

West Klickitat Regional Fire Authority

Regular Meeting

119 NE Church Street White Salmon WA 98672.

Thursday December 19, 2024. 6:30pm.

- **The meeting was called to order at 18:30 by Chair Thomas Montag.**
- **Flag Salute.**
- **Attendance:**
WKRFA Governing Board: Quorum: Jason Hartmann, David Lindley, Charles Virts, Ben Giant, Robert Connor (Connor was remote via zoom).
Excused:
Advisory groups/staff: Chief Wes Long, Rozalind Plumb, Jennifer McLean, Eric Bosler.
- **Agenda:**
“Move to approve the agenda” made by David Lindley, second by Charles Virts, (5 in favor, 0 opposed) motion passed.
- **Minutes of October 17, 2024, Meeting.**
“Move to approve the minutes from November 21st”, made by Ben Giant, seconded by Charles Virts. (5 in favor, 0 opposed) motion passed.
- **Minutes of Budget Hearing – October 17, 2024.**
“Move to approve the minutes of the budget Hearing”, made by Charles Virts, seconded by David Lindley. (5 in favor, 0 opposed) motion passed.
- **Public Comments:** None
- **Administrative Secretary’s report**
 - KCFD3 financial report is available via the KCFD3 website. No other WKRFA business to report currently.
 - Discussion on the \$50,000 set aside by KCFD3 and WSFD to cover cost of the transition. \$12675.60 has been spent so far. Additional expenditure is expected before the end of December.
- **Fire Chief’s Report** - Chief’s report was sent out prior to the meeting, nothing much has changed. Chief Long noted that he has received some interest in the American LaFrance engine we are trying to sell.
- **Training Report** -See Chief’s report.
- **Volunteer Representative Report.** Eric Bosler reported the Firefighters Association has finalized their bylaws. The EIN and 501 c3 are in process. The two associations are combining leadership of the new association.
- **Information Only Items**
 - Chief reported that he is now the vice chair of the state wide Fire Defense Committee.
 - KCIFA – Chief reported the new building official in Klickitat County is working to engage a task force of citizens across the county to serve on a committee to provide input for policy. On battery storage of power.

- **Unfinished Business- Follow -up Items.**
 - Value Statement- The Vision statement that was approved by the Board on September 30 was incorrectly titled. It should have been titled “Value Statement”.

Motion to change the title from vision to value statement made by Jason Hartmann, second by Charles Virts. (5 in favor, 0 opposed) motion passed.

- **Discussion Items**

1. **Resolutions**

- a. None presented

2. **Policies**

- a. None presented.

3. **Agreements**

- a. **White Salmon Building Lease** –City Council has approved the building lease where they will provide an update on relocation of city chambers every two years and that a review for building or planning permission should take no more than 60 days. The revised version has not been shared with WKRFA staff. It still needs to be reviewed by WKRFA legal counsel. Discussion on when it would be ready for the board to review and approve. While not ideal, it is anticipated that finalizing the agreement after January 1 would not affect service. Ben Giant will reach out to City staff to share the revised agreement.
- b. **Social Security Agreement** – As a new entity this is part of the paperwork to Extend Social Security Coverage to Eligible Employees.

“I move to empower the chair to sign the extension of social security coverage to our employees as presented in the meeting packet.” Made by Ben Giant, second by Charles Virts. (5 in favor, 0 opposed) motion passed.

- c. **Employee Agreements** – Review and discussion on the job descriptions and employee agreements for staff. Staff performance reviews occurred in September 2024. Discussion on wages and salaries. Charles Virts noted that in his role on the EMS District for the county he recognizes the difficulty in attracting and maintaining staff at a wage that enables them to live in the area. Charles Virts made the following proposals:

Fire Chief- Proposed salary for 2025 \$119,000. (This is still lower than surrounding agencies in the gorge).

Administrative Manager –Proposed changing this to a full time salaried FLSA exempt position at \$70,000. Discussion on the potential conflict of Rozalind also serving as a volunteer. Legal counsel is being sought on how to best navigate this.

Administrative Assistant – Proposed this position remain part time with annual wage of \$37,887. (\$30.36/hour).

Length of service- Discussion on the vacation accrual based on length of service established under the existing agencies and how that transfers to the new entity. The board agreed to recognize the legacy of service of personnel moving into the new agency. The board requested an addendum to the

agreements for 2025 to ensure service to date and earned accruals are carried forward to the new agency.

The board was in agreement on the proposed salaries and wages as they are within the budget for 2025. Clarification is needed from legal counsel regarding salary verses wages.

The agreements can be finalized at the January meeting with the addendum and legal counsel's input on wages.

- d. **Life Flight** – Both KCFD3 and White Salmon FD have provided Life flight membership benefits to members under a group subscription. Board members are able to join at the group payment rate but should make a check payable to the RFA, (Auditing regulations do not permit the board to receive benefits paid by the RFA).

Motion to approve the group membership made by Charles Virts, second by Jason Hartmann. (5 in favor, 0 opposed) motion passed.

- e. **Radio system use Agreement** – required for radio operations in the county.

Motion to approve the Radio system use agreement made by Jason Hartmann, second by Charles Virts. (5 in favor, 0 opposed) motion passed.

- f. **Board for Volunteer firefighters (BVFF).** – Local board of trustees need to be established for the RFA. BVFF covers the volunteers for L&I and pension. The local board of trustees report to the state for L&I injuries and pension requirements. The Local board is made up of the Chair, one other board member, Fire Chief, Secretary and a representative of the fire fighters. Chair is Tom Montag, Chief is Chief Long, Secretary- Rozalind plumb, Firefighter representative Eric Bosler. Bob Connor volunteered to be the second board member.

- **Action Items**

1. **Resolutions** - None
2. **Policies** -None
3. **Agreements** - Covered under individual discussion items above.
4. **Other Action Items as needed**- None

- **Executive Session** (not needed).

- **Good of the order-**

- Chief Long commented that we have achieved a lot over the last few months. He commented that he attended the last city council meeting where Chief Hunsaker was acknowledged for his service as Fire Chief. Chief Long noted that he was disappointed in some of the language he had heard at the meeting that appeared to be negative (referencing “them” ‘us”). He noted that any perception of separation is detrimental to the agency. He is very proud of the work done by

the RFA board and hopes that the work done by this board is recognized in a positive light by those not engaged in the RFA.

- Thomas Montag noted that we are very fortunate to have Chief Long and acknowledged the great work done by everyone to get us to this stage.

- **Next Meeting:**

Regular Board meeting January 16th, 2025, 18:30. Location: White Salmon Fire Station.

- Motion to adjourn:

Motion to adjourn made by Charles Virts seconded by Jason Hartmann. (5 in favor 0 opposed). Motion passed.

Meeting adjourned 20:01.

APPROVED:



WKRFA Chair -Thomas Montag (date)

Attest:



Secretary Rozalind Plumb