

RESOLUTION NO. 2026- 71A

**A JOINT RESOLUTION OF THE BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS OF THE WEISER AREA RURAL FIRE PROTECTION DISTRICT AND THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF WEISER, IDAHO**

A JOINT RESOLUTION ESTABLISHING A FIRE PROTECTION GOVERNANCE, SERVICE MODEL, URBAN DISTRICT FORMATION, CONSOLIDATION, FUNDING, AND VOTER EDUCATION EVALUATION SUBCOMMITTEE; REQUIRING ANALYSIS OF THE STATUS QUO, A CITY FIRE DEPARTMENT MODEL, A SEPARATE URBAN FIRE PROTECTION DISTRICT MODEL, AND AN URBAN-RURAL CONSOLIDATED FIRE PROTECTION DISTRICT MODEL; DEFINING MEMBERSHIP, DUTIES, TIMELINE, REPORTING REQUIREMENTS, AND LIMITATIONS; AND PROVIDING FOR AN EFFECTIVE DATE.

**RECITALS**

**WHEREAS**, the Weiser Area Rural Fire Protection District, also known as the Weiser Rural Fire District, is an Idaho fire protection district organized and operating under Idaho law; and

**WHEREAS**, the City of Weiser historically provided municipal fire protection services within the City, and the Weiser Area Rural Fire Protection District provides fire protection services in the surrounding rural area; and

**WHEREAS**, the City of Weiser and the Weiser Area Rural Fire Protection District currently coordinate fire protection services through an intergovernmental service arrangement intended to provide coordinated fire protection operations for the City and surrounding rural area; and

**WHEREAS**, the governing bodies recognize the public importance of providing reliable, efficient, financially sustainable, legally sound, and publicly accountable fire protection, life safety, emergency response, fire prevention, and related services for residents, property owners, businesses, and visitors within the City and rural service area; and

**WHEREAS**, the governing bodies desire to evaluate multiple future service and governance options, including continuation of the current arrangement, return to or continuation of a municipal fire department model for the City, formation of a separate Urban Weiser Fire Protection District, and formation of an Urban and Rural Weiser Fire Protection District followed by consolidation with the Weiser Area Rural Fire Protection District; and

**WHEREAS**, legal and financial analysis prepared for the Weiser Area Rural Fire Protection District has identified a potential two-step pathway for long-term unification of fire protection governance and funding, consisting of: (1) formation of a new fire protection district encompassing the City of Weiser, referred to herein as the "Urban Weiser Fire Protection District" or "Urban District"; and (2) subsequent consolidation of the Urban District with the Weiser Area Rural Fire Protection District; and

**WHEREAS**, said analysis explains that a municipal fire department is not itself eligible for statutory consolidation with a fire protection district and that only fire protection districts may consolidate with one another; and

**WHEREAS**, said analysis further indicates that annexation of City territory into the existing Rural District may not be fiscally viable due to Idaho budget-growth limitations, while the formation-and-

consolidation pathway may permit a consolidated district to establish a more sustainable first-year property tax budget based on the authorized budgets of the separate districts; and

**WHEREAS**, said analysis recommends that future operational and capital needs be evaluated before any initial Urban District levy or budget target is established, including apparatus replacement, facilities, SCBA and PPE, radios and communications, training infrastructure, insurance, maintenance, staffing, fuel, utilities, testing, certifications, and other recurring and nonrecurring expenses; and

**WHEREAS**, said analysis further recommends that the City and District evaluate asset transfer issues, including City-owned equipment, vehicles, apparatus, supplies, leased or lease-purchase assets, real property, fire stations, deed restrictions, bond obligations, title issues, and related transfer documents; and

**WHEREAS**, the governing bodies desire to evaluate whether a May 2027 election for formation of an Urban Weiser Fire Protection District is legally, financially, operationally, administratively, and publicly feasible; and

**WHEREAS**, the governing bodies further desire to evaluate the costs and public education requirements associated with such an election, including statutory notices, mailed information, public meetings, election administration, voter education materials, tax-impact explanations, and neutral public communication; and

**WHEREAS**, the governing bodies find it appropriate and in the public interest to establish a temporary joint advisory subcommittee to gather information, evaluate options, coordinate with staff and legal counsel, and prepare a written recommendation to the Weiser Area Rural Fire Protection District Board of Commissioners and the Weiser City Council.

