December 11, 2024, *Prescott, WA*

MINUTES OF MEETING

**CALL TO ORDER:**

The Walla Walla North County Fire District Commissioner’s meeting was called to order at 8:00 AM by Chairman Steve Hoffmann.

**PRESENT:**

Commissioners Steve Hoffmann(D3), Kevin Chabre (D3), Jeff Buley (D3), Preston Brock (D1), Dave Brock (D1), Brent Tompkins (D1), Bob Beckman(D7), Pat Nettleton (D7), Chief Ruffcorn, and Secretary Kathy Brock (D1).

\*Quorum met

**ADDITIONS TO AGENDA:**

* Chief Ruffcorn presented and discussed DNR Agreement for Mutual Aid and Commissioners signed.
* Also discussed was the Freightliner with 900 gallon water truck given/loaner for district to use from Dan Boyal with the Forest Service. It will need paint, decals, and transmission work. Commissioners discussed best place to take for getting the work completed. Chief Ruffcorn will call and get some quotes.

**MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING:**

* Copies of the November 2024 Minutes were given in hard and digital copies for review. Kevin moved to accept minutes as is. Pat seconded the motion.

**CHIEFS REPORT:**

* The Radios are being worked on currently by WESCOM. With the changes made so far some of the commissioners stated that sometimes they can hear better and are noticing a difference. Others still do not notice any difference to the north of the towers.
* It is reported that this is a huge project, millions of dollars spent on the work being done to improve the radios. Everyone should start to see improvements.
* The recent windstorm in our area caused issues with an increase of 170 calls into dispatch between 7:00 pm and midnight.
* Chief Ruffcorn reports that he completed the 50/50 Grant for nozzles, monitors, and headsets requested. He will keep everyone updated. He is continuing to work on any additional grants found.

**OLD BUSINESS:**

* D1 Quit Claim Deed for land at Clyde Station. Quick discussion of conversation with title company and lawyers regarding the mismarking of land. We lose about 50 feet of land in this deed, but it is going back to the original deed description. The loss does not affect the department’s function or land. Kevin moved that we support D1 in signing this agreement, Eric seconded. All in favor.
* 2025 Budget presented and discussed. Kevin moved to accept the general budget of $355,744.00 and EMS budget of $65,028.00 Preston seconded the motion. All in favor.
* **OLD BUSINESS CONTINUED:**
* Discussion of payroll for 2025: Sara presented the board with 3 different options of getting payroll done, including online systems, quick books, and costs from local accountant. Having a local professional who also deals with other small districts was important to board. Eric moved to have Patton & Associates do payroll for us. Pat seconded the motion. All if favor.
* RFA Updates: Conference Call with lawyer Brian Snure regarding RFA questions during meeting.
  + Telephone conference with Snure: Discussion of RFA options for vote or petition. We discovered that an RFA must go to the voters.
  + If we complete RFA by October 1, 2025, can set 2026 rates. Snure advised we can run it in Feb and if it fails, we can re-advertise and do again. (can run RFA vote Feb, April, Aug, or Nov). Commissioners are thinking of trying for April and have stuff ready by Feb.
  + RFA can have a 5-member commissioner board. We can change and adjust down gradually. We could also create commissioner districts, that is complicated and not recommended.
  + Max tax rate is $1 if no FT employee, Max rate with FT employee is $1.50 \*Check about benefits for FT employee in WA and rules for that.
  + After we start can dissolve old district by vote
  + We need to have an RFA planning committee group to plan and organize public meetings. Will need separate agenda for meetings Flyers, Education to public. Also
  + Each district makes a joint resolution to move forward.
  + Create a narrative for why we are doing this.
  + Steve will get history of other levy lift amounts. No commissioners can recall asking for $ from voters. Will work on a worksheet of loss to D3, gain to D1 and D7 at the different rates
* SOP Review/Creation: tabled.

**NEW BUSINESS:**

* RFA Updates:
  + Steve presented the RFA creation Procedural Checklist and the Draft RFA Template for all to review. Noted that a lot of work has gone into the creation of the RFA with the help of Snure advise.
  + If we complete RFA by April 1, 2025, we can set 2026 rates. Snure advised we can run it in Fe, However, commissioners not sure we can have this ready for Feb, so may aim for the April election and if it fails it can run again in the August election (can run RFA vote Feb, April, Aug, or Nov). Commissioners are thinking of trying for April.
  + Further discussion on the RFA can have a 5-member commissioner board. We can change and adjust down gradually as needed. Commissioners plan for the next RFA meeting on January 8th.
  + Commissioners considered this as an initial planning meeting to discussed the tax rate of $1.20, this would allow the hiring of a full-time maintenance person and if it fails, then it can run for $1.10 tax rate.
  + Further discussion on having an RFA planning committee group to plan and organize public meetings. Will need separate agenda for meetings Flyers, Education to public. Also
* Preston reported that Dist. 1 still has truck #3147 at HiMark the tank is leaking and needs repaired. No other reports noted.
* Pat will check on the process of where they are at on painting trucks.
* Preston also reported that Pleasant View heating is working and its warm in the building. Clyde new station needs the doors adjusted and will check in getting that done.
* Davie reported that the furnace in the 3 bay in Clyde is cleaned and working.

**MISCELLANEOUS:**

* Kathy has a catalog of coats to look at for banquet: commissioner discussed type and style they liked. She will get some samples. Commissioners want no waist elastic, no zip out liners, something light and water resistant.
* The banquet is set for March 8, training dates set similar to last year. Starting Jan 7, 2025.

**ADJOURNMENT:**

* There being no further business or comments meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,

Kathleen Brock, Secretary

Steve Hoffmann, Chairman