

**WENATCHEE VALLEY FIRE DEPARTMENT,
CHELAN COUNTY FIRE DISTRICT 1 & DOUGLAS COUNTY FIRE DISTRICT 2
MEETING MINUTES
MARCH 12, 2025**

Commissioners: Commissioner de Mestre, Commissioner Dormaier, Commissioner Fennell, Commissioner Johnson, Commissioner Zimmerman

By Phone: Commissioner Evenhus

Personnel: Fire Chief Brian Brett, Deputy Chief Andy Davidson, Deputy Chief Brandon Kunz, Battalion Chief Peter Rigelman, and Cindy Blaufuss

Guests: Ettore Castellente

I. Call to Order: 1:00 pm.

II. Additions and Deletions to Agenda: Fire Benefit Charge was added as item #2 under Unfinished Business.

III. Public Comments: None.

IV. Consent Agenda: Commissioner Johnson reviewed this month's warrants.

Commissioner Johnson made a motion to approve the consent agenda items. Commissioner de Mestre seconded the motion. The consent agenda items were approved.

V. Correspondence:

1. The memorial service for Chet Christensen will be held this summer at Fire Station 1.
2. Many Chelan County residents have not received their tax statements. The County said all statements will be distributed by March 15.

VI. Staff Reports:

1. Administration: Chief Brett

- Legislation that would provide financial assistance for aviation assets has passed the house.
- Last week five offers of conditional employment were made to Firefighter applicants.
- Chief Brett asked the Commissioners to review the draft Deputy Chief Employment Agreement and provide feedback for consideration next month. Chief Brett will be updating comparable department information for the Fire Chief, Deputy Chief, and Mechanics. A shared, track-change version of the Employment Agreement will be available for the Commissioners' recommendations and comments.
- Aviation
 - Personnel recommend the department purchase a separate parcel for Fire Station 2. WSRB ratings warrant a fire station at the airport; but it does not need to be on airport property. Fire Station 2 is currently staffed with Volunteers.
 - The department is not obligated to provide ARFF. The Port wants the department to continue with ARFF but has suggested it be funded with the FBC.
 - Locating a hangar on the National Guard property is still an option for the department.
 - The estimated funds needed to complete 1PR are included in the 2025 Helicopter budget. Commissioner Fennell is wary of spending more money on 1PR, and he requested the Program Managers explain the remaining expenses.

2. Operations: Chief Davidson

- The department has responded to 995 calls to date this year.
- The department ordered the engine authorized this year and an order for the brush trucks is in process.

- The department extended job offers to five firefighters; they are good candidates and very excited for the opportunity.
- The two tenders purchased in December will be ready for training in April.
- I-Spy has been functioning better. There will be some follow-up training and then the department will be ready to begin the accreditation process.

3. Fire Prevention:

- Commissioner de Mestre attended a community meeting about the Fusion Power Plant proposed in Malaga; there were many questions from the public. Chief Blanchard visited the Helion Plant in Everett and feels comfortable about their proposal.
- Commissioner Fennell asked if DNR has funds available for an electronic reader board at Fire Station 13. He suggested reader boards be included in all future station plans.

4. Logistics: Chief Kunz

- Fire Station 17 Hangar – The Shop could expand into the hangar space if a new hangar is built. However, it would require improvements such as heating/HVAC, electrical, plumbing and insulation. The heater is currently out of service. The heater may be replaced with gas heat if it will be used as a Shop, otherwise, a smaller, electric heater might be sufficient.

The Shop needs more space, especially to work on the larger apparatus such as ladders. Commissioners asked for a cost estimate to add a bay onto the existing Shop. Commissioners also asked for a cost estimate to acquire property west of the hangar for a second landing zone.