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS OF THE WEISER AREA RURAL FIRE PROTECTION DISTRICT AND THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF WEISER, IDAHO, AS FOLLOWS:**

#### **SECTION 1. CREATION OF SUBCOMMITTEE.**

There is hereby created a temporary joint advisory subcommittee to be known as the “Weiser Fire Protection Governance, Service Model, Urban District Formation, Consolidation, Funding, and Voter Education Evaluation Subcommittee,” referred to herein as the “Subcommittee.”

The Subcommittee is created for the limited purpose of studying, evaluating, comparing, and making recommendations concerning the future governance, funding, legal structure, operational model, and public education needs of fire protection and related emergency services for the City of Weiser and the Weiser Area Rural Fire Protection District.

#### **SECTION 2. REQUIRED OPTIONS ANALYSIS.**

The Subcommittee shall evaluate, compare, and report on each of the following service and governance options. The Subcommittee shall not omit any option from its final report, although it may recommend for or against any option based on its findings.

- 1.1 Option 1 — Status Quo / Existing Contract Model.** Continuation of the existing City/Rural contract-for-services or intergovernmental service arrangement, including analysis of current operations, cost sharing, governance, accountability, City contribution, Rural District levy, service levels, capital planning, operational risks, and long-term financial sustainability.

- 1.2 **Option 2 — City Fire Department Model.** Provision of fire protection services within the City through a City fire department or municipal fire-service model, whether separate from or coordinated with the Rural District, including analysis of City funding responsibility, personnel, equipment, facilities, governance, operational duplication, response capacity, mutual aid, and impacts on rural service delivery.
- 1.3 **Option 3 — Separate Urban Weiser Fire Protection District.** Formation of an Urban Weiser Fire Protection District encompassing all or substantially all territory within the City of Weiser, without immediate consolidation with the Rural District, including analysis of formation requirements, initial budget, levy authority, governance, assets, staffing, service contract needs, operational independence, and risks of creating a separate urban district that remains separate.
- 1.4 **Option 4 — Form-Then-Consolidate Model.** Formation of an Urban Weiser Fire Protection District followed by consolidation with the Weiser Area Rural Fire Protection District, including analysis of legal feasibility, financial feasibility, initial Urban District budget strategy, consolidated levy impacts, governance, asset transfer, public education, election timing, protest risk, cash-flow requirements, and long-term sustainability.

### **SECTION 3. PURPOSE.**

The purpose of the Subcommittee is to provide the governing bodies with a complete, comparative, and practical recommendation concerning which fire protection governance and funding model best serves the public interest. The Subcommittee's recommendation shall be supported by legal, financial, operational, governance, election, public education, and implementation analysis.

The Subcommittee shall function as a fact-gathering and recommendation body. The establishment of the Subcommittee does not commit either governing body to formation of an Urban District, consolidation, separation, a levy amount, an election, or any other final action.

