



**MINUTES  
CITY OF LAUREL  
EMERGENCY SERVICES COMMITTEE  
MONDAY, MARCH 23, 2026**

The Emergency Services Committee meeting was called to order at 6:00pm on Monday, March 23, 2026, by Chair Jodi Mackay

**Members Present:** Jodi Mackay - Chair, Irv Wilke – Vice Chair, Brent Edgmond, Sara Naylor, Shane Lacasse

**Others Present:** Ambulance Chief Lyndy Gurchiek, Police Chief Jarred Anglin, Fire Chief JW Hopper

**Public Input: NONE**

**General Items:**

1. Approval of the Minutes from February 23, 2026. Irv made motion to approve, Shane seconded. Motion carried 5-0

2. Update from Emergency Departments – reports attached  
Fire Department

613 calls in reporting period

Continue with training – 436 hours ytd

Currently at 29 members with 4 applications waiting for September review

Preparing for wildland fire season – concerned it will be busy fire season

Met with NWE – have not heard back regarding establishing partnerships

Have applied for multiple grants – Firehouse Subs, Tourism and Lowe's

Hoping Lowe's grant will assist with FAP bay doors

Emergency Networking system – working through tech issues – company responsive

Successful meeting with school re: 4<sup>th</sup> of July. Have a plan. Waiting on City approval.

Moving event toward little league fields and shelter

Police Department

777 calls in reporting period (2149 ytd compared to 2032 last year)

100 crimes reported with 5 arrests and 63 charges filed

Working with Redtail Communications to upgrade PD's radio system and equipment

Total quote is \$233497 – Cpt. Brew working on grant for project

Still waiting to hear about Dept of Homeland Security grant for Toughbooks

Recently purchased 40 mm launcher that shoots bean bags to have a nonlethal option

Patrol shift working AM and PM on Southside to monitor CHS turnaround

Ambulance Department

97 requests for service

No staffing changes

Continue to complete recertifications

New ambulance is in service – great addition

Submitted application for appropriations from Downing

Working on grants

**New Business:**

## **Old Business:**

Noise Ordinance Discussion cont.

Chief Anglin provided data from 2025 – out of 6226 calls 27 were noise complaints

Committee sees larger issues facing department, particularly with cumbersome requirements to institute a noise ordinance (decibel readers, calibrating readers, baseline neighborhood data, etc.). Department will continue to respond to noise complaints and deal with them on a case by case basis.

Traffic Patter Discussion cont.

Chief Anglin reached out to the State regarding a request to discuss a turn arrow to go South under the underpass on 1<sup>st</sup> Ave. The MDT responded that they will review it this summer when they are working on that intersection.

## **Other Items:**

Chair initiated a high level conversation about City growth and concerns and issues from departments

FD: Currently seeing decline in firefighters – volunteer numbers dropping fast

60% of calls occur during the day - hardest to staff given most responders have other jobs

Call volume increasing / Equipment costs increasing / Mutual aid requests increasing

FF Gear cost est. \$43000 / ff

Rural Urban Interface – fires more likely

Would like to see 6 full time firefighters to provide 100% response rate – could fund by looking at districts, new partnerships with NWE

PD: Currently down officers – best practice is 3 officers / 1000 people = 21 officers for Laurel – reality is currently at 14 officers

Equipment costs increasing / need new vehicles

Busy with calls and unable to monitor traffic consistently

Concerns about impact of potential State MH Fac – would want 5 new officers. Anaconda PD reports consistent response to Galen

FAP Building concerns

AD: Increased calls every year – would need more staff to meet increased demand

Equipment wear and tear increasing / Equipment costs increasing

FAP Building concerns

All departments continue to work to find grants to fund necessities. Often find Laurel is too close to Billings municipality to be eligible. Departments would like to see City grant writer on staff.

Committee will discuss in further detail in next month's meeting.

**Announcements:**

3. Next meeting will be Monday, April 27, 2026 at 6:00pm in Council Chambers

Meeting adjourned at 6:54 p.m.



