WESTFIELD JOINT FIRE & RESCUE DISTRICT

ORGANIZATIONAL MEETING MINUTES

July 17, 2026
1:00 p.m.
Westfield Fire Station

Call to Order

Jim Likely called the organizational meeting to order at **1:00 p.m.**

Roll Call

Members Present:

- Jim Likely
- Karen Martin
- Brandon Todd
- Jack Franz

Also Present:

- Chief Jeff Hall
- Assistant Chief Young
- Nathan Kott, Medina County Prosecutor
- Melissa Kurtz, Fiscal Officer

Election of Chair

The board opened the floor for nominations for Chair.

Karen Martin nominated **Jim Likely** to serve as Chair. The nomination was seconded by Jack Franz.

There being no further nominations, nominations were closed.

Roll Call Vote:

- Jack Franz – Yes
- Brandon Todd – Yes
- Jim Likely – Yes
- Karen Martin – Yes

Motion carried.

Chair Jim Likely assumed the chair.

Election of Vice Chair

Chair Likely opened the floor for nominations for Vice Chair.

Jim Likely nominated **Karen Martin** to serve as Vice Chair. The nomination was seconded by Jack Franz.

There being no further nominations, nominations were closed.

Roll Call Vote:

- Jack Franz – Yes
- Brandon Todd – Yes
- Jim Likely – Yes
- Karen Martin – Yes

Motion carried.

Melissa Kurtz has agreed to act as the **Fiscal Officer** at the board's request.

Budget and Levy Discussion

Chair Likely opened discussion regarding the District's budget and the proposed tax levy.

Nathan Kott, Medina County Prosecutor, reviewed the statutory process required to place a levy on the ballot. Mr. Kott advised that the Board must first determine the millage rate, certify the levy request to the Medina County Auditor, and subsequently adopt a resolution requesting the Medina County Board of Elections to place the issue before the voters.

Chief Jeff Hall discussed the District's current financial needs. He stated that the department's existing fire apparatus has exceeded the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) recommended service life of 25 years and should be replaced. He also advised that the District's EMS apparatus will require replacement in the near future.

Karen Martin requested information regarding staffing levels and compensation. Chief Hall reported the following:

- The District currently employs **24 part-time employees**.
- Part-time employees are limited to a maximum of **1,976 hours annually**.
- Night shift personnel receive **$4.17 per hour** for standby coverage.
- No more than **two employees** are scheduled during the overnight shift.
- The highest current hourly wage is **$18.75**.
- Entry-level Basic EMTs are paid **$17.00 per hour**.
- Daytime staffing typically consists of **two employees in addition to the Fire Chief**.

Chief Hall stated that additional levy funding is necessary to replace aging apparatus, maintain service levels, and provide competitive wages necessary to recruit and retain personnel.

Mr. Kott advised that the proposed levy may be submitted either as a **five-year levy** or a **continuing levy**, and that Ohio law does not authorize a seven-year levy for this purpose.

Review of Previous Levy Attempts

The Board reviewed previous levy election results, including:

- **May 2023:** 3.5-mill permanent levy – Failed (approximately 76% opposed).
- **November 2023:** 2.5-mill continuing additional levy – Failed (57% opposed).
- **November 2024:** 2.5-mill additional levy for five years – Failed.
- **2025:** 1.5-mill EMS levy for five years – Failed (58.59% opposed).

Following discussion, Board members expressed consensus that any future levy should be **no less than 3.1 mills for a five-year term** in order to adequately address the District's long-term operational and capital needs and reduce the likelihood of returning to the voters for additional funding in the near future.

Resolutions

Resolution 2026-01
A resolution declaring it necessary to levy an additional tax in excess of the ten-mill limitation was offered by **Mr. Likely** and seconded by **Mrs. Martin**.

Roll Call Vote:

- Jack Franz – Yes
- Brandon Todd – Yes
- Jim Likely – Yes
- Karen Martin – Yes

Motion carried.

Resolution 2026-02
A resolution adopting compliance with Ohio's Sunshine Law and open meetings requirements was offered by **Mr. Likely** and seconded by **Mrs. Martin**.

Roll Call Vote:

- Jack Franz – Yes
- Brandon Todd – Yes
- Jim Likely – Yes
- Karen Martin – Yes

Motion carried.

Resolution 2026-03
A resolution adopting policies regarding public records, a mission statement, and a statement of principles and policy was offered by **Mr. Likely** and seconded by **Mrs. Martin**.

Roll Call Vote:

- Jack Franz – Yes
- Brandon Todd – Yes
- Jim Likely – Yes
- Karen Martin – Yes

Motion carried.

Adjournment

Karen Martin moved to adjourn the meeting. The motion was seconded by Jim Likely.

Vote: All in favor.

The meeting adjourned at **3:30 p.m.**

X _____

Karen Martin
Vice Chair

X _____

Melissa Kurtz
Fiscal Officer

X _____

Jim Likely
Chairman