

## Lookingglass Volunteer Fire Department/LRFD

### 2021 ANNUAL REP8RT

April 13, 2022

Submitted by Steve Rhodes, Fire Chief

I am hereby submitting an annual review of fire department operations as required by our LRFD Bylaws. Our Mission Statement is:

The Lookingglass Volunteer Fire Department meets the needs of our community by providing well-trained firefighters for response to fire, rescue, medical and public service incidents. We protect lives, property, and the environment with compassion and a dedication to excellence. We meet or exceed the requirements of local, State and National statutes and standards related to the Fire Service. Our conduct will reflect our commitment to safety, honesty, personal responsibility, fairness, respectfulness and integrity. We recognize that the most effective way to protect lives and property is to prevent fires from occurring through fire prevention and education.

#### **Staffing**

As 2021 ended, we had 18 volunteers actively maintaining certifications and training. 7 volunteers are listed as inactive due to job commitments, current residence location, or other administrative reasons. We continue to work with our FF trainees undergoing NFPA FF1 and FF2 training as provided by our State certified instructors. All FFs, Driver Operators, and Chief Officers/Instructors were recertified by the DPSST, and this is the second year of the two year State accreditation through DPSST. We currently have 1 paramedic as our medical instructor, 5 Emergency Medical Technicians, and 6 Oregon Emergency Medical Responders as medical staff. All personnel are trained in CPR/AED. Nine of our FFs are now NFPA Apparatus Operators, and many of our heavy equipment drivers are commercial licensed. We have 4 operations level haz mat trained personnel. There are also 15 ffs certified or working towards NFPA FF1, and 3 NFPA FF2s. We have 4 DPSST certified instructors providing in house and regional training, and continue to add to that cadre. A few of our younger volunteers continue schooling at UCC pursuing FF, Nursing, and Paramedic careers.

Our Fire Cadet program continued in 2021, and as the year ended 1 cadet remains registered. Other cadets have “aged out” over the last few years, and are now volunteer FFs. Some have become State certified FF1s, and are moving toward First Responder related fields. Chief Rhodes, Captain Chitwood, and Captain Fox are designated as adult leaders, and maintain certification in adult child protection training. As COVID-19 issues resolve, we will actively recruit in our area.

The LRFD was less affected by COVID-19 during 2020 and 2021 than most surrounding jurisdictions. We adhered to OSHA and Oregon Health Laws, and practiced station sanitation, masking, and social distancing. 16 out of 18 ffs were vaccinated, with 1 medical exemption and 1 religious exemption. 2 ffs chose to resign rather than meet State requirements. The Department was able to meet the increased response needs throughout the pandemic.

#### **Incidents**

The LVFD responded to 245 calls for service during 2021. As a comparison,

2020 – 233 calls,      2019 – 172 calls,      2018 – 164 calls,      2017 – 137 calls.

We experienced an increase in the number of incidents again this year. Of the total, medical aids accounted for 120 incidents (49%), structure fires numbered 26(11%), natural cover fires were 38 (16%), public assists/safety were 31

(13%), motor vehicle accidents numbered 20(8%), Hazmat/hazardous conditions incidents totaled 6 (2%), and false alarms numbered 4 (<2%).

Of the total fires responded to, 26 were mutual or automatic aid into our surrounding jurisdictions. We received mutual or automatic aid on 11 incidents, split between natural cover fires and structure fires.

The LRFD experienced a fire loss of \$224,500 related to structure fires, including one vehicle/garage fire, one kitchen fire, and one barn shed/fire in the Flournoy Valley area. There were no fire related deaths or injuries. We had a total of 7 acres lost due to natural cover fires including 5 acres to one fire in Flournoy Valley.

The LRFD participates in mutual aid and/or automatic aid agreements with all Fire departments in Douglas County. The current aid system benefits our District, and continues to provide paid fire engines and other equipment from DFPA, Douglas FPD#2, and Winston Fire for any fire in our District. The number of wildland fire responses was steady in the LRFD response area this year, and our firefighters and equipment were also committed to several wildland fires in our surrounding jurisdictions. We provided crews for the Landers area fire in Green, a fast moving wind driven fire with structures lost. Significant incidents included the previously mentioned structure fires in our area; structure fires in Camas Valley, District 2 (Melrose area), and Tenmile; trauma related vehicle accidents, a mutual aid response to a large church fire in Winston.

The LRFD was also affected by the COVID-19 pandemic along with the rest of the world. It has resulted in new procedures and policies, more medical incidents in our area, remote and canceled Board and training meetings, an increased demand for PPE and sanitation supplies, and an adjustment to incident response. As 2021 ended and 2022 began, we moved back toward normalcy as OSHA and State Fire rules and guidelines to protect our firefighters and our community were rescinded.

