

**Whatcom County Fire District #4
via Zoom Meeting
4142 Britton Loop, Bellingham, WA 98226
12:00 p.m.
October 15, 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 October 15, 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) September 16, 2024 – Announcement (no quorum)
 - b) September 23, 2024 – Special (date change)
2. Staff Reports – Chief / Operations / Training / Technical Support
3. Financial Report
 - a) Total Revenue – September \$48,953.31
 - b) Total Expenditures – October \$2,483.00
4. Voucher / Payroll / Benefits
 - a) Direct Deposit Payroll: \$483.00
 - b) Monthly Expenditure Voucher: \$2,000.00

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

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

Britton Loop Station 12 Exterior Projects: Chief Van der Veen is overseeing this project and continues to work on getting bids for the siding project. He has met with the first of three contractors at the station and hopes to get updated bids soon.

In the interim, some trees are being removed around the station to provide more direct sunlight to the building and eliminate some of the pine needle issues.

Fire Engine Bid Quote: Chief Van der Veen reported that he is meeting with Pierce Manufacturing next week to review the district's apparatus needs.

NEW BUSINESS

District 21 Planning Meeting: Chairman Cooley and Chief Van der Veen attended the District 21 planning meeting on October 12, 2024.

Attendees discussed ways to find and/or save money due to the failure of the District 21 levy lid lift.

Chairman Cooley thanked the District 4 community for their continual support and approval of their levy lid lift.

Chief Van der Veen noted that the District 21 Board is committed to not browning down Britton Loop Station 12. In addition, while the District 21 Board is considering alternative funding sources, including BLS collections for delinquent medical payments, they are also investigating how to parcel out the District 4 taxpayers.

Both Boards continue to run unified operations. As a long-term plan, the District 4 Board may decide to converse with outside agencies to see which agency will benefit their constituents, depending partly on the City of Bellingham's proposed annexation. No changes to the current agreement are expected in 2025.

Whatcom County Consolidation Study Meeting: Chief Van der Veen and District 21 Chairman Ansell attended the Whatcom County Council Fire Service Consolidation Study kickoff and the Whatcom County Fire Commissioners Association (WCFCA) meetings.

District 21 also met with one of the East Coast consultants and provided information about Washington State Fire Agencies, including the fire commissioner's role. In the future, a follow-up meeting may be held to discuss District 4/District 21's operations. Chief Van der Veen will forward the project's process and projected timeline to the Board.

During the WCFCA meeting, specific fire chiefs and commissioners were tasked with developing a thirty-minute outreach on the history of fire districts in this area and the role of an elected official of a special taxing district. Chief Van der Veen is part of developing the outreach. The information will be presented to each Whatcom County Council Member with the hope of better collaboration and learning opportunities in the future.

Liz Loomis Public Affairs: Chairman Cooley and Chief Van der Veen will meet to discuss the benefit of retaining Liz Loomis Public Affairs.

Although Liz Loomis has created an informational flyer, it is expected to be sent to District 4 constituents after the election for greater impact.

More discussion is expected during the next meeting.

CORRESPONDENCE

None

ANNOUNCEMENTS

- **November Board Meeting Attendance Query:** The Board agreed to change the meeting date to November 14 via Zoom. The meeting will be a special meeting (date change) and Public Hearing.
- **November 2025 Joint Budget Work Session:** All Board members plan to attend the November 22 at 9:00 a.m. meeting at Odell Station 61.

AGENDA ITEMS FOR NEXT MEETING

- Britton Loop Station 12 Exterior Project
- Fire Engine Bid Quote
- Liz Loomis Contract
- Whatcom County Consolidation Study Meeting
- Bellingham Annexation

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 12:30 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted by:

Jennie Sand, Board Secretary

ATTEST:

Steve Cooley, Chairman

Tim Johnson, Vice-Chairman

Mark Lann, Commissioner

Jason Van der Veen, Fire Chief