



**MINUTES**  
**Chelan Fire and Rescue**  
**Wednesday, July 28, 2021 at 3:00 P.M.**  
**232 East Wapato, Chelan, WA**



*The CFR Board of Commissioners will conduct the meeting in person at the fire station, you are welcome to join via Zoom. The public is welcome to join by following this link: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/87284665516> Meeting ID: 872 8466 5516*

*Proposed Chelan Fire and Rescue agenda pending Board approval.*

**Roll Call:** Chairman Moller, Commissioner Oules and Commissioner Jones

**Staff in attendance:** Chief Donnell, Chief Asher, Carol Kibler, Karla Mendoza, John Goynes

**Others in attendance:** Ron Simmons, John Corban, Steve Clark, Anne Clark, Marcia Holmdahl and Bill Bassett.

**Regular Meeting Call to Order:** Chairman Moller called the meeting to order at 3:00 p.m.

**Approve Agenda: MOTION was made to APPROVE the agenda as submitted the MOTION CARRIED.**

**Flag Solute**

**Public Comment:**

Ron Simmons resident of Chelan – submitted with minutes.

John Corban resident of Chelan – discussed filling the fire chief position and finding a chief that will take the fire department into the future. The community has retired fire personnel living in Chelan, let these people help with finding a chief. They have the knowledge and expertise in finding the best chief we can for Chelan.

**Consent Agenda: MOTION was made to APPROVE the consent agenda as submitted the MOTION CARRIED.**

- Revenue and Expenditure Report: June 2021
- Payroll: May 25 to June 21, 2021 for \$132,739.13 paid 07-05-2021
- General Account Vouchers: #13935584 - 1393586 for \$4,421.53 / 1393587 – 1393596 for \$3,251.37 / 1393597 - 1393616 for \$16,821.19 / 1393617 - 1393624 for \$3,051.05.
- Capital Account Vouchers: #17178 – 17180 for \$1,102.71.
- Minutes: June 16, 2021

**Fire Chief Report:**

**2021 Budget & Financials:**

- June financials have been reviewed with the 2021 Budget spent at 45% (budget target – 50%).
- Paid staff overtime for April/May/June used 64% of allocated overtime budget and should hold throughout fire season barring any unforeseen injuries or illness. With the return of FE Troy Keene to full duty on July 8<sup>th</sup> and the filling of the 2<sup>nd</sup> seasonal position we do not anticipate any undue overtime throughout the remainder of fire season.
- We have already sent out crews on state mobilizations to Cheney, Oregon (Bootleg Fire, returning on 7/28), Red Apple/Batterman, and currently have FE Adam Jones deployed as the TFL on the Cedar Creek/Cub Creek Fires in Mazama. Note: We are fully reimbursed for all expenses for these mobilizations (wages, apparatus expenses, and backfill overtime) and it should be noted that our overtime budget will be overspent because we do not directly offset that account with reimbursements from state mobilization. We filled the seasonal position so we know have 2 seasonal.
- 2022 Budget Proposals (with and without levy passage) have been started. First *DRAFT* proposals will be ready for Board review at the September meeting.



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**Emergency Response Reports:**

- June Incident Response Report shows 106 calls for emergency service, our highest June call volume, with our average call volume for June being 92 calls. Rescue/EMS responses accounted for 69.8% of total calls with 41.1% of those non-transport (includes patients who died at scene) or patient transported POV.
- Major incidents for June:
  - 6/06: Brush Fire, Boyd Loop Road
  - 6/11: Commercial Building Fire, 509 E. Gibson: victim rescue/fire confined to single unit
  - 6/12: Vehicle Fire: US Hwy 97, MP 240
  - 6/15: Chimney Fire, Campbell's Lodge
  - 6/28: Brush Fire, S. Lakeshore Road
- June turnout and response times (primary apparatus at Station 71) are within established service delivery goals as set out in SOG 010. Times for outlying stations are still outside of 90<sup>th</sup> percentile.
- The district met our service goals for establishing an Effective Work Force as established by SOG 010 for structure/building and wildland/brush fires.
- Total fire loss for May was \$103,000.00.

