

**NEWMAN LAKE FIRE & RESCUE**  
**Spokane County Fire District No. 13**  
Minutes for November 16, 2022  
**BOARD OF FIRE COMMISSIONER MEETING**

**CALL TO ORDER**

The Board of Fire Commissioners of Spokane County Fire Protection District No. 13 met on November 16, 2022, at 1:00 p.m. at Station No. 1, 9324 N Starr Rd., Newman Lake, Washington.

**ROLL CALL**

Board: Chair Teresa Phelps, Commissioner Ben Kaiser, and Commissioner Eileen Weyrauch  
Others Present: Chief Stan Cooke, Captain Josh Ambach, Robin Harbin, and Faye Le Grand

**CONSENT AGENDA**

The consent agenda consisted of the meeting minutes for October 19, 2022, October 26-29, 2022, and October 31, 2022; Financial Reports; and Approval of Warrants #11247 - #11313 in the amount of \$63,567.20, Payroll Taxes in the amount of \$9,572.25 and DRS Pension in the amount of \$1,871.21. Warrants #11244-11246 were for Commissioner Meals/Mileage Per Diem to the WFCFA Annual Conference which were included in the Voucher Approvals of October 19, 2022. Commissioner Kaiser moved to accept the consent agenda; Commissioner Weyrauch seconded; Chair Phelps called for the vote, which passed unanimously.

**AUXILIARY REPORT**

Faye Le Grand reported the current Fire Auxiliary fund balance is \$4,267.00, of which \$1,707 is available for expenses. Three new members attended Monday's meeting which focused on Breakfast With Santa scheduled for December 3, from 8:00 a.m. to Noon. It has been three years since holding the event; the community is quite excited. Tables will be set up against the recliners around the perimeter of the training room for gift selections. Auxiliary members will cook in the kitchen for serving breakfast in the bays. Members will begin to set up and decorate Friday evening after 4:00 p.m.

**CORRESPONDENCE** – The Spokane County Auditor's Office sent notice they will not process any warrants the week of December 19-23. December checks will not arrive for distribution until December 28 or shortly thereafter.

**UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

**Staffing:**

- *Full-Time Firefighter Contracts* – Stan presented and discussed the contracts. We will now be a combination department but have no aim to build beyond three full-time firefighters; (we are not filling the vacant Deputy Chief position). The full-time firefighters will cover call response, oversight of maintenance, training, and EMS. The contracts are 25-year agreements to be reviewed every three years, adapted from the

Leavenworth/Chelan Fire District 3 model which was reviewed and approved by attorney Brian Snure. Compensation was based on average local regional starting firefighter wage increased accordingly for supervisory roles. Step-Program increases will be based on five-year increments plus education/training. A cost-of-living adjustment (COLA) of a minimum of 2.5% will be in place for 2024 and 2025. The contracts include comp-time up to 80 hours per year, floating holidays to ensure coverage, two weeks' vacation to be increased with every 5 years of employment, 320 hours sick leave, \$50,000 life insurance, uniforms, and overtime pay when over 227 hours per 30-day pay period (Fire department FLSA Exemption). The department will pay health insurance premiums for the firefighter and domestic partner. If a firefighter chooses to not cover a domestic partner, he/she may choose to invest a percentage portion into a VEBA.

- *Full-Time Chief Search* – Stan is creating a flyer to post on Daily Dispatch announcing the full-time chief position which will start in May of 2023.

**2022 Fire Academy & New Recruit Update:** Josh Ambach reported the 2022 Fire Academy has been modified to an abbreviated academy due to a limited number of recruits able to participate. A full academy will be planned for the spring.

## **NEW BUSINESS**

**WFCA Health Care Program 2023 Open Enrollment:** The 2023 Employer Application and Eligibility/Contribution Form was reviewed for employee health insurance benefits through the Washington Fire Commissioners Association Health Care Program. Robin reviewed 2023 premium rates. Full-time firefighters hired in 2023 will be offered the PPO-300 Plan with the district paying premiums for the employee and their domestic partner. Commissioner Weyrauch motioned to approve the selections made on the 2023 Employer Application and Eligibility/Contribution Form; Commissioner Kaiser seconded; Chair Phelps called for the vote, which passed unanimously.

**Resolution 2022-8 to Close Fund F65 (F365) and Transfer Balance to Fund F66 (F267):** Fund 365 was re-opened by Spokane County to receive the \$300,000 local direct investment loan at the end of 2020. The \$300,000 was transferred to Fund 363 for new construction and Fund 267 was set up for the loan debt service payments. A \$0.27 balance remained in Fund 363 after transferring out the \$300,000 due to interest earned. As Fund 365 is not needed at this time, Commissioner Kaiser motioned to approve Resolution 2022-8 to close Fund 365 and transfer any remaining balance to Fund 267; Commissioner Weyrauch seconded; Chair Phelps called for the vote which passed unanimously.

**Levy Lid Lift:** The need for a levy lid lift was discussed in order to sustain adequate delivery of services to the community. Although the department can ask for as much as \$1.50/thousand dollars of assessed property value. Since 2015 the amount NLFR has been able to collect has decreased from \$1.50 to 2023's amount of \$.77. This has not allowed NLFR to stay up with inflation. Without a levy lid lift, the department may need to consider selling some apparatus and shutting down Station 2. Commissioner Weyrauch motioned to approve placing a levy lid lift to \$1.30/thousand dollars of assessed property value on the ballot in April 2023; Commissioner Kaiser seconded; Chair Phelps called for the vote, which passed unanimously.

**Signers on Imprest Account:** A motion was made by Commissioner Weyrauch to remove both Kim Stanley and Toni Halloran as signers on the Imprest Account at Umpqua Bank and to add as signers on the account both Josh Ambach and Teresa Phelps; Commissioner Kaiser seconded; Chair Phelps called for the vote, which passed unanimously.

**Shift Stipends and Life Flight Membership for New Shift Volunteers:** Due to budgetary constraints, ending shift stipends for new shift volunteers was discussed. The point was made that shift volunteers gain the benefit of training and experience through our department to help them obtain a position with a paid department. Commissioner Weyrauch motioned to end shift stipends to new volunteers; Commissioner Kaiser seconded; Chair Phelps called for the vote, which passed unanimously. Shift volunteers who have been receiving shift stipends will continue to receive them. Ending Life Flight membership for new volunteers who live outside the district was also discussed. However, at only \$65 per year per member, Life Flight membership is an important benefit the department would like to continue offering to all members. Commissioner Weyrauch motioned to continue paying Life Flight membership for all department members and their households; Commissioner Kaiser seconded; Chair Phelps called for the vote, which passed unanimously.

**PUBLIC COMMENTS - None**

**GOOD OF THE ORDER**

**Phone Calls to Commissioners – Per Diem:** Robin emphasized that commissioners need to be compensated for their time and that members of the department need to know they can take issues to the commissioners when necessary. However, to prevent excessive and/or unnecessary phone calls to commissioners, she suggested an emphasis on members following the chain of command. Robin also suggested that each issue be limited to two meetings with a commissioner whenever possible: 1) Convey information regarding the issue and steps taken to resolve the issue; develop a plan to address and solve the issue. 2) Follow-up meeting to review and confirm resolution of the issue.

**ADJOURNMENT**

As there was no other business, the meeting was adjourned at 2:19 p.m.

  
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Teresa Phelps, Chairperson

12-21-22  
Date

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Robin Harbin, District Secretary

12-21-22  
Date