- Fire Station 11 - The quote to replace one-half of the Station 11 roof is \$44,000. The existing roof is metal over shingles. It may be more cost-effective to replace the entire roof.
- Capital Improvement Plan - is in process.
- Fire Station 13 – There isn't room on the current parcel for training or staging apparatus. He would like to add a driveway to avoid blocking Squilchuck. The Commissioners asked Chief Kunz to approach the owner of the adjacent property.
- The department has submitted two grant applications for two exhaust removal systems and the Station 17 roof and a generator.
- Surplus Recommendation – Three items are recommended for surplus. The items will be posted for sale using Marketplace or Craigslist. If the department cannot sell the extractor or message board, they will be disposed of.
 - Extractor – It leaks and has been replaced but may have some value.
 - Dump trailer – The trailer doesn't meet the department's needs. The gate must be lifted off. It would be replaced with a sturdier trailer with a swing gate and ramps to better meet the department's needs.
 - Message board – The Station 1 message board that was replaced last year. It is no longer of use to the department.

Commissioner de Mestre made a motion to approve the surplus of the items listed. There was a second from Commissioner Fennell. The motion was approved.

Commissioner Fennell recommends getting input before purchasing another trailer.

5. Health, Safety and Volunteer Services: No Questions

6. IAFF:

- Battalion Chief Rigelman said the Local is researching options to the current Mandatory Overtime policy to bring to the administration.

- The Cuffs & Axes charity softball game is scheduled for June 1.

7. Volunteers: The Volunteer Academy graduation is at 2:00 pm, April 19 at the American Legion.

VII. Committee Reports:

1. Performance Evaluation Committee – There was discussion on options to collect information from personnel on the important attributes of the next fire chief.
2. EMS Committee – Chief Brett has met with Dr. Jobe, Ballard Ambulance and Lifeline individually. It would be valuable to schedule a meeting with the Fire Commissioners regarding EMS in the valley.

VIII. Unfinished Business

1. Policy Review:

Commissioner Zimmerman made a motion to approve the revised policies as recommended. There was a second from Commissioner de Mestre. The policies were approved.

Commissioner de Mestre asked to review and discuss the department's Post-Incident Decontamination policy.

2. Fire Benefit Charge

The Commissioners discussed extending the deadline for the Fire Benefit Charge Appeal process because of delays in this year's tax statements. Chief Brett has received calls and emails from approximately 100 Douglas County property owners and has 16 petitions for consideration. Overall, the interactions are positive. Most petitions involve sprinkler and senior discounts. The goal is for consistency between the senior discount applied to the tax levy and the benefit charge; in some cases, those with senior discounts are not paying any tax levy.

IX. New Business

1. Chelan-Douglas Health District Mobile Command Unit Interlocal Agreement:

The agreement will give the department access to the health district's command trailer.

Commissioner de Mestre made a motion to approve the Interlocal Agreement with the Health District. There was a second from Commissioner Zimmerman. The Agreement was approved.

2. Chelan County Emergency Management Lease Extension:

The extension allows Emergency Management to continue leasing the former Station 11 Admin building on a month-to-month basis. They have purchased property to build a facility.

Commissioner de Mestre made a motion to approve the Lease Extension with Chelan County Emergency Management. There was a second from Commissioner Zimmerman. The Lease Extension was approved.

3. Douglas County Fire Benefit Charge Interlocal Agreement:

Douglas County has not completed the review process for the agreement.

4. Sample Resolution MERP for Promoted Personnel

A sample Resolution was distributed for the Commissioners review and consideration in April.

X. Executive Session: At 3:01 the Commissioner adjourned to Executive Session to review personnel performance and qualifications of an applicant for public employment (per RCW 42.30.110(1)(g)), and to consider site selection for purchase (RCW 42.30.110(1)(b)). The session was estimated for 30 minutes. The session was extended three times for a total of 25 additional minutes (15 minutes, 5 minutes, 5 minutes). The public meeting was reconvened at 3:56.

XI. Other Business and Good of the Order:

1. Send personnel survey questions to Cindy.

2. Commissioner Dormaier understood the concern of the citizen regarding the department's decision to send personnel and an apparatus to California. He suggested the funds received for the Engine be invested in the Apparatus Replacement Fund. Chief Brett explained the budget policy directs any additional funds to be transferred to the department's Capital fund which includes the apparatus replacement.
3. The regular April meeting will be rescheduled for April 23.

XII. Adjourn – 4:00

Respectfully submitted, Cindy Blaufuss