**Operations:**

- We are currently in one of the busiest fire seasons to date and are watching resource allocation to ensure adequate coverage within the fire district. Firefighting resources throughout the Western United States are being tax to critical levels with the current fire operations and the forecast does not improve for the rest of the season.
- We continue to work on the county wide Mobile Mapping Project which will allow the integrated mapping and fire risk assessment of the fire district which will be placed into a larger accessible database for all partner agencies.
- Generator for Station 74 has shipped on July 23<sup>rd</sup>. We anticipate that this project (FMAG funded) to be completed by late September.

**Community Risk Reduction:**

- Chelan County moved to EXTREME for danger effective on July 19<sup>th</sup> which effectively eliminates all open burning in the county.
- Placement of the 6 Fire Danger signs has begun with the Union Valley and Station 71 signs. We hope to have the Knapp and Navarre Coulee signs placed this week. Captain Rains is working to tie down the last two locations (Apple Acres & Chelan Falls).



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- We have tentatively scheduled an open house at Station 71 on October 2<sup>nd</sup>. More details will follow as they develop.

**Apparatus Status:**

- C-702 (AC Asher's Command Vehicle) is slated for front end rebuild with an estimated cost of \$3,000.00. This vehicle is currently 12 years, has 140,000 miles, and was scheduled for replacement in 2018.
- Brush 79 front end work and tires replacement this should be completed by next week.
- John has begun work on the 2<sup>nd</sup> M-1083 conversion. Pump is back ordered into December. We will be using the pump and torrent we have.
- All other apparatus are in service at their assigned stations.

**Assistant Chief Report:**

**Volunteer Recruitment & Retention / Training**

- Recruitment: Chelan, Brian Bendawald and William Christenson, Orondo, Chad Mathis.
- Marcia Holmdahl has resigned her position, but will participate as an association member. Thank you, Marcia for your years of service.
- We've participated in the Thursday Farmers Market.
- Stipend shift coverage for June 28% month end 33%, July 42% we are getting better and have reached out to Entiat recruits. Duo recruits Mark and Erica Ward are getting experience and helping our regional folks and getting exposure to training and incidents.
- Training: We've been focusing on Wildland training; the new recruits are taking a blended course the goal is to get a field day in and get them ready.
- We've been working on ropes and knots and hoisting, deck gun spraying water and ground ladders.
- Chief Asher received his Strike Team Leader qualifications during the Red Apple fire. Captain Shawn Sherman while in Oregon fighting fire received more certification on his Strike Team Leader task book. The team received excellent evaluations while in Oregon fighting fire.
- We hired Casey Goss to fill the 2<sup>nd</sup> Seasonal Firefighter position he started July 18, 2021. Casey is fitting in great.
- The fire fight on the Red Apple fire in Wenatchee was an excellent effort by all, it was off the charts, chaos at its finest.
- Chief Asher met with Rivercom; they are creating a fire severity level. Activating the severity level requires additional 911 run cards. This would get us apparatus/firefighters from other agencies to respond to our incidents. If we decide to up the responses, we will get more apparatus. It will not affect 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> alarm run cards. The departments would designate apparatus and personnel. Chief Asher will meet with Rivercom next week to discuss the severity level run cards.



