

NEWMAN LAKE FIRE & RESCUE
Spokane County Fire District No. 13
Minutes for September 21, 2023
BOARD OF FIRE COMMISSIONER MEETING

CALL TO ORDER

The Board of Fire Commissioners of Spokane County Fire Protection District No. 13 met on September 21, 2023, at 1:00 p.m. at Station No. 1, 9324 N Starr Rd., Newman Lake, Washington.

ROLL CALL

Board: Commissioners Eileen Weyrauch and Teresa Phelps; Chair Ben Kaiser participated remotely via GoToMeeting.

Others Present: Chief Daron Bement, Senior Advisor Stan Cooke, Captain Josh Ambach, Secretary Robin Harbin, Fire Auxiliary Representative Faye Le Grand, Jerry Le Grand, and Charles Stocker

CONSENT AGENDA

The consent agenda consisted of the meeting minutes for August 17, 2023 and August 29, 2023; Financial Reports; and Approval of Warrants #11719 - #11761 in the amount of \$38,438.66, Payroll Taxes in the amount of \$5,350.74 and DRS Pension in the amount of \$2,712.04. 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. Some of the current balance came from previous years' T-Shirts which were sold at the August Ice Cream Social. The Auxiliary may donate some of the unsold T-Shirts to recent fire victims of the Gray Road, Medical Lake and the Oregon Road, Elk wildland fires. Captain Josh Ambach stated that Auxiliary President, Kelli Lemley, reported that the following department wish list items were approved for purchase by the Auxiliary: 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 approximately \$240.

CORRESPONDENCE

- Robin presented excerpts from recent community member correspondence, thanking the department for their assistance and service. Full notes and letters were not presented in accordance with HIPAA.
- Robin reviewed the DRS Audit Exit Summary and the corrections made in response. The DRS Audit included directions to offer PERS retirement to elected officials. Robin will find out if this would be retroactive to a commissioner's start date and what the cost would be to the commissioner as well as the department.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

Levy Lid Lift:

- **Informational Posts on Website & Facebook**

Chief Bement stated the Facebook and Website posts have been rewritten with a more positive message/delivery after receiving feedback that the posts were too harsh and negative. Although it is important that the community understand how emergency services will be effected without a levy lid lift, the focus will now be on how to help maintain services. Chief Bement conducted a podcast interview with a local community member this week, answering Levy Lid Lift questions.

- **Informing the Community**

October 5th, and possibly October 12th, volunteers and Auxiliary members will be going door to door to inform the community about the Levy Lid Lift. Stan stated the community needs to know what we'll maintain if the Lid Lift is passed and what we'll lose if it doesn't. Some community members are under the impression we are a full-time career fire department and don't know that we are a volunteer department with a limited number of community volunteers available to respond on calls from home. Many don't know that our volunteers must train to the same level as a full-time career firefighter. Call volume is increasing; both volunteers and a quality training program are imperative.

HVAC Update:

- Robin reported what she has learned to date from Larry Andrews of Andrews Mechanical. Samples from the HVAC coolant lines contain green slime, indicating the lines have been compromised. If the lines are simply flushed and recharged, we will likely have issues within a few years, requiring the system to be torn apart again to replace the coolant lines and indoor units. Robin presented Andrews Mechanical Proposal & Contract No. P 8888 in the amount of \$29,941.00 plus tax to remove and replace the six indoor units and refrigerant lines. A parts warranty was not included in the proposal. Robin will obtain warranty information for the commissioners. Commissioner Phelps motioned to approve Proposal & Contract No. P 8888 contingent upon warranty information; Commissioner Weyrauch seconded; Commissioner Weyrauch called for the vote, which passed unanimously.
- Enduris will be sending out an electrical or mechanical engineer to evaluate the compromised coolant lines to determine the cause for the insurance claims adjuster.

