

**WENATCHEE VALLEY FIRE DEPARTMENT,
CHELAN COUNTY FIRE DISTRICT 1 & DOUGLAS COUNTY FIRE DISTRICT 2
SPECIAL MEETING MINUTES
OCTOBER 11, 2023**

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

Staff: Fire Chief Brian Brett, Battalion Chief Pete Rigelman, Cindy Blaufuss

- I. Called to Order: 2:00 pm.
- II. Additions and Deletions to Agenda: No additions or deletions.
- III. Public Comments: None.
- IV. Unfinished Business

- Finance Discussion and Fire Benefit Analysis: The Commissioners continued their discussion on the excess levy options available to the department, including a Fire Benefit Charge.

The Fire Benefit Charge gives the Fire Commissioners the ability to expand and contract the budget based on the needs of the community and set aside funds for apparatus and facilities. The Benefit Charge is capped at 60% of the overall budget. A six-year benefit charge would initially require a super majority but can be renewed with a simple majority.

Chief Brett explained it will take time to verify the data, and he expects many questions from the public, but it should be manageable once it is in place.

Both fire districts have had success passing a multi-year excess levy. One option is using a CPI-based lid lift. Or, it can be based on the historic rate increase of 6%.

With either excess levy option, the attorney would be asked to write the ballot language, and the department would provide an explanation for the public.

Chief Brett will prepare a side-by-side, six-year comparison of budgets based on a Fire Benefit Charge and multi-year lid lift with an inflation factor.

- V. New Business

- Campaign Support: A local political candidate had posted a photograph of himself with a department vehicle, giving the appearance of political support. The candidate was asked to remove the photograph from his campaign materials and complied with the request.

Commissioner Castellente made a motion to write a letter to the candidate thanking him for complying with the department's request to remove the photograph from his campaign materials and explaining the department's policy. There was a second from Commissioner Zimmerman. The motion was approved. Commissioner de Mestre abstained from voting.

- VI. Adjourn – 3:44.

Respectfully submitted, Cindy Blaufuss