NEWMAN LAKE FIRE & RESCUE
Spokane County Fire District No. 13
Minutes for October 15, 2026
BOARD OF FIRE COMMISSIONERS MEETING

CALL TO ORDER
The Board of Fire Commissioners of Spokane County Fire Protection District No. 13 met on October 15, 2026, at 1:00 p.m. at Station No. 1, 9324 N Starr Rd., Newman Lake, Washington.

ROLL CALL
Board: Chair Ben Kaiser and Vice Chair Teresa Phelps; Commissioner Dennis Gleckler participated remotely via Teams
Others Present: Chief Daron Bement, Division Chief Josh Ambach, Training Officer Carleen Beauchene, Secretary Robin Harbin, and Community Members Dave and Kathy Pfeiffer; Michael Miller participated remotely via Teams

CONSENT AGENDA
The consent agenda consisted of the meeting minutes for September 17 and September 28, 2026; Financial Reports; Approval of Warrants #13536 - #13607 in the amount of $73,387.09; Payroll Taxes in the amount of $9,936.03; and DRS Pension in the amount of $5,479.11. Vice Chair Phelps moved to accept the consent agenda; Chair Kaiser seconded the motion; Chair Kaiser called for the vote, which passed unanimously.

CORRESPONDENCE
09-18-2026 Assessment & Preliminary Levy Calculation Summaries: Secretary Harbin reported the preliminary best estimates for 2027 are: General Fire Levy $839,177.59; EMS Levy $370,428.55 for a total of $1,209,606.14, an increase of $34,454.92 over 2026. The district is in year 3 of 4 of the levy lid lift which allows an increase of three percent rather than the one percent lid. The district is in year 2 of 6 of the EMS Levy.

Thank You Card from the Willis Family: Lieutenant Beauchene read a card of thanks presented to us from the Willis family, along with a large, framed photo of our EMS team that quickly and efficiently worked together to successfully revive Mr. Willis from cardiac arrest.

FIRE CHIEF'S REPORT by Chief Daron Bement
General Message:
- We had a few last-minute wildland mobilizations in September.
- Our call volume continues to be projected higher than last year.
- We are focused on fire and community safety in October. The outdoor burn ban will be lifted at 00:01 on 10/16/2026.

Calls, Staffing, Apparatus, Training:
- September 2026 = 19 responses
- Increase from 18 in September 2025
- Our year-to-date total calls is 200 as of September 30, 2026.

- We will have 50 Volunteer Firefighters on the roster after processing in two lateral Firefighter/EMT transfers from Grant County. Opening doors to Shift Volunteers who live outside the district, along with developing a quality culture and training program have contributed to an increase in applicants. We would be able to bring on more volunteers if we had a sufficient supply of gear.
- Brush Truck B13-2 is scheduled to receive parts for the warranty work this month and should be done by the 21st. Dennis helped to expedite the work.
- Brush Truck B13-1 chassis swap-over will be completed later this month or early next month, depending on team availability.
- The 2026 RAM 1500 (Command 1302) will be going for wrap and labels this month and will go to upfit once all equipment is received.
- September training included: Auto Extrication; Scope of Practice–EMS; ICS; and Fire Gound Operations

DIVISION CHIEF'S REPORT by Chief Josh Ambach
Operations/Training Division Report:

- Training is going well. 2027 Academy plans are in place.
- Four out of five testing for FF1 passed. We are working with the 5th one to successfully pass.
- Our newest recruits go for Hazmat training at District 4 next week.
- The opportunity to receive quality training and achieve certifications is another reason for an increase in volunteer applications.

2026 Wildland Mobilizations Review:

- We are slowly receiving payments from WSP and DNR. We have five more fires yet to be paid out for equipment.
- DNR has double paid us on two fires. We do not know when or how they will correct this.

AUXILIARY REPORT
As reported by Division Chief Josh, the Fire Auxiliary balance is still $7,438.73, the same as the last two months. No information was received regarding any meetings which may have been held.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

2027 Operating Budget DRAFT 2:
Secretary Harbin presented the second draft of the 2027 Operating Budget which is based upon Preliminary Tax Levy estimates received from the Spokane County Assessor's Office after their September assessment, a total of $1,209,606. After budgeting $100K to go into Capital ($71,000 to Apparatus; $29,000 to Facilities), and $79,600 for the non-voted LTGO Bond payment, the remaining budget is divided by department as follows:

LEGISLATIVE EXPENSES	$42,400
STAFFING & VOLUNTEER EXPENSES	$645,550
OFFICE AND ADMINISTRATION EXPENSES	$126,950
FIRE SERVICE EXPENSES	$72,700
EMS SUPPLIES AND PPE	$12,500
FACILITIES EXPENSES	$41,700
VEHICLES EXPENSES	$48,406
TRAINING AND COMMUNICATION EXPENSES	$39,800

Command Vehicles:
Chief Josh reviewed the impact of selling Command C13-3. The negative impact to the department outweighs the benefit of selling the 2015 Ford Explorer, which could potentially sell for $7000 on the high end because it is a police interceptor model. The district had four command vehicles when Chief Bement came on the department in 2023. All four of our current command vehicles are being used: 1301, 1302, 1320, and C13-3. Command vehicles are utilized on wildland mobilizations, generating funds for the district. When command vehicles are out on mobilizations, it is imperative to have a command vehicle available for the duty officer. Duty officers are not willing to respond to calls in their own personal vehicles due to risk. Enduris only covers personal vehicle damage after personal insurance has paid. Selling Command C13-3 would cause the district to lose money on wildland mobilizations. More importantly, it would result in losing a longtime committed duty officer and take away any incentive for members to serve as duty officer. As all four command vehicles are being used and maintenance costs are minimal to retain Command C13-3, Chief Josh requested the commissioners reverse last month's request to sell Command C13-3. In consideration of the benefits of keeping Command C13-3, Vice Chair Phelps motioned to retain and not sell Command C13-3; Commissioner Gleckler seconded the motion; Chair Kaiser called for the vote, which passed unanimously.

New Apparatus Project Cost Update:
Chief Josh gave an update on the New Apparatus Project completion costs for Command 1302 (2026 RAM 1500) and Brush B13-1 (2026 RAM 5500 Chassis). The original total project cost estimate was $160,000.00, based upon best estimates from information gathered before vehicle purchase. Since then, costs have increased. The actual total costs will be $170,179.97. All efforts have been made to reduce costs as much as possible. For example, Brush 13-1 can use its existing lights and sirens, and CW Outfitters is reducing costs by $5000 as well as the amount of the tax we will pay. As both vehicles will generate funds for the department by going out on wildland mobilizations, the increased costs of approximately $10,180 are reasonable and justifiable. Vice Chair Phelps motioned to approve the increased expenses to complete the New Apparatus Project; Commissioner Gleckler seconded the motion; Chair Kaiser called for the vote, which passed unanimously.

NEW BUSINESS

New Threshold for Employee Exempt Status:
Secretary Harbin reported that Washington State recently published the new minimum salary threshold for employee exempt status. Chief Josh is currently classified as an exempt employee, which makes him exempt from overtime or comp time. His scheduled 2027 salary is $688.50 below the new exempt salary minimum threshold of $92,196.00. Therefore, Secretary Harbin asked the commissioners if they would rather increase Chief Josh's 2027 by $688.50 to meet the minimum exempt salary threshold, or rewrite Chief Josh's contract to include overtime and comp time. Vice Chair Phelps motioned to increase Chief Josh's 2027 salary by $688.50 to the minimum exempt threshold of $92,196.00; Chair Kaiser seconded; Chair Kaiser called for the vote, which passed unanimously.

Used Fire Engine Available:
At the September Commissioner Meeting, Chief Bement had presented a potential new fire engine at the cost of approximately $720,000. After shipping and outfitting, the total cost would be at least $850,000. In continued search for the best fire engine to meet the district's needs at the lowest cost, the Chiefs found a pristine, practically new fire engine at a new fire district in Otsego, Minnesota. After the new district had purchased a fleet of new fire engines, they had a change in leadership who chose to switch to an EMS focus. Therefore, the new fire district is selling a 2025 fire engine with less than

600 miles on it at the cost of $545,000 plus tax of approximately $46,325, for a total of $591,325. The fire engine has all the apparatus team has been looking for: A low ladder, heated compartments, heated pump, and comes with approximately $10,000 worth of equipment such as: Suction hose, ladders, hose and hose reel, pike poles, and trash hook. An annual pump test will be completed by the seller prior to the sale and the blue emergency lights will be changed out for red. Shipping on a flatbed is included in the price. The Chiefs completed a virtual tour of the Midwest Fire made truck yesterday. It has a standard Cummins L9 360HP engine with a standard 4WD Allison transmission a on a Freightliner chassis and has a 750 gallon tank. It is the same height and length as our current engines but is a 4WD and has a better turning radius. Per Fire Safety USA, the third party dealer handling the sale of the fire engine, the one piece poly unit box comes with a lifetime warranty. There is a 6 year warranty on the Cummins motor and transmission, (6 years from purchase), and a 5 year warranty on the Waterous pump and electronics. Any warranty work can be completed locally through Cummins, General Fire, or other approved providers. The truck would not need to be taken to Minnesota for warranty work. Commissioner Gleckler expressed concern about off road power. Chief Josh affirmed the engine is an L9 rather than a 6.7. The fire engine will be used for urban interface, protecting structures vs. fields and timber. It won't be climbing to the top of a mountain. When deployed on wildland mobilizations, the truck could potentially generate approximately $3200 per day for the district. Chief Bement stressed that careful consideration is given to sending out apparatus and firefighters on wildland mobilizations. We first ensure the district has at least one brush truck, one fire engine, and adequate personnel to meet our own community's needs. Chief Bement concluded that this fire engine has all the items the Apparatus Committee wanted in a new engine. He expressed his concern that if we let this opportunity go, we won't find another like it.

