



**CHELAN**  
**FIRE and RESCUE**  
**Wednesday, November 10, 2021**  
**Budget Meeting**  
**Board of Commissioners**

**Commissioners in Attendance:** Phil Moller, Russ Jones and Karyl Oules

**Staff in Attendance:** Fire Chief Mark Donnell, Assistant Fire Chief Brandon Asher, Carol Kibler and Karla Mendoza.

**Others in Attendance:** Richard Uhlhorn, Steve Clark, Anne Clark, Jasmine Shattuck, Karl Polzin, Larry Peabody, and Sam Belsky. Via Zoom: Deanna Walters, Jerry Isenhardt, Bill Bassett, Taylor Rains and Casey Tjeerdsma

**Call meeting to order at 5:00 p.m.:**

County Assessor Deanna Walters stated she sent the preliminary values by letter to the fire district.

- The only outstanding amount is the state utilities and this will vary year to year.
- The new construction numbers given to you divided by 1000 times last year's assessed rate.
- The state assessed is always multiplied by last years rate, if different from last year utilities, this year state assed utilities will be received. Your fire district rate was \$0.79 for 2021.
- Based on approved \$1.10 rate and one conversation I had with a commissioner the \$1.10 is more than what you need.
- This is an unusual situation! It was a rate that was approved at a \$1.10 base rate this will be your new highest rate.
- This resets your levy. If you take less than the highest going into 2022 the difference and dollar amount is bank capacity.
- It is not collected it is only a number sitting in the system which creates banked capacity.
- Going into 2023 you will have the bank capacity for 2022 (delta) only for one year.
- Your highest lawful is still growing, you will continue to have banked capacity each year if you take less than the highest lawful base rate each year.
- Levies are confusing!

Commissioner Jones: if we only took a lesser amount will the county collect the money.

A: No, they will not collect. It is a banked capacity on paper.

Fire Chief Mark Donnell:

Q: Bank capacity for 2023, if the option is to take the banked money is it taxed back to collection.

A: Yes, and it goes into the formula to figure out the rate and it goes toward the total assessed value.

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- County Assessor Deanna Walters stated you are not at the \$1.50 of your highest lawful it is only \$1.10.
- You could go past the \$1.10 the \$1.50 is your ceiling.
- You are approved at \$1.10; the rate is irrelevant as you are back to a budget base for the \$1.10. If your assessed valuations go down, the rate base vs budget base move forward for 2022.
- Deanna Walters: Tribal properties are exempt to property tax. Any agreement with the tribes would be a third-party contract.
- The district will need to send the certified levy amount to the assessor office. The ballot resolution will go with the certification to the assessor office.

Thank you for your time, Deanna Walters.

Assistant Fire Chief Asher – Strategic plan discussion review power point presentation in taking an aggressive approach to long term planning.

- The definition of: “strategic planning” and we’ve done this through the years.
- With passing of the levy, we have updated the strategic plan. This is a living document that requires making adjustments throughout the year.
- Putting the plan together we have opportunity to move forward now that we have funds.
- We’ve always had a strategic (or long range) plan, we just not had the funding for apparatus replacement and capital expenditures.
- Future programs: Recruitment and retention is imperative and important to the department.
- Call volume is not slowing down, we will need to add more full-time fire fighters in the near future.
- Resident firefighter: provides for future staffing and allows a resident firefighter to live and train at the fire department. Consideration should be given for participating in the WVC fire science degree; a 2-year.
- We will need to look for a replacement for the Fleet Supervisor who is planning on leaving in four years. Consideration should be to outsource this work or hire an apprentice before his retirement. We need to think long term.
- We have a need for an Assistant Fire Chief to oversee volunteer recruitment/retention, training, operations, health & safety, and potentially manage a resident program.
- We have immediate critical apparatus replacement needs: Engine 75 (failed pump test,) Engine 73 is due to be replaced in 2022 as well as one of the command vehicles (CH-72.) We have increased funds (\$250,000.00) into the apparatus fund starting in 2022 but this will not meet all future needs for apparatus replacement. We have an apparatus replacement schedule that shows all apparatus replacement needs for the next 10 years and beyond.
- Response areas will need to have enough apparatus to fulfil the needs for future growth.

**CHELAN**  
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**Budget Meeting**  
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- We have identified that would cost over \$7 million to replace our current apparatus in the next 10 years.

Fire Chief Mark Donnell identified immediate critical apparatus needs.

- Long term (5 years) 2 Type 3 vehicles will be sent back to DNR. These have been replaced by the 2 M-1083s.
- Replacement 2 engines and one command rig is estimated at 1.4 million.
- Our current Apparatus Replacement Schedule has fallen behind because of insufficient funding. The current levy passage gives use more flexibility for putting together a viable apparatus replacement schedule.
- We show the need of replacing apparatus and we have ability to save funds for future purchases, saving \$400,000 annually with the new levy collection instead of the budgeted amount of \$250,000 annually.
- Staff will continue to look at all alternatives to purchasing new versus used apparatus for future service needs. This can be accomplished through utilizing DNR grants, looking at lease option programs, and finding reliable used apparatus that will fill our needs as well as developing usable apparatus that can be used by a one-person crew.
- We have identified the needs and to move forward into the future. We have the funding to allow us to do this.
- These are the type of things the board needs to be planning for into the future.

Commissioner Jones:

Q: Engines 75 and 73 will they be replaced with urban interface.

A: Yes, this will allow us to maintain the WSRB rating and they will have all of the requirements needed. These vehicles are all wheel drive and we will be able to go anywhere

Chief Asher discussed the recruitment of volunteers and outfitting and cost of \$7,500 to \$8,000 ideally, we outfit the recruits with up-to-date safe gear, structure and wildland, radios/pagers. This amount will increase by 12-14 percent coming into 2022.