### **SECTION 4. MEMBERSHIP.**

- 4.1 The Subcommittee shall consist of the following voting members:
  - a) Two members of the Weiser Area Rural Fire Protection District Board of Commissioners, appointed by the District Board;
  - b) Two representatives of the City of Weiser, appointed by the Mayor with the advice or consent of the City Council, or appointed in such other manner as the City Council may determine; and
  - c) One at-large community member, if mutually approved by both governing bodies, who resides within either the City of Weiser or the Weiser Area Rural Fire Protection District and who has relevant finance, emergency services, governance, public administration, business, agricultural, or community engagement experience.
- 4.2 The following may serve as non-voting ex officio members or technical advisors:
  - a) The Fire Chief, or designee;
  - b) The City Clerk, City Treasurer, or other City finance representative, as designated by the City;
  - c) The District Secretary, Treasurer, or other District finance representative, as designated by the District;
  - d) Legal counsel for the District;
  - e) Legal counsel for the City, if designated by the City;

- f) A Washington County representative, County Clerk representative, County Assessor representative, County Recorder representative, or other county official, if invited for technical assistance;
- g) Financial, election, mapping, communication, or operational advisors invited by majority vote of the Subcommittee or authorized by the governing bodies.

**SECTION 5. ORGANIZATION, MEETINGS, AND RECORDS.**

- 5.1 At its first meeting, the voting members of the Subcommittee shall select a Chair and Vice Chair.
- 5.2 The Fire Chief, District Secretary, City Clerk, or another person designated by the Subcommittee shall assist with agendas, notices, meeting materials, minutes, and records.
- 5.3 The Subcommittee shall establish a regular meeting schedule sufficient to complete its work in time to support a potential May 2027 Urban District formation election.
- 5.4 Meetings shall be conducted in accordance with applicable Idaho open meeting laws to the extent required by law.
- 5.5 A quorum shall consist of a majority of voting members. Actions and recommendations shall be approved by majority vote of voting members present, provided a quorum exists.
- 5.6 The Subcommittee may create working groups or assign tasks to staff, counsel, or advisors, but final recommendations shall be approved by the Subcommittee.

**SECTION 6. SCOPE OF REVIEW**

The Subcommittee shall evaluate and report on the following workstreams. Each workstream shall be analyzed as applicable to the four required primary options: status quo, City fire department model, separate Urban District model, and form-then-consolidate model.

- 6.1 **Existing Service Model and Baseline Conditions.** Review the current City/Rural fire protection service arrangement, including governance, operations, funding, staffing, equipment, facilities, service levels, response capacity, cost-sharing, contract terms, mutual aid, capital planning, and known operational constraints.
- 6.2 **City Fire Department Model.** Evaluate the feasibility, cost, governance, staffing, equipment, facility, insurance, tort, operational, and service-level implications of the City providing fire protection services through a municipal fire department model, including whether such model would operate separately, contract with the Rural District, or require a modified intergovernmental arrangement.
- 6.3 **Separate Urban District Model.** Evaluate the feasibility, cost, governance, levy, staffing, service, asset, and operational implications of forming an Urban Weiser Fire Protection District that remains separate from the Rural District, including the risks and consequences if formation succeeds but consolidation is not pursued or does not occur.
- 6.4 **Form-Then-Consolidate Model.** Evaluate the legal, financial, operational, governance, public education, election, and implementation requirements associated with formation of an Urban Weiser Fire Protection District followed by consolidation with the Weiser Area Rural Fire Protection District.
- 6.5 **Legal Pathway for Urban District Formation.** Evaluate petition requirements, proposed boundaries, City consent, county hearing requirements, election requirements, ballot submission

