



APPLEGATE VALLEY FIRE DISTRICT

1095 Upper Applegate Road – Jacksonville, OR 97530

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April 16, 2024

Williams Fire District Team,

First of all, I want to express my gratitude to all of you for allowing my Deputy Chief and me the opportunity to observe and engage with you over the past few weeks. I feel that this experience has provided me with valuable insights into potential operational and administrative changes that Williams Fire could implement, as well how Applegate Fire can assist Williams Fire over the coming months in order to ensure your successful transition to working under a new Fire Chief.

First and foremost, I want to convey my belief that you already possess all the necessary components for success within the Williams Fire District. It is my firm conviction that appointing me as the Interim Fire Chief of Williams Fire District is unnecessary. Instead, I believe that current Interim Fire Chief, Nicco Holt, is the best choice to lead you forward, provided certain adjustments are made.

To the Board, I recommend the following actions:

- Everyone needs to trust and rely on the Board President and the Interim Fire Chief to serve as conduits for communication between the board and line personnel. Heather and Nicco should commit to regular communication, even on a daily basis if necessary. Heather should keep the other Board members apprised of the communications and information gained while communicating with the Interim Fire Chief.
- Chief Holt has been regularly working over 40 hours per week yet he is still only being compensated at his 25 hour per week position. This needs to be corrected retroactively.
- It is time for Williams to make the Fire Chief position full-time. Having four full-time personnel (Operations Lieutenant, Fire Marshal, Firefighter, and ideally the HR/Admin) and two part-time personnel (Training Captain and Community Coordinator) all reporting to the Chief is too much for a part-time position.
- I strongly recommend, at the time of hiring the new Fire Chief, transferring the HR/Administrative Assistant position to be under the supervision of the Fire Chief rather than the Board. This adjustment will reduce the potential for miscommunication within the team and clarify the Chain of Command within the organization.



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- Implement the use of an “Agenda Item Explanatory Sheet or Statement” to enhance understanding of board activities among the public and line staff (see attached example). These should be included in the board packet when agenda items are introduced.
- Your Firefighters have indicated that they are planning to create an Association and would like a standing spot on your regular agenda for them to provide reports to the board.
- Modify the protocol for allowing public and line staff comments at Board Meetings to allow individuals to speak before the Board votes on agenda items. Additionally, permit individual board members to interact with the public, ensuring decorum is maintained.
- Consider hosting a "Meet and Greet" session with Fire Chief candidates, reserving the first 30 minutes for members only and then soliciting feedback from line personnel on all candidates.
- Enter into an Intergovernmental Agreement (IGA) with Applegate, establishing us as a resource pool available to Williams. While I don't believe that there is currently a need for me to be the Interim Fire Chief, I do wholeheartedly believe that Applegate is in a solid position to support Williams in many other ways. All requests should be directed through Nicco to me, and we will determine how Applegate Fire can support Williams. Billing should be based on an hourly rate, rather than a set monthly rate.

To Interim Fire Chief Holt:

- Be proactive in communicating with the Board President frequently (Daily if Necessary).
- Schedule regular "Team Meetings" to facilitate communication and idea-sharing among staff members and other line personnel.

To the Line Personnel:

- First and Foremost, remember why we are all here.

“It is Williams Fire Rescue’s mission to be committed to quality, possess excellence in service, and have an emphasis on teamwork to protect life and property for the citizens of the Williams area.”

“We are committed to being an active community partner and to continue and increase activities that provide opportunities to be an integral part of the community we serve.”

“It is Williams Fire Rescue’s motto that paid or volunteer we are professionals who put service before self.”



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- Organize a Firefighters Association that can offer reports at Board Meetings to facilitate positive messaging with the Board and public (“Praise in Public”). Refrain from using this opportunity to air grievances.
- Refrain from bypassing the chain of command when addressing concerns. Address issues directly with the individual involved first, seeking guidance from your direct supervisor if necessary. Going to the Board with your concerns should be your last choice, and only if everything else has failed you. (“Criticize in Private”)
- Consider avoiding airing internal grievances publicly or on social media platforms. While you do have the right to free speech, airing grievances publicly fixes nothing, only serves to build internal strife, and also leads to the loss of your community’s confidence in your team.
- Trust each other and support each other. Know when to ask for help. Be willing to offer your help to everyone.

In conclusion, I believe these adjustments will contribute to the continued success and cohesion of the Williams Fire District Team.

Again, I wholeheartedly appreciate your trusting me as an outside observer. I really hope that you all consider these recommendations and Applegate looks forward to our continued collaboration. As always, my phone is on and my door is open.

Sincerely,

Fire Chief
Applegate Valley Fire District

**Williams Fire Rescue
Board of Directors Agenda Item Explanatory Statement**

Date: February 12, 2024

To: Board of Directors

From: Chief Holt

Agenda Subject: 3 Way Trade

Overview of Agenda Subject:

Staff has had initial conversations with the Fire Chief's at Applegate Fire and Illinois Valley Fire District and is proposing a three-way trade of equipment.

Agenda Subject Brief Background:

Williams has a Zoll X-Series Cardiac Monitor/Defibrillator that they are proposing to trade to Applegate Fire (Applegate). Applegate has a surplus fire engine (E52 – 1991 Pierce Arrow) that staff is proposing to trade to Illinois Valley Fire District (IVFD). IVFD has a LifePak 15 Cardiac Monitor/Defibrillator that they are proposing to trade to Williams Fire.

Recommendation- (What is the recommended outcome of the Agenda Subject):

Staff recommends the BOD assign either the Fire Chief or a BOD member to negotiate and sign for the trade.

Agenda Subject Supporting Documentation/Attachments (specific reference documents):

N/A