

## Lookingglass Volunteer Fire Department/LRFD

### 2019 ANNUAL REP8RT

February 25, 2020

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 2019 ends, we have 21 volunteers actively maintaining certifications and training. 4 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 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 State accreditation through DPSST. We currently have 1 paramedic, 4 Emergency Medical Technicians, and 9 Oregon Emergency Medical Responders as medical staff. All personnel, including Explorers, are trained in CPR/AED. Five of our FFs are also NFPA Apparatus Operators (an increase this year), and most of our heavy equipment drivers are commercial licensed. Three of our volunteers are currently enrolled at UCC pursuing FF, Nursing, and Paramedic careers.

Our Fire Explorer program continued in 2019, and 4 Explorers are registered and working towards the State FF 1 certification. This program is affiliated with the Boy Scouts of America, and is open to ages 14-18. The LRFD FF Association provided the funds to reregister our junior firefighters for 2019. Several of the original 2014 Explorers have become State certified FF1s, and are moving toward First Responder related fields. Chief Rhodes, Captain Chitwood, and PM Lindsey Chitwood are registered as adult leaders, and maintain certification in BSA required adult child protection training.

#### **Incidents**

The LVFD responded to 172 calls for service during 2019. As a comparison,

2018 – 164 calls,      2017 – 137 calls,      2016 – 161 calls,      2015 – 196 calls.

We experienced a small increase in the number of incidents this year. Of the total, medical aids accounted for 86 incidents (50%), structure fires numbered 17 (10%), natural cover fires were 19 (11%), public assists were 13 (7%), motor vehicle accidents numbered 23(13%), alarm system malfunctions numbered 1 (<1%),Haz/mat incidents totaled 1 (<1%), animal rescues were 3 (2%), and other miscellaneous calls totaled 12 (6%).

Of the total fires responded to, 28 were mutual or automatic aid into our surrounding jurisdictions. We received mutual or automatic aid on 7 incidents, split between natural cover fires and structure fires.

**The LRFD experienced no fire loss or injuries related to structure fires in our area this year.** We had a total of 1.5 acres lost due to natural cover fires.

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. While our wildland fire incidents were down in the LRFD response area this year, our firefighters and equipment were committed to several wildland fires in our surrounding jurisdictions, and provided crews to the Milepost 97 fire in the Canyonville/Azalea area. Significant incidents included structure fires in Camas Valley, District 2 (Melrose area), and grass fires in the Melrose area.

Douglas County suffered a record snow event in February/March of 2019, and the Lookingglass area was very much affected. Power outages lasting up to 15 days affected our residents, with numerous road closures and blockages occurring. The LRFD responded to numerous calls for assistance, including 4 wheel drive transport to meet ambulances in Roseburg, trees and wires down, reaching isolated citizens, animal rescues in collapsed barns, and delivering fuel/water/food to citizens. We operated in a disaster mode, conducting a windshield survey of the area to locate problems that were unreported due to power and phone systems being down. In conjunction with the Grange, the LRFD provided power with Engine 1031 to operate a warming center and shelter. We also initiated contact with the Red Cross, and became an official shelter with their support.

### **Vehicles**

The vehicle fleet of the LVFD/LRFD represents the majority of the financial assets of our Department. During 2019, our diesel equipment was again serviced, safety checked, and repaired as needed at Southern Oregon Diesel. This was the seventh year of our maintenance program.

Engines 1030 and 1031 passed the annual NFPA Standard 1911 pump tests in October. We are no longer required by ISO to do annual testing on Tender 1060. Each pumper was reported to be in safe and good operating condition. Tender 1060 will continue to be tested biannually due to less pump activity. Repairs were made to vehicles during 2019, including:

1081- New Battery

1030- Road/Pump switch repair, exhaust system repair, body work

1090 – Radio/wiring console installed, emergency light work, timing chain, battery minder installed

1080 – new off road tires, defroster/heater repair

1070 – new tires from 1080

Annual maintenance has been completed on all units except 1070. Near future (5 year) vehicle needs include planning for the replacement of Engine 1031, and a grant will be submitted to FEMA again this year. The new Brush 1080 has functioned as designed the past two years, and the old Brush 1081 is still mechanically sound, safe to operate, and cost effective as a reserve.

