

**NEWMAN LAKE FIRE & RESCUE**  
**Spokane County Fire District No. 13**  
Minutes for October 19, 2023  
**BOARD OF FIRE COMMISSIONER MEETING**

**CALL TO ORDER**

The Board of Fire Commissioners of Spokane County Fire Protection District No. 13 met on October 19, 2023, at 1:00 p.m. at Station No. 1, 9324 N Starr Rd., Newman Lake, Washington.

**ROLL CALL**

Board: Commissioners Ben Kaiser, Eileen Weyrauch and Teresa Phelps  
Others Present: Chief Daron Bement, Senior Advisor Stan Cooke, Captain Josh Ambach, Secretary Robin Harbin, Fire Auxiliary Representative Faye Le Grand, and Danny Christmann

**CONSENT AGENDA**

The consent agenda consisted of the meeting minutes for September 21, 2023; Financial Reports; and Approval of Warrants #11762 - #11803 in the amount of \$52,846.11, Payroll Taxes in the amount of \$5,182.75 and DRS Pension in the amount of \$2,734.57. Commissioner Phelps moved to accept the consent agenda; Commissioner Weyrauch seconded; Commissioner Weyrauch called for the vote, which passed unanimously.

**AUXILIARY REPORT**

Faye Le Grand reported the current Fire Auxiliary fund balance is \$10,599.00, the same as last month. The wish list for the department, presented by Captain Josh Ambach, has been approved and includes a Streetwise Smart Board subscription (5 years at \$480 per year, to be paid each year); 2 iPad mounts for command vehicles at \$80 each; and an outdoor grill at \$240. The Auxiliary approved purchasing tables for their events so they don't have to rent them anymore. They may also purchase chairs for the same reason. Auxiliary members were asked to help with the department door-to-door event to get information out about the levy lid lift. No members participated. The Auxiliary is organizing the gifts for Breakfast With Santa which will take place from 8:00AM to Noon on Saturday, December 2<sup>nd</sup>. They may need to purchase additional inexpensive gifts for children. They will set up for Breakfast With Santa on Friday, December 1<sup>st</sup>. The Auxiliary will be putting up Christmas decorations at the station on November 25<sup>th</sup>.

**CORRESPONDENCE**

- Volunteer Firefighter Mike Jennings wrote a thank you letter to Starr, owner of Newman's Pour and Pies, thanking her for her kindness and generosity shown in support of our first responders. Mike's letter and a certificate of appreciation were presented to Starr on October 12, 2023.

**UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

**Levy Lid Lift:**

- **News and Podcast**  
Chief Bement gave a brief review of the levy lid lift interviews conducted by National Public Radio, KXLY News, the Spokesman Review, and Experience Home Podcast by Grace Chiquette.

- **Informing the Community**

Chair Ben Kaiser, department staff and volunteers went door-to-door with information regarding the levy lid lift on Thursday evening, October 5<sup>th</sup>. Staff and volunteers also went door-to-door with information on Saturday, October 14<sup>th</sup>. Neighborhoods covered include the east end of McCoy Road, Eastwood Terrace, and Lincoln Road area.

**HVAC Update:**

- **Enduris Review by Coffman Engineers**

Robin reported that Enduris sent out mechanical engineer, Mark Boyer, of Coffman Engineers on Wednesday, October 18<sup>th</sup> to inspect the HVAC system. He will advise Enduris regarding the compromised refrigerant lines to determine whether they were compromised by the August 2022 hailstorm which damaged the outdoor unit and shut down the HVAC system to the resident side of the building.

**PERS for Elected Officials:**

Robin gathered more information regarding PERS retirement for elected officials as the recent DRS audit required us to offer PERS to our commissioners. However, elected officials do not qualify to participate in PERS unless they earn at least 90 times the state minimum wage each month. In 2023 that would be at least \$1,416.60 per month; in 2024 that will be \$1,465.20 per month. Fire commissioner per diem is currently only \$128 per meeting so our commissioners earn far below the minimum to qualify for this benefit.

