

**Whatcom County Fire District #4
4142 Britton Loop, Bellingham, WA 98230
12:00 p.m.
May 18, 2026
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 18, 2026, to order at 12:00 p.m.

ROLL CALL

Attendees: Chairman Steve Cooley; Vice-Chairman Tim Johnson; Fire Commissioner Mark Lann; District 21 Chairman Bruce Ansell; Fire Chief Jason Van der Veen; Deputy Fire Chief Tony Melillo.

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

There were no public comments.

APPROVAL OF CONSENT AGENDA

1. Meeting Minutes
 - a) April 13, 2026
2. Staff Reports – Chief / Operations / Training / Technical Support
3. Financial Report
 - a) Total Revenues – April \$2,732,124.39
 - b) Total Expenditures – May \$821,924.48
4. Voucher / Payroll / Benefits
 - a) Direct Deposit Payroll: \$644.00
 - b) Monthly Expenditure Voucher: \$821,280.48

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

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

Britton Loop Drill Ground Project Update: Chief Melillo provided an update on the Britton Loop drill ground project.

Chief Melillo reviewed the three bids for the paving work at Britton Loop Station 12. The information includes the bid revisions that delayed the selection of a contractor at the previous meeting.

Asphalt NW
\$21,244.00
(cleaning and resealing
asphalt only)

Western Refinery Services
\$449,382.27 (estimated on options
available)

Stremler Gravel
\$795,500

Chief Melillo recommended proceeding with Western Refinery Services, based on earlier discussions about replacing the main use area with concrete. Western Refinery Services (WRS) offers the best price and is closest to the scope.

The project will involve the following:

- Section A – Clean and reseal asphalt
- Section B – Add concrete or clean and reseal asphalt
- Section C – Add concrete
- Section D – Clean and reseal asphalt

The additional concrete for the B and C sections of the training ground would push the project over the \$400,000 approved at the February 12, 2026, meeting. The district has the funds to cover the increased project cost. The board agreed that it made sense to upgrade the project based on future costs, longevity, and the safety of all those using the grounds.

MOTION: Commissioner Lann moved to accept the bid from Western Refinery Services to concrete sections B and C of the training ground and to clean and reseal the asphalt in the remaining sections, not to exceed \$460,000. The motion was seconded by Chairman Cooley and approved 3-0.

All future use of the training grounds after July 13, 2026, will be suspended to ensure the project is completed without interruption.

The board thanked Chief Melillo for his work on the project.

Britton Loop Training Room HVAC: Chief Van der Veen stated that the project is progressing, but a start date has not yet been determined.

NEW BUSINESS

Chief's Report: Chief Van der Veen provided an overview of his chief's report, which covered the City of Bellingham and Fire District 8's Regional Fire Authority discussions. Chief Van der Veen has requested to observe the planning process to keep District 4 informed and engaged in the conversations should the District 21 levy be unsuccessful.

Chief Van der Veen provided information about a newly created ferry district approved by the Whatcom County Council. The Council will vote on the proposed tax levy in late July. The levy does not require a public vote and is subject to the same one percent (1%) increase limitation as other junior taxing authorities.

Chief Van der Veen has contacted both the Whatcom County Fire Commissioners and the Whatcom County Fire Chiefs Association, urging them to ask the council to consider the timing of the vote and its potential impact on public opinion of several important public safety measures, including the upcoming Fire District 21 levy lid request.

Fire District 21 Chairman Ansell suggested that the District 4 Board consider asking the Whatcom County Fire Commissioners Association to request that the County Council wait until after the August election to finalize the ferry levy.

CORRESPONDENCE

Vice-Chairman Johnson addressed an email from ReSources sent to the board about environmental concerns related to PFAS contamination at the training ground.

Vice-Chairman Johnson, who has experience with contaminated site investigations, offered to attend the May 19 meeting with Chief Van der Veen at the Britton Loop Station 12 administration building to provide expertise. The group agreed to have a pre-meeting phone conversation with Vice-Chair Johnson to discuss the ecology report before the ReResources meeting.

Information was provided about an upcoming car show at Britton Loop Station 12, featuring a remote-controlled car challenge course. Whatcom County Sheriff Deputy Jerilyn Kix will lead the event.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

- **June Board Meeting Attendance Query:** Vice-Chairman Johnson and Commissioner Lann plan to attend the June 15 Board Meeting (in person) via Zoom or phone.

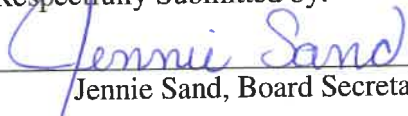
AGENDA ITEMS FOR NEXT MEETING

- Training Ground Project Update
- HVAC
- Environmental Concerns (St 12)

ADJOURNMENT

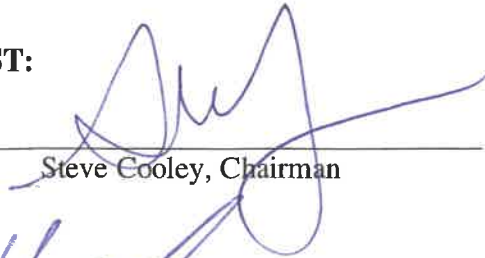
The meeting was adjourned at 12:58 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted by:



Jennie Sand, Board Secretary

ATTEST:



Steve Cooley, Chairman

Tim Johnson, Vice-Chairman



Mark Lann, Commissioner



Jason Van der Veen, Fire Chief