# LAUREL FIRE DEPARTMENT

215 West 1st Street • Laurel, Mt • 59044 • Office 406.628.4911 • Fax 406.628.2185

## *Emergency Services Meeting 2/23/2026 – 3/23/2026*

### **Calls (2/23/2026 – 3/23/2026)**

- Responded to 47 Total Calls

### **Total Hours on Call - 613**



- Training Hours – 436 HRS YTD

### **Training**

- Wildland Training
- Vehicle Extrication
- Officer Training
- Apparatus Maintenance

### **Rookie School Training**

- MVA (Motor Vehicle Acc dents)
- Car Fires
- MVA/Car Fires Practical Test
- Wildland

### **Department News**

- Current Numbers
  - 29 Members
    - 3 firefighters in rookie school
    - 1 firefighter resigned due to moving and new job.
  - 1 Fire Fighter Resigned due to not having enough time.
  - 4 applications so far for next interviews in September.

- DNRC Staffing
  - Training
    - Wildland Refresher
    - Pack Test
    - Engine Boss, Chainsaw and Wildland Urban Interface
  
- Misc.-
  - Early Wildland Season
  - Meeting with Northwest Energy/Cat at the Gas generated Power Plant.
  - Applying for Fire House Subs Grant.
  - Applied for a tourism grant.
  - Applied for Lowes Grant Fire Station Repairs
  - Emergency Networking
    - Working through some technical issues.
  - Meetings with School about 4<sup>th</sup> of July.
    - Flew the park with a drone.
    - Securing permits and permissions.

	Stations	ACTIVE FIREFIGHTERS				% OF TOTAL		
		Career	Volunteer	Paid-Per-Call	Total	Career	Volunteer	Paid-Per-Call
Montana	436	825	5449	387	6661	12%	82%	6%
USA	52571	372314	562010	133765	1068089	35%	53%	13%

# HOW MUCH DOES FIREFIGHTER GEAR COST?

Helmet: \$350

Hood: \$120

Bunker Coat: \$1,902

Flashlight: \$220

Halligan & Axe: \$640

Bailout Kit: \$600

## ADDITIONAL GEAR

Wildland Gear: \$2,710  
 Tech Rescue Gear: \$1,400  
 Bullet Proof Vest: \$700  
 2nd Set of Gear: \$3,579

Radio: \$7,500

Self-Contained Breathing Apparatus: \$11,900

Gloves: \$170

Bunker Pant: \$1,387

Boots: \$598

**TOTAL: \$33,776.00**

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Montana	436	825	5449	387	6661	12%	82%	6%
USA	52571	372314	562010	133765	1068089	35%	53%	13%

# 2025

- 545 calls
- 765 call hours
- Avg hours/call – 1.40
- 7220 man hours – approximately 9.4 firefighters per call (includes standby personnel)
- - Approximately 13.25 man hours/call
  - 44% City calls
  - 56% calls came from our protection area, which includes 7.5% calls that were mutual aid (county/other FDS)

# Future Challenges

- Call volumes have steadily increased at least 4% p.a., thereby taxing both equipment/apparatus, AND personnel (time, money, opportunity costs)
  - Passed the “threshold” of 500 calls
  - Expected to continue growth in calls
  - 60%+ calls are daytime (business hours) calls
  - Increased number of calls that require specialized intervention (extrications, rescues, wildland)
  - Aging population – increase in traffic incidents and lift assist calls
  - More irresponsible behaviors on roads that are getting busier both due to increased traffic and increased distractions – more accidents, more EMS calls
  - A busier EMS dept also means demands on the fire dept increase to make driver(s) available to help the EMS dept
- **Ensuring firefighter availability, especially during busy hours**
  - Almost all firefighters have career jobs outside of the department
  - No incentive for a firefighter to quit her/his job and show up for a fire call during business hours
  - Negative impact on community

## Future Challenges, cont'd....

- The department is not equipped personnel-wise to respond in time and effectively to a fire call during the day, unless someone is off from work or is unemployed
  - Dependence on firefighter availability worked when we had less calls
- Second pages are becoming more common
- Mutual aid demands are increasing, especially from areas that either have a fully volunteer fire dept or have no fire dept
- Due to increasing population, the WUI (Wildland-Urban Interface) is increasing, and getting closer to higher human populations
  - Higher risk of wildfires
  - Increased risk to life & property

## Proposed Solution(s)

- 6 career firefighters to staff the station from 6 am to 8 pm Mon-Fri
  - Ensure 100% response
  - Ensure quick response (2-3 minutes) – save lives and property
- Allow the dept to start earning more revenue for itself and also for the city
  - Wildland contracts
  - Increase billing
  - Negotiate better contract terms with customers
- Purchase of a Tactical Tender truck to go on wildland calls and earn revenue

