

KITTITAS COUNTY FIRE DISTRICT #2
Ellensburg, Washington

Minutes of: Commissioners' Board Meeting
Meeting date: April 10th, 2025
Meeting time: 7:00pm
Meeting place: 400 E. Mountain View, Station 29

Commissioners in Attendance: Pat Clerf, Ross Ogan, Jerry Pettit, Scott Ciraulo (Virtually), and Neil O'Neill.

Others in Attendance: Chief DJ Goldsmith, ASM McBride, FSM Beckett and numerous firefighters and members of the public. Deputy Chief Moen had an excused absence at the start of the meeting for a call response.

1. Call to Order: Commissioner Ogan called the meeting to order at 7:00pm and led the Pledge of Allegiance.

2. Approval of Agenda:

Commissioner Clerf made a motion to approve the agenda. Commissioner Pettit seconded the motion. There was no further discussion. The Board voted unanimously to approve the agenda.

3. Consent Agenda

3.1 Approve Proposed Meeting Minutes

- March 13th-Meeting Minutes
- April 8th- Special Meeting Minutes

3.2 Acknowledge Correspondence

- Good work message from KCSO Deputy Langevin

3.3 Authorize to pay vouchers

APRIL 2025		
Batch #	Amount	Description
2025.04.01	\$514,101.89	Payroll - General Fund 010
2025.04.02	\$219,033.28	Payroll - EMS Fund 011
2025.04.03	\$68,588.44	Accounts Payable - General Fund 010
2025.04.04	\$45,121.27	Accounts Payable - EMS Fund 011
2025.04.05	\$5,441.02	Accounts Payable - CON Fund 020
2025.04.06	\$91,102.82	Accounts Payable - Equipment Fund 041
\$943,388.72		

Commissioner Clerf made a motion to approve the consent agenda. Commissioner O'Neill seconded the motion. There was no further discussion. The Board voted unanimously to approve the agenda as presented.

4. Public Hearing: None.

5. Public Comment items: None.

6. Administrative Reports:

6.1 Finance Report: FSM Becket presented the attached report and addressed the following:

- March Revenue and expenditures are attached. Manda reached out to the Washington State auditor's office to get a date for the audit in the beginning of May.
- The revenue received through the end of March is 1.7 million.

- The expenditures through March are at 3.59 million. 2.9 million of that is payroll. Commissioner Pettit asked if there is there anything outstanding with the retro pay? Manda responded no, there was a big payout administratively for the two Chiefs in January.

6.2 District Secretary Report: District Secretary McBride presented the attached report and addressed the following:

- Thank you to the board for allowing me to attend the fire chief evaluation class on April 5th. It was an incredibly informative and educational class.
- Annual public disclosure reports are due by April 15th.
- Fire Commissioner Position 1 is open for election this year.

6.3 Deputy Chief Report: Chief Goldsmith/DC Moen (on a call) presented the attached report and addressed the following:

- The March responses totaled 402; 313 EMS, 36 Out of County Transfers. This is a 6% increase in call volume.
- The out of County Transfers are down 22% from last year. During the last meeting with KVH, we learned that we are only handling 51% of the transfer requests. 49% are being handled by airlift of private ambulance. One thing that is helping is the single point of contact coordinating transfers from KVH. Conversations with KVH are happening about what emergent means for them to help prioritize the sick patients. The hospital has a belief that surgery at 1000 the next day is something they were considering emergent, but that isn't emergent to Fire Chief Goldsmith.
- Overtime is down from last month but still above the 4 years. The main reason is call volume and the number of people on extended leave. 10 members and 2 at paramedic school and 2 at the WSFTA.
- We are losing a member of the department; he has accepted another job. We will have a new hire starting on May 1st to fill the position. We are working on recruitment and retention.
- The gates are completed and ready, but we are working on distance that the card readers will reach.
- Response guidelines are still being worked on and hopefully we will have this in play by May 1st. There are some items that Kittcom is still working on that are holding this project up. It adds the 3rd and 4th alarm. Chief Goldsmith will again try to work with Kittcom.
- 79% of the calls for the year are EMS, 21% have been Fire Calls. False alarms are now being counted and captured in your figures.

