



LONE PEAK PUBLIC SAFETY DISTRICT DRAFT MINUTES

**Monday, November 19, 2025
7:30 am**

Approved January 14, 2026

Highland City Hall, 5400 West Civic Center Drive, Highland, Utah 84003

7:30 AM REGULAR MEETING

Call to Order: Chair Kim Rodela

Invocation: Board Member Brittney P. Bills

The meeting was called to order by Chair Kim Rodela as a regular meeting at 7:33 am. The meeting agenda was posted on the *Utah State Public Meeting Website* at least 24 hours prior to the meeting.

PRESIDING: Kim Rodela, Chair

BOARD MEMBERS:
Brittney P. Bills - present
Kurt Ostler – present
Carla Merrill – present
Jason Thelin – present

STAFF PRESENT: LPPSD Executive Director Erin Wells, LPPSD Assistant Executive Director Shane Sorensen, Fire Chief Brian Patten, Police Chief Brian Gwilliam, Recorder Stephannie Cottle, Finance Director David Mortensen, Highland City Attorney Rob Patterson

OTHERS PRESENT: Dustin Mitchell, Brent Rummler, Nancy Jones, Doug Courtney, P. J. Christensen, Owen Olsen, Andrew Young, Ron Campbell

1. UNSCHEDULED PUBLIC APPEARANCES

Please limit comments to three minutes per person. Please state your name.

There were no public comments.

2. CONSENT AGENDA

a. Approval of Meeting Minutes

Lone Peak Public Safety District Meeting – July 9, 2025

Lone Peak Public Safety District Work Session – September 30, 2025

Board Member Kurt Ostler MOVED to approve the consent agenda, item 2a. the meeting minutes of July 9, 2025 and Lone Peak Public Safety Work Session on September 30, 2025

Board Member Brittney P. Bills SECONDED the motion.

The vote was recorded as follows:

Board Member Brittney P. Bills	Yes
Board Member Kurt Ostler	Yes
Board Member Carla Merrill	Yes
Board Member Jason Thelin	Yes

The motion passed 4:0

3. AMENDMENTS TO THE INTERLOCAL AGREEMENT FOR LONE PEAK PUBLIC SAFETY DISTRICT (LPPSD)

The Board will consider amending the Interlocal Agreement related to the formula for the Cities allocations to fund the Fire Department.

Executive Director Wells referred to her staff report regarding the matter, which provided background information pertaining to amendments to the Interlocal Agreement for the District; she presented three options for amending the Interlocal Agreement regarding the formula for City allocations to fund the Fire Department. She apologized for the late distribution of the packet materials and provided a detailed explanation of each option:

- Option 1: Change the assessment formula from the current base formula split between population and ERUs to one based solely on taxable property value. This would take effect in fiscal year 2027.
- Option 2: Implement the property tax value formula over a two-year transition period. In the first year (FY 2027), Alpine would pay 50% of the increase, with Highland covering the remaining portion. In the second year (FY 2028), the formula would be fully based on taxable value.
- Option 3: Similar to Option 2, but the 50% gap in the first year would be covered by fund balance instead of Highland City. Additionally, Highland City would receive a proportional benefit from the fund balance. The district currently has approximately \$3.4 million in fund balance.

Ms. Wells provided examples and hypothetical situations to demonstrate how each of the options would work in those situations; she noted that the Highland City Council had discussed these options at their meeting the previous night and preferred Options 1 or 3. Final action on the matters may be taken by the Highland City Council at their December 2 meeting, with the Alpine City Council scheduled to discuss and vote on the matter at their January 13, 2026 meeting.

Board Member Jason Thelin expressed concern about the short notice for reviewing these options and felt that Option 3's use of the fund balance was being rushed without proper consideration, particularly regarding using fund balance. He noted that Alpine's City Council had discussed including property tax in the formula but had not discussed removing other metrics entirely or how the implementation would work.