Administrative Assistant Contract Review:

Robin's contract was reviewed and amended to include the promised \$2.00 per hour increase for obtaining EMT certification in April and changing hours from a minimum of 30 hours per week to from 30 hours up to a maximum of 40 hours per week. Commissioner Phelps motioned to approve Robin Harbin's Administrative Assistant as amended; Commissioner Weyrauch seconded; Commissioner Weyrauch called for the vote, which passed unanimously.

Conversion of Active 911 to Streetwise:

Captain Josh Ambach reported that the conversion from Active 911 to Streetwise is complete. One major advantage of Streetwise over Active 911 is that it is a CAD system with live feed enabling responders to see all dispatch notes and updates in real time. Another advantage to Streetwise is that neighboring fire districts are on the system which will allow us to track other units for mutual aid. We'll be able to see which units are coming and how far away they are.

Sale of Surplused 2001 Jeep Cherokee:

Captain Josh Ambach removed all equipment and decals from the 2001 Jeep Cherokee before selling it to a private party for the full asking price of \$4,000 on September 14th. Chief Bement discussed using the proceeds to purchase a patient transport slide-in for one of UTVs. The UTVs have the ability to get into areas inaccessible by any other vehicle. Being able to safely transport a patient in a UTV will help improve patient outcomes.

FIRE CHIEF'S REPORT

Training/Calls/Apparatus/Facilities:

Training this past month has included EMS hands-on, ropes rescue, firefighter safety/bailout, ladder operations, and water tender shuttles. Call volume has been much higher than in past years. August had 28 responses up from 16 in 2022 which is a 54% increase. We've had several critical incidents in the past couple of months and helicopter transports have been on the rise. There have been minor issues with the older tenders that we were able to repair in-house. We are working with SVFD to develop a plan to have them assist with apparatus maintenance.

Wildland Mobilization August 18-29, 2023:

Over 500 homes were lost to the Gray Road and Oregon Road wildland fires. Attack 13-1 and Tender 13-4 were sent to the Gray Road fire in Medical Lake. The Tender crew was there for 12 hours; Josh Ambach worked the Gray Road fire for 24 hours. Brush 13-2 was sent to the Oregon Road fire with volunteers Victoria Ediger and Jim Stevenson being the first crew on for 24 hours, swapping with volunteers Mike Jennings and Connor Hunnel for the next 24 hours. Mike and Connor worked diligently to defend and successfully save over six houses from the fire. Stan commended Chief Bement on providing help to Medical Lake and Elk while assuring adequate and ready coverage in district.

NEW BUSINESS

Preliminary Draft 2024 Operating Budget:

Robin presented a draft of the 2024 Operating Budget which has been cut and cut again in numerous areas and still has another \$50,000 to cut. Cuts include shift volunteers, gear, hose, supplies, training, and education. Chief Bement and Robin will continue to work on budget cuts and will present an updated draft to the commissioners at the October meeting.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

- Jerry Le Grand inquired about asking a question of the commissioners after the meeting. Commissioner Weyrauch explained the rules of the public meeting act. Mr. Le Grand stated the topic was regarding a Tillamook new article. Chief Bement responded that Commissioners are aware of the Tillamook situation. Commissioner Weyrauch confirmed that it was fully disclosed by Chief Bement during the chief hiring process.
- Charles Stocker stated that the department needs to communicate its financial issue to the public before November 7th. He suggested going door to door to educate the public in clear, understandable terms. Mr. Stocker also suggested we make sure the "yes" vote community members get out and vote. He stressed the importance of getting information out to the community before the ballots go out in October.

GOOD OF THE ORDER

NW Leadership Conference 2024 – In light of budget cutbacks, it was suggested that commissioners select either the NW Leadership Conference or the Annual WFOA Conference,

not both. Commissioner Phelps will go to the NW Leadership Conference. Robin will ask Commissioner Kaiser which one he would like to attend; Eileen will go to the other.

ADJOURNMENT

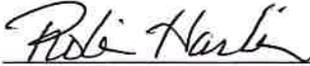
As there was no other business, the meeting was adjourned at 2:30 p.m.



Ben Kaiser, Chairperson

10/19/23

Date



Robin Harbin, District Secretary

10-19-2023

Date