

UMATILLA MORROW RADIO & DATA DISTRICT
BOARD of DIRECTORS MEETING
Stafford Hansell Government Center – December 2, 2025 – 1:30pm

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

Absent: None

In-Person Guest(s): Melissa Ince, City of Umatilla
Remote Guest(s): Adam Wilkinson, Pendleton Fire
Staff: Brett Mueller, Rosanna Brown, Hank Gehrke

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

- ## II. Roll Call

Director Pratt
Director Primmer
Director Irons
Director Kennedy
Director Pierotti

- ### III. Recognition of Guest(s)

- IV. Changes/Additions to the Agenda: None

- ## V. Business from Guests: None

- VI. Consent Agenda
 - A. Minutes of the meetings from November 4, 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 Kennedy and seconded by Director Primmer.

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

- ## VII. Old Business

- ### A. LMR System Project Update

Brett reported progress on the system upgrades. All of the controllers in the system were upgraded to the new operating system about 2 weeks ago. Chris Sheasley was on-site, but some work was delayed due to both Brett and Hank being sick. A final firmware patch still needed to be applied. Chris also completed preventative maintenance and inspections at all of the sites, except Umatilla Ridge. Testing in that area is also needed to address recurring issues reported on Radar Road and Bensel Road.

An issue that was previously thought to be corrected came up again, regarding the consoles and the dispatchers' outgoing audio, with the voices fading in and out. Morrow County and Tribal dispatch centers had not experienced these issues, since they were still operating with the older hardware. Brett noted the problem had to do with the newer USB-driven consoles. Six were installed in May at a cost of \$100,000. Because of recurring problems, the District was holding off on purchasing additional units.

There was a UPS failure at the Justice Center, affecting back-up power to the core site. Brett suspected a problem with the HVAC unit. Critical systems were switched to the backup controller at Boardman to ensure continued service, in the event of another power loss. This excluded 48v DC-powered systems; however, AC-only components such as the RFSS controller, console VPGate, and the firewall connecting to Tribal dispatch could experience brief outages.

Brett and Hank visited a potential site on Cunningham Sheep property near Kamela. They took ground and aerial photos and had a phone conversation with the landowner's manager, who was open to a proposal for review by their board. A new site could help address current coverage gaps in the Meacham region.

B. Fire Portable Radio Committee Update

Brett reported that the committee's recommended radio—originally believed to be NFPA-rated—turned out not to meet those standards. The APX8000HXE evaluated was intrinsically safe but lacked full compliance with the latest NFPA standards. A new Motorola model that did meet those standards was received the day prior and Brett noted that it was significantly larger, lacked the breadth of accessory options, and supported only one battery and two speaker mic models, which would limit flexibility.

There was discussion about LTE integration in radios and its potential, but Brett noted that seamless LMR-LTE switching was still inconsistent. While newer tech (e.g., low-earth orbit satellite integration) may become viable, the current version would likely not be reliable.

Adam added that more time was needed to test and have a discussion with the committee before making a new recommendation to the board. This would likely not happen in time to meet the grant timeline.

Director Pierotti reminded the board that NFPA standards are guidelines, not legal requirements, and that intrinsic safety might be the more practical priority. Brett confirmed that the FEMA Assistance to Firefighters Grant wasn't open yet, but Nick Dicote was monitoring it.

Director Pratt raised concerns about device durability, especially screen damage in fire events. Brett noted that the screens, mics, and accessories for the Motorola portable were quite a bit more expensive than current subscriber units, and that added to concerns about long-term feasibility and cost.

C. City of Umatilla Dispatch Center Update

Brett reported recent contact with AdComm, following the bond's passage. The city was moving forward with plans for the new police station and dispatch center. They originally hoped to locate equipment at Lind Road, but height requirements and equipment constraints made it less attractive. A passive repeater setup was considered but rejected due to potential interference from the antenna alignment.

The alternative plan would use an intermediate cell site to link Radar Road to the new PD via microwave hops. This would also support future redundant loops.

Director Pierotti raised concerns about the maintenance burden that would come with another dispatch center, on the District. Brett acknowledged the need to hire an additional Comm Tech to help with the

increasing workload. There was funding in the budget for another employee, but Brett had not been able to start the search for a qualified candidate.

Melissa Ince shared that construction on the new police station was expected to begin around mid-February 2026, with a projected 15-month timeline. While the building would include space designated for a dispatch center, dispatch-specific infrastructure and operations were not expected to be implemented immediately.

D. Umatilla Urban Renewal Update

Melissa provided a detailed update on the urban renewal project and its financial impact. The URA would capture tax value largely from the Amazon data center near Lind Road. The city was projecting approximately \$2.8 million in total diverted funds, of which \$1 million will return to the District through shared revenue.

The URA design intentionally excluded other data centers and most residential areas to minimize impact on taxing districts and because the URA was already expected to reach the maximum amount it could collect. Revenue sharing would begin immediately and continue through 2043.

Melissa explained that the City Council (acting as the URA board) would meet in January to consider projects and any mitigation requests from impacted districts. Districts were encouraged to submit recommendations for capital offset funding or annual support.

Brett identified potential mitigation projects such as:

- A fill-in repeater site covering the upper Umatilla River and canyons
- Coverage gaps in Ione, Irrigon, Pilot Rock, Echo, and Stanfield
- Site on top of the Blue Mountains, near I-84

Director Pratt suggested requesting a straightforward annual contribution from the city to offset current debt obligations, instead of trying to identify and fund specific future projects.

Melissa agreed that this was a conversation worth having. She expected the fire district to receive funds first in FY28–29, and noted that the financial support to other districts would come later. She clarified that any contributions to other districts would not come from URA funds, but instead from other revenue sources, such as SIP agreements. She explained that SIP funds were inconsistent—arriving unpredictably and varying in amount—which made planning difficult. Melissa encouraged the District to submit its strategic priorities soon so they could be considered as the city identifies potential projects.

Director Pierotti emphasized that local public safety was significantly underfunded and expressed appreciation that the City was willing to engage on this issue. Melissa acknowledged rising costs and hoped to continue to build a productive partnership.

E. District Safety Committee Update

Staff reviewed seasonal safety tips, including avoiding illness during the holidays.

VIII. New Business: None

IX. Open Discussion: Director Pratt wished everyone happy holidays.

X. Adjourn: The meeting was adjourned at 2:37pm

Next Board Meeting

January 6, 2026 - 1:30pm – Boardman City Hall