

**Whatcom County Fire District #4
via Zoom Meeting
4142 Britton Loop, Bellingham, WA 98226
12:00 p.m.
May 13, 2024
Regular Board of Fire Commissioners Meeting**

CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Cooley called the regular Whatcom County Fire District #4 Board of Fire Commissioners meeting for May 13, 2024, to order at 12:00 p.m.

ROLL CALL

Attendees: Chairman Steve Cooley; Vice-Chairman Tim Johnson; Fire Commissioner Mark Lann; Fire Chief Jason Van der Veen.

With the rescission of Proclamation 20-28, the district continues to do its best to provide accommodations to the public. A direct link allowing the public to participate in the meeting during the public comment section was included on the meeting agenda and posted on the District's website.

PUBLIC COMMENT

None

APPROVAL OF CONSENT AGENDA

1. Meeting Minutes
 - a) April 15, 2024 – regular
2. Staff Reports – Chief / Operations / Training / Technical Support
3. Financial Report
 - a) Total Revenue – April \$1,411,565.74
 - b) Total Expenditures – May \$2,483.00
4. Voucher / Payroll / Benefits
 - a) Monthly Expenditure Payroll Voucher: \$483.00
 - b) Monthly Expenditure Voucher: \$2,000.00

Due to a correction made by Whatcom County to the 2023 tax revenues, Finance Specialist Jessica Koehler could not reconcile the accounting system to reflect the accurate April Revenues.

MOTION: Vice-Chairman Johnson moved to approve the Consent Agenda as presented. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Lann and approved 3-0.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

05.14 Capital Purchasing Policy: Chairman Cooley and Chief Van der Veen met to review the policy in great detail. The policy was first introduced during the March Board meeting.

MOTION: Chairman Cooley moved to approve the 05.14 Capital Purchasing Policy as presented. The motion was seconded by Vice-Chairman Johnson and approved 3-0.

Small Works Roster Termination Update: Chief Van der Veen noted that a resolution terminating the district's small work roster may be presented for approval during the June meeting.

A separate resolution will also be presented for approval to join the Municipal Research and Services Center (MRSC) for Washington. MRSC is a nonprofit organization that helps local governments across Washington State better serve their communities. The district can utilize its small work roster, and effective July 1, 2024, MRSC Rosters will become the designated statewide roster.

Whatcom County Council Resolution 2023-054 Protest: The Whatcom County Fire Commissioners Association Executive Board sent a letter to the Whatcom County Council requesting they repeal the resolution. The Whatcom County Council motion to repeal Resolution 2023-054 failed, and no other progress has been made. A copy of the letter was included in the Board packet.

Britton Rd/Northern Heights Annexation Update: Chief Van der Veen and Chairman Cooley noted that there has been no forward movement regarding the proposed annexation. The city departments continue to gather data, and Chairman Cooley will continue to monitor this topic.

Chief Van der Veen also plans to review the City Council Board meeting packets for pertinent information in the future.

NEW BUSINESS

Whatcom County Fire Commissioners Meeting: Chairman Cooley attended the Whatcom County Fire Commissioners Association meeting on Wednesday, May 8. He plans to attend future meetings regularly.

The Whatcom County Fire Chiefs Association directed Attorney Richard Davis to draft a letter addressing their concerns regarding the County Council's interpretation of how agencies will receive emergency medical services (EMS) funding in the future, which conflicts with the original agreement. The letter also references how miscommunications by the County in the past have resulted in animosity. It was unclear what role the Whatcom County Fire Commissioner's Association may play regarding this topic.

Chief Van der Veen will locate and distribute a copy of the letter.

Department of Ecology Notification:

“The Department of Ecology will file an adjudication in Whatcom County Superior Court in Spring 2024. Adjudication is a court of process that reviews all water use in an area.

- *Later this year, you will receive certified mail, including a summons, instructions, and court claim forms.*
- *If you use water directly from the surface or groundwater, you must follow the instructions and file a court claim form. If you only use water from a city or other public service, you do not need to file a form.*
- *Even small groundwater uses that do not require permits, including single homes on wells, still need to file a claim form*
- *You do not need a water meter to submit your required court claim form.”*

Commissioner Lann provided information regarding the Department of Ecology’s upcoming process. This process includes forcing entities, including homeowners, that do not utilize water from a city or other public service to fight for their water rights. It is expected to take a minimum of one year to complete.

District 4’s Smith Rd. Station 13 utilizes a well.

Commissioner Lann, who also serves on a Water District Board, will update the Board with any pertinent information.

Chief Van der Veen will forward the information to the district’s attorney.

Britton Loop Station 12 Projects

Replacement of Fire Engine – An apparatus committee has been established that will provide a recommendation for an engine replacement in the near future.

Upgrading of the Britton Loop Station 12 exterior: Chairman Cooley noted that due to the size of the project and limited administration staff, it was suggested that the district consider hiring a project manager for oversight. Chief Van der Veen stated that District 21 has two project manager interviews scheduled in the near future. The project manager will oversee the Birch Bay Station 63 project. District 4 may also want to utilize their subject matter expertise.

Items to be discussed during the interview include salaries, expectations, scope of work, expertise, and costs. A project manager would also need a vast knowledge of prevailing wage, taxes, L&I, OSHA, and audit regulations and requirements.

More information will be presented during the June Board meeting.

CORRESPONDENCE

- D21 Letter to Citizens
- Water Adjudication Information
- MRSC Information

ANNOUNCEMENTS

- **June Board Meeting Attendance Query:** All Commissioners present are expected to attend the June 17 meeting via Zoom.

AGENDA ITEMS FOR NEXT MEETING

- Small Works Roster Termination Resolution
- MRSC Resolution
- Department of Ecology Water Adjudication Update
- Britton Rd/Northern Heights Annexation Update
- Britton Loop Station 12 Exterior Project Manager Update

ADJOURNMENT

MOTION: There being no further business, Chairman Cooley moved to adjourn the meeting at 12:24 p.m. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Lann and approved 3-0.

Respectfully Submitted by:

Jennie Sand, Board Secretary

ATTEST:

Steve Cooley, Chairman

Tim Johnson, Vice-Chairman

Mark Lann, Commissioner

Jason Van der Veen, Fire Chief