- deadlines, voter eligibility, commissioner appointment or election issues, boundary filings, and related statutory or administrative requirements.
- 6.6 **May 2027 Formation Election Feasibility.** Prepare a backward calendar for a potential May 2027 election, including petition preparation, legal description and map preparation, City Council consent, filing with Washington County, county hearing and notice publication, ballot language preparation, county clerk submission deadlines, public education, election administration, canvass, county order of formation, and post-election boundary filings.
  - 6.7 **Consolidation Pathway.** Evaluate the steps required for potential consolidation following formation, including preparation of a consolidation agreement, name of the consolidated district, transfer and assumption of property, debts, contracts, obligations and liabilities, treatment of employees and volunteers, board composition, commissioner subdistricts, public hearings, protest-petition risk, potential consolidation election, boundary filings, and timing for the first unified levy.
  - 6.8. **Financial Feasibility and Levy Analysis.** Analyze the current Rural District levy, City contribution, current and projected operations costs, tort and insurance costs, capital needs, apparatus replacement, facility needs, equipment, PPE, SCBA, communications, training needs, projected Urban District initial budget and levy requirement, projected consolidated district budget and levy requirement, tax impacts on City taxpayers, tax impacts on Rural District taxpayers, new construction, assessed valuation changes, available foregone balances or budget capacity, risks of setting an initial Urban District budget too low, and consequences of delaying formation or consolidation.
  - 6.9 **Cost Analysis for Formation, Election, Voter Education, and Consolidation.** Prepare or cause to be prepared a cost analysis identifying estimated costs for legal services, financial consulting, boundary mapping, legal descriptions, assessment and parcel analysis, petition preparation, county filing and administration, statutory hearing notices, statutory mailed notices, election administration, ballot preparation, publication costs, voter education materials, public meetings and open houses, website or project-page development, tax-impact examples or calculators, staff time, asset inventory and transfer documentation, title review, lease or lease-purchase assignment review, insurance transition, accounting and payroll transition, policy and bylaw development, public records and document management, and contingency costs if a protest petition triggers a consolidation election.
  - 6.10 **Voter Education Plan.** Evaluate and recommend a legally appropriate voter education plan for any May 2027 formation election, including key public questions, neutral explanation of the current structure, neutral explanation of a City fire department model, neutral explanation of a separate Urban District, neutral explanation of possible later consolidation, tax-impact examples, frequently asked questions, public meeting schedule, mailer schedule, website information, newspaper or public notice strategy, communication with City residents, communication with Rural District residents, distinction between public education and election advocacy, estimated costs, and responsibility for preparing, reviewing, approving, and distributing materials.
  - 6.11 **Interim Operations and Cash-Flow Plan.** Evaluate the need for interim service contracts, joint powers agreements, cost-sharing agreements, cash-flow support, or other transitional agreements for the period before an Urban District receives tax revenues and before any consolidated district receives unified levy revenues.

- 6.12 Asset Transfer and Real Property Plan.** Evaluate and recommend a framework for transfer, lease, assignment, or use of assets necessary for fire protection services, including City-owned apparatus, Rural District-owned apparatus, wildland engines, equipment, PPE, SCBA, radios and communications equipment, supplies, fire stations, training grounds, real property, leased or financed assets, lease-purchase agreements, title restrictions, deed restrictions, bond-financed property, and documentation required to complete any transfers.
- 6.13 Governance and Representation.** Evaluate governance options under each model, including City governance, district governance, three-member board versus five-member board, commissioner subdistricts, representation of City and Rural constituencies, interim board composition, staggered election cycles, bylaws, financial policies, meeting schedule, administrative staffing, and transition from City fire governance to district governance or vice versa.
- 6.14 Risk Analysis.** Identify legal, financial, operational, political, public communication, and timing risks, including failure to qualify for the May 2027 ballot, failure of the Urban District formation election, formation approval but later consolidation delay, formation approval but later consolidation protest, consolidation election risk, insufficient initial Urban District levy or budget request, cash-flow shortfalls before tax receipts, incomplete asset-transfer authority, City or District withdrawal from the process, voter confusion or insufficient public education, assessed valuation changes, capital cost increases, and impacts on service levels.

