Chelan County Fire Protection District No. 5

Special Meeting of Commissioners
Hosted by Chelan Fire & Rescue
232 E. Wapato, Chelan WA
Wednesday September 18, 2024 @ 5:00 pm

Flag Salute

Commissioners Present: Fred Weiss and Chris Willoughby.
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 via Zoom, Assistant Fire Chief Shawn Sherman, Administrative Assistant Karla Mendoza.

Call to Order: Chairman Jones called the meeting to order at 5:00 p.m.

Roll Call: Chaiman Jones suggested-No roll needed

New Business:

- **Cascadia Home Assessment - Commissioner Weiss**
  Home Hardening Incentive Program offered by Cascadia Conservation District (CCD) For residents who want to better prepare their homes and community for wildfire. Reduces the risk of homes and structures igniting in the event of a wildfire. Maximum incentive payment $600 per household, following practice specifications.

  - Commissioner Weiss shared experience with his personal home assessment with Cascadia Conservation. Tree & shrub removal and adding gravel to his landscape.

  - Commissioner Jones: Per their website they have an online checklist, near impossible to meet all the restrictions.

- **Homeowner's Insurance Issue-Commissioner Donnell**

  - Commissioner Donnell: Noted all insurance companies s are doing something different, rates are not consistent and based on individual companies.
    Shared his ideas on how to best approach this issue, starting at the State level and collaborating with citizens in the community, Fire Commissioners, lobbyist, legislature-it should be a joint effort. Suggested also setting up a meeting with his contacts-agencies hosting a community town hall.
  - Chief Baker-keep on the legislature side of things.
  - Commissioner Weiss-Agreed with legislature pressure, Statewide problem, K-5 News – More and more complaints of people loosing their insurance. Increased cancellations in the first half of the year compared to last 2-years.

- Commissioner Donnell-Stayman Flats rates went "way up"-no fire station near that area.
- Chief Asher-Homeowners Fire insurance is a hot topic currently in CA
- Commissioner Jones-Reiterated connecting with Dave Forte -WA State Office of the Insurance Commission and set up meeting with other contacts.
- Commissioner Jones: Offered to provide an excel summary with data.

- **Washington Fire Commissioners Association survey - Commissioner Donnell**

  - Noted the Tax Increment Financing (TIF) for Chelan- "things can be changed". A statewide problem and a survey would be helpful.

- **Battalion Chief Position – Chief Asher, Chief Baker**
  - Chief Asher: Asked what are the best steps to take to grow together? One option is to share a Battalion Chief position, Command Staff for both districts? What are the ways we can change things for the future?
  - Chief Baker: He is currently waiting for Manson Commissioners to reach a decision regarding this position and looking for guidance on how to proceed. He is still in shoulder recovery and doing light duty at this time but will continue to work on his blue card.
  - Commissioner Donnel: Asked if Chelan is looking at putting in a new position or using resources we already have.
  - Chief Asher: Sharing a new position, Volunteer Retention Coordinator. Explained once Manson District starts the Training Center it will take a new position to run and maintain the center.
  - Commissioner Jones: How would we split the time between both Manson/Chelan?
  - Chief Asher: Possibly doing a 50/50 split. It would be finding a person dedicated to just working with volunteers, as Chelan is getting spread thin when getting to incidents.
  - Chief Baker: The plan for Levy funds was to help fill the full-time position, three chief positions were budgeted. The Commissioners are discussing and hopefully by the end of the year things will be in place.
  - Commissioner Jones: Asked Commissioner Willoughby and Commissioner Weis if this is doable.
  - Commissioner Weiss: Reiterated the Manson Board is still in discussions and thinks they can produce a solution.

  - Chief Asher noted there is "a lot of change coming" and asked what the best direction for us is to move forward. He noted it would be nice for Chief Baker to see the change before retirement.

- Commissioner Willoughby expressed doing what is right and beneficial for both departments and also using taxpayers' money wisely.

- **Manson Training Center – Chief Baker**

  - Chief Baker: Discussed the latest concerns working with the Department of Ecology and grant options. Phase 1-was not done on ST52 property when purchased so grant funding for soil mitigation will be challenging.

