



**Sandy Fire District #72  
Clackamas Fire District #1  
Joint Work Session  
August 22, 2022**

**ATTENDANCE**

Sandy Fire Board of Directors: Andrew Brian, Sue Hein, Ron Lesowski, Mark Maunder, and Justin Stuchlik; Clackamas Fire Board of Directors: Jay Cross, Chris Hawes, Thomas Joseph, Jim Syring, and Marilyn Wall

Others present: Nick Browne, Steve Deters, Ariel Roberts, Brian Stewart, and Mark Whitaker – Clackamas Fire; Nannette Howland, Jason McKinnon, and Phil Schneider – Sandy Fire; and Kurt Latipow, Randy Parr, and Melissa Swank – AP Triton

Other employees, community members, and citizens were in attendance. The full video conferencing attendance can be provided upon request.

**1. CALL TO ORDER PER ORS 192.610 TO 192.710  
ORS 192.650 – The meeting is being recorded.**

President Joseph called the meeting to order at 6:00 pm. The video recording will be made available on Clackamas Fire and Sandy Fire’s websites: <https://clackamasfire.com/board-and-public-meetings/> and <https://sandyfire.org/>.

**2. Introductions**

The Clackamas Fire and Sandy Fire Boards of Directors introduced themselves.

AC Deters clarified that agenda item number four – Questions – was time for the elected officials to ask questions after the AP Triton presentation. Agenda item number five – Public Comment – was the time for questions from the public.

Division Chief (DC) Jason McKinnon introduced the Intergovernmental Agreement (IGA) Committee: Mark Maunder and Justin Stuchlik – Sandy Fire; Thomas Joseph and Jim Syring – Clackamas Fire.

The chiefs from Clackamas Fire and Sandy Fire introduced themselves.

AC Deters thanked everyone again for their participation in the feasibility study, especially DC McKinnon and CFD DC Josh Gehrke who began the process, and all the division heads, program managers, and others who contributed. He thanked Kurt and the rest of the AP Triton team for all their work.



AC Deters shared the history of Boring Fire and the similar process that they went through with Clackamas Fire. AC Deters shared that he was proud and excited to be involved in this process now with Sandy Fire.

DC McKinnon reaffirmed that the feasibility study was about providing regional service to the communities of Sandy Fire and Clackamas Fire, as well as neighboring communities, partners, and stakeholders.

Two and a half years ago, Sandy Fire was faced with some challenges and opportunities. Sandy Fire was facing a decline in relative force, all the while there was an increase in community need due to the rapid and immense growth of Sandy. This gave them the opportunity to have a mutually beneficial partnership with Clackamas Fire. It began with 24/7 battalion chief coverage, as well as training for both volunteer and career firefighters. Six months later, Sandy Fire began paying for one shift at CFD Station #18, which allowed the station to be staffed 24/7 with a three-person ALS engine crew, providing initial response, mutual aid, and regional partnering. He explained that they are now at the stage where they need to re-evaluate how they can provide top-notch service to both the Clackamas Fire and Sandy Fire communities.

### **3. Presentation of Feasibility Study – AP Triton**

Kurt Latipow introduced himself and the rest of the AP Triton team that worked on this project.

#### **Project Overview**

Kurt explained that in September 2021, both districts retained AP Triton to conduct a cooperative services feasibility study. The primary purpose of the study was to evaluate the various options for jointly providing fire protection, EMS, special operations, and other services that would result in greater efficiency, cost, effectiveness, and improvements to emergency operations.

The first piece of the project was data collection to determine response and travel times, etc. The data collected was from January 2018 through June 2021 and was given to AP Triton by both districts by November 18, 2021. The AP Triton team used this data to complete the first version of the Technical Review, which was completed on April 13, 2022. Clackamas Fire requested that their financial data be updated due to recent changes, and the final version of the Technical Review was completed on July 18, 2022.

Kurt acknowledged both boards and teams for their emphasis on transparency and inclusivity in this process. The appendices highlight the extensive community outreach that was conducted, including a community-wide survey that had a significant number of responses, and stakeholder interviews.

