



## Walla Walla County Fire District #4

2251 S. Howard St., Walla Walla, WA 99362

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### FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Date: February 28, 2024

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### **Board of Fire Commissioners to meet on fire levy resolution**

*Community invited to learn more and provide comment*

Walla Walla, Wash. – The Walla Walla County Fire District 4 Board of Fire Commissioners will meet March 13, 2024, to discuss a resolution to place a fire levy lid lift on the August 6, 2024, primary election ballot. The community is encouraged to attend the meeting at 4 p.m. at Station 41, 2251 S. Howard Street.

Revenue from the fire levy is not keeping up with costs to provide emergency services. Costs increase 4 to 5 percent each year, while the fire district is limited by state law to just a 1 percent revenue increase per year.

Emergency personnel are also responding to more calls for service. Call volumes have increased 30 percent from 2018 to 2022. Calls for EMS are also increasing and now account for 68 percent of all emergencies.

The Board is considering asking voters to reset the fire levy from \$0.88 to \$1.26 per \$1,000 of assessed property value. If approved by voters, the fire levy lid lift will maintain essential emergency services, fund additional personnel to respond to calls faster, renovate Station 41 to add additional sleeping quarters, and replace aging apparatus to ensure service reliability when responding to calls.

Fire District 4 can pay for its operational and capital needs through its regular fire levy as opposed to borrowing money through a voter-approved bond, which costs taxpayers more in interest payments. The fire levy lid lift would continue this cost-saving measure.

The \$0.38 lid lift would be the first levy lid lift in almost 40 years and cost an additional \$12.67 per month or \$152 per year for the owner of a \$400,000 home.

Learn more at [www.wwfire4.com](http://www.wwfire4.com). Fire Chief Rocky Eastman also welcomes your questions at 509-529-1282 or [reastman@wwfire4.com](mailto:reastman@wwfire4.com).

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*Walla Walla County Fire District 4 provides fire suppression and emergency medical service (EMS) to 9,250 people over 125 square miles in the unincorporated areas west, south, and east of the cities of Walla Walla and College Place, and the Port of Walla Walla Regional Airport. Fire District 4 is a combination fire district that relies on volunteer, part-time and full-time emergency personnel who are highly trained to provide structural and wildland fire suppression, Basic and Advanced Life Support EMS, ambulance transport, vehicle accidents and extrication, and life safety programs. Fire District 4 is debt free, has passed all independent financial audits by the state, and works with neighboring agencies to share costs and improve emergency service levels.*