

NEWMAN LAKE FIRE & RESCUE
Spokane County Fire District No. 13
Minutes for November 13, 2024
BOARD OF FIRE COMMISSIONERS MEETING

CALL TO ORDER

The Board of Fire Commissioners of Spokane County Fire Protection District No. 13 met on November 13, 2024, at 1:00 p.m. at Station No. 1, 9324 N Starr Rd., Newman Lake, Washington.

ROLL CALL

Board: Commissioners Eileen Weyrauch, Teresa Phelps, and Ben Kaiser
Others Present: Chief Daron Bement, and Secretary Robin Harbin; Captain Josh Ambach participated via Microsoft Teams

CONSENT AGENDA

The consent agenda consisted of the meeting minutes for October 17, and October 23-26, 2024; Financial Reports; Approval of Warrants #12304 - #12365 in the amount of \$48,693.46; Payroll Taxes in the amount of \$7,975.30; and DRS Pension in the amount of \$2,873.07. Commissioner Kaiser motioned to accept the consent agenda; Commissioner Phelps seconded; Chair Weyrauch called for the vote, which passed unanimously.

AUXILIARY REPORT

Auxiliary member Josh Ambach reported the Fire Auxiliary balance is: \$11,367.00 with no outstanding bills. The last Auxiliary meeting was held December 2nd, focused on Breakfast with Santa, which is scheduled for Saturday, December 7, from 9AM-12PM. Set up will begin on Friday, December 6, at 6:30PM. Fire Auxiliary President Kelli Lemley has inventoried the available gifts for the event and many more gift items have been donated. Chair Weyrauch asked Josh to notify the Auxiliary about the WSU Forestry Classes scheduled at Station 1 Friday evenings November 29th through January 24th to see if they may provide light refreshments.

CAPTAIN'S REPORT by Captain Josh Ambach

We have recently applied for two DNR Grants:

- 1) For a surplus brush truck, (a Type 6 or Slide Deck)
- 2) Phase 2 Grant for 10 sets of Wildland Firefighter Gear, less boots and gloves; 15 Pagers, and three BK Mobile Radios.

We should find out if we have received the grants by mid-December. Chair Weyrauch asked if the department provides wildland boots. The department reimburses members up to \$250 for the purchase of wildland boots.

CORRESPONDENCE

Secretary Harbin presented a memo from the Spokane County Auditor's Office, Accounts Payable Department. Due to the Holidays and their transition to a new software system, all December vouchers must be submitted to the County Auditor by Tuesday, December 17, 2024. No further runs will be completed in 2024.

FIRE CHIEF'S REPORT by Chief Daron Bement

Calls/Staffing/Apparatus/Training:

We had another successful Kids' Day on October 5th. We should plan similar events moving forward as it is a great way to interface with our community. WSU Forestry Department in conjunction with DNR will be using our training room to host a landowner property management class November 29th through January 21st. The classes, to be held on Friday evenings, are aimed at teaching responsible stewardship of lands and being wildfire ready. The cost will be approximately \$150; flyers will be posted once received from WSU. Chief Bement and Captain Josh attended the NFA 2-day Fire Investigation for First Responders the end of October and are preparing for their December course at SVFD for Fire Investigator 1. Volunteer Firefighter, Andrea Licari, will also be attending that course.

We had 15 emergency incidents in October, a decrease from 19 in October 2023. Year-to-date calls total 197, a record number of calls.

All of our new Resident Firefighters have moved into Station 1 and have begun training. They completed their EVIP driving course last week.

Engine 13-1 remains out of service. Captain Josh was able to locate the needed part online. We will know by the end of the week if the part will work. If it doesn't, the engine will be out of service until the back-ordered part arrives sometime in February.

October training included Apparatus Maintenance, Ventilation/VEIS, and EMS Equipment/Patient Evaluations.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

2025 BUDGET PROJECTIONS – DRAFT No. 3:

Secretary Harbin presented the third draft of the 2025 Operating Budget which shows the projected \$777,000 Regular Levy plus the projected \$232,000 EMS Levy for a total projected 2025 tax revenue of \$1,009,000. The proposed Operating Budget items were presented by line item along with a summary page by department. Included in the presentation was a 5-year Operating Budget Comparison showing actual revenues and expenditures for 2021-2023, year-to-date figures for 2024, and proposed budget amounts for 2025. The 2025 Budget Proposal Drafts for all other funds were also presented. Washington Fire Chiefs Association has increased their fees based on the total assessed value of our district. We will evaluate the benefits vs the cost of membership and cancel membership if not of sufficient benefit. Chair Weyrauch was recently made aware that Life Flight membership does not transfer to Air Lift should Life Flight be unavailable at the time of transport. Our agency has chosen to use Life Flight and pays for department member households at \$75.00 per year. Department and community members should be made aware that there is no reciprocity between Life Flight and Air Lift.