**Draft 2024 Operating Budget:**

Robin presented the draft of the 2024 Operating Budget which has been balanced to current projected tax revenues of \$549,149.92 Fire Levy and \$227,412.85 EMS Levy for a total 2024 budget of \$776,562.77. Further cuts were made to stay within this budget, which included the elimination of all contingencies for unexpected expenses. Although these cuts were necessary to stay within the budget, it will mean that breakdowns of equipment and apparatus may not be able to be repaired, rendering them inoperable and unavailable.

**FIRE CHIEF'S REPORT**

**Training/Calls/Apparatus/Facilities:**

Training this past month has included EMS hands-on, live fire training, and search and rescue with smoke. Junior Fire Academy was held at Station 1 on Saturday, October 7<sup>th</sup> for children in the community. Call volume for September was slightly lower than last year but year-to-date calls of 144 is above average. We have added four new Shift Volunteers and have a few more prospective Shift Volunteers. There has been no increase in Community Volunteers.

**DNR Surplus Brush Engine Grant:**

DNR has a surplus of 11 brush engines they are granting to fire departments. We have applied for all of them, ranked by preference. Most are 2015-2016 chassis with approximately 80,000 miles. If we receive one of the brush engines, it will add opportunity for going out on wildland mobs while still covering the district with our current brush truck(s). It could also offer back-up for Brush 13-2, which is a 2001 model, not yet retrofitted like Brush 13-1.

**NEW BUSINESS**

**WFCA Health Care Renewal Contract for 2024:**

Robin presented the 2024 Employer Application and Eligibility/Contribution Form for the Washington Fire Commissioners Association Health Care Program. Robin suggested that all three

employees of the department be under the same medical benefit plan. We would be required to write an addendum for exception if any employee were to be covered under a different plan. Commissioner Weyrauch motioned to approve the annual health insurance contract for 2024 as written with the same plan for all employees; Commissioner Phelps seconded the motion; Chair Kaiser called for the vote which passed unanimously.

**Schedule Public Budget Meeting – November 2023:**

The public budget meeting to finalize and approve the 2024 budget was scheduled for Monday, November 13, 2023 at 6:00 p.m.

**General Fund Reserve Policy – Update to Resolution 2014-8:**

Robin reviewed state and local statutes regarding minimum fund reserve amounts. She did not find any legal requirements. However, Resolution 2014-8 establishes these minimums. In review, only the General Fund Reserve Policy attached to the resolution needs to be changed. Chief Bement and Robin will update the Policy in Lexipol and present it at the next meeting for approval.

**RESOLUTION 2023-11, A Resolution Authorizing Transfer of Funds from F32 to F61:**

The \$4000.00 proceeds from the sale of the surplused 2001 Jeep Cherokee need to be transferred from the Operating Fund 032(F32) to the Capital Project - Apparatus Fund 361(F61) to apply toward the \$4,395.00 cost of a UTV Patient Transport Drop-In to enable better patient access and transport in difficult district terrain. Commissioner Weyrauch motioned to approve Resolution 2023-11 as written; Commissioner Phelps seconded the motion; Chair Kaiser called for the vote which passed unanimously.

**PUBLIC COMMENTS** - none

**GOOD OF THE ORDER**

- Community Volunteer, Michelle Breach, is on leave of absence for 6 to 12 months as she walks across the United States with her dog, Kip, representing both HOPE Animal-Assisted Crisis Response and Newman Lake Fire & Rescue. She and Kip have covered over 600 miles so far. Michelle’s journey can be followed on Facebook at Hope Across America Walk-Kip.
- Volunteer Danny Christmann commented on the Door-to-Door Levy Lid Lift information and stated that the 1% lid on the Fire Levy is not anywhere near the rate of inflation.
- Chief Bement shared that one of the Tillamook, Oregon lawsuits has been dropped and settled, with his name being cleared.

**ADJOURNMENT**

As there was no other business, the meeting was adjourned at 1:46 p.m.



Ben Kaiser, Chairperson

11/16/23

Date



Robin Harbin, District Secretary

11-16-2023

Date