

January 16, 2013  
6:00 P.M.  
Newport, Oregon

**JOINT WORK SESSION  
NEWPORT CITY COUNCIL AND THE  
CENTRAL OREGON COAST FIRE AND RESCUE DISTRICT,  
NEWPORT RURAL FIRE PROTECTION DISTRICT, AND  
DEPOE BAY FIRE DEPARTMENT**

Councilor Members present: Roumagoux, Swanson, Sawyer, Busby, Saelens, and Beemer. Allen was excused.

City Staff present: Jim Voetberg, Peggy Hawker, Phil Paige, Chris Rampley, Tracy Cole, Melanie Nelson, and David Marshall.

Others present:

Central Oregon Coast Fire and Rescue District - Derek Clawson, Chief, Dave Brooks, Board Member, Jerry Phillips, Board Member, Ray Woodruff - Board Member, Julie Becker, Tim Grady.

Depoe Bay Fire Department: Joshua Williams, Chief, Barbara Leff, Board Member, Gary Nees, Board Member, Phil Taunton, Board Member Harry Riches, Kirk Medefesser, David Jensen, Phyllis Palmer.

Newport Rural Fire Protection District: Ron Beck, Board Member, Yale Fogarty, Board member, Ron Benfield, Board Member, Peter Boris, Board Member, Shamus Gamache, Board Member, and Kent Gibson, Board Member.

Also in attendance were: Tracy Shaw, Seal Rock Rural Fire Protection District; Don Baker, North Lincoln Fire District; David Morgan, News Lincoln County.

Leff called the meeting to order at 6:00 P.M. The Pledge of Allegiance was recited. Roll was taken by each agency.

Leff noted that this is a workshop and no vote will be taken. She noted that public comment will be limited to three minutes per speaker, and asked that everyone in attendance sign-in.

Leff introduced Chief Phil Paige of the Newport Fire Department. Paige introduced

Derek Clawson, Chief of the Central Oregon Coast Fire and Rescue District, and Joshua Williams, Chief of the Depoe Bay Fire Department.

Paige made a PowerPoint presentation. The presentation included the history of collaboration efforts and the ESCI study; the reasons for collaboration; the challenges of cooperation; the options; the recommendations. He noted that an intergovernmental agreement is recommended to form a board with representatives from each participating agency. Paige noted that a collaboration committee was formed that developed goals and recommendations. The recommendations include the consolidation of administrative functions of the Newport Fire Department, Depoe Bay Fire Department, and the Central Oregon Coast Fire and Rescue Department. The governing board would be comprised of five members, one from each agency, and two from Newport. He added that a draft contract is under development and should be complete within the next week. He reviewed a sample budget for the first year; an organizational chart; responsibilities of shared positions; and suggested an implementation date of July 1 if it is decided to move forward.

Paige commented, as Chief of the Newport Fire Department, that he was impressed with the process and input. He stated that Newport's career and volunteer firefighters are not supportive of the idea, adding that there are details to work through. He added that he believes this plan is the best for citizens to provide better protection for the long-term.

Clawson stated that the Central Coast Fire and Rescue Department is 100% committed to the process, and ready to move forward as a group and meet the challenges together.

Williams thanked the committee for its work adding that change is not easy. He stated that the responsibility is to keep up with change and manage it, and the recommendation is a blueprint for the process.

David Jensen, Depoe Bay Fire Department, stated that he is in favor of consolidation.

Chris Rampley, Newport Fire Department, read a statement noting that the career firefighters were unanimous in their opposition to this plan. He noted that the changes can be achieved through mutual aid agreements.

Leff stated that the committee had done excellent work. She called for public comment.

Kirk Medefesser, Depoe Bay Fire Department, stated that this department is 100% in favor of the proposal.

Leff asked for questions from the governing bodies.

Beemer asked about the number of volunteers in the Depoe Bay Fire Department; how many of them are local residents; and whether they are certified to enter burning buildings. It was noted that there are approximately 26 volunteers, and three are local residents and all three are certified to enter burning buildings.

Busby asked why the districts that are not participating thought that the concept is not a good idea. Tracy Shaw, from the Seal Rock Fire District, stated that his district is monitoring the collaboration efforts and may participate at another time.

Beemer noted that it is his understanding that the Newport volunteer firefighters voted on this issue last night. Paige reported that the vote was 9-2 to oppose the effort. He noted that the Assistant Chief supports the collaboration efforts.

Don Baker, North Lincoln Fire District stated that there is no specific reason that this district is not participating, but noted that there are cultural differences in the three participating agencies.

Swanson asked why the Depoe Bay Fire Department supports the collaboration. It was reported that collaboration would provide better and overlapping coverage, and potential sharing of equipment.

Sawyer noted that the consolidated organization is similar to a three-legged stool with oversight by the consolidated board, the Newport City Manager, and the fire boards of the other districts. He asked what would happen if Paige did something that the others found egregious, and the City Manager suspended him for a week and the other members of the consolidate board believed he should be terminated. Woodruff stated that nothing will change but administrative duties. He reviewed the organization and how it would work, noting that overall, it would provide more services for the money.

Leff noted that only Newport could terminate Paige in the scenario described by Sawyer.

Leff stated that the goal of this effort is to decide on the number of fire districts in the county so that the state does not mandate consolidation.

Saelens noted that fire districts are not the only agencies needing to review efficiencies and potential consolidations and collaborations. He suggested carefully weighing the present to what the future could bring.

Yale Fogarty, board member of the Newport Rural Fire Protection District, stated that this district is the broken leg of the stool. He noted that the district has a contract with the city, and to participate in the consolidation would add liability that the district currently does not have.

Paige noted that many directions were discussed, and that what makes sense now would allow for future flexibility. He noted that the new governing body would need errors and omissions insurance for its decision-makers.

Fogarty stated that he was under the impression that there would be new lettering on the trucks, and that this might create/increase liability of participating departments/districts. Paige reported that the preliminary thought is that a sticker/decals of the new collaboration could be affixed to all equipment used by the consolidated

group. Fogarty noted that the affixing of the decal on the equipment could lead to assuming a portion of the liability. A discussion ensued regarding liability.

Fogarty noted that the consolidation may be good in the long-term, but that a start date of July 1 may be too ambitious.

It was suggested that the City Council and fire district boards develop questions for the collaboration/consolidation committee, and hold another meeting in 60 - 90 days.

Beck noted that his district is the gap if there is a consolidation, and that the geography is what brings this district to the table. He added that there are eleven fire authorities and nine fire chiefs in Lincoln County. It was suggested that a discussion of the services that will go away be held prior to determining whether only one chief is needed.

Nees stated that he has 38 years in the fire service, and he worked for the Tualatin Valley Fire District which consolidated decades ago. He added that consolidation can be accomplished but that it needs to be done in a good and safe manner. He urged folks not to be hung up on the suggested July 1 start date. He stated that there are two errors in the ESCI study and they are that the Depoe Bay Fire Department and the Central Coast Fire and Rescue District are not in compression. He added that Newport is closest to compression and that parts of South Beach are in compression.

Paige stated that the July 1 start date is an artificial date and was chosen due to the fiscal year.

It was again suggested that each group develop questions and reconvene to discuss answers. It was noted that the agencies will not stop working together regardless.

Beck addressed the letter from Speer Hoyt regarding there being no conflict of interest for representing four of the involved agencies.

At the conclusion of the meeting, it was reiterated that questions should be developed by each agency and that another meeting occur to discuss those questions and answers.

Having no further business, the meeting adjourned at 7:30 P.M.