#### **SECTION 7. REPORTING REQUIREMENTS.**

The Subcommittee shall prepare a written report to the Weiser Area Rural Fire Protection District Board of Commissioners and the Weiser City Council. The report shall include, at minimum:

- Executive summary;
- Description of current service model;
- Analysis of Option 1 — status quo / existing contract model;
- Analysis of Option 2 — City fire department model;
- Analysis of Option 3 — separate Urban Weiser Fire Protection District model;
- Analysis of Option 4 — formation of an Urban District followed by consolidation with the Rural District;
- Legal pathway for Urban District formation;
- May 2027 election calendar and feasibility assessment;
- Consolidation pathway and timing;
- Financial and levy analysis;
- Taxpayer impact analysis for City and Rural District taxpayers;
- Election, notice, and voter education cost analysis;
- Proposed voter education plan;
- Interim operations and cash-flow plan;
- Asset transfer and real property plan;
- Governance and representation recommendation;
- Risk analysis;
- Recommended action;
- Implementation timeline;
- Budget for next steps; and

- Appendices containing key data, maps, assumptions, draft public education materials, and relevant legal analysis.

The report shall include a comparative matrix identifying the advantages, disadvantages, estimated costs, tax impacts, operational impacts, legal requirements, election requirements, timing, and implementation risks of each required option.

### **SECTION 8. TARGET TIMELINE.**

The Subcommittee shall proceed according to the following target schedule, subject to modification by majority vote of the Subcommittee or direction from the governing bodies:

- First organizational meeting: no later than \_\_\_\_\_, 2026.
- Completion of preliminary legal and election calendar review: no later than \_\_\_\_\_, 2026.
- Completion of preliminary service-model comparison, including status quo, City department, separate Urban District, and consolidated district models: no later than \_\_\_\_\_, 2026.
- Completion of preliminary financial and levy analysis: no later than \_\_\_\_\_, 2026.
- Completion of preliminary voter education and election cost analysis: no later than \_\_\_\_\_, 2026.
- Completion of preliminary asset transfer and governance analysis: no later than \_\_\_\_\_, 2026.
- Presentation of interim findings to the District Board and City Council: no later than \_\_\_\_\_, 2026.
- Completion of draft final report: no later than \_\_\_\_\_, 2027.
- Final report and recommendation: no later than \_\_\_\_\_, 2027.
- If formation is recommended for a May 2027 election, all petition, City consent, county filing, notice, hearing, ballot submission, and voter education deadlines shall be scheduled backward from the May 2027 election date and applicable county and state election deadlines.

The governing bodies should consider setting the final report deadline early enough to allow time for City consent, petition finalization, county filing, county hearing, statutory notices, ballot language, voter education, and election cost funding before the May 2027 election.

### **SECTION 9. AUTHORITY AND LIMITATIONS.**

- 9.1 The Subcommittee is advisory only.
- 9.2 The Subcommittee shall not have authority to bind the City of Weiser, the Weiser Area Rural Fire Protection District, Washington County, or any other public entity.
- 9.3 No election shall be called, petition filed, City consent granted, consolidation agreement approved, asset transferred, debt assumed, service agreement amended, or levy amount adopted solely by action of the Subcommittee.
- 9.4 Any final action shall require approval by the appropriate governing body or governing bodies as required by law.
- 9.5 The Subcommittee may request information from City staff, District staff, County officials, legal counsel, financial advisors, and other relevant persons.
- 9.6 The Subcommittee may recommend that the governing bodies authorize professional services necessary to complete legal, financial, mapping, election, communication, or asset-transfer work.

## **SECTION 10. PUBLIC COMMUNICATIONS.**

The Subcommittee may recommend public education materials and public meeting formats; however, all public communications regarding any ballot measure shall be reviewed for legal compliance before publication or distribution.

The Subcommittee shall endeavor to ensure that public education materials are accurate, neutral, understandable, and focused on explaining the legal structure, service implications, financial impacts, election process, taxpayer consequences, and implementation risks of each option analyzed.

