

The minutes of the regular meeting of the Fire Commissioners of Walla Walla County Fire District No. 4 held on January 8, 2025 at Station 41.

The meeting was called to order at 4:00 p.m. by Commissioner Hector. Commissioners Myrick and Farrens and Secretary/Chief Rocky Eastman were present at Station 41. Guests included Deputy Chief Golden, Deputy Chief Adam Woiblet, Deputy Chief McKinney, Brian Jones, Josh Richard, Ben Wolfram and Megan Waite in person at Station 41.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The Pledge of Allegiance was led by Commissioner Hector.

APPOINTMENT OF CHAIRMAN AND VICE CHAIR FOR 2025

Commissioner Hector motioned for Commissioner Farrens for Chairman and Commissioner Myrick for Vice Chair. Commissioner Myrick seconded the motion and was carried unanimously.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

The meeting agenda was presented, no changes to agenda. Commissioner Hector motioned to approve the agenda. Commissioner Myrick seconded the motion and was carried.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

The minutes of the regular meeting of December 11, 2024 and the special meeting of December 19, 2025 were motioned for approval by Commissioner Hector. Commissioner Myrick seconded the motion and was carried.

SECRETARY'S REPORT

The December Commissioners Activity Reports were reviewed and approved by each Commissioner.

The required advertisement for the 2025 small works roster and vendor lists will be advertised in the Union Bulletin as required by law.

CHIEF'S REPORT

New members Deputy Chief Brandon McKinney and Mechanic Viorel Malancea introduced themselves to the Commissioners. A pinning Ceremony is scheduled for January 13th at 6:00pm.

The EMS response and transport report for the month of December was provided. Ninety-Eight responses for the month of December. Twenty-nine fire responses and sixty-nine EMS responses with thirty-one transports completed in December.

The district responded to 1158 incidents for 2024, which was a record high. Chief Eastman handed out an ESO report listing the incident type and number of calls for each category. Of these 1158 calls, 748 were EMS Related.

The schedules for the 2025 Labor Management Meetings and Officer Meeting dates were handed out.

A retirement dinner for Travis Slater is scheduled on January 20, at 6:00pm at station 41.

WFCA Legislative Day is February 6th. Commissioner Farrens is interested in going with Chiefs.

Washington state Department of Retirement Services (DRS) audit has been completed, an exit interview is scheduled for Jan. 14th.

Vector Solutions was willing to negotiate the auto-renewal invoice. The invoice was reduced to 25% and we will have access to reports and information for the next 12 months.

Structure Academy started January 7th, District 4 has 12 members enrolled and College Place Fire has 4.

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Deputy Chief Brandon McKinney and Station 1 Lt. Anthony Cannone will be added to the Duty Officer rotation. Lt. Cannone will have a 6-month training period with another duty officer available assist if needed.

Annual Awards Banquet is scheduled for March 1st at the Marcus Whitman Hotel & Conference Center.

FEMA has requested structural strike teams for the current California wildfires. District 4 will be sending a Type 1, E3414 with Lt. Casey Sewell, Irving Park, Brody Pingree and Sam Martinez. The strike team will depart Walla Walla early Thursday and report to staging in Northern California – by Friday afternoon.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

The Chiefs had a boundary drop meeting today. Discussions are focusing on dropping boundary lines and providing the best service and closest service to our citizens. To allow the three stations to train and collaborate better together, Local 4515 voted to move shift start time to 7:30 to match the City of Walla Walla, group morning briefings include all three stations.

Type 4 engines update, one is almost finished currently looking for a remote start for the pumps. New mechanic Viorel has jumped right in and started working on the second Type 4. The new command pick-up is waiting to be delivered to General Fire, when they are ready to be upfitted with emergency lights, center console, canopy, and other items for a command vehicle.

NEW BUSINESS

Commissioner Hector asked if Chief Eastman and Deputy Chief Golden would be willing to discuss our lid-lift process with North County Commissioner Steve Hoffman. Both agreed they would happy to meet with Commissioner Hoffman.

Chief Eastman asked for an extension on the payroll and expense vouchers, due to the addition of in-house payroll and the meeting being early in the month. Commissioners will have a special meeting on Monday at 6:45 pm to review and approve the vouchers and discuss payroll.

Financial hardship waiver for an EMS transport was presented. The applicant's monthly income is significantly below the federal poverty level for 2024. Commissioner Myrick motioned for a 100% reduction of the ambulance invoice. Commissioner Hector seconded the motion and was carried. Chief Eastman suggested setting a policy for future financial hardship requests, allowing Chiefs to authorize discounts without Commissioner approval. Firefighter/EMT Ben Wolfram suggested considering the number of times we have granted financial hardship requests previously for the same patient.

The Board has discussed and planned for Deputy Chief Golden to be appointed as Fire Chief after Chief Eastman's retirement date of March 31, 2025 but no official action has been taken by the Board. After a brief discussion, Commissioner Hector motioned to appoint Deputy Chief Golden as Fire Chief effective April 1, 2025. Commissioner Farrens seconded the motion and it was carried unanimously.

AUDIENCE INPUT

Josh Richard and Ben Wolfram inquired about the boundary drop and how responses will look for the different stations and what happens when the first due ambulance is already on a call, who is second out? Chief Eastman explained the closest ambulance will be dispatched initially, and if they are out already Station 41 units will be dispatched.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 5:18 PM

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The next regular Walla Walla County Fire District No. 4 Commissioner Meeting will be held on January 22, 2025, at 4:00 PM.

Submitted by: Rocky Eastman, Secretary

Approved by: _____, Chairman