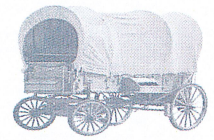




THE CITY OF VALE, OREGON

Malheur County Seat



Historic stop on the Oregon Trail

150 Longfellow Street North Vale, Oregon 97918
Phone: 541-473-3133 TTY-VOICE: 1-800-735-2900

July 13, 2022

RE: City of Vale Proposed Fire Fee

To the Residents of Vale,

Recently you received a survey in the mail about a proposed new fire fee. The survey intended to gather input from the residents as the city develops a plan to increase funding for the fire department going forward. This action frees up general fund revenue for public safety and ambulance services also in need of revenue.

Current Issues:

- Aging PPE (Personal Protective Equipment)
- Contingency fund continues to decline
- Currently funded by the General Fund
- Fuel costs climbing
- Aging equipment
- Aging apparatuses

The question many citizens have asked is, why do we need the added revenue?

The city is looking for a long-term solution to ensure the Vale fire department has the means to supply good fire protection going forward. Firefighter safety and health is of utmost importance, which requires regular vehicle and equipment upgrades. State and Federal regulations also have guidelines and restrictions for equipment and vehicles that apply to Vale.

Funding for the fire department has not increased in years. The cost to run multiple vehicles, buy equipment, and pay for wages and benefits, cannot sustain at the current level without an increase in revenue or a change in amenities not vital to operations provided by the city, such as the pool or library. Inflation continues to eat away at current revenue streams with no end in sight. The city of Vale is looking at tough decisions about allocation of revenue. We are in this current situation because when the city made the change from a volunteer department to a full-time paid department many years ago, there was no plan in place to sustain the cost long term.

Many may not know, but the Vale Fire Department covers not only the City of Vale, but also surrounding areas in Malheur County. Partnering with the Vale Rural Fire District, the groups cover 810 square miles. Additionally, the Vale Ambulance service covers approximately 2,500 square miles of Malheur County.

Safety and security are the top priority, so it is imperative that the Fire Department have the necessary equipment to protect our community, and the new fire fee can supply the necessary revenue.

The city values the opinion of all residents and appreciate those who gave input prior to this decision. We welcome your support and believe the future of Vale is moving in the right direction.

Vale City Council

Tom Vidganda Leighton Keller
Christine Phillips Vic Pe