

**NEWMAN LAKE FIRE & RESCUE**  
**Spokane County Fire District No. 13**  
Minutes for September 19, 2024  
**BOARD OF FIRE COMMISSIONERS MEETING**

**CALL TO ORDER**

The Board of Fire Commissioners of Spokane County Fire Protection District No. 13 met on September 19, 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, Captain Josh Ambach, Secretary Robin Harbin, and community members Deb Davis, Gayle Furness, Pat Brown, Karen Rowe, and Polly Phipps

**PRESENTATION OF CERTIFICATES OF APPRECIATION**

The following community members were recognized for their outstanding efforts in support of the fire department: Deb Davis, Gayle Furness, Pat Brown, Teresa Phelps, Karen Rowe, and Polly Phipps. (Those recognized but not able to be present include: Simone Ramel-McKay and LeaAnn Gould.)

**CONSENT AGENDA**

The consent agenda consisted of the meeting minutes for August 15, August 24, and September 5, 2024; Financial Reports; Approval of September 2024 Warrants #12228 - #12263 in the amount of \$39,038.09; Payroll Taxes in the amount of \$7,448.00; and DRS Pension in the amount of \$3,995.00. Commissioner Phelps motioned to accept the consent agenda; Chair Weyrauch seconded; Chair Weyrauch called for the vote, which passed unanimously.

**AUXILIARY REPORT**

No representative of the Fire Auxiliary was present during this portion of the meeting. Auxiliary member, Josh Ambach, later reported the Fire Auxiliary balance is: \$12,724.07

**CORRESPONDENCE**

Secretary Harbin presented an email from Enduris regarding insurance coverage for a department member's dozer if used on a wildland fire in the district. Accidental property damage while operating under the district's scope and duty would be covered. Secretary Harbin will inquire further about coverage for damage to the dozer while on duty.

**FIRE CHIEF'S REPORT by Chief Daron Bement**

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

The management team is working on the 2025 budget. Chief Bement and Captain Josh Ambach will participate in the Staff Ride at Little Big Horn the first week of October. Captain Josh Ambach and Lieutenant Carleen VanDerostyne will attend the National Fire Academy in Emmitsburg, Maryland October 20-25. Chief Bement and Secretary Harbin will attend the Snure Legal Seminar in Spokane the evening of October 23. Chief Bement and Captain Josh Ambach will complete Fire Investigation training at Spokane City Fire the last week of October.

We had 29 emergency incidents in August, an increase from 19 in August 2023. Year to date calls total 164, an increase from 124 at this time last year – a 25% increase. We have two new volunteers and nine more potential volunteers at training going through observation.

Command Vehicle 13-1 was damaged by a collision with a deer while out on a call the night of September 15, 2024. Preliminary repair estimates are approximately \$1500, which will be covered by insurance less a \$250 deductible.

August training included Apparatus Maintenance, Tender Operations, EMS Trauma, MVA Scenarios and Extrication, and Ropes/Tech Rescue.

### **Steps to Improve WSRB Protection Class Rating:**

Chief Bement and Secretary Harbin met with Robert Ferrell of the Washington Survey & Ratings Bureau, (WSRB), on September 4, 2024 to discuss ways the department can improve protection class ratings at our next evaluation due the beginning of 2026. Fire department capability and readiness weighs heavily in protection class ratings. Major categories of focus include: Staffing, training, apparatus, and fire safety & prevention. Chief Bement is working with management to implement the recommended plans toward achieving a protection class 5 from our current class 6.

### **CAPTAIN'S REPORT by Captain Josh Ambach**

Captain Ambach reported we were first on scene at a mutual aid brush fire today near Trent and McKinzie. We received high praise from Spokane Valley Fire for quickly containing and knocking down the fire.

The department deployed a brush truck and several personnel on two wildland mobilizations in August 2024. These included: Wicked Drive Fire, August 19-21, 2024 and Bauer Coulee Fire, August 28, 2024.

Open House is scheduled at Station 1 on Saturday, October 5<sup>th</sup>, from 11:00AM-3:00PM. Demonstrations may include a Mega Code and possibly a Live Burn.

## **UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

### **Bereavement Leave Policies of Spokane County Fire Districts:**

Robin presented a summary of bereavement leave policies collected from fire districts in Spokane County. Family members included in the policies were identical to our policy. However, wording has been added to a few of the policies to include the death of someone for whom the employee is the primary caretaker and to allow the five bereavement days to be nonconsecutive, if needed. Commissioner Kaiser motioned to amend our bereavement policy to include both the aforementioned additions; Commissioner Phelps seconded; Chair Weyrauch called for the vote, which passed unanimously.

### **Updates – Policy 215 Annual Stipend; Procedure 607 Resident FF:**

After review of updates to Policy 215, Commissioner Kaiser motioned to approve the updates; Commissioner Phelps seconded; Chair Weyrauch called for the vote, which passed unanimously. Commissioners reviewed updates to Procedure 607 for information purposes as their approval is not required on procedures. Department members sign off to acknowledge all department policies and procedures.

**NEW BUSINESS**

**RESOLUTION 2024-9 A Resolution Authorizing Transfer of Funds from F361 to F32 To Reflect Expenditures from Imprest Fund:**

Secretary Harbin presented Resolution 2024-9 which will accurately reflect F361 expenditures made from the Imprest Fund, not from the F32 Operating Fund. After review of Resolution 2024-9, Commissioner Kaiser motioned to approve the resolution as written; Commissioner Phelps seconded the motion; Chair Weyrauch called for the vote, which passed unanimously.

**EMS Levy Renewal Due in 2025:**

The EMS Levy renews by vote every six years. It is not a new tax but is due to go on the ballot in 2025. Chair Weyrauch suggested we find out what ballot measures are planned by other fire districts, the school district, or other local agencies in 2025 so we may better plan when to place the renewal on the ballot.

**2025 BUDGET PROJECTIONS – DRAFT No. 1:**

Chief Bement presented the initial rough draft of the 2025 Budget Proposal. The draft included a budget for a full-time firefighter to serve as the Training Officer. Commissioners requested a Job Description including a list of Job Duties for the position and an evaluation of the position’s impact on the budget.

**PUBLIC COMMENTS**

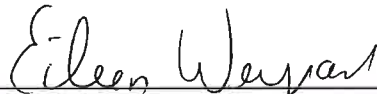
Deb Davis asked about the department’s plans for continued Community Meetings. Chief Bement would like to hold a minimum of two Community Meetings per year in addition to Open House and other community events held at the Fire Station. Additional Community Meetings will be scheduled as needed, including daytime and evening meetings to accommodate community member schedules.

**GOOD OF THE ORDER**

- Everything is set for the WFCAs Annual Conference October 23-26, 2024. Robin will send the commissioners information regarding the 2025 Northwest Leadership Seminar speakers.
- The welcome to Newman Lake Fire & Rescue district signs are old and faded and need replaced. Chief Bement reported SmartSign will make three 18”x18” reflective metal replacement signs for \$208 plus tax. Commissioners would like quotes from a local business to obtain 20”x20” signs.
- Chief Bement discussed the disagreement between SREC and Spokane City Fire. He will draft a letter to Spokane Mayor Brown in support of SREC and will stress its importance to the continuance of effective emergency communications in our community.

**ADJOURNMENT**

As there was no other business, the meeting was adjourned at 2:23 p.m.

  
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 Eileen Weyrauch, Chairperson

10-17-2024  
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 Date

  
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 Robin Harbin, District Secretary

10-17-2024  
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 Date