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**Firefighters Association Report:**

- President Dan Crandall reported a balance of \$3,653.00 in the general account, \$10,953.00 in the Gala account and \$1,834.00 in Marine 71 account for a total of \$32,641.00 the parade truck account has \$566.00 and we have a dedicated account with \$559.00.
- The association members discussed the financing for Marine 71; Fire Department will handle routine maintenance. Purchasing equipment will be approved by association members and paid for by the association. The association recently paid for some equipment under \$200.00
- The association members recently discussed policy regarding emergency funding for victims of hardship. The members will need more information and look at each situation and bring to a vote.
- Open house – Oct 2 and possible lunch that will be a priority at the next meeting.
- All information regarding the levy is located on the association's website CD7FFA.COM

**Unfinished Business:**

- **2021 Levy Lid Lift:** Chief Donnell posted the approved information sheet on the district's website. Does the board have any request from staff?
- **New Chief Hiring Process:** Chief Donnell is willing to stay past his retirement date until a fire chief is hired. Chief Donnell stated staff is willing to help the board move forward in the hiring process for the future.
- **City of Chelan Fire Protection Services Contract – Update:** Chief Donnell is close to sending the draft to Wade Farris and hopes to have something for the board next meeting. Chief Donnell and City are looking into submitting something regarding business false alarms. A one, two three violation concepts to include fines if nothing changes in fixing the problematic alarms.
- **Station 75 Short Plat – Update:** Chief Donnell has appointment with Morgan Picton tomorrow as Chief will sign a couple County required documents. Morgan Picton suggested the board could move forward with selling the property.
- **SOG 230 – Marine Operations (DRAFT)** - This is placed as a holder on the agenda. The Marine 71 responses have been limited and we have had good presences on the water. We are moving forward.

**New Business:**

- **Review of 2021 Operational Goals:** See attached document. Chief Donnell reviewed the document:
- August through December works towards a successful passage of 2021 operations levy lid lift.
- Complete 2022 budget proposals (with and without levy lid lift.)
- Develop and implement plan for new fire chief hiring.
- Revisit 2021-2025 Strategic plan and update for future.
- Chief Donnell asked the board for recommendations as we move forward.
- Commissioner Jones, an outline for hiring a fire chief and committee participation would be nice.



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- Chief Donnell sent information to the board regarding the hiring of Assistant Chief and the hiring of Fire Chief Tim Lemon.
- Chief Donnell explained the fire chief hiring process that was taken when hiring Chief Tim Lemon.

**Special Events:**

- WA Fire Commissioners Association Annual Conference October 21-23 at Tulalip Casino.  
*(Please let Karla or Carol Know if you are interested. Chairman Moller is interested in attending.)*

**Board for Volunteer Firefighters:** None

**Commissioner Comments:**

Commissioner Oules wants to move forward with finding a chief and consider Fire Dist. 5 or take it off the consideration. We have the abilities to do it in house. Chairman Moller also agrees in moving forward.

Commissioner Oules stated that she will not be in person for the August and September Board meetings and would participate via Zoom.

Commissioner Jones stated “we would not know what type of Chief we are seeking until after the levy. Moving forward is problematic and he is not in favor of moving forward to a part time chief.

Chairman Moller addressed Commissioner Jones: “that he reached out to Attorney Joe Quinn and explained the situation from last month’s meeting. Giving him a good understanding of the meeting.” Chairman Moller referred to correspondence received from Attorney Joe Quinn stating “there was no open public meeting act violation and that emails or statements presented by Mr. Laughlin do not demonstrate acts of “violations”.

Commissioner Jones to Chairman Moller: Why do you feel this concept of contracting with Manson needed to be kept a secret? When you and Commissioner Oules gave this proposal to Fire District 5 Fire Chief. I was left out, so I asked a Fire District 5 Commissioner what was going on.”

Chairman Moller referred to the executive session that was held to discuss options and reaching out to Fire District 5 and asking one of Fire 5 commissioners if their board would be interested in contracting with us. Chairman Moller; last meeting he did state he spoke with Fire District 5 Commissioner asking if their board would be interested in contacting, he has not heard back from Chelan County FD 5 Board.

Commissioner Jones stated that “he was told Fire 5 Fire Chief was already working on a draft agreement.”



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Chairman Moller addressed Fire Chief Donnell regarding calling him out about the radio interview levy misinformation stated. Chairman Moller stated he did correct the error and asked if Chief Donnell had received the recording from KOZI. Chief Donnell responded no we have asked for it, Jeff at KOZI has it. Chairman Moller stated you can get it off KOZI website.

