



**OFFICIAL MEETING MINUTES**  
**Fire-EMS Consolidation Working Group (CWG)**  
**January 5, 2022**

*Full video record of minutes is available online at [www.jeffco.net](http://www.jeffco.net)*

**IX. Call to Order**

The meeting was called to order by Co-Chair Rick Allen at 5:35 p.m. on Wednesday, January 5, 2022 at Jefferson County Fire District 1, 765 SE 5<sup>th</sup> Street in Madras, Oregon.

**X. Roll Call of Members**

**Members:** (8 Members present)

✓	Rick Allen, Co-Chair	x	Bob Buckner
x	Dustin Miller, Co-Chair	✓	Mat Felton
✓	Janet Brown, Exec Comm	✓	Mack Gardner
✓	Mark Carman, Exec Comm	✓	Gretchen Schlie [for Jake Schwab]
x	Jeff Rasmussen, Exec Comm	✓	Kim Stout
✓	Mike Ahern	x	Susan Stovall
x	Devon Bowen		

**Others:**

Ben Ochs (Meeting Facilitator); Lysa Vattimo (Meeting Recorder).

**Guests:**

**In person:** George Dunkel and Bob Keefer (SDAO); Kasey Skaar (JCFD1); Mike Lepin (JCEMS); Rob Galan, Andrew Glen, Jeff Blake; Trevor; LeeAnn Patton.

**On Zoom:** Hilario Diaz; Rick Krause, Joe Parrott, Jeff, Nancy Diaz, Joe Krenowicz.

**XI. Old Business**

A. Approval of November 7, 2021 Minutes

**MOTION:** To accept the November 7, 2021 minutes.

**MOVED:** Mark Carman

**SECONDED:** Mike Ahern

**ABSENT:** Bob Buckner; Devon Bowen; Dustin Miller; Jeff Rasmussen; Susan Stovall

**PASSED:** 8/0

**XII. Goals – Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats (SWOT) Process**

Facilitator Ben Ochs began by reminding everyone that they are here to identify goals, not build a framework. SDAO is here to help the committee gather information to build an analysis. The committee should keep perspective and represent concerns of the community.

Incoming Fire Chief Jeff Blake stated he is pleased to be a part of this process and wants to hear the concerns and help develop a department that provides the best service possible.

George Dunkel stated SDAO has been working with Chief Skaar and Chief Lepin to get informed on the current delivery system. The process the committee will work on tonight is not a SWOT *analysis* but utilizes SWOT to identify issues and perceived issues of joining the two departments. He then walked the committee through the four topics Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats and received input on each. The following represents their input.

**STRENGTHS:** It is important for any organization to identify their strengths to assure they can provide the services requested by customers, and to ensure that strengths are consistent with the issues they face. Often, the identification of strengths leads to the channeling of an organization's efforts toward the community needs that match those strengths. Programs that do not match organizational strengths, or the primary function of the agency, should be reviewed to evaluate the rate of return on precious staff time.

- Good Community Support
- Generally Positive for both Organizations
- Improved Response Times
- Financial Stability
- Strengthen personnel pool (combining personnel, blending skill sets)
- Shared knowledge and experiences
- Streamlining resources
- Cross-training, location of products and tools
- Shared resources (office staff, skills, equipment, training, etc.)
- Staff familiarity (strengths, weaknesses in skill sets)
- Proof of the concept
- Coordination of Incident command
- Consistency in delivery of service
- Easier on dispatch (currently on two frequencies; would move to one)
- Improved incident communications (amongst crews and dispatch)
- Stronger recruitment opportunities
- Improves teamwork regionally
- Positive story to tell
- Logical
- Reducing stress on crews

**WEAKNESSES:** Performance or lack thereof, within an organization depends greatly on the identification of weaknesses and how they are confronted. While it is not unusual for these issues to be at the heart of the organization's overall problems, it is unusual for an organization to be able to identify and deal with these issues effectively on its own.

For any organization to either begin, or continue, to move progressively forward, it must be able to identify its strengths, as well as those areas where it does not function well. The areas needing improvement are not the same as threats, which will be identified later, but rather those day-to-day issues and concerns that may slow or inhibit progress.

- Perception of money grab by Fire District
- Perception of reduced response
- EMS Staff Training Vs. Firefighter Training Standards

- Competition between Career Personnel and Volunteers responding to calls (reduced need for Volunteers)
- Lack of trust
- Failure to communicate effectively and consistently (being transparent)
- Culture blending/loss of identity while respecting history
- Training discrepancies
- Long-term process – will take some time to work it all out
- Financial ability to meet the vision

**OPPORTUNITIES:** The identification of opportunities for the organization follows the assessment of strengths and weaknesses. These opportunities are not solely focused on existing services, but on expanding and developing new possibilities both inside and beyond the traditional service area.

- Expand Services
- Medical Transport Services, non-emergent
- Sharing our model and accomplishments, knowledge, and experience
- Bureau of Land Management locating at Fire Station
- Potential additional revenue sources through commercial development and annexations
- Increased Opportunity for Grants
- Enhance volunteer recruitment/strengthen intern program by having both EMS and Fire
- Strengthen employee retention
- To address the Culver coverage/District issue
- Realign district boundaries to reflect actual service areas
- Inform the community about services in one, unified voice
- Resource reliability/back up (outer areas and/or 2nd and 3rd resources)
- Career advancement/Professional development
- Intentional outreach/messaging to begin informing the public
- Engage elected officials
- Weaknesses can become opportunities

**THREATS:** There are conditions in the internal and external environment that are not under an organization's control. However, by being aware of them, the organization can develop plans and programs to either mitigate or respond when a threat becomes reality. By recognizing possible threats, an organization can greatly reduce the potential for loss.

- Outside Agencies
- Employee/Volunteer Retention
- Ambulance Service Area (ASA) Poaching
- Current building/facilities liabilities
- Federal and State unfunded Mandates
- Community Growth, service demand vs. revenue growth
- Burdened by hospital transfers reducing availability to respond to emergent calls and increases wear and tear on vehicles
- Turf/Nostalgia (emotion)
- Resistance to change
- Fear (how will this affect me)
- Logistics (process of getting it done)
- Under educated public (lack of public education; start now on small stuff)

- Internal cultural imbalance
- Over promising

Joe Parrott expressed some concerns about guarantees of service in the Three Rivers area. He asked the group to use caution when formulating plans too early in the process.

Ben Ochs reminded the committee to be unified when sharing information outside the meetings to increase confidence and trust with the public. Any concerns or questions should be raised and resolved during the meetings.

It was agreed that the committee will continue to meet during every phase of the consolidation and ensure they are communicating effectively with the public on the process of the consolidation.

**XIII. Additional Comments or Announcements**

It was agreed that the fire district meeting room was better suited for the meetings. Therefore, future meetings will now be held at Jefferson County Fire District 1. The next meeting is scheduled for January 26, 2022 at 5:30 pm at Jefferson County Fire District 1.

**XIV. Adjourn**

Meeting was adjourned at 7:54 p.m.

Minutes prepared by:

Reviewed By:

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Lysa Vattimo

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Rick Allen, Co-Chair