Training Chief, Chris Grant Fire Marshal, Joe Talamantez Business Services Manager, and Stephanie Ziegler Office Manager.

VIRTUAL MEETING CRITERIA

President Bailey read the virtual meeting criteria. There was no one online.

4. ELECT A BUDGET COMMITTEE CHAIRPERSON

Dick Schaffeld nominated Corey Case for Chairperson. Seconded by Kiel Nairns. There were no other nominations. All in favor.

Bailey **YES**
Schaffeld **YES**
Denstedt **YES**
Ashmore **YES**
Hamilton **YES**
Sawyer **YES**
Nairs **YES**
Willer **YES**
8 Ayes, 0 Nays. Corey Case is elected Chairperson.

5. ELECT A BUDGET COMMITTEE SECRETARY

Director Bailey nominated Dick Schaffeld, Tom Ashmore seconded. All in favor.

Bailey **YES**
Case **YES**
Denstedt **YES**
Ashmore **YES**
Hamilton **YES**
Sawyer **YES**
Nairns **YES**
Willer **YES**
8 Ayes, 0 Nays. Dick Schaffeld is elected as Budget Committee Secretary where he deferred recording of minutes to District Recorder Stephanie Ziegler.

6. RECEIVE PROPOSED BUDGET DOCUMENT

a. Chairperson Case asked Chief Jensen to take the committee through the budget process. Chief Jensen explained the requirements for posting the budget and the notice for the meeting are very specific. The proposed budget was published in the newspaper and was verified within the 30-day window of the Budget Committee meeting and was also put on our website within 15 days. He stated that some districts present the budget at the Budget Committee meeting, however we post it and publish it and give it to the members so they can access it all on the same day before the meeting. He explained this was all in accordance with Oregon budget law.
b. Chief Jensen gave an overview of the Strategic Plan and the Budget goals. He stated the current Strategic plan is in its 4th year and will be up for renewal, which will start in July or August. He went through the goals, giving an update on each goal. He explained that the budget is structured to reflect the board's strategic goals, ensuring that financial decisions support long-term district objectives. He discussed the district's diverse revenue streams including ambulance services, taxes and grants. He highlighted a firefighter apprenticeship grant in the amount of $1.25 million which will fund 4 firefighter/apprentices for a two-year term. He stated that this budget anticipates us receiving those funds after July 1st. He explained that we will receive part of the sum in July and the other part in December. The district also relies on ambulance service fees and property taxes as another primary revenue stream. He stated that the district participates in coordinated care organization and ground emergency medical transport programs (CCO and GEMT) payments. He stated that the expected payments have been delayed and may affect the fund balances. A full year of CCO payments is estimated to be $300,000 is still pending. He also spoke about significant increases in health insurance and workers' compensation. He explained that health insurance costs could go up by 20% and workers compensation premiums are increasing significantly due to experience ratings and time-off costs.

c. Capital Project Presentation – Chief Jensen along with Chief Beckner presented the capital project slide show, which included ambulance purchases, a potential fire boat acquisition, radio site property consideration for purchase and security upgrades for Station 1. There was much discussion following.

7. REVIEW OF THE 2026-27 FY BUDGET

Chair Case proceeded with review of the 2026-27 FY general fund. He stated he would go through each page and ask if there are any questions before proceeding to the next page. Director Denstedt had questions regarding general insurance and Dues & Subscriptions. He is requesting breakdowns of Dues & Subscriptions and Professional Services, what is in each fund. He would like to see each fund have its own line item. There was much discussion regarding this topic.

8. PUBLIC COMMENT

There was no public comment or written communication.

9. CONSIDER APPROVAL OF PROPOSED BUDGET

Chair Case stated he was open to a motion to approve the proposed 2026-26 budget.

Director Bailey made a motion that the budget committee of Mid-Columbia Fire & Rescue approve the budget for the 2026-27 FY in the amount of $16,551,903. Budget Committee member Kyle Nairns seconded. All in favor.

Bailey **YES**
Schaffeld **YES**
Denstedt **YES**
Ashmore **YES**
Hamilton **YES**
Sawyer **YES**
Nairns **YES**
Willer **YES**
Case **YES**
9 Ayes 0 Nays. Motion carried.

Director Schaffeld made a motion that the budget committee of Mid-Columbia Fire and Rescue approve property taxes for the 2026-27 FY at the rate of $2.1004 per $1000 of assessed value for operating purposes in the General Fund and a levy amount of $355,449 for the general obligation bond principal and interest in the Debt Service Fund. Budget Committee member Tom Ashmore seconded. All in favor.

Bailey **YES**
Schaffeld **YES**
Denstedt **YES**

Ashmore **YES**
Hamilton **YES**
Sawyer **YES**
Nairns **YES**
Willer **YES**
Case **YES**
8 Ayes, 0 Nays. Motion passed unanimously.

10. GOOD OF THE ORDER

Chair Case thanked everyone for taking the time to go through this budget and thanked the staff, stating it was a long, drawn-out process but everyone did an awesome job. Chief Jensen stated he had nothing for the Good of the Order, but he thanked everyone for showing up and taking part in this process.

11. ADJOURNMENT

Chair Case adjourned the meeting at 19:20 p.m.

Committee Chair

Committee Secretary Treasurer