The key points of the analysis were the current service delivery, organizational structure, and financial stability of each fire district. AP Triton evaluated the current IGA and found it to be very effective. Their team also completed financial analyses, identified future opportunities and



challenges of further collaboration or integration, and provided recommendations regarding various options.

Kurt shared several graphics and charts that provided an overview of the following for both fire districts:

- Services Provided
- Service Areas
- Incidents
- Travel Time Coverage
- ISO
- Effective Firefighting Force – Firefighters & Apparatus
- Call Received to Arrival by Call Type
- Workload Projections

These visuals are all available in the Feasibility Study documents.

### **Findings & Recommendations**

Kurt shared findings and recommendations for Sandy Fire. The first recommendation was for Sandy Fire to ensure adequate staffing 24 hours a day and monitor their demand for service. The concern for a second staffed station also came up multiple times during the study, which may present a challenge in the future.

Sandy Fire also requires additional administrative support. It is the opinion of AP Triton that an expansion with Clackamas Fire should include additional administrative support.

In regard to Station 71, AP Triton recommended that water rescue gear should be moved to a location outside the apparatus bay and that an accessibility ramp should be constructed.

Kurt reported on to the financial findings and recommendations for Sandy Fire. He acknowledged that property tax revenue growth is limited by state legislation, though it has increased annually for SFD between FY2017 and FY2021. Kurt shared that an expanded service agreement between CFD and SFD could result in an increased operating cost for Sandy and that a full consolidation would be potentially financially unstable. Randy Parr, AP Triton, corrected Kurt and explained that the statement was intended to mean that if a consolidation did not occur, Sandy Fire would not be able to afford to expand its service contract with Clackamas Fire. It does not indicate that consolidation would not be financially feasible.

Kurt shared that it is their recommendation that volunteer firefighter recruitment and retention should continue at SFD. AP Triton also recommends that SFD personnel be allowed to participate in the CFD Wellness Program.

Kurt then presented the findings and recommendations for Clackamas Fire. He explained that the significant service contract with a neighboring agency that expired in June 2021 had a negative impact on the Clackamas Fire budget. AP Triton identified that moving forward, Clackamas will



need to pursue additional funding sources to sustain services. Additionally, Clackamas needs to evaluate the current needs for administrative support.

Kurt shared the following joint recommendations for the districts:

- A quarterly newsletter that will serve the staff and constituents of both districts to improve the understanding of both districts' operations.
- Conduct a security assessment of fire stations in both districts.
- CFD and SFD labor groups should merge.
- Standardized job descriptions should be developed for the districts.
- Response performance standards based on national standards (NFPA 1710 and NFPA 1720) should be developed but customized for each district.
- Consider adding EMS resources to the overall system.
- Improve turnout times to meet national standards.
- Work with Clackamas County Department of Communications to improve call processing times.
- An internal joint quarterly report should be published showing the previous three month's response performance of each individual company by shift.
- Develop a formal agreement with the local community college to establish a regional training site.

Kurt said that AP Triton's primary recommendation is an expanded functional and operational partnership. They believe that more time needs to go into building the relationship and that the current IGA should be expanded. This expansion will strengthen the response programs, command and control, and relationships both internally and externally in the districts and communities. Throughout their study, they did not find that there was a strong appetite to move forward with legal integration at this time.

Ultimately, AP Triton recommended that Clackamas Fire should assume all functions and activities, also known as "All Fire Protection and Emergency Medical Services" of Sandy Fire, until the elected officials deem the timing for legal consolidation appropriate.

#### **4. Questions**

President Joseph opened the floor to questions from the elected officials.

Director Cross asked if during the evaluation of EMS services, if AP Triton got any information from Randy Lauer from Oregon AMR or Ritu Sahni from Clackamas County. He wanted to know if they got direct, local data or just used national assumptions. In particular, Director Cross was interested in how the new ambulance service contract could affect this partnership.

Kurt replied that the data came from the CAD and the fire records management systems of the districts. Anything going on within the county's EMS was not within their scope. They did interview the director.



Director Cross said that during the presentation they said that Sandy Fire cannot pay for any further services. However, at the end of the presentation, they said they need to look at expansion.

