

West Klickitat Regional Fire Authority
Regular Meeting
119 NE Church Street White Salmon WA 98672.

Thursday January 15, 2025. 6:30pm.

- ❖ **The meeting was called to order by Chair Thomas Montag at 18:30.**
- ❖ **Flag Salute.**
- ❖ **Attendance:** *Welcome Morella Mora to the Governing Board (Oath of Office was conducted by a Notary before the meeting).*
WKRFA Governing Board: Quorum: Thomas Montag, David Lindley, Morella Mora, Robert Connor, Charles Virts.
Absent: Ben Giant
Advisory groups/staff: Chief Long, Eric Bosler, Rozalind Plumb, Jure Poberaj.
Other: Lucas King (Mount Adams Resource Stewards MARS)
- ❖ **Agenda:**
Motion to approve the agenda with adjustment to move the MARS item earlier in the meeting, made by Charles Virts second by Robert Connor, (4 in favor, 0 opposed) motion passed.

Agreements item moved to beginning of meeting:

MARS – Mount Adams Resource Stewards. Lucas King – Fire and fuels Resource Manager
Proposal to lease part of Station 31 for an office and storage location for equipment and vehicles. This places a 10-person fire crew in the area during the spring and summer fire season. The crew will be working on fuels reduction projects in the area when not fighting fires.

Lucas King gave a brief presentation of the work MARS does in the community for fuels reduction and working with all the different private, state, local and federal landowners. They are a 501(C) (3) non-profit company employing around 30 staff. The goal is to promote resilience in forests and communities. Lucas works directly on fuel breaks, prescribed fires and wild land firefighting among other stewardship and restoration work. The emphasis is on fuels reduction to create fire breaks and slow down the spread of fires. The Seasonal crews are also qualified as wildland fire fighters and support response to fires locally. The use of WKRFA facilities in Husum will entail storage of vehicles (brush engines and personal vehicles of the crews), storage containers for tools and fuels and office space on the stage. Joint use of the kitchen and bathrooms.

Discussion on shared mission of the WKRFA and MARS and the benefit to having additional firefighters in the area. The crews will be 10 to 15 people which is a similar capacity to what was available when DNR were stationed in Husum.

Board was in agreement to continue finalizing the lease agreement with staff and legal counsel.

❖ **Minutes of the last Meeting.**
“Move to approve the minutes from the last meeting” made by Charles Virts, second by Robert Connor (4 in favor, 0 opposed) motion passed.

❖ **Public Comments:** None noted.

❖ **Administrative Secretary’s report**

- Not much change from the December 18 meeting. The Treasurer’s report was not available until right before the meeting. Reminder that this was the first year of operation and we had budgeted for additional full time staff and a duty program, but staffing did not occur until later in the year.
- Now that we have the final tax revenue from the county, we can transfer 10% to the Capital reserve. There is opportunity to transfer more than 10%.
- State Audit is due by the end of May for 2025 fiscal year. This is an annual accountability audit which is followed by an in-depth review by the state every 3 years. KCFD3 will be audited for years 2023, 2024 and 2025 this year. WKRFA will be audited in 2027 for years 2024, 2025 and 2026. Currently we do not meet the \$2million criteria for a full Financial Audit. Staff expect that to start in the next few years.
- Approval of the scripts.

GENERAL EXPENSE FUND 615.1: See 2025 Operating Budget table and graphs.

General Expenditure Scripts for approval

Date	Amount	Date	Amount
12/22/2025	507.92	01/09/2026	11,908.64
12/29/2025	2,896.03	01/13/2026	5,665.86
12/31/2025	4,628.21		
01/05/2026	716.79		
01/07/2026	1,246.73		

General Expense fund expenditures up for approval are dated the 22nd December 2025 in the amount of \$507.92, the second dated 29th December 2025 for the amount of \$2,896.03. third on the list dated 31st December 2025 in the amount of \$4,628.21. Next on the list is dated 5th January 2026 in the amount of \$716.79, followed by 7th January 2026 for the amount of \$1,246.73. The 9th of January 2026 in the amount of \$11,908.64. The final one being on the 13th January 2026 in the amount of \$5,665.86.” Motion made by Charles Virts, second by David Lindley. (3 yay, 0 opposed (Mora abstained). motion passed.

❖ **Fire Chief’s Report** –See attached by Chief Long.