6.4 Chief Report: Chief Goldsmith presented the attached report and addressed the following:

- Manda has put her notice in and will be leaving KVFR at the end of May. Chief Goldsmith is requesting the board allow him to advertise for the position and request a potential for a contract for service with Manda beyond May. The board discussed that they would like to move forward with the advertisement.
- We have sent termination letters to volunteers that have not been participating. We will be graduating the recruit academy with 20 new volunteers in the next few weeks.
- Chief Goldsmith has met with everyone in one-on-one meetings to help with his state of the agency report.
- Labor Management is still going well.
- Transfers are continuing to be worked on.
- We were asked to support a levy for the hospital district which will add a \$0.75/1000 AV. Chief Goldsmith doesn't believe we can support it with our own internal issues and the economy

and doesn't want to provide anything but a neutral stance on it. Commissioner O'Neill doesn't disagree and would like to not be associated with a tax measure right now. Commissioner Pettit commented that KVFR doesn't ask for other agencies to support our measures and agrees that we do not want to be associated with a tax measure when we might want to ask the community next year.

- The Vantage Bridge project is underway and Chief had a meeting with DOT to express his discontent with the management of the risk for wildfire. Commissioner Clerf asked what the county is doing with the old vantage highway? Chief Goldsmith spoke that they do have a gate at exit 115 now that will help divert traffic. Backups were being reported 40 minutes at 5am up to 1.5 hours on a Friday afternoon. DOT is updating the traffic map to help navigate response routes.
- Chief Goldsmith mentioned to DOT about joining our 0805 meeting to help coordinate traffic updates.
- KVFR is working through obtaining a grant writer for the AFG.
- Chief Goldsmith is getting word that GEMT, SAFER and AFG may be going away with the federal cuts. We may be facing 700000-800000 a year being removed from the line items.
- There are several agreements or needs for agreements for contracts for service for government entities in our District.
- We are having a hard time getting ahold of the Station 26 land owner.
- Kittitas County Fire District 4 was tabled last meeting and Chief Goldsmith would like to recommend a special meeting between our board and their board and short and long term plans for service. It is a cleaner process to have directly meet.
- Goldsmith was going to prepare a letter with the concerns about KRD removing bridges. He has since learned that the landowners had years to create a plan. He is going to be going on a tour with KRD. Some of the people were given 10 year's notice to work on the bridge situation. KRD is at the end of their grace period and right now there are only 4 set to be closed. There are some response problems with this but he will be doing a tour and get them identified and marked. Chief will pause on the FD letter until he can get the full picture.
- We have removed the requirement from citizens to get a three month burn permit or get fire chief clearance for a 10-foot fire. KVFR had no statutory enforcement power to ask them to put them out. We have people and phone calls all day long. When there is a burn ban it will be posted. We have updated our website and will continue to educate the public about the safety. We will still set up a burn line when the new phones come in.
- M-T 7-5pm are Chief Goldsmith's hours and he is now living within the District. He is attending IMT training in the Tri-Cities in 21-23 and has completed his first quarter of school with a 4.0 GPA.
- There are a couple of days that there is not a duty chief with the district. The Chief is working with YTC who has Chief officer's to provide this service through the mutual aid agreement we can request them for a response.
- Chief Goldsmith is pushing 280 hours of comp time, he has an idea to help reduce some of those hours with a buyback proposal, this helps the agency and in full transparency is a benefit to him as well. This would allow him to go off on a fire assignment with the management team, use his admin leave time for the daytime hours and then district benefits keeps him engaged and there is a benefit for him as well.
- There was 54 people that showed up for the training burn at Bowers field. Mutual aid partners were invited and in attendance from other agencies it helped with relationships. There is still

about 100 acres to burn out there and Chief is thinking to do this in the middle of June. Chief Goldsmith wrote a three year burn training program for bowers field.

- Chief has prepared a presentation for his state of the agency and it is fitting that today is exactly day 100 for him as Chief.

6.5 Commissioner Report: Commissioner Pettit shared that Kittcom's meeting occurred today. The tax money is coming in, so they are moving forward with some of the improvements. Staffing is starting to stabilize, and they are even getting lateral candidates now. Commissioner Pettit echoed DS McBride's praise of the Fire Chief Evaluation class last Saturday and shared about the CARES program presentation that followed that class. This is a community paramedic type program and it helps mitigate the demand on 911 resources.

