Chelan County Fire Protection District No. 5

Special Meeting of Commissioners
Hosted by Chelan Fire & Rescue
232 E. Wapato, Chelan WA
Wednesday March 20, 2024 @ 4:30 pm

Flag Solute

Commissioners Present: Fred Weiss, Chris Willoughby and Dan Baker.
Chelan Fire & Rescue: Russ Jones, Mark Donnell and Karyl Oules.

Others Present: Chief Arnold Baker, District Secretary Reggie Trusel, Captain Nick Glenn, Lieutenant/Training Officer Raynor Baker. Chelan Fire & Rescue: Chief Brandon Asher, Assistant Fire Chief Shawn Sherman, District Secretary Carol Kibbler, Administrative Assistant Karla Mendoza.

Call to Order: Chairman Jones called the meeting to order at 4:30 p.m.

Roll Call: Chelan Fire & Rescue and Chelan County Fire District 5
Each Board member and staff gave their name and background.

New Business:

Levy info and suggestions (requested by CC5)

- CCFD5: Commissioner Weiss asked the Chelan Board attendees if they could share their past Levy experience in what they learned through the process.
- Commissioner Jones reported their Association was a huge help and took care a lot of the campaign side of things, also Attorney Brian Snure advised on ballot wording.
- Commissioner Donnell emphasized the help received from their 12-member Advisory Group. They helped to put together a campaign that would have community support asking for a reasonable amount for a successful outcome.
- Chief Asher noted they received 67% of the vote (440 favorable votes) and the one thing they didn't anticipate was the County Assessor property values to come out much higher. Worth having a conversation with the Assessor's office.
- Commissioner Oules: Their last Levy was challenging as they have failed two previously, "Odds were not in their favor". Community involvement helped to pass. Voters entrusted the three commissioners to make good decisions with funds-was not an easy process.
- Commissioner Weiss: Would it be beneficial to talk to community groups, mayor?
- Ron Simmons: Meeting attendee mentioned the legalities on what a fire district can & can't do. Their levy committee/commissioners spoke on Kozi, met with several groups & Realtors, encouraged having a game plan with positive communication. Fundraising.
- Chief Asher expressed the need to have a clear message for what the community will have to gain. Plans for correcting department deficiencies, hiring staffing, apparatus upgrades which help to improve WRSB rating for citizens insurance saving. Having consistent message and utilizing all social media platforms, created a video and shared on Facebook.
- Commissioner Weiss asked if CFR had a backup plan if the levy failed.

- Chief Asher responded they didn't. He stressed keeping confident and not engaged with "Nay Sayers". He emphasized providing "factual information" that could be backed up. He reported needing to handle some misinformation from within their department and it took some cleanup inside the agency, now moving forward they are a "happily functioning agency".
- Commissioner Jones: advised using the assessed per 1000 in ballot language as the property values will not come out until October. Levy resolution language is submitted in May.
- Chief Asher: suggested legally departments can include "cost of living-inflation" in their ballot wording now.

Activities / Training to coordinate between CC5 and CFR

- Chief Asher: communicated both districts are starting to work more together with training drills. He stressed, keeping open communications for better drills will give confidence in knowing each other's capabilities when on incidents.
- Commissioner Weiss: Commented on how working together benefits both communities.
- Assistant Chief Sherman: Reiterated keeping communications open will help make us more unified. Response times are getting better and having a second responding agency improves service on incidents.
- Commissioner Oules: asked if there is a "master plan" or goals between our two districts? Stated it is a critical need for both agencies to function and explore possibilities for the future.
- Chief Asher; noted the need to recruit/retain members is critical and is maintained by Chief Officers.
- Lieutenant/Training Officer Baker: The communication started out with baby steps and is a huge benefit having a positive relationship between the two districts. Both have their own needs and offer ideas to better work together. Every time our district comes together on drills it gives us great opportunity plan how each other deals with incidents.
- Chief Baker: CC5 number of volunteers are growing. It was huge to have six of our volunteers join the Training Recruit Academy. He expressed once the Training Center is built it will be a great opportunity to expand training on structural fire skills.
- Assistant Chief Sherman: We all train with ICS Incident Command System and when we join training, we gain a better understanding and improve on both sides.
- Commissioner Donnell: Stressed the need to look at emergency response globally. The challenges that are faced are respected in both volunteer & career. He explained having limited funds available along with community demands have put a huge stress on the department He stipulated doing a lot with what resources / funding they do have and continuing the steps in working together with training, improving service to each other. He summarized, asking how we can work better together, and has seen positive changes in how the two departments work together with limited resources.