The donated utility vehicle from District 2 has been integrated into our system as a safety and incident command vehicle. It was serviced, and outfitting continued through 2019.

Future vehicle needs were identified in our 2013 strategic plan and will continue to be addressed. Engine 1031 and Tender 1061 will continue to be evaluated, with a replacement plan being brought to the Board. I intend to continue submitting for a FEMA Grant for the new 1031 each year, and will seek Board approval for any purchase if grant monies

are awarded. After our ISO evaluation, Tender 1061 (1979 Freightliner) became a reserve unit. It is no longer required to be part of our response to maintain our 4 rating. Our maintenance providers do not want to provide certification or maintenance to it due to liability issues. At this time, we will keep it as a reserve, do routine warm up and inspections, and plan to surplus it in the future when it becomes no longer viable. As part of a long range plan, we will continue to submit grant requests for a smaller, more efficient tender for our roll area to augment our response capabilities.

### **Equipment**

The LVFD/LRFD was successful in securing an ODF/VFA matching grant for fiscal year 19/20. Funds for budgeted equipment purchase were \$18,900, with a matching return of \$9,450 from the Oregon Dept. of Forestry. We continue to offset future capital PPE costs, increase our firefighting capability, and provide for future training.

At this time, inventories are being updated again. Written tracking for all ODF grant equipment is due in 2021, and will be worked on this year. Future needs for the remainder of this fiscal year are minimal – mostly replacement of expendable equipment as it is used, worn out or damaged. We completed the annual flow testing of our SCBAs, quarterly testing of our breathing air supply, and annual maintenance of the air system compressor.

Future equipment needs to be addressed before 2022 include our SCBA units and bottles. The bottles underwent the final 5 year test of a 15 year service life in 2017. The SCBAs are now 2 generations old and approaching 15 years of service life. At this time, to replace 12 SCBA's and 24 bottles would cost approximately \$126,000. We are entering into a joint regional FEMA grant in FY 19/20 to seek funds for replacement with Dist. 2 and 5 other surrounding jurisdictions. Total cost of our portion of the grant will be approximately \$126,000, with a match of \$6300 from LRFD. I am also submitting for a new Engine 1031, at a cost of \$425,000 with a \$21,250 match from the LRFD. The grant matches will be budgeted for FY 20/21, but if they are unsuccessful there will be no financial liability for our Department.

The LRFD submitted for and received disaster equipment through a State bond funded grant program. The State has provided us with a 45KW diesel generator on wheels, with the plan being to provide electrical power when needed to critical infrastructure in our local area (including the Grange as a disaster shelter). The State grant program ran out of money before other requested equipment was funded, but we will continue to seek out opportunities to increase our preparedness.

### **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, Mike Shaw, 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.

In October of 2019, the LRFD again conducted fire prevention and education classes for Lookingglass School students. The program we presented included a physical agility for students, fire extinguisher and hose training, smoke detector education, a simulated motor vehicle accident/rescue, and a meet the firefighter/tour of equipment. We had 9 volunteers and explorers facilitate this program. We were also involved in the final fire protection evaluation of the new

school gymnasium, as well as the improvements to the original school building.

The LRFD participated in the annual Clean Up day in May of 2019. Vehicles paraded with the rest of the participants, and the Firefighter Association provided beverages as a fundraiser in the Grange. Our firefighter association also made a donation of gift cards to the Lookingglass school for use as needed during the Christmas season.

A large variety of fire prevention material is on the LRFD website, and is easily accessible (thanks to our Webmaster). We still have smoke detectors available for installation from a small grant we received in 2014: we have installed several and more are still available for the public. In 2020, in conjunction with the Red Cross we will be hosting smoke detector events involving free detectors and installation. Dates will be announced soon.