7. Unfinished Business: None

8. New Business:

8.1 WRSB Presentation: Chief Goldsmith presented the attached presentation and touched on the following:

- Washington State Rating Bureau, it was formed in 1911 to help provide fire and data information for insurance ratings to help consumers feel that their premiums are fair.
- Protection class (PC) are given to agencies. What is evaluated? There are three specific factors. Fire hydrants are a big piece to this.
- The last WRSB was included in the board packet can be read. The water supply is a huge factor. Right now, district 2 and city of Ellensburg are at a 4 the City of Kittitas is a 5. The City of Vantage is at a 7. We will get rated next summer, if we don't have our hydrants tested and training hours and apparatus data it will impact our score.
- They take much of the data from the year before. If we get some things done Chief Goldsmith says that we will get our rating down to a 3 for FD2 and City of Ellensburg resulting in thousands of cost savings for insurance premiums for citizens.
- Commissioner Clerf asked if all the hydrants have to be tested. Chief Goldsmith responded, yes all 863 in Ellensburg. He is getting a summer crew to do this, it may cost the agency more but save citizens in the long run. Chief spoke about how the City has added new hydrants and the fire in dogtown that happened, the crews hooked up to hydrant and though it was frozen but it was actually broken.
- If we can improve the PC rating it is a benefit for everybody. Commissioner Pettit asked if there is the potential opportunity to work with the city of Ellensburg to get some of this funding/taken care of? When we look at the concerns that were in the last rating as well as the knowledge of what we have since then, is there something the board can support to really potentially help getting the hydrant testing to a better place? Chief Goldsmith spoke that he will have a report on this for next meeting. Chief Goldsmith is also aware of the hydrant issues with Kittitas and has met with Krista Stream, they are putting a whole new water system in town, and are replacing a bunch of hydrants and adding some more with the growth happening out there. Commissioner Pettit spoke about the water supply in the county, during the middle of April through October, lots of water options, but less in the winter.

8.2 State of the Agency: Chief Goldsmith presented as directed and promised to the board what he identified as the state/needs of the agency and concerns of the agency and where KVFR is at. He would like to first thank our team for feeling conformable enough to share information during his one-on-ones. Chief Goldsmith spoke on the following:

- The state of agency is the operational status of a district at a given time, readiness and operational efficiency and resource availability. How well a district is fulfilling its mission. Issues and budget cuts and impact to serve the community.
- Readiness and preparedness were considered under NFPA 1720 for a combination fire district. This is the same consideration for what he talked about in WSRB. All of this is intertwined. Under NFPA 1720 they are under a revision of this to NFPA 1750 the OSHA rule that could change the way of restricting us and costing a lot of money for training for us. Chief Goldsmith believes that this OSHA rule is secretly passing which will require a lot more training for volunteers. He will have an answer by June 1st on that. What is important here, is that the standard for urban area/downtown area, has a minimum staffing is 15. Response time is 9 minutes. He showed a table for response and staffing. Chief Goldsmith believes we are not meeting this standard.
- Commissioner Pettit asked Chief Goldsmith when you are talking about responses are you talking about staffing is with 4 at Station 29 and 4 at Station 21 and meeting this only 10% of the time is for the entire district. Chief Goldsmith responded correct, the only time when we compliant is 10% of the time which includes the entire district.
- Chief Goldsmith spoke about the concurrent calls that occur that occur 37% of the time, we do everything we can do to handle the second and third response needed. Its alarming if a CPR call comes in.
- Our members have projects on top of their training and 911 response duties. We don't have enough hours in the day and still maintain a decent services within these guidelines for the community.
- We have committed to a minimum staffing of 8. There is no dedicated Chief officer for each shift, just the Chief and Deputy Chief. Span of control is a lot for the Chief positions.
- The training division is a single point of contact for all of the volunteers and we don't have enough training officers. They are task saturated with the recruit academies and volunteer drills.
- In Chief's triage, we are smoking our people and the workload is too much for our people.
- KVFR will work to get Lexipol up and running and work to standardize policies. We have some pretty out dated policies and procedures.
- The apparatus fleet is aging and they do get rid of the age retirement but some apparatus will be past their 15 year shelf life.

