



Columbia River Fire & Rescue

ADMINISTRATION OFFICES

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An Open Letter to Friends of the Fire Service & the Women and Men of Columbia River Fire and Rescue

The Columbia River Fire and Rescue Board of Directors is currently working through several issues of significance to our community, District employees and our Fire District. We want to acknowledge that this is a time of frustration and uncertainty for many. We volunteered for the elected office knowing this would be a difficult road. Your Board has already made some tough decisions. There is likely to be more to follow. Because of the complex nature of the issues and challenges facing us, we realize these cannot be solved overnight. We are in the process of determining the right things to address, the priorities, and the correct ways in which to proceed.

Our community is aware of several key challenges facing Columbia River Fire and Rescue. Most important of all, your Board is working to ensure the financial stability of the Fire District both immediately and in the long term. As a Board, we are working together with staff and other professionals to gain a complete understanding of where we are now, what we need to understand about how the District got here, and the best course of action to ensure the District's future financial stability.

Many in the community are demanding our prompt answers and immediate action. We hear you, share and understand your frustrations. The women and men who serve as professionals for the Columbia River Fire and Rescue do amazing work every day, service you in your time of emergency needs and keeping our community safe. Everyone in our service area relies on the Fire District and the Board of Directors to provide great service, to be fiscally responsible, and to communicate with transparency.

Our community and employees of CRFR deserve the best from us. As a Board, we intend on giving you that. Since the election, the Board has been working hard to "catch-up" and get up to speed on the budget, legal challenges, financial challenges, staffing issues, and planning and addressing leadership options. The work is extensive and the information we need to digest to make good decisions is tremendous.

We have heard your frustration and the requests some of you have made to us. As your Board, we are asking the public to give us time to accomplish the work necessary so that we can move the District as appropriate and master the details necessary to provide correct answers transparently. Obviously, we cannot provide information we do not have, and until the District Attorney completes the gathering of information and the examination by Mr. Moody and the Oregon State Police enable understanding, we cannot provide information because, as has been addressed, the records and information does not exist at the District.

We know this is extraordinary - and we are beholden to the District Attorney, Mr. Moody, and the Oregon State Police for the facts and explanation.

Considering all that has happened, we understand the desire of many for immediate action. Because CRFR provides such a critical service to the community, it is very important that we make the right decisions. This must be done based on accurate information. We are in the process of getting that accurate picture and with some time, will make decisions that will ensure that Columbia River Fire and Rescue is on a firm foundation today and in the future.

Sincerely,

Austin Zimbrick, Director



Richard Fletcher, Director



Ryan Welby, Director



Kelly Niles, Board President

Columbia River Fire and Rescue Board of Directors.