Mayor Kurt Ostler emphasized that the formula discussions had been ongoing for months and noted that this issue surfaced around April to May. He discussed Highland's current staffing situation, with only three firefighters being present 70 percent of the time, despite the area having the highest call volume in the district and Highland paying 65 percent of the fire budget. He expressed concern that this disparity in staffing poses a risk to Highland's residents and that they are not receiving the same level of service compared to other areas of the district. Mayor Ostler highlighted that even though the district had voted to increase staffing to nine firefighters, this has not yet been implemented, leaving Highland with lower staffing levels than desired. He further pointed out that most fire districts typically use property tax values when determining their funding formulas, which he believes to be a more equitable solution to address the current discrepancies in service levels within the district. Chair Rodela

acknowledged the prolonged discussions regarding the formula changes. She indicated understanding of the discrepancies in service levels and the concerns highlighted by Board Member Ostler. Chair Rodela recognized the need for equitable funding solutions that align the District's resources with service demands, suggesting that the use of property tax values was a viable method to address these issues.

Board Member Thelin asked for clarification on the three options presented by Executive Director Erin Wells. He inquired if Option 1 would involve a full property value tax implementation starting fiscal year 2027, and whether Alpine City would face an increase based solely on property values, representing a 281,000 dollar rise from the current setup. Ms. Wells confirmed his understanding. Board Member Thelin asked about Option 2, expressing interest in whether the incremental payment by Alpine would be \$140,000 dollars for the first year, transitioning to the full amount by fiscal year 2028. This scenario, as reiterated by Ms. Wells, was contingent on no increases other than structural changes. Regarding Option 3, Board Member Thelin sought reasoning for compensating Highland City over the two transitional years using funds from the District's fund balance, stating it might be complex for Alpine City, given the recent introduction of this consideration. Ms. Wells noted both the Fire and Police Chiefs had supported Option 3, seeing it as equitable. Board Member Thelin expressed opposition to Option 3, highlighting potential complications for Alpine City; he indicated he is cautiously leaning towards Option 1, but needs time for further evaluation of the implications of the options.

Board Member Carla Merrill emphasized that the financial impact would be significant for Alpine, as their overall city budget is only \$10 million, making the potential \$281,000 increase a substantial adjustment. She noted the full Alpine City Council had not had time to discuss the options, particularly regarding the use of fund balance.

Chair Rodela explained that Option 3 was proposed as a compromise to help Alpine manage the financial impact while still implementing the change Highland felt was long overdue.

A lengthy discussion ensued about the history of the funding formula, staffing disparities between the stations, and the collaborative nature of the district. Board Member Thelin noted that Alpine City Council had indicated they were amenable to including property tax in the formula but had not anticipated completely removing other metrics like call volume and population. Board Member Thelin reiterated the decision is being rushed and he is not comfortable. Board Member Merrill agreed and stated that Highland representatives had the benefit of having reviewed the options in advance and discussing them with their full Council; Alpine has not had that benefit and she was not aware that there would be three options. She feels uneasy as well and wants to proceed with caution.

Board Member Bills expressed surprise at the lack of preparation from the Alpine representatives. She stated that her understanding was that the purpose of this meeting was to finalize the funding formula change that had been previously discussed and agreed upon. She reiterated that the main objective for this gathering was to approve the funding approach, facilitating its subsequent presentation and review during the upcoming City Council meetings in December and January for Highland and Alpine, respectively. She emphasized the importance of adhering to the previously set timeline, which anticipated moving forward with the formula changes by the end of the year to ensure the District's continued operational integrity and financial stability.

After extensive discussion about the merits of each option and the timing constraints, the Board engaged in a detailed debate concerning the potential implications of transitioning to the new funding formula for both cities. Throughout the discussion, the Board acknowledged the need to balance timely decision-making with the need for consideration of each City's financial and operational capacities. The deliberations underscored the complexity of arriving at a consensus that satisfies all parties involved, focusing on ensuring fairness while acknowledging each City's unique circumstances. Despite the differences in opinion, the collective effort was directed towards finding a viable solution that aligned with the previously agreed-upon objectives and deadlines.

Board Member Jason Thelin MOVED to recommend Option 2 to amend the Lone Peak Public Safety Interlocal Agreement.

Board Member Carla Merrill SECONDED the motion.

The vote was recorded as follows:

Board Member Brittney P. Bills	No
Board Member Kurt Ostler	No
Board Member Carla Merrill	Yes
Board Member Jason Thelin	Yes
Chair Kim Rodela	No

The motion failed 2:3

Board Member Kurt Ostler MOVED that the Lone Peak Board recommend Option 1 to change the Lone Peak Interlocal Agreement to the Alpine and Highland City Council's for adoption.

Board Member Brittney P. Bills SECONDED the motion.

