

UMATILLA MORROW RADIO & DATA DISTRICT
BOARD of DIRECTORS MEETING
Boardman City Hall– November 4, 2025 – 1:30pm

Present: Director Pratt Director Primmer (telephonically)
 Director Irons Director Kennedy (telephonically)
 Director Pierotti

Absent: None

In-Person Guest(s): None
Remote Guest(s): Adam Wilkinson, Pendleton Fire

Staff: Brett Mueller, Rosanna Brown

I. Call to Order and Recognition of Guests: The meeting was called to order at 1:30pm.

II. Roll Call
Director Pratt
Director Pierotti
Director Kennedy
Director Primmer

III. Recognition of Guest(s)

IV. Changes/Additions to the Agenda: None

V. Business from Guests

VI. Consent Agenda
A. Minutes of the meetings from October 7, 2025.
B. System Administrator's Report
 1. Income Review
 2. Expenditures Review
 3. Bank Statements/Checks Review
 4. LGIP Account Review

A motion to accept the consent agenda was made by Director Pierotti and seconded by Director Primmer.

Director Pratt: Aye
Director Pierotti: Aye
Director Kennedy: Aye
Director Primmer: Aye

VII. Old Business
A. LMR System Project Update:

Brett reported that system controller upgrades had been done at the core and some individual sites. The most impactful event was during the core controller upgrade when new OS and firmware were installed. Both controllers were taken offline before going live with the new configuration, resulting in a brief loss of service. All agencies had been notified in advance.

When the system came back online, some units failed to register with the core, including unattended radios, ISSI links, dispatch consoles, and the logging recorder. Brett noted that additional manual resets were required to bring these back online. The console VPGate had to be rebooted. Within a few minutes, everything was functional again. He noted that the state ISSI link took the longest to return, with OSP operating on VHF as a fallback for about two hours. Brett had reached out to ODOT Wireless, and the issue was resolved by approximately 7:00 a.m.

No further errors have been observed with the upgraded core. There were still several site upgrades to complete and Brett was concerned about snow making some locations inaccessible. A Racom technician was expected on-site starting November 17, and Hank and Brett considered visits to some of the more weather-vulnerable locations sooner. Preventative maintenance was also scheduled during that visit.

Brett recalled prior snowcat trips to Black Mountain and said winter access remained challenging.

The Umatilla County console project was completed. Brett was happy with the outcome. A few post-installation issues had come up but were not related to the new equipment itself. For example, Morrow County was still using older consoles, but experienced issues likely related to phone system integration. Brett commented that he and Hank often ended up fixing systems that weren't under the District's responsibility, simply because they impacted radio operations.

Director Primmer asked if position 3 was still having issues. Brett confirmed that the phone-related problem was escalated, console hardware was replaced, and the issue persisted. According to Director Primmer, audio was being clipped, specifically the first syllable, and again if there was a pause mid-sentence. Director Primmer thanked Hank for his continued assistance.

Documentation review was still in process. Brett stated that once he finished reviewing it, he would inform the Board and recommend closing out the project. That final documentation step was the only remaining piece before final payment to Racom.

Brett also reported on a service-impacting event at the Ukiah site. A fiber cut, caused by vandalism, took the site offline. It appeared that someone tried to pull copper, but removed a fiber line instead. The outage impacted multiple circuits, but Brett was able to switch Ukiah to a backup RF link via Black Mountain. The fiber backhaul was offline for less than 24 hours and the site ran normally on the backup link during that time. Brett expressed relief that the redundancy worked well.

B. Fire Portable Radio Committee Update

Adam Wilkinson provided an update on behalf of the committee. The group identified its key priorities for radio selection:

- Must support dual-band
- Must be durable and field-programmable
- Must support OTAP
- Must be usable with gloved hands and include voice annunciation
- Must be intrinsically safe
- Field cloning would be beneficial

Only two radios met all requirements: the Motorola APX8000 and a Harris model. Feedback from agencies using Harris radios was largely negative. Issues included long boot times, volume control failure on startup, inconsistent audio performance, and firmware and roaming issues.

The committee recommended the Motorola APX8000 as their preferred choice. While it was the most expensive option, it met all technical requirements, had proven durability, clear audio, fast programming capabilities, and an extensive options for accessories.

Brett pointed out that Motorola infrastructure was already familiar to the District. The radios would require chargers, programming tools, and possibly a maintenance agreement. The Umatilla Fire Chief suggested building a 5-year maintenance agreement into the grant request.

There was discussion around selecting a lead agency for the AFG grant, with previous consensus leaning toward a small department. Brett said Echo Fire was the best candidate: they've applied for and received AFG funds before, were located centrally in the district, and had a FEMA portal presence. Chief Gehrke was on board with the plan.

The timing of the grant remained uncertain due to the federal shutdown. The Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO) had not yet been released. While December was previously expected, it could be delayed. Brett noted that funding was typically granted for radios in "riding positions" of frontline vehicles, which in some cases exceeded the number of personnel.

The board discussed the District's potential responsibilities for maintenance and replacement of radios, and what MOUs would need to cover. Brett emphasized the importance of accountability with radios at this high price point.

Director Pratt asked when quote gathering and calculations for riding positions would be done. Brett said Director Irons had volunteered to work with departments to gather the information. Brett committed to preparing as much as possible in advance so that when the federal government reopened, the District could move quickly.

C. City of Umatilla Dispatch Center Update

The bond election was occurring on the day of the meeting. Director Kennedy said more would be known soon. Brett said there were no new updates at the time. Director Pierotti asked whether the bond would affect District revenue and Brett clarified that it would not.

D. Umatilla Urban Renewal Update

Director Pratt recapped a conversation held October 14 with representatives from the City of Umatilla. Based on the City's plan, the District could expect to lose a significant amount of revenue over the lifespan of the urban renewal project, especially during the years 2028–2043. The largest losses were projected for 2035 and beyond.

Brett noted that while the City was willing to offset the impact somewhat by contributing to District projects, they were under no obligation to do so. The City's consultants originally projected zero tax revenue increases for the District until 2035, but later adjusted their estimates to include regular assessed value increases until the enterprise zone expiration. This small change could provide some relief, but the District should still expect significant losses in revenue.

Director Pierotti shared that in a recent meeting with Greg Smith and area fire chiefs, similar concerns were raised statewide. Urban renewal projects were already causing budget strains for other special districts. Smith reportedly plans to pursue legislation addressing the issue and has tasked local fire chiefs with gathering data.

Director Primmer commented that it was good to have the conversation with Smith, and that this isn't just an Umatilla County problem—it's affecting districts across the state.

Director Primmer mentioned that the City of Umatilla asked for a list of possible projects the District might need funding assistance with. The City was open to attending a future board meeting and the board agreed to invite representatives to the next meeting after the bond election.

- E. District Safety Committee Update: Staff reviewed a document on noise pollution and hearing protection.

VIII. New Business: None.

IX. Open Discussion: None.

X. Adjourn: The meeting was adjourned at 2:04pm.

Next Board Meeting

December 2, 2025 - 1:30pm – Stafford Hansell Government Center