



## MINUTES

### USAR Subcommittee

of the Governor's Fire Service Policy Council

Meeting: May 13, 2024, 1:30 pm – 2:30 pm

Location: Teams

#### ATTENDANCE

- |                                                                      |                                                                   |                                                                |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Chris Heppel, Eugene Fire, Chair | <input type="checkbox"/> Rep. Nancy Nathanson                     | <input type="checkbox"/> Fred Charlton, Hillsboro Fire         |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Chris Barney, Portland Fire                 | <input type="checkbox"/> Greg Holland, Clackamas Fire             | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Cord VonDerahe, Salem Fire |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Daniel Watson, OSFFC                        | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Michael Traeger, Gresham Fire | <input type="checkbox"/> Wayne Morris, Eugene Fire             |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Mariah Rawlins, OSFM             | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Peter Godon, TVFR             | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Kyle Olson, Clackamas Fire |

#### Others in Attendance

Amanda Wright, OSFM, Administrative Specialist 2

Greg Deedon, Guest

Mariana Ruiz-Temple, State Fire Marshal

#### Topic: Funding Discussion

- Chief Ruiz-Temple welcomed the group and outlined the final topic of funding.
- She provided a history of funding and options that have been discussed.
- Chief Heppel said fees seem to be more acceptable in this regard.
- Traeger mentioned with Hazmat, the petroleum load fee was the selected option, but that doesn't always cover all industries.
- A base level funding in General Fund would be ideal, as fees tend to fluctuate. He added that a rollover option to build a fund would be best.
- As the training is built over time, then people retire, we lose that investment in training.
- Fees could be on concrete, timber, steel - materials that are utilized in buildings.
- Chief Ruiz Temple offered a few funding models that state government works in:
  - General Fund – X gets this amount of funding each year. Hardest to get.
  - New Fee – still takes time for legislators and stakeholders to approve the fee.
  - Grants – Spire Program; 3-5 million awarded
- Right now USAR is an unfunded mandate; we are relying on the fire service to do this.
- Through attrition we are losing our investment quickly. We are not funding response.
- If Spire funds were changed to be directly applied to OSFM for USAR, then there could be flexibility with how funds are spent. At this time Spire is limited to grant requirements.

- Chief Heppel added that Spire could be expanded. It is a recognizable funding.
- Chief Traeger added that it would make sense that the Spire funding should go to the State Fire Marshal for USAR. It seems strange that OSFM could be required to apply for funding in another department for funds for a program OSFM is required to have. Agreed this does not make sense and we could explain this in our funding options.
- Chief Vonderahe suggested Spire not be limited to equipment.
- Chief Ruiz-Temple said the more options we provide for funding, the better.
- Assistant Chief Rawlins gathered potential fee options.
- Chief Traeger agreed the Spire funds should not be grant funds, but instead should be directed to OSFM for the USAR Program.
- Seismic retrofit funds were mentioned. Chief Ruiz-Temple suggested Assistant Chief Rawlins look into this.
- Chief Heppel asked if we could generalize fees around large construction so that we don't affect single family.
- We were requested for snow load, floods in Pendleton, regional Tsunami in Brookings, wildfire, etc. These are the types of requests we've seen. We would not have receive federal help with this. Large scale (earthquake) we would be important to capture in the report.
- All agreed this should be a budgeted item for OSFM.
- OSFM has staff for grants, so we could include the option to actively seek to bring in other dollars.
- This would be a partnership; fire agencies are still contributing.
- Chief Heppel said there is good support for USAR around the state. There is capacity to build upon.
- Hazmat funding is a seamless process and has worked well.
- Chief Traeger asked if DPSST has a role in this as well.
- Olson – the recurring funding is the hold up. Spire grant is not an easy process. There should be effort to conduct train the trainers. Agencies should come to the USAR program with some base level of training.
- Chief Ruiz-Temple – DPSST fire is funded by FIPT which is OSFM's fund. This doesn't mean we can't coordinate. We need DPSST as a partner in this. There have been attempts at rubble piles and crude oil tank training.
- Assistant Chief Deputy Rawlins has done some work on the draft report. We really needed to add the funding conversation as a focus to round out the draft. With the agreements at this meeting, we will finalize a draft and send it to this Subcommittee.
- Chief Heppel would like to see this branded under the OSFM response ready ideology or initiative. It will be aligned with that concept and also will be routed through the OSFM Public Affairs team.
- Olson added that there is a time limit for how long agencies can continue funding USAR teams by themselves.
- General fund that isn't spent, does not roll over. So GF with a fee would be better, if possible. Assistant Chief Deputy Rawlins will address the revolving fund needs.
- Chief Heppel adjourned the meeting.