After the motion was made and seconded, Board Member Thelin requested clarification on the voting protocol, stating his uncertainty about whether a majority or supermajority was needed for the motion to pass. He expressed his understanding that one Board Member from each City should have been necessary to approve a recommendation based on prior discussions. Ms. Wells clarified that the newly approved ILA did not require one Member from each City for approval. She emphasized that the updated process involved the Board making recommendations, but final approval comes from the City Councils.

Board Member Ostler highlighted that selecting Option 1 for the amendment did not preclude the possibility of revisiting the funding method in the future. By recommending Option 1, it established using property tax value as the assessment formula but still allowed for discussions on funding mechanisms at a later date if both Councils agreed.

The vote was recorded as follows:

Board Member Brittney P. Bills	Yes
Board Member Kurt Ostler	Yes
Board Member Carla Merrill	Yes
Board Member Jason Thelin	No

The motion passes 3:1

4. VEHICLE REPLACEMENT/PURCHASE FOR POLICE DEPARTMENT

The Board will consider the replacement and purchase of vehicles to be used by the Police Department.

Executive Director Wells presented options for the purchase of three replacement vehicles for the Police Department. She explained that the Police Department typically replaces three vehicles annually, traditionally using a lease arrangement with Zions Bank. Given the district's significant fund balance, approximately \$3.4 million, with about \$1.9 million attributable to the Police Department, she proposed the option of using fund

balance to purchase the vehicles outright at a cost of approximately \$200,000. This would provide some interest savings compared to leasing at the current 4.5 percent rate, though the fund balance currently earns about 4 percent interest.

Board Member Merrill expressed her thoughts on vehicle purchases, noting her preference for outright purchasing vehicles rather than leasing, based on her past experience. She highlighted that, traditionally, her approach has been to buy vehicles rather than enter lease agreements. She raised fiscal concerns, contemplating whether leasing or purchasing outright is the more advantageous option, especially considering resale potentials post-ownership. Despite owning vehicles outright, she acknowledged the nuances specific to Police vehicles, including rebranding for resale, which might influence the practical benefits of owning versus leasing. Ms. Wells clarified that the lease arrangement with Zions Bank was actually a lease-to-own option. This means that while payments were made over time, the vehicles would ultimately be owned by the District at the end of the term. She highlighted that this approach allowed for the resale of owned vehicles once they had served their useful life, and the lease arrangement provided the flexibility of spreading payments, even though it involved some interest costs. Ms. Wells emphasized that while outright purchase using the fund balance could offer interest savings, the lease-to-own plan allowed the District to maintain liquid funds that could continue to earn some interest, effectively balancing short-term financial decisions with the long-term operational strategy.

Board Member Carla Merrill MOVED that the Lone Peak Board authorize the use of fund balance for the purchase of the three replacement vehicles and related equipment as outlined in this report.

Board Member Kurt Ostler SECONDED the motion.

The vote was recorded as follows:

<i>Board Member Brittney P. Bills</i>	<i>Yes</i>
<i>Board Member Kurt Ostler</i>	<i>Yes</i>
<i>Board Member Carla Merrill</i>	<i>Yes</i>
<i>Board Member Jason Thelin</i>	<i>Yes</i>

The motion passed 4:0

5. DEPARTMENT REPORTS

a. Administration

b. Police Department

c. Fire Department

Fire Chief Brian Patten made a brief announcement about a blood drive scheduled for the following day at the Highland Fire Station and invited everyone to sign up and donate blood. He also clarified that contrary to rumors, there was not a firefighter calendar, but rather a fire truck calendar.

The remaining department reports were deferred to the December meeting due to time constraints.

6. CLOSED SESSION

The Board may recess to convene in a closed session for the purpose of discussing items as provided by Utah Code Annotated §52-4-205.

There was no closed session.

ADJOURNMENT

Board Member Kurt Ostler MOVED to adjourn the regular meeting and Board Member Carla Merrill SECONDED the motion. All voted in favor and the motion passed unanimously.

The meeting adjourned at 8:32 a.m.

I, Stephannie Cottle, Recorder, hereby certify that the foregoing minutes represent a true, accurate and complete record of the meeting held on November 19, 2025. This document constitutes the official minutes for the Lone Peak Public Safety District Board Meeting.



Stephannie Cottle, CMC, UCC
LPPSD Recorder