**Jefferson County Fire & EMS**
**Board of Directors Special Meeting Minutes**
**Date:** June 2nd
**Time:** 5:36 pm
**Location:** Station 1701, 765 S. 5th St. Madras, OR 97741

**I. Call to Order**

The meeting was called to order by the Board President, **Kim Stout**, at 5:37 pm.

**II. Pledge of Allegiance**

The Pledge of Allegiance was led by Director, **Ryan Boyle** at5:38 pm.

**III. Roll Call**

**Board Members Present:** Board President Kim Stout, Vice President Rob Galyen, Secretary Dusty Miller, Director Chris Dupont, Director Ryan Boyle

Krystal Hughes, Finance Manager

Tim Gassner, Attorney

**Staff Members Present:** Chief Jeff Blake, Deputy Chief Micheal Lepin, Danielle Peckham, Trevor Beebe

**Community Members:** Rick Allen

**Zoom Attendees:** Andrew Glen, Melody Ronan, David Ulbricht From Special Districts SDAO

**IV. Agenda Approval/Adjustments / Orrick Engagement Letter**
The agenda was reviewed and approved without changes.

**Motion:** Director Ryan Boyle moved to approve the agenda as presented.

**Seconded by:** Vice President Rob Galyen
**Motion Passed Unanimously. 5:39 pm**

**V. New Business**

**A. Loan Approval – Special Districts (Resolution No. 2024-2025-07)**

Chief Blake provided a comprehensive overview of the email communications, loan documentation, and engagement details for the proposed tax anticipation note. He invited any questions from the Board and confirmed that David Albrecht from SDAO was available to address any legal or loan-related inquiries.

Blake sought clarification on the loan's payback terms, emphasizing that the loan was structured as a tax anticipation note with a maximum maturity of thirteen (13) months, as permitted under Oregon law. He explained that this type of working capital loan must be repaid within that period and can be repaid early or in partial payments without penalty. Chris clarified that the maturity date is when both principal and interest would be due. Blake also compared the terms to alternative financing through the County, noting key differences.

Chris raised a question regarding the tax revenue forecast, which was estimated at $1.2 million. Blake acknowledged that approximately $300,000–$400,000 of the District’s anticipated operating funds were allocated to outsourcing EMS billing operations. Blake elaborated on the current challenges with internal billing processes and emphasized the need to contract with an experienced billing company to assist with both current and backlogged accounts.

David Albrecht added legal context, noting that Oregon law allows the District to borrow up to 80% of budgeted tax revenue and other legally anticipated receipts. This flexibility supports the District’s justification for the loan amount.

Blake described the District’s ongoing cash flow difficulties, noting that only $65,000 in revenue was collected in the previous month. Kim expressed concern about the ability to repay the loan under current revenue conditions. Ryan asked whether the full loan amount would be disbursed upfront and whether the funds could earn interest. Rob inquired about the Local Government Investment Pool (LGIP) interest rate, which Ryan estimated at 4% and Chris approximated at 2%.

When asked about potential extensions, David stated that if the District were unable to repay the loan in full, it would need to refinance or restructure the loan into another short-term borrowing agreement. Chris expressed concern about the possibility of requiring loans annually and asked whether there were limits. David confirmed that multiple loans could be taken out as long as the legal revenue caps were observed.

Kristal noted that the loan would help bridge the gap until delayed EMS revenue arrives. However, Dusty voiced concern about relying on uncertain EMS reimbursements and was hesitant to support a plan that might leave future board members in a difficult position. He acknowledged that staffing and expense reductions had been made but still expressed skepticism. Blake said he felt confident about the plan but respected the concerns of others.

Trevor departed at 5:51 p.m.

Blake reported that more information would be known by June 16 regarding pending revenue opportunities and expense reductions, including updates from PGE and the City of Culver. He warned that any further staffing reductions would severely impact operations. He noted that this weekend, the department would be cross-staffing due to limited personnel. Negotiations with St. Charles for supplemental EMS revenue were ongoing.

Chris asked when the loan would need to be finalized. Blake and Kristal confirmed that it must be completed this month. While Chris believed there were two months remaining, Kristal clarified that a shortfall is expected this month. The District has a $125,000 check from COIC, which is not yet reflected in the budget. Beginning fund balance was approximately $1.4 million, with $96,000 recently expended.