Future fire prevention efforts will involve programs relating to Wildland/Urban interface fire prevention and extinguishment. A Firewise program was formed in the Diamond Heights area, and we will continue to support it as it grows. We have identified home heating and cooking as common causes of fires in our area, and have worked to provide training and education to the public concerning these types of fires. 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 two State certified Fire Instructors on our roster, and also provide required medical training through our paramedic approved by our physician advisor. There are currently 3 firefighters starting 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 140 + hours of instruction this year. State and County EMS standards require 12 hours per year of continuing education for EMTs and First Responders. Training highlights have included live fire burn exercises with the UCC Burn Trailer and Winston Dillard Fire District, driver training (all personnel), haz mat training with Roseburg FD, wildland training with DFPA, safety and operations classes with local utilities (Avista, Northwest Pipeline, Douglas Electric, Umpqua Basin Water), SDAO risk management training, quarterly tower drills at DCFD Melrose Station 3, and numerous "wet" structural fire drills. We hosted Reach Helicopter training, and also hosted the Portland Emanuel Burn Center outreach. The LRFD co-hosted regional State approved auto extrication and flammable gas firefighting exercises on site.

Three of our firefighters attended leadership training at the NVFC Summit in Portland, Oregon. Two additional firefighters attended the OVFFA annual training in Pendleton, Oregon. Two firefighters also attended a national Critical Incident Management course in Denver, Colorado on scholarship, and two also took regional CISM training and are now members of the Douglas County team. Grants and scholarships help fund all of this advanced training.

Our Firefighter 1 Academy will continue into 2019, as we gain new trainees and new Explorers. Future budgeted expenses include live fire training with propane as a finish to our FF1 program, incident command training, and certified wildland fire training for FF 1, FF 2, crew boss, and engine boss.

Board Members and the Fire Chief also attended training on State Budget Law, regional HR/Facility management training, and various SDAO required courses on our online Safepersonnel training site.

### **Administration**

During 2019, the LRFD implemented new procedures, and was subject to several changes in reporting requirements. A new harassment/discrimination policy was developed due to a change in State law. As part of this policy, and Employee Assistance Program was initiated. A public information request for all financial transactions in 2018 was acted upon. The Oregon Hazardous Materials Right to Know program was automated and updated, resulting in a new required disclosure process. The State Fire Marshall reporting program changed, and our Department was required to change with it. Year-end summaries were completed for DPSST, NFPA, and the State Fire Marshall as required. The LRFD became an early member of the regional online training system, requiring a new reporting and records system. We also initiated contracts with the State and Federal Surplus system, and the State Office of Emergency Management, for access to emergency and disaster equipment.

During the year, our Board Secretary retired as her term expired and was replaced by a new Board member. Our Board President relocated with his family out of State, and the process of replacement commenced. 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 SDAO, the LRFD registered for rebate credit and signed a contract for limiting rate increases in the future.

As a result of the snow event in 2019, Lookingglass Fire participated in several after action meetings and has assisted with planning for future events by meeting with County EOC personnel, the Red Cross, the County Fire Chiefs Association, and coordinating with the local Grange as a disaster center.

### **Facilities**

Facility maintenance and improvements were addressed in 2019, and future actions are under way. Our building heating system fuel tank was replaced with a surplus tank from the Grange after ours failed. The LPG training prop was replaced and all new underground plumbing was installed. Continued conversion to LED lighting continues as costs allow. Remaining improvements and maintenance for this year include spot crack repair of the parking lot, more storage cabinets, modifying the outdoor pole building to function as a carport, overhead door maintenance, and continuing ADA improvements. A safety and security grant was secured during both FY 18/19 and 19/20, resulting in financial assistance for a security camera system for the facility and grounds as well as the pending installation of an emergency generator with natural gas supply. Extinguishers and safety equipment were maintained as required, and any other expenses or repairs were minor in nature.

### **Capital Expense Outlook**

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

While working on the upgrades to our current station in 2019 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.

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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