

NEWMAN LAKE FIRE & RESCUE
Spokane County Fire District No. 13
Minutes for May 16, 2024
BOARD OF FIRE COMMISSIONER MEETING

CALL TO ORDER

The Board of Fire Commissioners of Spokane County Fire Protection District No. 13 met on May 16, 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, Fire Auxiliary Representative Faye LeGrand, and Richard Peplinski

PUBLIC HEARING – Morris Road Annexation, 22156 E Morris Rd, Parcel No. 56225.9093

Property owner and annexation petition filer, Richard Peplinski, was introduced to the board of commissioners. Chief Bement reported that Richard Peplinski has been a resident of Newman Lake for 49 years. He recently moved up Morris Road to a property not within the Newman Lake Fire District and signed a petition to be annexed into the district on April 2, 2024. In accordance with RCW 52.04.031-051, the fire commissioners reviewed the boundaries of the property to be annexed and accepted the petition at their public meeting held April 18, 2024; May 16, 2024 was set as the date for public hearing; a hearing notice was published in the Spokane Valley News Herald; and three notices of public hearing were posted in the proposed annexation area. Opportunity was given for public testimony. No public was present, nor public testimony given at this public hearing held at 1:00 p.m. on Thursday, May 16, 2024. Chief Bement agreed that annexing the entirety of Parcel No. 56225.9093 into Spokane County Fire District No. 13 is a good decision. As the board was in agreement and there were none in opposition, the public hearing was closed at 1:04 p.m. with the Annexation Resolution to be voted upon later in the regular commissioner meeting.

CONSENT AGENDA

The consent agenda consisted of the meeting minutes for April 18, 2024; Financial Reports; Approval of May 2024 Warrants #12075 - #12114 in the amount of \$36,445.89; Payroll Taxes in the amount of \$5,028.92; and DRS Pension in the amount of \$2,787.45. Commissioner Kaiser motioned to accept the consent agenda; Commissioner Phelps seconded; Chair Weyrauch called for the vote, which passed unanimously.

AUXILIARY REPORT

Faye Le Grand reported the Fire Auxiliary balance is \$7,349.00. Tech rescue rope bags and flags were purchased this last month. The annual hot dog and t-shirt sale is scheduled for Saturday, July 6, from 10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. There were approximately ten people at the last Auxiliary meeting. They are encouraging all members to assist with the hot dog and t-shirt sale. Bob McCauley is in charge of food and has encountered some difficulty in obtaining food donations this year. T-shirt designs have been submitted. One of the new members has volunteered to be in charge of the water sport raffle this year.

CORRESPONDENCE

Letters and Donations from the Inland NW Bronco Club and Jack & Vicki Carney:

A nice letter and a donation in the amount of \$500 was received from both the Inland NW Bronco Club and Jack & Vicki Carney. Robin read the letter from the Inland NW Bronco Club thanking the department for our dedication, bravery, and commitment to protecting lives and property in Newman Lake. They hope their donation will help us maintain the high standards provided by Newman Lake Fire & Rescue. Jack & Vicki Carney live on the coast but have been donating \$500 to the department each year for the past four years in appreciation of our emergency assistance in 2019. Chair Weyrauch noted that the Carney letter mentioned the recent fire being at Honeymoon bay whereas it was at Hampton Bay.

FIRE CHIEF'S REPORT by Chief Daron Bement

General Message:

Our community continues to come together and rebuild after the tragic fire. We are extremely grateful to all of the community that assisted in supporting the district's efforts during the incident and beyond. The department is thankful for our community and all who brought/donated food and drinks. Our staff and volunteers should be proud of the accomplishments of that day. Due to excellent volunteer turnout and partner agencies assisting, two structures were saved and there was no further significant fire spread.

Calls/Training/Staffing/Apparatus/Facilities:

As of May 2, we have had sixty-seven (67) emergency calls this year – an increase of 52% over this time last year. We had twenty-six (26) emergency calls in April alone, an increase of 188% over April 2023.

Training this past month has included an After-Action Review (AAR) for the April 30, 2024 structure fire; monthly apparatus maintenance; EMS Quarterly CPR/Medication Administration & Assessment; and Firefighter Search and Rescue.

The HVAC repair/replacement is moving forward with Andrews Mechanical. However, some electrical work needs to be done before the project can be completed.

Ambulance Service Board:

The County Ambulance Service Board has been meeting with consultant Mike Lopez, (who has been in EMS/Fire for 40 years), to draft a new contract with AMR. The board has been meeting on a weekly basis to end June 30. AMR rate increases will go into effect but not for Medicare/Medicaid patients. After January 2025, the state will impose an act prohibiting billing for nonreimbursable funds.

