

# *Resolution Recognizing Community Volunteers and Civilian Firefighters*

## **Preamble**

During the first week of September 2020, wildfires burning on forest land in Marion County, Oregon, spread toward Clackamas County and Molalla. By Labor Day on September 7, these were being joined by other fires in Clackamas County, all pushed on by an historically powerful windstorm. The winds stoked the flames, and made them spread at speeds never seen in the modern history of this area. Eventually, professional emergency responders were overwhelmed as winds hurled burning embers onward to start new fires, and more new fires, while ever-thickening smoke and ash turned daylight into an eerie, orange twilight. The force of the wind-driven fire was so crushing that, before the second weekend of September, many professional firefighters returned to their stations, not because the fires were under control, but because their commanders ordered them to “disengage” from the fires, and to protect their staff resources for other emergency calls.

It is during catastrophic events like these that civilian members of communities come together and protect one another, regardless of differences in politics, faith, race, gender and income. It is in times like these that an uncommon form of hero emerges: The brave, selfless volunteer businesses, organizations and individuals who see a need, and who offer up their lives, their livelihoods, and their possessions, even without be asked or called to do so.

**And so, the Molalla River School District resolves and proclaims as follows:**

**Whereas,** the lives, homes, businesses and facilities of residents throughout and surrounding the Molalla River School District were threatened by historic fires of a magnitude not seen in a hundred years or more; and

**Whereas,** the most immediate danger involved hundreds of homes, and thousands of people, pets and livestock spread across tens of thousands of acres; and

**Whereas,** even the best-trained, best-prepared, most highly-qualified professionals need outside help in order to succeed in the face of extraordinary events; and

**Whereas,** concerned residents, businesses and private groups across the communities of Beavercreek, Clarkes, Dickey Prairie, Glen Avon, Maple Grove, Molalla, Mulino, Rural Dell, Sawtell, Wilhoit, and beyond, stepped forward to aid their neighbors and fellow community members without being asked; and

**Whereas,** these selfless volunteers worked alone and together to supply water tankers, drive bulldozers, dig fire lines by hand, donate and prepare meals, provide shelter, transport livestock, and much more; and

**Whereas,** the commitment and the spirit of volunteerism of these heroes sets a highly valuable example for the youth and students of our community; and

**Whereas**, the number and diversity of these unpaid volunteers is so broad and innumerable as to defy a complete and accurate recitation; now, therefore,

***Be It Resolved*** that the Molalla River School District Board of Directors recognizes and applauds ALL civilian firefighters and volunteer responders throughout the Molalla River School District and surrounding communities, and offers them our most heartfelt appreciation for their gifts and their sacrifices.