

**Whatcom County Fire District #4  
via Zoom Meeting  
4142 Britton Loop, Bellingham, WA 98226  
12:00 p.m.  
March 13, 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 March 13, 2023, to order at 12:02 p.m.

**ROLL CALL**

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

Commissioner Mark Lann was excused from this meeting.

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) February 9, 2013 – special
  - b) February 13, 2023 – regular
2. Staff Reports – Chief / Operations / Training / Technical Support
3. Financial Report
  - a) Expense Fund Revenue – February \$208,812.17
  - b) Total Expenditures – March \$6,951.50
4. Voucher / Payroll / Benefits
  - a) Monthly Expenditure Payroll Voucher: \$896.00
  - b) Monthly Expenditure Voucher: \$6,055.50

**MOTION:** Vice-Chairman Johnson moved to approve the Consent Agenda as presented. The motion was seconded by Chairman Cooley and approved 2-0.

**UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

**Liz Loomis Communications Meeting:** Chief Van der Veen provided information regarding the communications planning meeting held on Friday, March 3.

The meeting focused on moving forward with the community outreach letter, which will go out as soon as possible. Chief Van der Veen continues to work with Liz Loomis's team on a press release regarding the letter and outreach dates as well as an informational letter for personnel.

Chairman Cooley will reach out to Liz Loomis regarding the proposed Board training.

**Auditor Exit Interview:** Chief Van der Veen noted that the Washington State Auditor's 2020-020-2021 audit has been completed. Both he and Commissioner Lann attended the audit exit interview.

Chief Van der Veen noted that the audit went well, with only some minor housekeeping issues noted.

Chairman Cooley and Vice-Chairman Johnson thanked the staff for their efforts during the audit.

### **NEW BUSINESS**

**WCFD 4 Plan B:** The group discussed having an alternative plan if the levy lid lift is not approved.

Chief Van der Veen suggested that the Board consider and investigate commissioner indebtedness bonds. A commissioner indebted bond (\$5M-\$10M) is when the Board takes out a loan instead of a voter-approved bond. The loan is limited based on the district's current tax revenue and is paid back over time. Chief Van der Veen pointed out that a commissioner bond would only be a temporary remedy, although it would buy the district some additional time to devise a permanent solution to the revenue dilemma.

Even if the levy lid lift is not approved, the district will continue to provide service, although not at the same level of service.

Chief Van der Veen noted that in the past, District 21 utilized a commissioner indebtedness bond to purchase three engines and a ladder truck.

Both Chairman Cooley and Vice-Chairman Johnson would like to explore this option. Chairman Cooley plans to attend or watch the upcoming District 21 Board meeting, where an investment specialist plans to present and discuss types of bond financing options.

More discussion is expected.

### **CORRESPONDENCE**

- Whatcom County Auditor re: Election deadlines

### **ANNOUNCEMENTS**

- **April Board Meeting Attendance Query:** All Commissioners present are expected to attend the April 17 meeting via Zoom. The other commissioners plan to attend.

**AGENDA ITEMS FOR NEXT MEETING**

- Liz Loomis Public Affairs Update

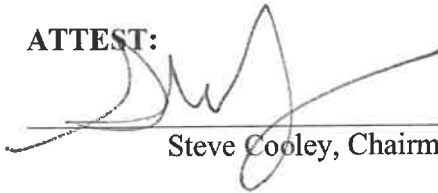
**ADJOURNMENT**

**MOTION:** There being no further business, Chairman Cooley moved to adjourn the meeting at 12:19 p.m. The motion was seconded by Vice-Chairman Johnson and approved 2-0.

Respectfully Submitted by:

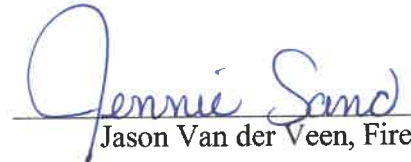

  
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Jennie Sand, Board Secretary

**ATTEST:**

  
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Steve Cooley, Chairman

  
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Tim Johnson, Vice-Chairman

  
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Mark Lann, Commissioner

   
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Jason Van der Veen, Fire Chief