Chief Asher future challenges in the community:

- Expansion to the North: hospital, airport and casino. We need to plan into the future and long-range plan.
- Our next WSRB rating is in 2022 the last time we got reviewed we had more career firefighters. The number they use is 3 volunteers to every one career staff. We have fewer volunteers and fewer career staff than last time.
- Economic down turn are we in a bubble?
- Community as a whole we are growing, urban interface challenge!

We identified 6 goals and expected outcomes, this is in our strategic plan:

- **Goal 1:** Highly trained and motivated workforce who share a commitment to our values.

**CHELAN**  
**FIRE and RESCUE**  
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**Budget Meeting**  
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- Adding \$50,000 to give more incentives to the recruits. Allowing opportunities for more education and training. This budget item also covers stipend shifts and volunteer points.
- Hiring an Assistant Fire Chief, for operations training, recruitment and weekend shift coverage.
- Hiring 3 Seasonal positions, we did have a hard time finding staffing for the 2 positions in 2021 and this may be challenging for 2022.
- **Goal 2:** Apparatus, equipment and facilities that match the service delivery needs of the community.
  - Recommend increasing the apparatus fund to \$400,000 annually to cover identified apparatus needs.
  - Staff will be putting together an apparatus committee to review the type of engines we need.
- **Goal 3:** Effective Community Risk Reduction;
  - We increased \$5,000 defensible space assessments, address sign program, smoke alarm program and home safety inspections.
  - Continue our partnerships with DNR and Cascadia conservation district for fuel reduction programs.
- **Goal 4:** Develop partnerships that improve efficiency, cost savings and service quality.
  - We added adjacent agencies to our first alarm run cards. We will continue to work with the regional HazMat and Technical Rescue teams.
  - Continue to work with EMS and adjacent fire departments for possible regionalization.
  - Continue to working with the City on completion of the ILA.
- **Goal 5:** Maintain strong community awareness and involvement.
  - We are an all-risk fire department; we respond to EMS calls and are on scene before EMS. CPR requires 8-9 individuals to perform CPR.
  - We continue to engage with the community in to sending a positive message out.
- **Goal 6:** Maintain Excellence in stewardship of public funds and fiscal management.
  - We will continue to post clean annual audits.
  - We are committed to be fiscally responsible and are keeping our bond rating high.
  - We will continue to explore all options for emergency services delivery on our community; grant programs, consolidations.

Commissioner Jones:

Q: "Has a letter been sent to Manson Fire regarding discussion of regionalization and have we received a response?"

Chief Donnell: "We sent the letter last week, waiting for their response."

**CHELAN**  
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Chief Asher; “we have a need and we need to be aggressive, the people voted yes on the \$1.10 we need to recognize the future needs. If we take less the levy amount our accumulative loss through the years will mount up.”

Commissioner Moller “Is there still a question about that? At the last meeting, it was my understanding that we all agreed to it.”

Chief Asher: “There was still discussion on taking less and no decision was made public by the board at that meeting.”

Commissioner Jones: “Considered taking less but after talking to many people 90% of them said do the \$1.10 and reserve what you can. On the projections we talked about the compounding effect on new construction, even projecting at 38,000 annually using the 1% formula will be more accurate. “

Chief Donnell: “We can forecast with all kinds of variables. Historically, new construction is all over the board. We try to stay close to what we are receiving and projecting. We are looking at a 25% increase from last year. Even with the levy passing this is not a huge amount of increased revenue. The District has always been conservative in what we have projected. Know that we have funding we can utilize it responsibly. If we have a turn in the economy the fire district will do what is necessary to tighten its belt. The board will need to consider saving more for critical apparatus and capital improvements. We have 3 buildings that are 30 years old. We looked at 5, 10- and 20-year budget projections. This current levy gives us the ability to move into the future. We will need carry over into 2023 of \$820,000. We are anticipating receiving state mobilizations funds. The board will need to prioritize into 2023 and beyond. The ladder is estimated at \$250,000 we did budget for the expense.”

Commissioner Jones wants to keep the projections conservative.

Chief Donnell: the resolution and certificate needs approval at the November 17<sup>th</sup> meeting. The 2022 budget can be approved at December meeting. We can review the budget and make changes in the budget to address the immediate needs. Staff has looked at all stations and immediate needs and has also increased the carry over for future years.

Commissioner Jones: we will need to start strategic planning for all of the items listed to get a good assessment of new casino, airport water line and growth rate in airport area. We will need to pencil in the items that follow the growth in the community.

Larry Peabody: Apparatus planning expectation of landing an engine is 1.5-2 years, we should be talking about immediate needs sooner than later.  
New hires move it up to mid-2022 to get the process going for ramp up time.

**CHELAN**  
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Stewardship of public funds; your organization has done that and continues to do so. And is pleased to hear the \$1.10 passed.

All fire departments are all risk. High performance CPR, records show 50 out of a 100 walk out of the hospital. 8-9 people needed for CPR great to see the department is doing that!

No fluff in the budget, it is always good, you can do a lot of good with the funds.

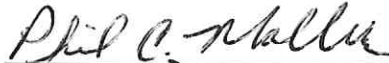
Rich Uhlhorn – why not upgrade the resident quarters you already have a Station 71.

A: there are lots of options.

Sam Belsky – moving forward pro-actively is providing services for the community. Belsky would like to see more involvement with the community. Easier to do services and public relations with more funds.

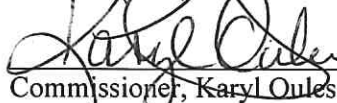
There was no more business before the board the meeting closed at 6:26 p.m.

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



Chairman, Phil Moller

  
Commissioner, Russ Jones

  
Commissioner, Karyl Oules

  
Carol Kibler, District Secretary