# Expected Outlay

- Firefighters - \$80K/year (incl. benefits) - \$480K
- Fire Dept. to renegotiate fire protection contracts with LUFSA and Fire Districts as applicable
  - Current contracts are for \$361K – increase them to \$500K
- Increase billing and collection efforts – currently, we are bringing in around \$60K a year
- City's financial contribution to the dept budget needs a review
- Sign contract with Northwestern Energy for fire protection – plant run by Caterpillar, not Northwestern Energy
  - Minimum ask \$20K
- Dept “operating” budget (not including payroll expenses or debt servicing) to remain at or around \$280K

**Laurel Emergency Services Report created 3/23/26:**

<b>2022</b>	<b>2023</b>	<b>2024</b>	<b>2025</b>
1238 requests for service	1300 requests for service	1363 requests for service	1492 requests for service
177 times LEMS was unavailable	171 times LEMS was unavailable	73 times LEMS was unavailable	44 times LEMS was unavailable
48 times AMR was unavailable	23 times AMR was unavailable	14 times AMR was unavailable	12 times AMR was unavailable
351 responses in Ward 5=29% of calls outside of the city of Laurel	351 responses in Ward 5=27% of calls outside of the city of Laurel	373 responses in Ward 5=27% of calls outside of the city of Laurel	404 responses in Ward 5=27% of calls outside of the city of Laurel

**Recent Month Summary:**

**February 2026:**

Requests	97
Missed Calls	3 = 3%
Shortest Delay	24 minutes
Longest Delay	45 minutes
Average Delay	37 minutes
Fire Driver Available	0 times
City Driver Available	0 times
QRU Response With 1 Provider	1 time **
On A Previous Call	3 times
2 Units On A Call	0 times
No Crew / Provider Available	0 times
AMR Transported or Responded	0 times*
Red Lodge Transported	0 times
HELP Flight Transported	0 times
HELP Amb Transported or Responded	0 time
Columbus Transported or Responded	1 time
Joliet Transported	0 times
Park City Transported	2 times
PD Assisted Pt or Transported	0 times
FD Assisted Pt no transport	0 times
POV Transport	0 times
Refusal or no transport	0 times
YCSO Transported	0 times
MHP Transported	0 times



\*\*1 time the QRU responded to begin patient care. 0 times the QRU responded and the patient refused / no transport to hospital or no patient found.  
 29 responses in Ward 5 = 30% of calls outside of the city of Laurel  
 0 LEMS response for mutual aid. None of these responses resulted in LEMS not being available for another call.

2026 Running Totals

	January	February	March	April	May	June	July	August	September	October	November	December	Total 2026
Requests	113	97											210
Missed Calls	5	3											8
Shortest Delay (minutes)	30	24											24
Longest Delay (minutes)	42	45											45
Average Delay (minutes)	35	37											36
Fire Driver Available	1	0											1
City Driver Available	1	0											1
QRU Response w 1 Provider	2	1											3
On A Previous Call	5	3											8
2 Units On A Call	4	0											4
No Crew / Provider Available	0	0											0
AMR Transported or Responded	3	0											3
Columbus Transported or Responded	0	1											1
Joliet Transported	0	0											0
Park City Transported	2	2											4
Red Lodge Transported	0	0											0
HELP Flight Transported	0	0											0
HELP Amb Transported or Responded	0	0											0
POV Transport	0	0											0
PD Assisted Pt or transported	0	0											0
FD Assisted Pt no transport	0	0											0
YCSO Transported	0	0											0
MHP Transported	0	0											0
QRU/AMR, Refusal or No Patient	0	0											0
Responses in Ward 5	34	29											63
LEMS response for mutual aid	2	0											2

\*correction made after report given

Other Reporting Information

-Staffing – no changes this report.

-Recertification for our individual EMS licenses is due March 31<sup>st</sup>, everyone should be done this week.

-The new ambulance is up and running as first out. It is great!

-After our meeting with Congressman Troy Downing he suggested that we apply for some of the appropriation money for equipment. We did complete and submit the application. We also put in for the Lowes Hometown Grant requesting moneys for some station improvements. Will keep you posted on both.

-We are paged for 911 calls via the dispatch CAD system to our cell phones via a text message. Unfortunately the cell phone carriers are changing this technology and anyone other than Verizon no longer works and we are told that will stop in the near future. LVFD uses the Yellowstone County provided system called I Am Responding. I have met with the YC DES Director and he stated that we should be able to be put into that system as well. It should be fairly seamless with Dispatch as LVFD uses it and it should not cost us anything to utilize.