

**Whatcom County Fire District #4  
via Zoom Meeting  
4142 Britton Loop, Bellingham, WA 98230  
12:00 p.m.  
November 14, 2022  
Special Board of Fire Commissioners Meeting  
Public Hearing**

**CALL TO ORDER**

Chairman Lann called the special Whatcom County Fire District #4 Board of Fire Commissioners meeting for November 14, 2022, to order at 12:00 p.m.

**ROLL CALL**

Attendees: Chairman Mark Lann; Vice-Chairman Steve Cooley (12:45 p.m.); Fire Commissioner Tim Johnson; Fire Chief Jason Van der Veen; Division Chief Shaun Ward.

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 HEARING 2023 TAX LEVY INCREASE and LEVY CERTIFICATION**

Chairman Lann opened the public hearing at 12:03 p.m.

The public hearing is specific to allowing the District to increase its budget by up to one percent from the highest lawful levy since 1985 and levy certification. Comments will be restricted to these topics.

**PUBLIC COMMENT**

None

Chief Van der Veen provided information regarding the one percent increase and levy certification.

Chairman Lann recommended tabling any formal action until Vice-Chairman Cooley was in attendance.

Chairman Lann closed the public hearing at 12:08 p.m.

**PRESENTATION**

Chief Van der Veen introduced Communication Consultant Liz Loomis to the Board. The previous week, the two had an initial meeting to discuss specific District 4 nuances.

Loomis provided information regarding what Liz Loomis Public Affairs can offer District 4 in assisting with a future levy lid lift, which was suggested to be held during the August 2023 primary election. In addition to extensive background information, Liz Loomis provided information regarding what they do:

- Ballot Measures

- Offsite General Communications Services
- Public Relations
- Crisis Communications

Liz Loomis provided information regarding their specific project approach:

- 8–12 month timeline
- Phase 1 – Project Development, Systems, and Research
- Phase 2 – Key Messages and Communications Plan
- Phase-3 – Plan Implementation

Liz Loomis stressed the importance of message delivery before, during, and post-election. Messaging will include the following:

- Paid communication
- Earned Media
- Social Media
- Owned Media
- Public Outreach

Liz Loomis provided information regarding how she plans to accomplish objectives.

- Facilitate project through regular calls or meetings
- Develop, design, and secure approval for material content
- Coordinate production and dissemination of all materials
- Twenty-four hours of public relations assistance issued independent of the ballot measure

Liz Loomis provided information regarding strategies and tactics for message delivery.

- Paid communications
- Earned media
- Social media
- Owned media
- Public outreach

The Board discussed their projected timeline, including public outreach starting in 2023. Liz Loomis stated that she is comfortable moving forward with an August 2023 election.

The Board discussed the presentation and reviewed the proposed contract and projected costs.

- January 1, 2033 – August 31, 2023
- \$48,000 + expenses (*voter files, printing, main and handling charges*) and travel

Chief Van der Veen suggested forwarding the contract to the district's attorney for review.

**MOTION:** Chairman Lann moved to approve the contract with Liz Loomis Public Affairs pending attorney review. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Johnson and approved 3-0.

**PUBLIC HEARING 2023 TAX LEVY INCREASE and LEVY CERTIFICATION**  
Chairman Lann reopened the public hearing at 1:04 p.m. Vice-Chairman Cooley was in attendance.

Chief Van der Veen reviewed the draft resolutions for fire and EMS's one percent levy increase and levy certification. The resolutions are a required formality and are used as a placeholder for the District to take the one percent increase. The District will be entitled to collect the additional money in 2023.

**PUBLIC COMMENT**  
None

Chairman Lann closed the public hearing at 1:07 p.m.

**SPECIAL MEETING**

**Resolution 2022-04 Property Tax Levy Increase:** Chairman Lann read the resolution. The district's EMS levy is currently at \$.19.

**MOTION:** Commissioner Johnson moved to approve Resolution 2022-04 Property Tax Levy One Percent Increase as presented. The motion was seconded by Vice-Chairman Cooley and approved 3-0.

**Resolution 2022-05 EMS Property Tax Levy:** Chairman Lann read the resolution.

**MOTION:** Vice-Chairman Cooley moved to Resolution 2022-05 Fire Property Tax Levy Increase as presented. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Johnson and approved 3-0.

**2023 Levy Certification:** Chief Van der Veen noted that the levy certification must be certified by Whatcom County.

Chairman Lann requested information regarding the types of measures in place in case of a miscalculation. Chief Van der Veen noted that the Whatcom County Treasurer's Office had provided feedback on the document, and corrections can be made if needed.

**MOTION:** Commissioner Johnson moved to adopt the Levy Certification for 2023 as presented. The motion was seconded by Vice-Chairman Cooley and approved 3-0.

**APPROVAL OF CONSENT AGENDA**

1. Meeting Minutes
  - a) October 17, 2022 – regular
2. Staff Reports – Chief / Operations / Training / Technical Support
3. Financial Report
  - a) Expense Fund Revenue – October \$750,351.22
  - b) Total Expenditures – November \$2,103.20

4. Voucher / Payroll / Benefits
  - a) Monthly Expenditure Payroll Voucher: \$896.00
  - b) Monthly Expenditure Voucher: \$1,207.20

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

#### **UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

**Future of District 4 Meetings with City of Bellingham and Community Meetings:** It was agreed that Liz Loomis would assist with future public outreach. The initial meeting dates will be rescheduled from November 2022 to January 2023.

Chief Van der Veen expects that Liz Loomis will provide the district with preliminary tasks once the contract is signed.

**Whatcom County BLS Reimbursement:** Chief Van der Veen announced that Whatcom County had approved the District 4 BLS reimbursement for the last six years in the amount of \$187,714.86. The reimbursement is expected in late December.

#### **NEW BUSINESS**

**Washington State Fire Commissioners Conference:** Commissioner Lann noted that he attended the October Washington State Fire Commissioners Conference held in October. Beneficial information provided included financing, fundraising, legislation, and management vs. governance. He recommended that other members of the Board attend in the future.

#### **CORRESPONDENCE**

**District 21 Contract for Services Letter Response:** Chairman Lann was pleased with the draft response letter as presented.

It was suggested to update the public outreach information and dates as needed.

Chief Van der Veen will make the changes and disseminate the information to the commissioners individually.

Once signed, the letter will be sent to the District 21 Board.

#### **ANNOUNCEMENTS**

- **December Board Meeting Attendance Query:** All Commissioners present are expected to attend the December 12 meeting via Zoom.

#### **AGENDA ITEMS FOR NEXT MEETING**

- 2023 Budget Approval – Public Hearing
- 2023 Proposed Meeting Dates

**ADJOURNMENT**

**MOTION:** There being no further business, Chairman Lann moved to adjourn the meeting at 1:31 p.m. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Johnson and approved 3-0.

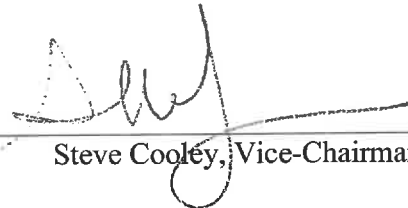
s

Respectfully Submitted by:

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Jennie Sand, Board Secretary

**ATTEST:**

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Mark Lann, Chairman

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Steve Cooley, Vice-Chairman

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Tim Johnson, Commissioner

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Jason Van der Veen, Fire Chief