CAPTAIN'S REPORT by Captain Josh Ambach

Station 1 Flagpole:

The flagpole has been backed into by an unknown vehicle and is currently leaning. The department will make the repairs by pulling up the flagpole, which is currently in deep sand, setting the pole in concrete, and installing bumpers around the flagpole to prevent future damage.

Station 1 Lot Maintenance:

Captain Ambach has sprayed the grounds with weed killer. The lot and field have been mowed thanks to the use of volunteer Mike Jennings' brush hog.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

Levy Lid Lift:

- **Voter Pamphlet For and Against Statements**

Robin pointed out the For Statement left out the word “rate” which changes the accuracy of the statement. She will note the fact at the upcoming Community Meeting on May 21st that the funding rate has decreased almost 50% over the past decade, not the actual funding. The Against Statement contains some inaccurate information and is derogatory against our fire commissioners. Accurate bond and loan information will be provided at the next Community Meeting. Chair Weyrauch stated the department got a good deal on the land purchased for Station 1. The plan had always been to have room for firefighter housing, space for performing necessary maintenance on apparatus, and adequate training facilities, such as the burn building and EVIP course, to fulfill all training and operating requirements set forth by State Law and NFPA standards. Chief Stan Cooke was able to complete these plans in a timely fashion, saving the department hundreds of thousands of dollars by finishing them prior to a drastic rise in costs due to inflation.

- **Community Communication**

Chief Bement and Robin have met with Dennis Gleckler, Dave & Kathy Pfeiffer, Gayle Furness, and Deb Davis, to provide accurate financial information and to clear up any misperceptions regarding department spending decisions. Chief Bement and Robin were also present to provide information and answer questions at the Community Clean-up event held April 20th and at Silverbeard’s Marina Grand Opening on May 4th. We are planning to send out the Smoke Signals newsletter mid-July. The voter pamphlet will be going out around July 17th. A door-to-door campaign will be planned to reach district homes outside of mailing zone 1 who do not receive our mailers. Signs and announcements will need to be posted for the Auxiliary’s annual hot dog and t-shirt sale since the department newsletter will go out after the event.

- **May 21st Community Meeting**

The commissioners would like to have available the half-sheet informational handout illustrating why the department needs a levy lid lift, how much more a homeowner will pay the first year if the fire levy is passed at \$1.10/\$1K, and what the tax rate will be in 2026, 2027, and 2028 if the lid is lifted from 1% to 3%. They agreed that the insurance impact and quotes obtained from WSRB and Nicholson Insurance should also be made available to the community. Robin will place the insurance information on the back of the half-sheet handout.

HVAC Update:

(This was covered during the Chief’s Report. See Chief’s Report section for notes.)

NEW BUSINESS

RESOLUTION 2024-5 APPROVING THE ANNEXATION OF 22156 E MORRIS RD, PARCEL NO. 56225.9093 INTO SPOKANE COUNTY FIRE DISTRICT NO. 13:

After review of Resolution 2024-5, Commissioner Phelps motioned to approve the resolution as written; Commissioner Kaiser seconded the motion; Chair Weyrauch called for the vote, which passed unanimously.

2022-2023 Audit:

Robin announced that the audit has begun. At this point, records are being requested and uploaded to the secure portal electronically. Unless an onsite visit is needed, the audit will be conducted electronically, which should be less expensive. The preliminary estimate of the audit is \$12,500 with additional for any travel costs or other expenses according to the State Auditor’s 2022-2023 Audit Engagement Letter.

PUBLIC COMMENTS – None

GOOD OF THE ORDER

- Captain Josh Ambach and Medic Mandie McIntosh were married on Saturday, May 11, 2024.
- Six properties off Strong are applying to annex into the district.
- Eric Swaggerty of Enduris came to the May 2nd training and gave a Safe Driving/What to Do in Case of an Accident presentation, providing an accident kit for each apparatus.
- Nicholson & Associates is putting together a quote for department insurance.
- Regarding the April 30, 2024 structure fire, Chief Bement stated we had 6 responders on scene withing 6 minutes. We had 5 out the door in less than 2 minutes, (3 staff and 2 shift volunteers). Our department had a total of 19 responders. We responded with 3 tenders, 2 engines, 1 brush truck, 2 command vehicles, and 1 medical truck. Two engines, 1 tender and AMR responded from out of district. Together, we saved the two neighboring houses and prevented wildland fire spread. The structure fire was fully involved when we were dispatched by 911. SVFD came in with their fire investigation team and District 4 arrived with their fire investigator dog. Investigators concluded the fire started inside the home of unknown cause.
- Captain Josh Ambach will be attending the next HOA meeting in the neighborhood and will communicate these fire investigation results.

ADJOURNMENT

As there was no other business, the meeting was adjourned at 2:05 p.m.




 Eileen Weyrauch, Chairperson



 Date



 Robin Harbin, District Secretary



 Date