

**Whatcom County Fire District #4
via Zoom Meeting
4142 Britton Loop, Bellingham, WA 98226
12:00 p.m.
October 16, 2023
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 16, 2023, 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 18, 2023 – regular
2. Staff Reports – Chief / Operations / Training / Technical Support
3. Financial Report
 - a) Expense Fund Revenue – September \$25,989.66
 - b) Total Expenditures – October \$17,926.13
4. Voucher / Payroll / Benefits
 - a) Monthly Expenditure Payroll Voucher: \$640.00
 - b) Monthly Expenditure Voucher: \$17,316.13

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

Chairman Cooley requested clarification on some of the board packet information.

Since the current longtime Business Manager is retiring soon, the Washington State Auditor's Office (WSAO) decided to complete a one-year 2022 financial cash audit. Commissioner Lann participated in a phone interview regarding the audit. The auditors will schedule an exit interview when complete, which can be done by one commissioner or by special board meeting.

District 4's portion of the August 2023 primary election was \$13,076.13.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

Contract for Services Extension: Due to various circumstances, Chairman Cooley, District 21 Chairman Ansell, and Chief Van der Veen have yet to meet to discuss the contract for services extension, which is expected to extend the original contract to the end of 2024.

Once completed, the document will be sent to the attorneys for review before asking for approval by both boards.

Northern Heights Annexation Update: Chief Van der Veen provided an update on the Northern Heights annexation.

Chief Van der Veen noted that he had talked with the City of Bellingham planning department, which recently received the Northern Heights annexation preliminary application. If approved, the application will be submitted to the Bellingham City Council and eventually to the Whatcom County Boundary Review Board for approval.

If no complications are brought forth, the annexation could be finalized by April 2025, which is sooner than was first anticipated.

In the interim, District 4's and District 21's chairs will craft a joint letter to the City of Bellingham expressing their concerns regarding the annexation's impacts on District 4.

All annexation information is public record, and Chief Van der Veen will update the Board on any pertinent facts.

Chairman Cooley noted that he met with Chief Van der Veen and Consultant Liz Loomis regarding District 21's upcoming levy lid lift request. Liz Loomis Public Affairs will continue to advise District 4 and assist with community communication efforts, including the probable upcoming annexation.

NEW BUSINESS

First Responder Contract/BLS Allocation Correction Amendment: Chief Van der Veen pointed out that the original signed document had incorrect reimbursement amounts for three of the multiple fire agencies. None of the adjustments will affect District 4. The exhibits to the amendment were included in the Board packet.

Chairman Cooley read the First Responder Contract/BLS Correction amendments No. 3 into the notes:

Amendment No. 3
Whatcom County Contract No. 201801022-3
**CONTRACT BETWEEN WHATCOM COUNTY AND
WHATCOM COUNTY FIRE AGENCIES**

THIS AMENDMENT is to the Contract between Whatcom County and the Whatcom County Fire Agencies, dated January 31, 2018, and designated "Whatcom County Contract

No.201801022". In consideration of the mutual benefits to be derived, the parties agree to the following:

This Amendment corrects the Exhibit "B" Allotment Amounts table in Amendment #1 and removes Whatcom County Fire Protection District No. 5 as a signatory to the original contract. A separate contract will be negotiated with Fire District No. 5 due to its unique location (Point Roberts).

This Amendment corrects scrivener's errors in the allocation table in Exhibit "B" in Amendment #1. The amount of the contract amendment is now corrected to total \$5,901,189.02.

Unless specifically amended by this agreement, all other terms and conditions of the original contract shall remain in full force and effect.

This Amendment takes effect on December 28, 2022 regardless of the date of signature.

Each person signing this Contract represents and warrants that he or she is duly authorized and has legal capacity to execute and deliver this Contract.

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

Joint 2024 Budget Study Session: Chief Van der Veen proposed an in-person 2024 joint budget study session with District 21 on Saturday, November 18. Discussions will include the 2024 budget and other financial items affecting the district.

In case of potential conflicts, the Board will forward other possible dates to Chief Van der Veen for the joint meeting.

CORRESPONDENCE

- Washington State Auditor re: 2024 billing rates
- Whatcom County Auditor re: August Primary election costs

ANNOUNCEMENTS

- **November Board Meeting Attendance Query:** All Commissioners present are expected to attend the November 13 meeting via Zoom.

AGENDA ITEMS FOR NEXT REGULAR MEETING

- Public Hearing – One to Three Percent Increase
- Northern Heights Annexation Update

ADJOURNMENT

MOTION: There being no further business, Chairman Cooley moved to adjourn the meeting at 12:28 p.m. The motion was seconded by Vice-Chairman Johnson 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