Funding and Purchasing a Used Fire Engine:
Chief Bement presented and discussed funding options to purchase the proposed used fire engine. The best option for the greatest funding flexibility and preserving some building outlay funds will be to transfer to Capital Apparatus Fund F361: $118,000 of the revenue made from 2026 Wildland Mobilizations, $162,000 from Capital Facilities Fund 363, and to secure a $300,000 5 year Spokane County Investment Pool (SCIP) loan through the Spokane County Treasurer at approximately 5.9% interest. This would provide the estimated $610,000 needed to purchase, license/register, and put in service the proposed used fire engine. Other financing options explored have interest rates of 6.1% to 6.7%. Chief Bement stated there is no penalty for early payoff of an SCIP loan. He proposed all future funds generated by wildland mobilizations be split with 50% going toward the loan and 50% going into capital funds. The district will also surplus and sell the current Fire Engine E13-2.

Vice Chair Phelps asked about the need for an adequate rescue boat. Chief Bement replied that a new fire engine and brush trucks present a greater need than a boat at this time. The goal is to pay off the fire engine in 5 years or less and rebuild capital funds enough to address the district's boat need. Chief Josh noted the public has appreciated how the department is improving our apparatus without going out for a bond or increasing taxes.

Although a former department member, now residing in Minnesota, has offered to inspect the fire engine in person, commissioners would like to send the Chiefs and Commissioner Gleckler to Otsego, Minnesota to conduct an in-person walk through of the truck the beginning of November before finalizing the purchase. Commissioners gave the Chiefs permission to sign a purchase agreement to hold the fire engine as long as the agreement states it is pending an in-person walk through.

- **RESOLUTION 2026-15 Authorizing the Sole Source Purchase of a Used Fire Engine**
  After review and discussion, Vice Chair Phelps motioned to approve Resolution 2026-15 as written, pending the in-person walk through of the fire engine in Otsego, Minnesota; Commissioner Gleckler seconded the motion; Chair Kaiser called for the vote, which passed unanimously.

- **RESOLUTION 2026-16 Authorizing the Transfer of Funds to Capital Apparatus**
  After review and discussion, Vice Chair Phelps motioned to approve Resolution 2026-16 as written, pending the in-person walk through of the fire engine in Otsego, Minnesota; Commissioner Gleckler seconded the motion; Chair Kaiser called for the vote, which passed unanimously.

- **RESOLUTION 2026-17 Authorizing an SCIP Loan of $300,000 for Used Fire Engine**
  After review and discussion, Vice Chair Phelps motioned to approve Resolution 2026-17 as written, pending the in-person walk through of the fire engine in Otsego, Minnesota; Commissioner Gleckler seconded the motion; Chair Kaiser called for the vote, which passed unanimously.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

Dave Pfeiffer asked about 20 Officers, also called Duty Officers. Chief Josh replied they are the officer in charge and responsible when filling their Duty Officer shift. They take phone calls from Dispatch and volunteers and respond to all calls as the responsible officer. Dave also asked if any volunteers respond to calls in their own vehicle. Chief Josh replied there are still about 3 volunteers who do this. However, in the winter months, nearly all volunteers come to the station first in order to respond on calls with a district vehicle.

GOOD OF THE ORDER

A Washington State Patrolman inquired about staying at Station 1 in our empty dorm room for two months while in transition. Chief Bement expressed that we want to be a good partner but will need communication and appropriate follow-up from WSP officers wanting to make such arrangements. Without this, the accommodations will not be made.

ADJOURNMENT

As there was no other business, the meeting was adjourned at 2:32 p.m.

Ben Kaiser, Chairperson — 11/12/26 Date

Robin Harbin, District Secretary — 11-12-2026 Date