- **Manson Residence Program - Chief Baker**

  - Chief Baker: There are 3.3 acres of soil to mitigate. Recommends splitting the project up; Training Facility first then doing the Residence Quarters second. This might be an easier way to go, so we can move forward.

- **Cooperative Training – Asst. Chief Shaun Sherman, Training Officer Raynor Baker**

  - Training Officer Raynor Baker: Advocated to continue doing combined training/drills quarterly. The two agencies have done Wildland & Structural trainings, Volunteer Recruit Academy and Water Rescue.
    Emphasized doing SCBA training in the future and is looking forward to the live fire burn of the Apple Cup building.
    Areas he would like to see more of: Planning next year's training calendar and developing drills for new Training Center. Also be able to do more combined drills with Chelan's full-time staff (career firefighters).
  - Asst. Chief Sherman: Advised Wenatchee passed the Recruit Academy over to Chelan which gave them the perfect opportunity to train on a consistent level-forced integration. Agreed doing quarterly drills should continue.
    Reiterated the idea to offer a split position between districts who would take over all of the volunteer training. That person would have access to Chelan's resources and would be a "good way" to incorporate more manpower. He emphasized more Manson volunteer firefighters come to their fire calls than their own volunteer firefighters.
  - Chief Asher: Communicated to the Board- Manson volunteers were a big help over the summer with incident calls, things are coming together and now it is starting to show.
  - Chief Baker advised he would like to have a seasonal crew ready for MOBE next fire season as Manson has not been able to participate in prior years.
  - Asst. Chief Sherman suggested docking Chelan Boat 71 at Mill Bay or Manson Marina and have a Manson crew man the boat for calls.

- Chief Baker-Utilizing the Sheriffs boat in the Manson Marina -beneficial to have two people on a call.
- Commissioner Willoughby stressed having a combined agency Marine class would be beneficial. Good opportunity to work together and see the participants' capabilities.
- Asst. Chief Sherman recommended doing a rescue swimmer class as well.
- Commissioner Jones-Nice to have the seasonal pay not only for themselves but nice for the agency.
- Commissioner Weiss: Suggested planning a special joint-event to Commemorate the 25th Anniversary for 9/11 next year.
- Chief Asher: Advocated supporting the annual 9/11 Remembrance event in Cashmere and would like to see this event rejuvenated.

- **Cooperative Administrative Office- Reggie Trusel**
  - District Secretary Reggie Trusel announced the two districts administrative staff will be attending the Washington Fire Chiefs- Fire Administrative Support Conference Oct. 7-9 in Everett, WA. Highlights: Equity, Diversity & Inclusion workshop, Records management, working with people in trauma and communication styles.

- **Potential Visit to Okanogan Check Lines – Commissioner Willoughby**
  - Photo/video was displayed for the Commissioner Boards. Commissioner Willoughby noted the Pioneer workers are here until after the first of October, doing cleanup-hauling logs and chipping. He explained the photos are of Cooper Road, Black Canyon-fire break areas. As soon as mitigation is completed on the roads, we will be able to tour those areas.

- **Pioneer Fire Update- Chief Baker**
  - Chief Baker: The Pioneer Fire has left for the high country, now being monitored. The Manson / Stehekin sides of the fire is where the cost was spent. Work was done to create fire breaks surrounding areas of the fire and hopes to have them stay forever.
  - Chief Asher: Commented on the challenge with barging equipment and apparatus.

- **Officer Input**
  - Asst. Chief Shaun Sherman-commented our joint Board meetings are helpful. He hopes the live fire burn for the Apple Cup will offer an opportunity to build their recruitment. Asst. Chief Sherman advised the asbestos inspection is in the works and steps are being followed for the big event for the community. He

shared some ideas for possible; Firefighter For a Day – touring the inside of the building or having the Apple Cup owner do a tour of the inside. He suggested inviting Waterville and Wenatchee Fire districts to participate as well.

Adjournment: Board Commissioner Donnell Motioned to close the meeting with no additional business before the Commissioners, the meeting adjourned at 6:00 pm.

Chelan County Fire District 5 Board of Commissioners:

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Commissioner Chairman Fred Weiss

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Chris Willoughby

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Commissioner Dan Baker

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Attest: Regenia Trusel
District Secretary