

NEWMAN LAKE FIRE & RESCUE
Spokane County Fire District No. 13
Minutes for March 20, 2025
BOARD OF FIRE COMMISSIONERS MEETING

CALL TO ORDER

The Board of Fire Commissioners of Spokane County Fire Protection District No. 13 met on March 20, 2025, at 1:00 p.m. at Station No. 1, 9324 N Starr Rd., Newman Lake, Washington.

ROLL CALL

Board: Commissioners Teresa Phelps and Eileen Weyrauch; Commissioner Ben Kaiser participated remotely via Microsoft Teams
Others Present: Chief Daron Bement, Captain Josh Ambach, Lieutenant Carleen VanDerostyne, Secretary Robin Harbin, and Community Members Dave and Kathy Pfeiffer

CONSENT AGENDA

The consent agenda consisted of the meeting minutes for February 20, 2025; Financial Reports; Approval of Warrants #12494 - #12531 in the amount of \$48,981.46; Payroll Taxes in the amount of \$6,819.06; and DRS Pension in the amount of \$3,738.15. Commissioner Weyrauch motioned to accept the consent agenda; Commissioner Kaiser seconded; Chair Phelps called for the vote, which passed unanimously.

AUXILIARY REPORT

Auxiliary member Josh Ambach reported the Fire Auxiliary balance is: \$4,533.62
This is the balance after purchasing community EMS pins and paying for half of the cost of catering for the service awards banquet. No Auxiliary meeting has been held yet this year. They should be holding a meeting next month.

CORRESPONDENCE

- Jack and Vicki Carney sent a donation of \$500. They have donated \$500 to the department each year since receiving needed emergency medical services during their summer stay at the lake.
- Inland Power & Light rates will increase 6% this next month and possible increases may be seen again this fall. This will affect Station 2 power bills as Station 1 is on Avista power.
- Vicky Dalton, Spokane County Auditor, sent an email regarding the difficulties encountered in their transition to their new accounting program called Workday. Vicky apologized for the lack of communication as well as the difficulties and delays in getting accounts payable checks out to districts for distribution. Fixing all of the problems with their new system will likely take several more months. In the meantime, the problems continue to require an extensive amount of time and work from our Administrative Assistant, Robin Harbin and IT professional, Michael Garrison Stuber.

FIRE CHIEF'S REPORT by Chief Daron Bement

B13-3 updates:

The radios are installed, and Brush 13-3 is ready to go. We are waiting on some minor parts and equipment such as nozzles and hose packs.

Service Awards Dinner:

The annual Service Awards dinner is to be held tonight. We look forward to seeing everyone there.

Calls, Staffing, Apparatus, Training:

- We had 21 emergency calls in February 2025, a 52% increase over February 2024.
- 2025 year-to-date calls is at 43.
- One Resident Firefighter has moved out as he is getting married.
- Both command units, 1301 and 1302, are in service.
- Training has included maintenance, EVIP refresher, annual wildland update, and EMS in the wildland setting.

CAPTAIN'S REPORT by Captain Josh Ambach

DNR Grants:

- We are waiting for invoices to close out the 2025 Phase 2 Grant, which should be approximately \$4000 after submitting invoices.
- Additional invoices for needed parts and repairs on Brush 13-3 will be submitted to DNR for reimbursement.

Software Report:

- We are looking at First Due, a scheduling, response, and reporting software, which would replace our current software, bringing three separate programs, (ESO, Streetwise, and When-I-Work), under one program for more efficiency and better access. First Due will be the same cost or less than what we are currently paying for the three programs to be replaced.
- First Due would be accessible on all responder cell phones as well as on vehicle tablets. Prefire plans with First Due are live, eliminating the need to upload, then wait for access.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

Community Meeting:

Meeting notices have been posted on the building, at the post office, at Newman's Pour and Pies, on the grange readerboard, on the district Facebook page and website, and through the NLPOA email group. It was also sent to the email provided by Dave and Kathy Pfeiffer for distribution. Items listed in the Chief's agenda as well as in Commissioner Phelps' email will be addressed at the meeting. A draft response to the community regarding property tax increases and the fire levy was reviewed and refined for posting and distribution.

NEW BUSINESS

Accounting Software Changes:

Secretary Harbin has learned that our current accounting software, Springbrook Express, (formerly known as BIAS), will no longer be updating the version we use which is on-premises. They will only be supporting their cloud platform. A quote was obtained from Springbrook for migrating to the cloud. The annual fee for the supported platform is \$6700. We have been paying approximately \$3500 per year for our on-premise version. The one-time fee for migrating over to the cloud version is \$3690. Robin has consulted with other fire districts in the county regarding accounting services and has scheduled a meeting and demo with Visions Software. A quote will be obtained from Visions after the meeting with the objective of securing equal services for less cost than the Springbrook Express cloud platform.

Insurance Shopping:

Insurance costs continue to rise. Our current property/vehicle insurance is approaching \$50,000 per year. Last year, Robin reached out to Nicholson & Associates to explore cost savings. However, their quote did not appear to provide equal coverage to that provided through Enduris, a risk management pool. With equal coverage to Enduris being the goal, we have met with both Acrisure and Nicholson & Associates to obtain new quotes. Nicholson & Associates will present their quote at the April 17th commissioner meeting. Eric Swaggerty of Enduris has requested to make a presentation to the board at the commissioner meeting scheduled on May 15th. Should the board choose a different insurance provider, written notice of intent to withdraw must be given to Enduris at least sixty days prior to the last business day of August.

Budget Adjustments for Wildland Grant & Expenditures:

▪ RESOLUTION 2025-7 Wildland Budget Adjustments

Proposed adjustments to the 2025 Budget include: Revenue & Expenditure budget codes and amounts for Brush 13-3 expenses and reimbursements; an Expenditure budget code/amount for non-grant wildland supplies and equipment; and an adjustment to the proposed end balance to balance budget revenues to expenditures.

After review, Commissioner Weyrauch motioned to approve Resolution 2025-7 as written; Commissioner Kaiser seconded the motion; Chair Phelps called for the vote, which passed unanimously.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

Dave Pfeiffer commented that the new command rigs sure look nice. Kathy Pfeiffer thanked the department for taking the time to teach her safe lifting techniques. Commissioner Weyrauch encourages all to call the fire department for assessment and safe lift assistance

GOOD OF THE ORDER

Lieutenant Carleen VanDerostyne reported the Fire Academy is going well two weeks in, with all recruits fully engaged and working hard. One candidate dropped the first week, realizing this was not their true career direction of choice. Fire dynamics was studied the first week; physical fitness exercises are already yielding noticeable improvements. Each of the four groups of recruits has an assigned mentor; all recruits have jelled well and are showing great comradery.

ADJOURNMENT

As there was no other business, the meeting was adjourned at 1:51 p.m.



Teresa Phelps, Chairperson

4-17-25
Date



Robin Harbin, District Secretary

4-17-2025
Date