Chairman Moller mentioned he and Commissioner Oules made statements and a commissioner candidate makes statements and you Chief Donnell call us out for making the statements, when the statements by the commissioners are from the citizens advisory group decisions. What you don't realize or remember Chief Donnell is the citizens advisory group came out that we should look at opportunities with Fire District 5. So however a candidate spins that I don't nor does Commissioner Oules have control of what they say.

Chief Donnell stated it is his job to protect the Fire District and board members from potential liability. Chief Donnell brought forward to the Board a public statement presented by a commissioner candidate that was concerning and had the potential for liability of the Board and the district. The candidate's statement clearly stated that he and 2 of the Chelan Fire & Rescue commissioners were having direct conversations with Chelan Fire District 5 and that they were in agreement with how to move the district forward.

Chairman Moller stated that he "believes these opportunities should be look into and were discussed in the citizens advisory meetings."

Commissioner Jones stated this has gone way beyond. We need to stay on track and concentrate on the levy.

Commissioner Oules asks Commissioner Jones why did you go to a commissioner and talk to them? Commissioner Jones stated "because I didn't know what was going on and found out there is an agreement." Commissioner Oules said if there is an agreement, we need to look it over.

Chairman Moller had a conversation with a member of the citizens levy committee and stated "that they were having secret meetings. The group is not following the district levy document that the board agreed to. Nowhere in the districts document does it state we are hiring 2 firefighters as was stated on the radio. "

Commissioner Oules heard on KOZI of a special invite to a levy meeting scheduled and she was not invited or knew about it. Also how did this group get started? Answer: It was a takeoff from the citizens advisory group.

Chairman Moller has been contacted by a lot of citizens regarding taxation and that his election promise was to not raise fire district taxes. Chairman Moller is trying to be positive in explaining the levy need. People are not happy about the rise in property values. Chairman Moller has left a message for Assessor Deanna Walters to discuss the fire district taxation and impact due to property value increases. Commissioner Oules also stated she has been contacted as well.

Chief Donnell asked the board if they are having second thoughts on the levy lid lift? Each of the board members stated that they are in favor of the levy lid lift.



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Chief Donnell stated that “we cannot dictate what the citizens levy group does, it is the citizens group giving out the information in support of the levy lid lift.”

Discussion about having the board members in attendance of the citizens levy group, all 3 board members cannot be in attendance unless it was put out in public notice and in compliance with the Open Public Meetings Act.

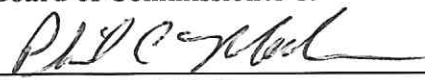
Ron Simmons: Chairman of the citizens levy committee, stated “no one was excluded from the citizens levy public meeting and apologized for any misunderstanding.” He also added that the people invited to attend were members of the community who could be influential to the citizens who will vote. The meeting was not a secret and the levy information on the flyer was exactly what was approved by the board. He asked to Board to contact him directly if they had any questions in the future regarding the citizen committee.

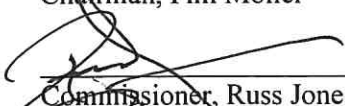
John Corban: Moving forward into November we have an adversarial thing. We sometimes think the worse. We want to collaborate with you and we all have a common goal. Corban has not heard anyone stating we want to hire 2 more people as part of proposition 1. Corban encouraged the commissioners to come to the levy group, and to not make assumptions. We are on the same team for the same goal. Contracting with the Manson Fire Chief is concerning. Corban talked about a test he took regarding teamwork, one individual cannot do it alone, a team effort is better than one. Value the opinions the people you work with. You have incredible wisdom here in the community that are retired fire service personnel that can help you. I see 2 Commissioners that are hell bent to be right, and not willing to listen to the feedback they are receiving. John stated that the Board should consider the possibility of keeping Chief Donnell until you find a candidate as this would allow time to explore all options. Corban stressed the importance to taking the department into the future not going backwards by contracting the Manson Fire Chief who has no experience with a combination fire department.

