

NEWMAN LAKE FIRE & RESCUE
Spokane County Fire District No. 13
Minutes for May 15, 2025
BOARD OF FIRE COMMISSIONERS MEETING

CALL TO ORDER

The Board of Fire Commissioners of Spokane County Fire Protection District No. 13 met on May 15, 2025, at 1:00 p.m. at Station No. 1, 9324 N Starr Rd., Newman Lake, Washington.

ROLL CALL

Board: Commissioners Teresa Phelps, Ben Kaiser, and Eileen Weyrauch
Others Present: Chief Daron Bement, Captain Josh Ambach, Lieutenant Carleen VanDerostyne, Secretary Robin Harbin, Volunteer Firefighter Michelle Breach, and Eric Swagerty of Enduris

CONSENT AGENDA

The consent agenda consisted of the meeting minutes for April 17, 2025; Financial Reports; Approval of Warrants #12577 - #12617 in the amount of \$41,986.39; Payroll Taxes in the amount of \$7,060.67; and DRS Pension in the amount of \$3,781.54. Commissioner Kaiser motioned to accept the consent agenda; Chair Phelps seconded; Chair Phelps called for the vote, which passed unanimously.

AUXILIARY REPORT

In the absence of Auxiliary member, Josh Ambach, Chief Bement read the written Auxiliary report sent from Josh, who reported the Fire Auxiliary balance remains the same as last month at: \$4,533.62

The annual hot dog and t-shirt sale will take place at the fire station on Saturday, July 5th starting at 10:00 a.m. Just one design will be selected this year for t-shirts, baseball caps, and mugs.

CORRESPONDENCE

Emails were received from Nicholson & Associates and Acrisure in response to our request for insurance quotes. Nicholson & Associates stated FirePlus denied a quote; Acrisure stated VFIS denied a quote. The emails stated the hailstorm claim was the reason for denial.

FIRE CHIEF'S REPORT by Chief Daron Bement

Wildland Fire Season: We are doing what we can to educate homeowners and provide resources to reduce wildfire risk. Although grant funding has expired for the Wildfire Ready Neighbor program, we are still offering site surveys, using supplies sent this past year.

Calls, Staffing, Facilities, Training:

- We had 28 emergency calls in April 2025, as compared to 20 calls in April 2024.
- 2025 year-to-date calls is at 86 as of April, a 14% increase over this date last year.
- Our average response time is 0:06:05 (last year it was 0:07:00)
- Our average out the door time is 0:01:58 (last year it was 0:03:00)
- One resident firefighter has taken a job in Wyoming/Montana as a horseback guide/ranch hand. New Resident Firefighter Drew Gray has moved in.

- The propane heater is being replaced at Station 2 due to a broken fixture, which as caused excessive propane costs. The propane has been shut off until the new heater is installed. The new heater will be installed by Conifer Electric after delivery.
- Brush 13-3 is fully equipped and in full service.
- Training has included – EMS Scenarios, Apparatus Pumping/Drafting, Wildland Live Fire, and EMS Backboarding.

CAPTAIN'S REPORT by Captain Josh Ambach

Apparatus: The surplused 2008 Ford Expedition, old Command 13-1, will be on auction at a Post Falls auction house this weekend with a reserve minimum of \$5,000.

Facilities: Station 1 lights will be updated to LED lighting beginning next week. The lighting update will save electricity and is covered by a grant. The department pays tax only. The installation will be completed by Conifer Electric.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

Insurance Review: Eric Swagerty, of Enduris, commended the department for our due diligence in exploring affordable insurance options and making efforts to obtain quotes from alternative insurance providers but cautioned us to verify equal coverage. Enduris has been our insurance provider since 2008. They are a risk management pool formed by and for special purpose districts such as ours with a \$1 Billion shared limit. Each of the 17 district types are rated on their own merits. General liability limits are \$20 million per occurrence. There is no pool aggregate, and coverage is based on replacement cost. Through Enduris, the department has access to MRSC, allowing us to ask legal and procedural questions of experts, free of charge. Enduris also provides responders accident and health benefits in case of loss of income as well as access to a first responder assistance program.

EMS Levy Renewal: David and Kathy Pfeiffer volunteered to be on the “For” committee to renew the EMS Levy. They sent a copy of their “For” statement after submitting it to the county elections department for the August 5th voters pamphlet. Robin reported that no one responded to our public notice or the county’s notice for an “Against” committee. Information about the EMS Levy renewal will be available at our next quarterly community meeting scheduled for Monday, June 23, 2025 at 6:30 p.m. We will also include information in our spring/summer Smoke Signals newsletter to go out in June and will plan to go door-to-door with information, starting with the neighborhoods that do not receive the newsletter by mail. Included in the information will be our new Personal Medication Card, which can quickly provide EMS responders with a list of health conditions, medications, and allergies – crucial information to have ready in case of a medical emergency.

NEW BUSINESS

Type 3 Apparatus: Chief Bement presented information to consider when planning future replacement of our two 2001 fire engines. He suggested the possibility of a type 3 pumper, due to its versatility for both wildland and structure fires. A good used one was recently listed on the east coast and went quickly. A new 2026 type 3 pumper is approximately \$600,000 according to General Fire/Rosenbauer. Possible options suggested for funding a new pumper include lease to

buy, a Local Direct Investment (LDI) loan through the county treasurer which could be around 4.5% to 5.0% interest, or a bond measure on a ballot. Regardless of any major apparatus purchase, we need to get adequate input and approval from our community. We will get our name on a list for a possible government surplus type 3 engine. However, those are few and far between. We will also continue looking for a good deal on a used type 3 engine.

Columbia County Sheriff's Boat: Chief Bement learned that Columbia County purchased a new Sheriff's Boat and may be selling their 19-foot jet boat for a good price. Information has been requested but no reply has been received to date.

PUBLIC COMMENTS - None

GOOD OF THE ORDER

Printing Warrants In House: After the recent need to obtain our warrants in the parking lot of the county treasurer's office, Secretary Harbin explored the possibility of printing our own warrants in house. Resolution 2017-13 gave approval to print our own warrants, but no documentation was found explaining why it was never implemented. After further communication with the county, Harbin was informed that the county passes along the annual fee that US Bank charges for the service, which would be between \$3,800.00 and \$4,200.00 per year. To avoid this expense to print our own warrants, the district will continue having the county print our checks.

ADJOURNMENT

As there was no other business, the meeting was adjourned at 1:57 p.m.



Teresa Phelps, Chairperson

6-19-25
Date



Robin Harbin, District Secretary

6-19-2025
Date

