



Minutes
Chelan Fire and Rescue
Budget Workshop
Monday, November 18, 2024, at 3:00 p.m.
232 East Wapato, Chelan, WA 98816



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/88541707011> or Meeting ID: 885 4170 7011. One tap mobile +12532158782,88541707011# US (Tacoma) +12532050468,88541707011# US

Flag Salute

Commissioners in attendance: Chairman Jones, Commissioner Donnell, and Commissioner Oules

Chelan Fire & Rescue Admin: Fire Chief Brandon Asher, Assistant Fire Chief Shawn Sherman, District Secretary Misty Fifield.

Others Present:

Call to Order: Chairman Jones called the meeting to order at 3:00 p.m.

Roll Call: Chairman Jones suggested-no roll is needed

The Board is here to discuss the 2025 proposed budget

- Chief Asher presented the 2025 Budget, proposing the hire of two additional firefighters for the year.
- Chairman Jones expressed reluctance to add two firefighters due to the minimal carryover, noting that this could lead to the need for a levy sooner than expected and could potentially take away from the apparatus replacement funds.
- Commissioner Oules asked Chairman Jones about his reluctance to hire two firefighters. Jones expressed concern about the carryover and emphasized his familiarity with financial statements.
- Chief Asher adjusted the budget by removing the four seasonal positions, leaving only the two firefighter positions as proposed. The revised budget showed a positive outcome, but it will remain tight.
- Chief Asher revisited the Weider proposed plan near Walmart and voiced strong concern about minimal staffing, stressing the potential difficulty in meeting the community's needs under the future proposed conditions.
- Chairman Jones reiterated concerns about the budget being over by \$200,000 due to the cost of hiring additional firefighters.
- Chief Asher confirmed the budget is in deficit, but noted that it does not account for income from all 2024 state mobilizations, as the state MOBE revenue was kept conservative due to uncertainties.
- Chairman Jones wants to delay hiring 2 FFs until 2026 to push the budget deficit out for 2 years.
- Commissioner Donnell feels the seasonals are a temporary fix but appreciates all of them. Acknowledges the added expense and the 50% decrease in volunteer rates, including nationwide.
- Chief Asher has reserved two slots for the academy due to spots filling fast.
- Commissioner Donnell wants to maintain a safe and effective workforce and supports hiring 2 FFs for 2025.
- Commissioner Oules suggests prioritizing funds from the apparatus carryover since it is doing well. Notes we have options for future purchases.
- Chief Asher proposed to the City of Chelan to pay \$29,000 per year for staffing due to the TIF.



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- Commissioner Oules asked Ron Simmons for his opinion on hiring 2 FFs for 2025. He agreed but expressed concerns about the possibility of going backwards.
- Commissioner Donnell believes there may be stabilization and possibly a reduction in sending personnel out on State MOBE.
- Chairman Jones noted that in 2021, CFR had 7 FFs, now we have 10, and in 2025, potentially 12 FFs. Everything is more expensive than anticipated.
- Chairman Jones inquired about the status of ST 73, and Commissioner Donnell confirmed it must be maintained until 2030.
- Commissioner Oules asked if the COLA has been projected for each year.
- Chief Asher confirmed the COLA projections have been made.
- Chief Asher emphasized that Lake Chelan is growing, beyond the TIF areas.
- Chairman Jones asked if the county had provided a number for the TIF; Chief Asher responded with a "No."
- Chief Asher raised questions: What are our needs? What does our apparatus schedule look like?
- Commissioner Donnell believes a review of capital expenditures is needed. Questions if we have the correct apparatus for our needs, whether all stations are needed, and how to keep the department viable.
- Chairman Jones expressed concern about how to pay for everything while maintaining the desired carryover.
- Chief Asher suggested moving some funds out of capital investment.
- Chief Asher isn't concerned about apparatus replacement but raised questions about volunteer commitment and the need for all stations, especially with fading volunteer numbers.
- Commissioner Donnell is in favor of hiring 2 FFs for 2025.
- Chief Asher emphasized the need for more conversations with Manson Fire, as Commissioners and Chief Baker have discussed a possible shared volunteer recruitment/retention coordinator position. Manson has set aside \$95,000 and is interested in sharing the position with CFR7. There is potential to work the position into a Duty Officer role.
- Commissioner Donnell seeks more clarity on the shared position but feels the cost would be minimal, so it doesn't require additional budgeting.
- Chief Asher recommended applying for the AFG recruitment and retention grant partnering with Manson.
- Chairman Jones likes the shared position idea but feels it's not sustainable alongside hiring 2 FFs. Hiring 2 FFs would close the door on the shared position.
- Commissioner Donnell disagrees, believing it can work. He is open to keeping the shared position alive and maintaining communication with Manson, though he has concerns about our FFs being shorted.
- Assistant Chief Sherman recognized areas of concern, such as reluctance to spend on staffing, but noted it costs money to do business. Concerned that the volunteer program may fall short compared to Manson's strong program. Suggests focusing more on retention and utilizing outlying stations to house volunteers.
- Commissioner Oules believes it would be a step back if we don't follow through with Manson.
- Chief Asher mentioned that Manson may hire some seasonals for 2025.
- Chairman Jones inquired about obtaining a copy of Manson's budget; Chief Asher will look into it.
- Chief Asher feels communication with District 5 is progressing well.



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- Commissioner Donnell requested an updated worksheet on Capital, outlining the proposed budget and apparatus list, with the removal of 2 seasonals.
- Chief Asher clarified that the 2 seasonals will be floaters for and fill Kelley days.

- NO OTHER DISCUSSION

Adjournment: Board Commissioner Donnell Motioned to close the meeting with no additional business before the Commissioners, the meeting adjourned at 4:08 pm.

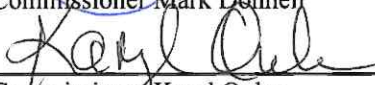
Chelan County Fire Protection District 7
Board of Commissioners:



Chairman, Russ Jones



Commissioner Mark Donnell



Commissioner Karyl Oules



Attest: Misty Fifield, District Secretary