## **SECTION 11. COOPERATION WITH COUNTY OFFICIALS.**

The Subcommittee is authorized and directed to coordinate with Washington County officials, including the County Clerk, County Assessor, County Recorder, and Board of County Commissioners, as appropriate, to determine:

- 11.1 Election administration deadlines;
- 11.2 Estimated election costs;
- 11.3 Notice requirements;
- 11.4 Ballot submission requirements;
- 11.5 Parcel and assessment data needs;
- 11.6 Mapping requirements;
- 11.7 Formation hearing requirements;
- 11.8 Canvass and order procedures;
- 11.9 Boundary filing requirements; and
- 11.10 Any other county-administered process relevant to Urban District formation or later consolidation.

## **SECTION 12. EXPENSES.**

- 12.1 Members shall serve without additional compensation unless otherwise authorized by their respective governing bodies.
- 12.2 Any professional service expense, publication cost, mailing cost, election cost, mapping cost, or other project cost shall require prior approval by the responsible governing body or governing bodies.
- 12.3 The Subcommittee shall identify recommended funding sources for formation-related costs, election costs, voter education costs, and implementation costs in its report.

## **SECTION 13. TERMINATION.**

- 13.1 The Subcommittee shall terminate upon the earliest of:
  - a) Acceptance of its final report by both governing bodies;
  - b) Written determination by either governing body that the Subcommittee is no longer needed;

- c) Completion of the May 2027 formation election and any immediate post-election recommendations requested by the governing bodies; or \_\_\_\_\_, 2027, unless extended by joint action of the governing bodies.

**SECTION 14. EFFECTIVE DATE.**

**14.1** This Resolution shall become effective upon approval by both the Weiser Area Rural Fire Protection District Board of Commissioners and the City Council of the City of Weiser.

**14.2** PASSED AND APPROVED by the Board of Commissioners of the Weiser Area Rural Fire Protection District this \_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_, 2026.

WEISER AREA RURAL FIRE PROTECTION DISTRICT

By: \_\_\_\_\_  
Chair, Board of Commissioners

ATTEST:

\_\_\_\_\_  
District Secretary

PASSED AND APPROVED by the City Council of the City of Weiser, Idaho, this \_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_, 2026.

CITY OF WEISER, IDAHO

By: \_\_\_\_\_  
Mayor

ATTEST:

\_\_\_\_\_  
City Clerk

## **APPENDIX A**

### **REFERENCE MATERIALS TO BE CONSIDERED BY SUBCOMMITTEE**

The Subcommittee should consider, at minimum, the following materials and information during its review:

1. White Peterson memorandum dated October 22, 2025, titled "Formation of the Weiser Urban Fire Protection District in 2026, Consolidation with Weiser Rural Fire Protection District in 2027, with the Goal of a Unified 2027 Levy."
2. Current City of Weiser and Weiser Area Rural Fire Protection District contract-for-services or intergovernmental service agreements.
3. Current and prior five years of District budgets, audits, levy certifications, and financial statements.
4. Current and prior five years of City fire-service costs and contributions.
5. Current apparatus, equipment, PPE, SCBA, radio, facility, and real property inventories.
6. Lease, lease-purchase, debt, title, deed restriction, and bond documents affecting fire-service assets.
7. Washington County parcel, assessed valuation, and boundary data.
8. County Clerk election cost estimates and election calendar requirements.
9. Draft public education materials, FAQs, taxpayer impact examples, maps, and meeting schedules.

## **APPENDIX B**

### **MINIMUM COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS**

The final report should include an analysis comparing each required option against the following criteria:

1. Legal feasibility;
2. Governance structure;
3. Operational feasibility;
4. Service-level impact;
5. Staffing and volunteer impact;
6. Equipment and facility impact;
7. Estimated operating cost;
8. Estimated capital cost;
9. Estimated transition cost;
10. Estimated election and public education cost;
11. Taxpayer impact for City taxpayers;
12. Taxpayer impact for Rural District taxpayers;
13. Levy authority and budget limitation impact;
14. Need for public vote;
15. Risk of failure or delay;
16. Interim cash-flow requirement;
17. Implementation timeline;
18. Advantages;
19. Disadvantages; and
20. Subcommittee recommendation.