



KITTITAS COUNTY FIRE DISTRICT # 7
MINUTES OF FIRE COMMISSIONERS MEETING
September 12, 2024 18:00

CALL TO ORDER: The meeting was called to order at 18:00 hours at Station 72, on September 12th, 2024. The Pledge of Allegiance was led by Administrative Specialist Brenna Whitney.

PRESENT: Commissioner Chair Jeff Myers, Commission Vice Chair Justin Zipperer, Commissioner Rober Cernick, Chief Aaron Lowe, Chief Admin Officer/District Secretary Micallef, Administrative Specialist Brenna Whitney, four firefighters from KCFD7, and no public.

ADOPTION OF AGENDA: Commissioner Cernick motioned to approve the agenda, Commissioner Zipperer seconded the motion, the Board voted 3-0 to approve the agenda.

PUBLIC COMMENT: None

APPROVAL OF MINUTES: Meeting minutes were presented for approval. The meeting minutes were from the August Regular Meeting. Commissioner Zipperer motioned to approve and sign the meeting minutes; Commissioner Cernick seconded the motion. The Board voted 3-0. Minutes were signed.

CORRESPONDENCE: Letter of thank you from AARF

FINANCIAL REPORT: Report was given. At the end of August the amount in all accounts was \$4,045,679.06. As of the end of August \$3,293,038.89 in property taxes had been collected, and \$2,362,894.31 was still left to be collected. Commissioner Cernick motioned to approve and sign the check registers, Commissioner Zipperer seconded the motion, the Board voted 3-0 to approve and sign the check registers.

CHIEFS REPORT:

- **DNR Wildfire Ready Neighbors** – Partnership with DNR to do wildfire home assessments. Working on doing more marketing in high hazard areas. Commissioner Myers would like mailers, DNR has mailers we can access.
- **Swauk Creek Fire** – Started by car fire by Liberty Café, giving water tender support. Chief Lowe has been attending meetings, they are working on containment.
- **August Significant Calls:**
 - **Anna Bell Wildland Fire** – Great coordination between KCFD7 and neighboring districts, USFS and DNR, lots of resources on scene made for a good catch. New AFMO Will Burks, working on bettering relationships.
 - **UTV Rollover in Sky Meadows** – Fatality on Skull Springs Road.
 - **Westside Road Structure Fire** – Good response from volunteers
- **Events:**
 - **Roslyn Parade** – BC71, Engine 711, two laps of a parade.
 - **LT Assessment Center** – First time this has been done at KCFD7, next week will be individual interviews, choice will be made next week.



KITTITAS COUNTY FIRE DISTRICT # 7
MINUTES OF FIRE COMMISSIONERS MEETING
September 12, 2024 18:00

COMMISSIONERS REPORT:

- Attending briefing in Liberty regarding the Swauk Creek Fire, Jim Miller our volunteer was a lookout the first day for spot fires. A thank you to the Liberty volunteers for being so accommodating, helpful and hardworking. Commissioner Myers is considering doing a guest spot in the newspaper about the autonomy of a wildfire for informational purposes to help the public understand how wildfires start and spread. And also how a district respond to these incidents.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS:

- a. **Training Tower Update – Letter to Life Support** Two days ago received a quote from WHP and the total is upwards of \$900k, hard conversations coming as to where the money is going to come from. This is much more than anticipated. Will need to possibly ask Life Support for more money, as the district just doesn't have the budget.
- b. **Administrative Specialists Hiring** – Brenna Whitney has been hired for the position and started work September 3rd. Chief felt with her HR background that she was the right person for the position. 9 applied and 8 interviewed.

NEW BUSINESS:

- a. **Discussion about Establishing Fire Chief Objectives for 2024/2025** – Make sure evaluations are not just check a box. Commissioner Myers has a document that details the three C's Communication, Consistency, and Collaboration. The document has been attached to minutes. Heavy emphasis on Recruitment and Retention of volunteers.
- b. **Surplus Resolution 2024-9: Truck Chassis** – Commissioner Cernick motioned to approve and sign, Commissioner Zipperer Seconded the motion. The Board voted 3-0 to approve and sign the surplus resolution.

GOOD OF THE ORDER: . Looking for potential Admin Office space. Commissioner Myers is asking staff to check the old Lazy A coffee as a potential space.

Meeting was adjourned at 7:13pm.

APPROVED

Kittitas County Fire District No. 7,
Kittitas County Washington

By: 

Jeff Myers, Commissioner Chair

By: 

Justin Zipperer, Commissioner Vice Chair

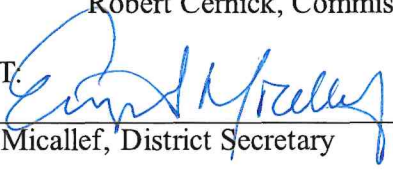
By: _____



KITTITAS COUNTY FIRE DISTRICT # 7
MINUTES OF FIRE COMMISSIONERS MEETING
September 12, 2024 18:00

Robert Cernick, Commissioner

ATTEST:



Eryn A Micallef, District Secretary



KITTITAS COUNTY FIRE DISTRICT NO. 7

31 Firehouse Road, Cle Elum, Washington 98922

Phone 509.649.2789

"Neighbors helping Neighbors"

