

**Whatcom County Fire District #4
via Zoom Meeting
4142 Britton Loop, Bellingham, WA 98226
12:00 p.m.
October 13, 2025
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 13, 2025, 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 15, 2025 – regular
2. Staff Reports – Chief / Operations / Training / Technical Support
3. Financial Report
 - a) Total Revenue – September \$55,534.16
 - b) Total Expenditures – October \$924,602.03
4. Voucher / Payroll / Benefits
 - a) Direct Deposit Payroll: \$644.00
 - b) Monthly Expenditure Voucher: \$853,844.10
 - c) Capital Voucher: \$70,113.93

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

Chief Van der Veen provided information included in the Chief's report:

Northern Heights Annexation: The Bellingham City Council, following parliamentary rules, revisited its decision to deny the proposed annexation of the Northern Heights area at the next council meeting. Following a robust discussion, it elected to revoke the denial of the annexation and place it in a "holding" category for an unspecified amount of time. The

reasoning stated was to allow further study of the impacts of the public works projects and to await further clarification from the state legislature on UGA rules regarding infill and accessory dwelling units.

The Board expressed its intent to revisit the 1997 agreement rewrite after the budget season.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

Britton Loop Station 12 Exterior Project: Chief Van der Veen provided an update on the siding project. Chairman Cooley, Chief Van der Veen, and Deputy Chief Melillo completed a walk-through of the project on Thursday, October 9. A few items still need to be completed, including the installation of gutters and weather stripping around the bay doors.

Chief Van der Veen pointed out some additional repairs and updates that will be considered at the next meeting. These items may be completed before the re-siding and painting of the administration building.

- Asphalt repair and upgrade
- Parking lot stripe repainting
- Drainage grates removal and upgrade
- Tree removal around the station
- Replace the commercial washer with an extractor to wash bunker gear

It was noted that since the district rents out the admin building and training grounds regularly, it makes sense to utilize those funds to improve the facilities.

Since Emergency Vehicle Incident Prevention (EVIP) training is also hard on the asphalt, Chief Melillo is working with the training officers group to ensure that no EVIP training occurs at the Britton Loop Station 12 training grounds in the future.

Vice-Chairman Johnson and Commissioner Lann plan to meet with one of the Chiefs to conduct a walk-through of the station and grounds to identify specific future projects and possible timelines.

Chief Van der Veen noted that East Smith Rd. Station 13, rented by the Department of Natural Resources (DNR), is regularly maintained. Any needed repairs are forwarded through the quarterly inspection reports submitted by DNR.

Britton Loop Station 12 Alarm Panel: Chief Van der Veen provided an update regarding the ongoing power loss issue with the alarm panel at Station 12. An electricity impact panel sensor has been installed to monitor the panel for the next month before a course of action can be proposed. If a replacement is needed, it will be completed as a 2026 capital expense. An update will be provided at the next meeting.

NEW BUSINESS

District 21 Budget Study Session: Vice-Chairman Johnson attended the District 21 Budget Study Session on Wednesday, September 17. Both expenses and revenue are on track for 2025, and no major changes are expected in 2026. It was noted that District 21's levy rate is

behind most other agencies. It was suggested that District 4 consider purchasing an engine for Britton Loop Station 12.

CORRESPONDENCE

- Systems Design re: BLS price increase
 - Company that processes transport billing (less than 3% over 2 years since last increase)
- Washington State Auditor re: rate increase
- Whatcom County Auditors' Office re: 2026 Submitting a Ballot Measure
- Whatcom County Auditors' Office re: 2025 Assessor Report
- Cascadia Article re: Fire Savings Proposal
 - Whatcom County Counsel will review recommendations
- Whatcom County Assessor's Office re: Fire and EMS preliminary assessed values

ANNOUNCEMENTS

- **November Board Meeting Attendance Query:** All Commissioners are expected to attend the Thursday, November 13 meeting (*Public Hearing*) in person.

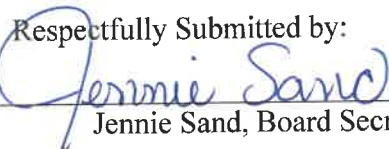
It was requested that the Board have the opportunity to review the draft budget and different levy rate options, including their impacts, prior to the meeting.

AGENDA ITEMS FOR NEXT MEETING

- Public Hearing
- 1997 Agreement (tentative)
- Northern Heights Annexation (tentative)
- Britton Loop Station 12 Exterior Project
- Britton Loop Station 12 Alarm Panel
- In-Person Board Meetings Discussion (Dec)

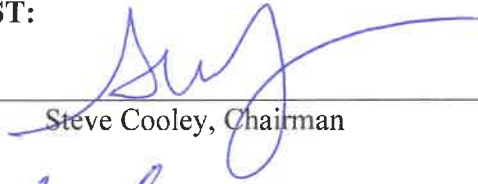
ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 12:47 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