Chief Goldsmith identified the top concerns for KVFR to be: Transfers, accountability, staffing, training, fleet replacement, recruitment and retention and consistency/trust/reserves. We don't have enough time, transports mean revenue, but we have to balance the 911 service to the community and what has been set forth by the policies. Accountability, can be addressed through some of policies and procedures. But it is trust and consistency and having a standardization across the agency and we follow it. When people mess up, we have to hold them accountable, holding folks accountable and us ourselves are accountable. Staffing is a huge concern. The amount of work we are asking the teams to do is too much and it all comes down to money. Fleet replacement and recruitment and retention. Transfers are a big reason that people do not want to come to KVFR, people want to fight fire not drive an ambulance. Chief Sinclair and Chief Elliott were not consistent with their responses.

Chief Goldsmith would like to bring back the Reserve program and plan for the future. He would like to have a strategic plan completed by Retired Fire Chief Bob Gear, a third party, this will be the

guiding document for where we will be in the year, 3 years and 5 years. He will request this of the board for the 2026 budget and start that in January.

He created a change in the volunteer policy that has driven a lot of conversation amongst the volunteer group. It's a hard but good conversation to make the program more effective. Chief Goldsmith said he heard about how much love there is for the organization and believes that there is some low hanging fruit he can handle internally right away. He believes that KVFR is taking on water right now and we will sink, with the call volume and staffing levels.

Commissioner Clerf stated that we have been burned by consultants before in the past but will look at the 2026 budget. Commissioner Pettit asked if the strategic plan would be a contract outside the agency, Chief Goldsmith said yes, it would be worth the cost we don't have the experience or the wherewithal and the time to do it internally. Commissioner Goldsmith asked about the mission statement and nobody could tell him what it was. Commissioner Pettit commented that a strategic plan will also help drive the budget process. It is not a document we can complete and then put on a shelf. Chief Goldsmith commented that the team is tired and they don't see a light at the end of the tunnel, there are people that are looking for other jobs. It takes a lot of money to train new people and we need to avoid that.

No further questions were asked by the board. Commissioner Ogan stated that was a lot to digest and it will take a minute for that to sink in.

8.3 Interlocal Agreement Yakima Fire District 2: Chief Goldsmith reached out to the Selah Fire Chief and he is waiting on one other signature then he will send it over on the document is completed. Chief shared that the ILA is the standard KVFR boiler plate one. Commissioner Pettit made a motion to approve the interlocal agreement. Commissioner Clerf seconded the motion. There was no further discussion and the motion passed unanimously.

8.4 Fire Protection Contract 20121 Reecer Creek Road: Commissioner Pettit made a motion to approve the Fire Protection Contract. Commissioner O'Neill seconded the motion. There was no further discussion and the motion passed unanimously.

8.5 Resolution 25-09 Cancel and Reissue Check: Discussion occurred that the resolution is only to cancel the check due to clerical error. Commissioner Pettit made a motion to approve Resolution 25-09. Commissioner Clerf seconded the motion. There was no further discussion and the motion passed unanimously.

9. Good of the Order: None.

10. Executive Session: Commissioner Ogan announced the board would be going into executive session for the performance review of Fire Chief DJ Goldsmith pursuant to RCW 42.30.140(4) (b) To review the performance of a public employee after a 5-minute break starting the executive session at 9:02pm. The executive session would be for 15 minutes until 9:17pm. Commissioner Ogan requested Chief Goldsmith remain for the executive session to meet with the Board members. At 9:17 it was announced that executive session would extend for 15 minutes until 9:32 pm. At 9:32 it was announced that the executive session would extend for 5 minutes until 9:37pm. The regular meeting resumed at 9:37 pm.

11. Fire Chief Performance Evaluation: The board completed an evaluation for Chief Goldsmith. Commissioner Pettit made a motion for the board to approve the fire chief evaluation and direct the board chair and fire chief to sign the performance evaluation. Commissioner O'Neill seconded the motion. There was no further discussion and the board voted unanimously to approve the evaluation as presented.

12. Adjournment:

Commissioner O'Neill made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Commissioner Clerf seconded the motion. There was no further discussion and the board voted unanimously to adjourn the meeting. The meeting adjourned at 9:39 pm hours.


Board Chair


District Secretary