Kurt said that it will be important to track the development in Sandy and how this may or may not impact services. Randy explained that based on the 2022 budget, they will have a very small reserve amount that is not sustainable for long. It also mentions needing a \$300,000 tax anticipation line of credit. This has him concerned about financial viability.

Director Maunder commented that in the study it mentions that for both districts, operations are not sustainable within the existing revenue structures. In the report, he didn't see any recommendations for cost containment or economy to scale.

Kurt replied that the scope of work for a feasibility study doesn't do a deep dive into cost containment. Randy said that any time they look at combining districts, there are potential cost savings. Having the same record management systems, not having separate administrative staff, combining insurance programs, as well as combining software programs all have the potential to reduce costs. Randy added that when they look at annexations or consolidations, the savings is in the labor. If an organization is running very lean, there will be some savings but not a large amount of savings. Salary and benefits are 85-90% of the costs. If savings can't be found there, they aren't going to get the level of savings necessary to be successful.

Director Syring said that when they discussed this at the interagency committee, he interpreted that as, if they kept with the status quo, renewed the current contract another year, and if the re-evaluated costs were higher, it might not be financially feasible. Current costs might not be accurate. Looking at the last 12 months of calls out of Station 18, 46% were to Sandy Fire and 54% were in Clackamas Fire District. Is Sandy Fire only paying \$500,000 for a station that costs \$2,000,000, still fair and accurate? That's what they'll need to discuss and decide.

Director Syring thanked AP Triton and the chiefs and staff from both districts for a great job.

Director Brian asked about the red flags in Sandy Fire's finances. The tax anticipation notes are just there as a placeholder. He felt Sandy Fire was in a fairly good financial state.

Randy said that through 2021, that would be correct. They are putting money in savings, etc. However, their 2022 budget anticipated a fairly significant growth in expenses. Expenses were \$3,750,000 in 2021 and projected to be \$5,283,000 in 2022. The revenue stream went from \$4,341,000 to \$4,380,000. This shows additional services are not sustainable.

Discussion followed regarding a possible discrepancy in the budget information for Sandy Fire provided to AP Triton.

Director Wall asked if the estimated revenue numbers were gross or adjusted if they consider if people don't pay, urban renewal, etc. Randy said the revenues are not at the gross amount. They



usually consider 2-4% for nonpayment. CFO Whitaker confirmed that the numbers provided to AP Triton take urban renewal into account.

Chief Schneider said that the \$5 million amount included their reserve funds and other monies that they have, but do not plan to spend. Further discussion followed.

Kurt said they work off the information provided. There were several technical reviews and CFD did provide more updated information at one point. Kurt recommended that the teams review the information that was provided. If they have misinterpreted any information, they will go back and reanalyze.

Director Hawes said that when they talk about expansion, it refers to two different things. Sandy Fire would not be able to expand into two fire stations. It was recommended that they expand the cooperation between the two agencies. AP Triton confirmed.

Director Hein said that Sandy Fire has not had to use the tax anticipation notes in over a decade; they are there just in case they are needed.


**5. Public Comment** *(The President will call for statements from citizens regarding District business, up to 15 minutes and each person not to exceed three minutes.)*


None.

**6. Adjournment**


The Joint Work Session meeting adjourned at 7:16 pm.

Minutes recorded by Clackamas Fire Executive Assistant Ariel Roberts and prepared by Clackamas Fire Administrative Technician Jessamyn Ode

  
Sue Hein (Oct 20, 2022 09:35 PDT)  
Chairman Sue Hein

  
Ron Lesowski (Oct 24, 2022 22:49 PDT)  
Secretary/Treasurer Ron Lesowski

  
thomas joseph (Nov 9, 2022 08:58 PST)  
President Thomas Joseph

  
James E. Syring (Nov 11, 2022 13:43 CST)  
Secretary Jim Syring


# 8-22-22 Joint Work Session Minutes


Final Audit Report


2022-11-11


Created:	2022-09-20
By:	Ariel Roberts (ariel.roberts@clackamasfire.com)
Status:	Signed
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## "8-22-22 Joint Work Session Minutes" History


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2022-10-20 - 4:35:57 PM GMT

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