## Vehicles

The vehicle fleet of the LVFD/LRFD represents the majority of the financial assets of our Department. During 2021, our diesel equipment was again serviced, safety checked, and repaired as needed at a new vendor, Mobile Diesel Service in Sutherlin.

Annual NFPA Standard 1911 pump tests usually scheduled in October were canceled due scheduling difficulties with COVID related issues and our vendor. They will be scheduled this year. Each pumper was reported to be in safe and good operating condition after annual inspections. Tender 1060 was also serviced by Mobile Diesel Service (MDS), and is in good condition also. Engine 1031 has some small repair issues due to age, and we will continue to correct them until it is replaced. Repairs were made to vehicles during 2021, including:

1081- Master cylinder, right rear brake cylinder, battery

1030- Pump/road air valve failure, on board air compressor, brake treadle valve

1091 – Emergency light work, new battery, rewiring of radio and power center, winch/bumper added

1060 – Roll up door

1080 – Foam leak repair, compartment shelving

1070 – Electrical relay outage, all emergency lights and siren

This year we identified and used 2 new maintenance and repair companies – Mobile Diesel Service (Sutherlin) for heavy equipment repair and Maverick Mobile for light vehicles. We also are using Chuck Swarm for tune ups and lube on light

vehicles. Near future (5 year) vehicle needs include planning for the replacement of Engine 1031 and salvage or replacement of Tender 1061. Our grant submissions have been unsuccessful so far. These future vehicle needs were identified in our 2013 strategic plan and will be addressed through possible grants, option levies, or bonds as directed by the Board. We intend to continue submitting for a FEMA Grant for the new 1031 and a new, smaller water tender each year, and will seek Board approval for any purchase if grant monies are awarded.

### **Equipment**

The LRFD was successful in securing an ODF/VFA matching grant for fiscal year 21/22. Funds for budgeted equipment purchase were \$19,864, with a matching return of \$9,532 from the Oregon Dept. of Forestry. We continue to offset future capital PPE costs, increase our firefighting capability, and provide for future training. The new SCBAs and accessories from a successful joint submission grant with Fire District 2 were delivered and placed in service this year. An intensive training period using the SCBAs and RIT equipment under live fire conditions was undertaken using the UCC burn trailer.

New equipment added included "Stop the Bleed" kits with associated mass casualty/active shooter training, various sanitizing and medical PPE supplies for COVID response from the State, air scrubbers and HEPA filtration for OSHA mandated COVID and air quality rules, and various fire suppression related tools and communications from the VFA grant.

### **Fire Prevention/Public Education**

The Lookingglass Rural Fire District falls under adopted Oregon State fire prevention codes. The current codes and standards are the newer 2018 edition of the Oregon Fire Code and the 2013 edition of the International Wildland/Urban Interface Fire Code. These codes outline requirements for new construction, as well as maintenance of existing occupancies and infrastructure. The State Fire Marshall in Medford currently administers our District. At this time, only large assemblies, schools, and board and care facilities are being inspected due to personnel limitations on a schedule of once every 2 years. A contract was signed and approved by the Board in 2017, establishing a cooperative agreement with the State Fire Marshall and outlining their responsibilities.

DFPA enforces ORS 277 and any wildland codes in our area during fire season. They continue to permit and monitor control burns during and outside of fire season.

This year, due to Covid 19 restrictions and the effects on school attendance, we were unable to complete our annual fire prevention program at Lookingglass School. It will be scheduled in the fall of 2022 as guidelines allow.

The LRFD participated in the annual Clean Up day in May of 2021. A small pandemic safe parade was conducted, but all fundraising and activities were canceled.

A large variety of fire prevention material is on the LRFD website, and is easily accessible thanks to our retired Webmaster and our new website. We still have smoke detectors available for installation from a small grant we received from the State recently. In 2020 and 2021, events with the Red Cross involving community smoke detector installation were canceled due to Covid 19. We will attempt to reschedule in later 2022.

Fire prevention efforts will involve programs relating to Wildland/Urban interface fire prevention and extinguishment. A Firewise program continues in the Diamond Heights area, and a new program is starting on Jade Drive. We will continue to support them as they grow. The Oregon Department of Forestry has hired a new wildland fire prevention specialist

for our area, and we will see more in person and online training with grant funding possibly available. A reflective address sign program continues to assist in locating incidents easier, and is part of the local Firewise program. Signs are provided without cost if needed.

## **Training**

The Lookingglass Rural Fire District is required by State law (DPSST) to provide training in a variety of fire department related subjects. We are fortunate to have four State certified Fire Instructors on our roster, and also provide required medical training through our paramedic approved by our physician advisor. There is currently 1 additional firefighter continuing the process leading to Instructor 1 certification.

New firefighters are required to complete a 90 hour course before FF1 certification, and existing firefighters are required to complete 60 hours of maintenance training each year. In addition, apparatus operators are required to complete 40 hours of supervised driver training after FF1 completion, and pass a performance test for each type of apparatus (engine,tender,wildland). Each additional certification requires 4 hours of maintenance training each year.