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- Captain Nick Glenn: conveyed the difference between our two departments, career/ volunteer and training regulation standards. He noted being aware of our differences and learning how we can work better together, bridging our two departments.
- Assistant Chief Sherman: pointed out the IMS-Incident Management Systems transfer of command from volunteer to career.
- Commissioner Donnell: Explained union members are required through ICS-Incident Command Systems to stay inside their requirements. It has its challenges to maintain a viable volunteer force as firefighters have to meet the same standards of training as career staff.
- Chief Asher: reiterated the combined career/volunteer training with CCFD5 will help.
- Commissioner Jones: Both career and volunteer firefighters are considered professionals.
- Captain Glenn: Joint Training, CFR career staff are subjected to overtime hours when training on weekends.
- Commissioner Donnell: CFR will pay overtime if need. Career firefighters appreciate a volunteer's time and always want to maintain that attitude.
- Commissioner Weiss: Asked about challenges with Command Duty shifts.
- Chief Asher; their department has duty rotations between him and Assistant Chief Sherman. He indicated "Duty Officer is very critical in our valley as a whole" the department is currently working on certifying their Captains to help fill command duty roles. He suggested "joint duty officers" and expanding that role for both districts. Is there any interest from CCFD5?
- Assistant Chief Sherman: He would love to discuss options for that to happen.
- Chief Baker: He would like to move CCFD5 training to a full-time position and is currently pushing through "Blue Card certifications and hopes to have it done by the end of the year.
- Commissioner Willoughby: Commented on seeing fires in our valley and coordinating joint training is a steppingstone to get the ball rolling in the right direction. Already doing structural training together; roof prop, hose drills and would like to see more done on a quarterly basis.
- Commissioner Jones: Asked if CFR are committed to quarterly training?
- Assistant Chief Sherman: They are committed but to nothing formerly.
- Commissioner Willoughby: Inter-local marine training is scheduled for June. Suggested getting everyone together to learn specialty tools and familiarization of vessel.
- Chief Asher: Advocated attending outside meetings for Chiefs to stay involved in what is happening with our area (State Mobe, RiverCom) meetings.

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Benefits of working together

- Understanding of career personnel / volunteers and how they relate to each other.
- Difference in training standards and bridging
- Expectations when giving / receiving aid.

Long-range succession planning

- Chief Asher**:** Asked about Chief Baker's foreseeable retirement and plans for his replacement.
- Chief Baker: He emphasized taking baby steps for now, as it is likely forming one agency in the future but not in his time. The firefighters will help determine when they're ready. Keeping the focus on improving departments training and providing the opportunity for the firefighters to gain skills to better service the community.
- Chief Asher: Explained Asst. Chief Sherman's idea is to keep a successful chain of command and share responsibility with the volunteer Lieutenants./ He has improved moral.
- Commissioner Donnell: stressed the need to continue providing the best service to the community.
- Captain Glenn: Explained the importance in knowing we have the trust and capability when putting ourselves in life and death situations. We can provide the right help.
- Chief Asher: Commented there are a ton of people leaving in the next five years and will be taking experiences they've gained over the 20-30 years. He sees a gap between ones leaving for retirement and new recruits. He is concerned of the void.
- Commissioner Weiss: Asked if there is an evacuation plan in place if we have a series fire.
- Commissioner Donnell: Suggested starting the conversation, how do we get people out of town really quick.
- Chief Baker: Emergency Management will mitigate. Suggested having a plan in place when the time comes to direct people to shelter. Shared his experience working Command with Douglas County during evacuations on a fire in Manfield.
- Chief Asher: Asked about responding to first alarm brush fires in each district, do both agencies respond. It is sometimes difficult to explain the severity of a fire to RiverCom. He suggested both responding then dispatch to cancel if need.
- Chief Baker: Agreed it is the responsible thing to do.

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Community Growth

- Manson Millbay Casino: Chief Baker reported they should be groundbreaking this spring for phase one of the 100-Unit hotel and Casino. Development will be on the upside of Hwy 150.
- 60 Lots near Millbay Casino.
- Near Manson Village-450 lots in the works.
- Chelan 900 Unit Apartment complex
- Chief Baker: Manson has high potential for growth. Would be nice to control number of homes by minimum setback of 15-30 feet and keep the character of the community and safer communities.
- Commissioner Donnell: We need to educate ourselves.
- Chief Asher: County Fire Marshal is stepping in to advise developments.

Group Insurance Plan:
Chief Baker informed; the current Group Insurance agreement will need to be amended by adding an "out claws". He explained we have the opportunity to add more agencies to our group plan and the out claws would stipulate those who are not doing their risk management could be voted out of the plan with 60% majority vote if not compliant. Nicholson Associates Insurance will be adding the appropriate language and Attorney Brian Snure will be reviewing. He stated Nicholson will be at the Chiefs Association meeting in April. He concluded the more in the group plan the better the rates.

Pilatus Aircraft:
Chief Baker invited CFR on a ride along April 18th to see an aerial view of our two districts. He advised a great way to view areas where fire risks are and for those interested in educating for incident command. Commissioner Oules agreed to participate.

Commissioner Jones: Suggested meeting again in June.
Commissioner Donnell: Suggested meeting Manson.

Meeting Agenda Points

- What things can we do today to have in place ten years from now?
- Evacuation Planning, shelter in place.

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Adjournment: Board Chairman Jones closed the workshop meeting with no additional business before the Commissioners, the meeting adjourned at 6:04 pm.

Chelan County Fire District 5 Board of Commissioners:

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Commissioner Chairman Fred Weiss

_____
Chris Willoughby

_____
Commissioner Dan Baker

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Attest: Regenia Trusel
District Secretary