Chris asked David how quickly funds could be made available. David confirmed the target funding date of June 12 and said it could be adjusted if necessary. Kristal assured the Board that payroll is currently covered. The next budget meeting was noted to occur the following day.

Blake and David discussed reducing the loan cap from $1.5 million to $1.1 million. Kim expressed concern about ongoing revenue trends. Kristal noted the likelihood of having this same conversation again next year. Ryan recommended setting the loan at $1.1 or $1.2 million and reassessing annually. Dusty agreed, stating that the District cannot afford to continue borrowing beyond what can be repaid. Blake agreed with the revised amount and said the organization had turned a corner. Rob supported the lower amount, noting it maintained pressure to improve EMS billing systems.

Blake emphasized that all efforts were being made to increase revenue and streamline billing. He noted the difficulty in capturing and collecting EMS billing revenue and reiterated the importance of hiring professionals to improve the return on investment. Chris expressed support for borrowing what was necessary to maintain operations while minimizing future risk. He supported the $1.1 million figure and agreed this may need to become an annual strategy, but with the goal of reducing the borrowing amount each year.

Blake stated that he had sent emails seeking feedback and encouraged the Board to respond promptly. He asked for consensus to proceed with signing the loan engagement letter. Tim confirmed the resolution should be amended to reflect the revised $1.1 million maximum borrowing amount and authorized Chief Blake to sign the engagement letter and related legal documents.

Rob clarified the need to designate an authorized representative in the resolution and confirmed the name should be properly spelled in all final documents.

Kim stated that if EMS billing revenue does not significantly improve or if further reductions are not made, the District will face a fiscal cliff by December. Blake warned that if the EMS revenue situation cannot be corrected, the County may opt to reclaim control of the EMS ASA. He is advocating for an operational levy but acknowledged that the County’s authority over the ASA requires their engagement. Dusty urged caution in this approach, and Blake agreed.

Trevor returned in person at 6:12 p.m.

Blake added that the State of Oregon must address broader EMS funding challenges, and that other agencies are surviving because they receive higher tax revenues — a luxury Jefferson County Fire & EMS does not have. Dusty stated that EMS billing should produce $70,000–$100,000 within a few months, at which point the District will regain some financial flexibility.

**Loan approval Special Districts resolution no. #2024-2025-07**

**Motion:** Director Chris Dupont motions “to pass resolution no. #2024-2025-07 with amended languages for the total principal loan amount to $1,100,000.”

**Seconded by:** Vice President Rob Galyen
**Motion Passed Unanimously. 6:29 pm**

**Public Comment: 6:29 pm opened during discussion**

Rick Allen addressed the Board, stating that even with the loan, the District is facing a $600,000 deficit. He emphasized the unsustainable nature of current spending and urged the Board to take more decisive action. He pointed out that EMS revenue projections had consistently fallen short and warned against relying on optimistic projections.

Rick provided a critical analysis of how the District arrived at this position, citing escalating personnel costs without matching revenue. He called for a balanced budget based on existing, reliable income and argued that payroll reductions would be necessary. He recommended transitioning to more part-time staffing and expressed concern about entering a financial "death spiral."

Blake acknowledged the feedback and reiterated that leadership developed a spend-down plan based on reasonable revenue expectations. Melody joined the meeting via Zoom at 6:23 p.m.

Rick concluded by stating that difficult decisions must be made now to avoid worsening the District’s financial condition. Chris echoed this sentiment, stating that the District cannot rely on hope and must plan according to actual funds available.

**X. Citizen Input (Continued)**

* 6:30 pm no further input closed

**XI. Additional Comments/Announcements**

* 6:31 pm

A quorum for the Budget Committee was confirmed, with new members having submitted RSVPs.

Dusty inquired whether the newly elected board members had been formally engaged or contacted. Chief Blake responded that no formal engagement has occurred at this time. There has been no response from Ben Anderson, while Scott has been involved and participating to some extent.

**XII. Adjournment 6:32 pm**

**Motion:** Kim Stout motioned to adjourn the meeting.
**Seconded by:** N/A
**Motion Passed N/A.**

Meeting adjourned at 6:32 PM by Board President **Kim Stout**.

**Signatures:**

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_      \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_
**Board President, Kim Stout**       **Recording Secretary**