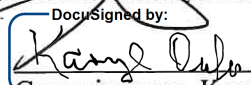
Bill Bassett: KOZI interview and forum was where statements read from other candidates stating staffing levels that might be what you heard.


**Adjournment:** there being no more business before the board the meeting closed at 4:40 p.m.

**Chelan County Fire Protection District 7**  
**Board of Commissioner’s:**

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Chairman, Phil Moller

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Commissioner, Russ Jones

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Commissioner, Karyl Oules

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Carol Kibler, District Secretary

July 28, 2021

Commissioners,

My name is Ron Simmons and I live at 14512 Morning Sun Drive.

I would like to read a prepared statement to you and for the record, offer a printed copy to each of you.

I come to you today with comments about 2 issues.

This Board made a brave gesture several months ago after listening to the advice of a group of citizens, and then unanimously passing a resolution to submit a levy lid lift to the public. There is currently a group of citizens who have been going around the area promoting the Levy that that this Board approved and resolved to follow through with. The Citizens For Chelan Fire & Rescue Committee has begun a campaign to assure this Levy bid in November succeeds, and I personally believe that this community will recognize the needs of the department and vote in favor of it.

I have learned a lot about this department since becoming more involved here earlier this year, and I am aware that there may be issues of contention between the Board members, and within the department that are unresolved, some relating to the 2018 levy lid lift attempt. I would submit to the Board that any contentious activity that gets aired out to the public may and most probably will be scrutinized as having come from an agency that may not be worthy of their tax dollar.

I would implore the Board members to avoid, and more so to discourage all unnecessary activity related to any issue that may display the district in a negative light. I believe that the Leadership of the Board is necessary to assure that the issues of 2018 and the past do not reoccur, the success of the 2021 Levy may be dependent upon it.

The second issue is the replacement of Chief Donnell.

I wish to commend Chief's Donnell and Asher for their leadership of this agency since the departure of former Chief Lemon. I think they have done an exceptional job managing and leading this department through a rocky period of time.

I am aware of discussions being held within the department and out in the public relating to what may occur as a result of this vacancy. Considerations of Chief Asher being placed in an interim position, contracting with a Part-Time Chief, or just finding someone new. I would encourage the Board to not rush into a situation, you have a capable group of people who have the ability to keep the department functioning.

The Board members are aware of my history, having been in the fire service for 40 years I have witnessed many quick decisions to replace a Fire Chief that in the end have cost departments money, time and in the end took them a lot longer to find a leader that fit the needs of the agency.

I would submit to the Board that you have a staff that will continue providing exceptional service to this community, there is no need to rush a leadership figure into the department who has no real knowledge of the personnel or operation, and no intent to stay in the department for any length of time. To rush to a temporary fix may be perceived as a lack of confidence in the staff by the public, or that we are not



that big so a part-time Chief can easily handle the issues. This could also be a potential for the loss of votes in favor of the levy.

Being a Fire Chief with a personnel staff the size that we have, that's all personnel; the budget the size that it is, second largest department in the county, and all of the same liabilities as any department our size and bigger, we need a well thought out process to assign someone to be the Chief of this department who has, or is capable of gaining a well-rounded knowledge of skills to manage every aspect of a progressive fire service, and will be willing to work with the Board, all of our work-groups and the public, with no personal agenda, and someone who will be willing to commit to serving the community and its citizens. I personally believe that you have someone who can fit this position given time and exposure to the administrative side of the department.

Chelan Fire & Rescue is a rural, all hazards service agency, functions with a Combination staffing model of career, stipend and volunteer firefighters. The assessed value and available funding ability for the agency will not change enough for a long time to change that model however, the population growth and call volume have required the department to mature beyond being an "All-Volunteer" agency. Any attempt to revert to that could very well be considered as a deception to the public, not in the best interest of the community and in no way would serve the basic emergency service needs of the Chelan Valley.

Thank you for your time and consideration of these issues.