Our firefighters and Explorers are also certified in CPR/Automatic External Defibulator (4 hours), Haz Mat First Responder (4 hours), and Wildland Safety (2 hours) annually.

We offered 150+ hours of instruction this year. Covid-19 again affected our Department training, resulting in drill cancelations and station closure. We are part of the County wide online training program, and there were many offers of webinars and other on line classes. The system was hacked in 2021, and is being repaired as this report is written. Training highlights have included live fire burn exercises in the UCC burn trailer, LPG live fire training, more driver training (all personnel), haz mat training with Roseburg FD, a hazardous materials pipeline drill with local pipeline operators, wildland training with DFPA, safety and operations classes with local utilities (Avista, Northwest Pipeline, Douglas Electric, Umpqua Basin Water), SDAO provided OSHA training, quarterly tower drills at DCFD Melrose Station 3, weekend auto extrication course for our ffs, and numerous “wet” structural fire drills.

The LRFD hosted 2 State sanctioned regional courses this year. We did a live fire LPG course for area firefighters, and a Live Fire Instructor certification class conducted by DPSST and our certified instructors. Our Firefighter 1 and 2 Academy will continue into 2022, as we gain new trainees and new Explorers.

Board Members and the Fire Chief also attended on line training with various SDAO required courses on our online Safepersonnel training site, and also attended in person Risk Management training with SDAO. Other mandatory online courses to meet OSHA and State requirements included sexual harassment, child/elder abuse reporting, and new smoke and heat procedures.

## **Administration**

During 2021, the LRFD continued to implement and adhere to new procedures concerning Covid-19, and was subject to several changes in reporting requirements. The Oregon Hazardous Materials Right to Know program information was disclosed as required. Year-end summaries were completed for DPSST, NFPA, and the State Fire Marshall as required. The LRFD continues as a member of the regional online training system, requiring a new reporting and records system. We continued our insurance programs through SDIS/SDAO, including liability/property, workers compensation, supplemental health, and the Employees Assistance Program. Due to reaching 5 years tenure with SDAO, the LRFD registered for rebate credit, signed a contract for limiting rate increases in the future, and received our second longevity rebate check. Reimbursement was received from the State of Oregon for our commitment to the Archie Creek fire, and

resulted in approximately \$11,000 being returned to the District.

Other changes included a switch to Microsoft 365 for computers, and associated training and hardware for cyber security improvement based on SDAO guidelines. A new website was implemented with Streamline Inc., and we are continuing to bring it up to its full capabilities. A few new District annexations were completed. A new contract with Evergreen Medical was finished, providing DOT physicals and OSHA Respiratory Program evaluations. For site security, a six digit door lock system was implemented to add to our current video surveillance program for crime prevention.

A scheduled Board election on 2021 resulted in 4 new Board members due to one existing having to retire due to family issues. Paul Reardon, Mark Bennett, David Smith, and Rob Ikola took over as President, Vice President, Communications Officer, and Secretary respectively. Our long serving tech specialist, webmaster, and CO Jerry Harris retired, and is surely missed. We thank him for his many efforts at security, procedures, compliance, and improving the administration and operation of the LRFD over the years.

### **Facilities**

Facility maintenance and improvements were addressed in 2021, and future actions are under way. Continued conversion to LED lighting continues as costs allow. Materials were budgeted for and procured for the carport/shelter upgrade that will continue into 2022. Minimal repairs were need in 2021. An upgraded heating system was budgeted for to convert to natural gas, but the cost sharing grant was unsuccessful. We will resubmit in 2022.

The LRFD entered into an agreement with ZCS Engineering for a study and the submission of a State Seismic Rehabilitation Grant for our facility. A successful grant would result in no matching fund building improvements of up to \$2.5 million for safety and upgrades. The grant is under consideration as 2022 ends.

### **Capital Expense Outlook**

A 25 year plan for capital expenses was completed and published on our website in 2012/2013. Those future capital expenses continue to exist, and the plan should be revisited by the Board to evaluate the fiscal impacts coming. We will continue to search for grant opportunities to offset the major projected costs, and it is cost effective to go outside for grant help and preparation as we did for the FEMA grant in 2019.

While working on the upgrades to our current station in 2021 to address long term needs, as Fire Chief I was not able to make progress on possible expansion into the Flournoy Valley/Reston area with a satellite station. I again will set a goal of initiating a plan of action to benefit our community members more than 5 miles from our current station.

Financially, the District is sound, and we are able to operate and maintain existing equipment and programs with our current budget. Any major new expenses or future capital projects will have to be funded by grant or other financial means, such as bond measures or option levies as determined by the Board and voters.

For further information about the operation of our community Lookingglass Volunteer Fire Department and the Lookingglass Rural Fire District, please contact me, the Board of Directors, or the Fire Station at 541 679-5555.

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