Training Officer – Job Description & Job Posting DRAFT:

Chief Bement presented several options for a proposed Training Officer position:

- 1) Post the position as a temporary full-time position with option for extension. A memorandum of understanding would be signed, acknowledging this is a temporary position contingent upon the renewal of the EMS Levy in 2025.

- 2) Post the position as a full-time position but have the chosen candidate sign a memorandum of understanding that this is a temporary position contingent upon the renewal of the EMS Levy.
- 3) Post the position as a part-time position with full benefits.

Although a full-time Training Officer is needed, the part-time option would allow for at least some ease of division of labor on current staff and represent a slight cost savings for wages. However, a part-time employee would not be salaried and would not be allowed to remain a volunteer. This would either present overtime costs or limit the capability of responding off duty. The cost of health insurance would be the same as that of a full-time employee.

A salaried full-time Training Officer, working a rotating shift can work up to 175 hours per month, earning comp time in lieu of overtime. The proposed full-time salary and benefits fit into our proposed 2025 budget. We have had a substantial influx of new volunteer and resident firefighters and need to ensure proper and timely training to keep interest and ensure safety for all. Having another full-time firefighter provides more coverage at the station when external training opportunities arise. It also enables the district to mobilize for statewide wildland fires while providing adequate coverage in district at the station. Secretary Harbin noted that the District was reimbursed nearly \$30,000 for the use of our apparatus on wildland fires this year.

After discussing the advantages and disadvantages of all options, Commissioner Kaiser motioned to approve option 1, posting the full-time Training Officer position internally as a temporary position with option for extension, to begin in January 2025 at \$70,000 annual salary with benefits; Commissioner Phelps seconded the motion; Chair Weyrauch called for the vote, which passed unanimously.

NEW BUSINESS

December Commissioner Meeting Date Change for Timely Accounts Payable:

RESOLUTION 2024-11 A One-Time Change to the Regular Meeting Time

In response to the memo from the Spokane County Auditors Accounts Payable department, Secretary Harbin presented Resolution 2024-11 to make a one-time change to the regular meeting time in December 2024 to 1:00 p.m. on Thursday, December 12 to ensure timely bill payments. After reviewing Resolution 2024-11, Commissioner Phelps motioned to approve Resolution 2024-11; Commissioner Kaiser seconded the motion; Chair Weyrauch called for the vote, which passed unanimously. Robin will post the meeting announcement on the building, website, and Facebook.

WFCA Health Care 2025 Employer Application & Eligibility/Contribution:

The WFCA Healthcare Employer Application for 2025 was presented with the same selections as in 2024. After reviewing the application, Commissioner Kaiser motioned to approve the application as written; Commissioner Phelps seconded the motion; Chair Weyrauch called for the vote, which passed unanimously.

Review Employee Contract Benefits:

Secretary Harbin presented a summary of current employee benefits per contract. Chief Bement, Captain Josh Ambach, and Administrative Assistant Robin Harbin agreed to reopen their contracts. They will discuss possible benefits changes for consistency among contracts to be presented at the December meeting.

Winter Smoke Signals Draft:

Secretary Harbin presented a draft of the 2024 Fall/Winter Smoke Signals Newsletter. Changes to be made include: 1) Clearly show that the EMS Levy renewal in 2025 is not a new tax; 2) Insert a segment regarding the value of our volunteer firefighters. Lithograph should have the newsletter printed by December 3rd.

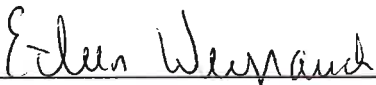
PUBLIC COMMENTS - None

GOOD OF THE ORDER

- Chief Bement and Secretary Harbin are implementing the updates presented at the Snure Legal Seminar in October. Captain Bob Kolva won second place in the annual WFCA photo contest. His prize-winning photo and ribbon are on display at Station 1.
- Secretary Harbin has reserved four rooms for the 2025 Northwest Leadership Seminar scheduled March 5-7, 2025 in Portland, Oregon, to be attended by Chief Bement and all three commissioners. Lodging cost will be approximately \$868 per person, up from \$750 per person last year.
- Chief Bement discussed the value of volunteer firefighters. The value calculators sent out by National Volunteer Fire Council will be used, along with district data, to present figures to the community.

ADJOURNMENT

As there was no other business, the meeting was adjourned at 2:18 p.m.



 Eileen Weyrauch, Chairperson

12-12-2024

 Date



 Robin Harbin, District Secretary

12-12-2024

 Date