Expectations for Fire Chief
September 12, 2024
By Commissioner Jeff Myers

Communication-

INTENT: *Recognizing that ineffective communication can be 90% of operational, interpersonal, organizational, personnel, and community perception related issues and problems, the Fire Chief will model, enhance, facilitate, and expect open and transparent communication externally and internally within all levels of the District.*

- The culture of withholding information is not power; sharing information, especially when not required, builds trust and engagement within and outside of the District.
- Leaders who are confident in their abilities and skills are open and transparent; leaders who are afraid to lead, also fail to communicate.
- The default should always be to communicate, and if you cannot talk about a particular issue or subject, let people know why.
- Create formal lines of internal communication, such as District email and/or District portal, which assists in regularly communicating organizational status, information, activities, leader intent, and sharing good news across all levels of the District: (commissioners, administration, firefighters, volunteers and district staff).
- Establish strong relationships with local media as well as create a formal KCFD7 single-point social media presence; social media posts and activities should be guided by clear policy and communication intent (how the District wants to be perceived). Refer to "Social Media Principals for Community Engagement".
- The public only assumes what they know about public safety; people really don't know what you do if you don't tell them. The District must regularly communicate and share incidents, information, statistics, and safety tips, as well as personalize the service our community receives every day (such as highlighting our staff, celebrating badge pinnings or hosting regular open houses at local stations). It is expected that citizens will not only hear from the District when asking voters for financial support.

Consistency-

INTENT: *Outside of the organization, our citizens should expect fire and emergency services to be consistently delivered to the best of our ability every single day. When we fall short, we will improve, and this will become our new level of consistent service going forward. The District will strive for efficiency and accountability through the consistent application of budgetary funds to accomplish the agency mission. Everyone inside the organization should be delegated authority and responsibility and expected to then be held accountable in the same manner as everyone else. Consistency promotes fairness.*

- The Fire Chief (with direct input from District members) is responsible for creating and consistently implementing a 2025 budget proposal for the Board to address needed staffing, apparatus, equipment, facilities, programs, and other District goals. The budget should consider current revenue rates, future anticipated assessed property evaluations/ new growth, new demands for service, and sustainability of service/ future levy rates. It would be a future goal to move to a biennial budget system for a wider view of District operations and needs over a 24-month, instead of a 12-month cycle.
- The District cannot continue to operate without professional, up-to-date, and clearly trained policies and procedures. Establishing (and training) the new Lexipol policy manual is a critical function to promote consistency, expect consistency, and hold ourselves to the standards we have set for ourselves.
- The District will struggle to provide consistent service and personnel cannot be expected to consistently perform and improve without clear policies and procedures in place. Although time consuming, this must be a top priority of the Fire Chief and the leadership throughout the entire District.
- As the new shift lieutenants are promoted, they should each be tasked with assisting in the creation, review, and vetting of new policies (and procedures) which are needed. Policies directly related to providing service to citizens and addressing safety concerns should be prioritized.
- The creation of policies and procedures through all levels of the District allows those 'doing the job' to provide their input and expertise, as well as have investment in the process and outcome. The best policy or procedure is the one we own.

Collaboration-

INTENT: *Although KCFD7 has grown exponentially over the last several years to include career firefighters now staffing two stations, collaboration remains a critical component in providing the best service possible during an emergency. This District is a volunteer organization supplemented by career firefighters. The District must be*

expected to embrace our motto of “Neighbors, Helping Neighbors” and take every opportunity to repair and strengthen relationships with our public safety partners. Collaboration allows us to provide a service larger than the sum of the parts.

- As policies and procedures are put into place, the Fire Chief must simultaneously implement strategies to retain and recruit additional volunteer firefighters; these positions should be created to meet the needs of the District, to include structural firefighting, wildland firefighting, emergency medical services, firefighter support/rehab, community risk reduction, public education, and other critical functions which can best be provided through a collaboration of career firefighters, volunteer volunteers, and District staff.
- Barriers to recruitment, retention and training should be evaluated with the intent to maintain standards, but at the same time maximize the opportunity for volunteers to be active members of the District.
- As calls for service arise, District volunteer firefighters and staff should be encouraged and empowered to respond and assist with the incident to apply their training and skills, as well as to show appreciation for volunteers by putting them to work. A robust volunteer response will also provide depth and additional capacity for the two first-out staffed stations.
- In addition to assisting neighboring fire, emergency medical, and public safety agencies when requested and available, the District should graciously accept and utilize the assistance provided by our neighbors. This includes encouraging mutual aid responses and working to integrate personnel from other agencies into the incident at hand, whether that be the initial response, overhaul, rehab, support functions, or other identified needs.
- Reliability and trust will be established by consistently and respectfully collaborating service (and training) together, not just through mutual aid agreements and protocols on paper. This applies for District members internally as well as working with our partnering agencies. This is an example of where ‘doing’ is more important than ‘talking’.
- Whenever possible, the District should be a leader in collaborating with the citizens we serve to provide the best possible fire prevention, fire response, and emergency medical services. This can be accomplished through robust COMMUNICATION, as well as regular formal and informal interaction between District members and the public- such as school visits, ongoing public education, station open house meetings, recruitment fairs, attending local events, Firewise assessments, installing smoke alarms, and other one-on-one interactions.
- Public safety is about service and the confidence the public has in the service our District can provide. This is a huge responsibility which is tested and evaluated with every interaction. Every member of the District has a duty to make it the best interaction it can be, and provide the best service we can provide.