Chief reported that the in-ground tanks on Snowden are insulated in asbestos. The WKRFA is responsible for mitigation. Recommendation now is to remove the asbestos to ground level so the tanks can be opened and the inside cleaned of oil and inspected. When the board chooses to remove and

dispose of the tanks (now or in the future) the asbestos will need to be removed from the entire tank before it can be disposed of.

Chief also attended a County Commissioner meeting this week with several other fire chiefs to voice the collective concerns about the county moving the Emergency Management Division to Public Works. The Chiefs submitted a letter to the County Board of Commissioners'. Chief noted that only one other county in the state of Washington has its emergency services under public works. However, they are in the process of changing as it has proven unsuccessful.

- ❖ **Training Report:** See attached by Captain Crumpacker.
Flexible training events have started and are generating interest. There are possibly 3 structures available for burning.
- ❖ **Volunteer Representative Report.** Eric Bosler noted the Association has selected its officers for 2026 and he will continue as representative to the board. Fund raisers this year include the Fire on the Mountain Trail run. The Association will help fund the Appreciation Dinner (cover costs for family members) and recognition for John Riggleman who is retiring after 30 years of service. The Association also received donations from Bridge Mart and Everybody's Brewing.
- ❖ **Information Only Items.** None noted
- ❖ **Unfinished Business- Follow -up Items.**
 1. ADA walkway at station 31. The initial bid was submitted through MRSC rosters via direct requests to vendors on the certified small business list. We have no responses and requested guidance. MRSC stated we can follow direct bidding rules. It is unclear if they have to be on the MRSC roster or not. Roz is following up.
 2. Snowden In Ground Tanks. –See Chief report above (asbestos abatement needed before cleaning phase can start).
- ❖ **Discussion Items/Action Items**
 1. Resolutions -Review established resolutions
 - *Meeting Dates - Motion to maintain resolution 2024-01 establishing the meeting date made by Charles Virts second by David Lindley (0 opposed motion passed)*
 - *Agent to receive Claims – Motion to maintain Brian Snure as our agent to receive claims as described in Resolution 2024-02." Made by Charles Virts second by Robert Connor. 4 Yay, 0 opposed motion passed.*
 - *Auditing Officer – Resolution 2024-03* This resolution requires the board appoint an elected Governing Board Member to review finance.
 - *Motion to maintain Charles Virts as the Auditing Officer made by Robert Connor, second by Morella Mora. (4 yay 0 opposed. Motion passed).*

- **Board Officer Position for 2026.**
Motion to maintain Thomas Montag as Chair and David Lindley as Vice Chair made by David Lindely, Second by Charles Virts. (4 yay, 0 opposed) motion passed.

2. Policies- none

3. Agreements.

- i. **Wildfire Resiliency Coordinator** - Resources Lagacy Fund (RLF)– The proposal is to host a Wildfire Resiliency Coordinator position in Klickitat County, funded by the RLF. Staff will meet with RLF representative next week and review the workload and management of the grant. Chief noted the position could be partially funded by WKRFA to ensure a specific amount of time is dedicated to properties in WKRFA.
- ii. **2026 employee agreements.** Following up on discussion at the December meeting, Charles Virts presented a summary of current wages and salary for administrative staff and the Chief. He made recommendations to increase wages based on comparison to local and regional examples for similar agencies and roles. Amounts were shown as annual, monthly, and hourly (depending on agreement). [NB Staff had not seen these figures before the meeting and Roz noted they will need to run them in the spreadsheet to see how it affects the salaries and benefits line in the budget].
Discussion on the existing agreements and noted that they renew automatically unless changes are needed. Additional discussion and recommendation to plan for step increases to allow better budgeting and consistency and retention for employees.

Motion to adjust the salaries of our fire chief to \$129,000 annually effective 1 January 2026. Also, in that motion I would adjust the Administrative Manager's compensation per year beginning 1 January 2026 to \$87,290 per year. Additionally, I would adjust the Administrative Assistant's compensation to \$45,465 per year effective 1 January 2026. Made by Charles Virts Second by Robert Conor, (4 yay, 0 opposed) Motion passed.

- iii. **Strategic Planning** - Next meeting date to be determined – April. Priorities will be for capital expenditures and planning for replacement.
- iv. **Health Saving Plans**
Jennifer provided information on possible options. Board can review and consider benefit options available to staff for future budgeting considerations.

4. Other Discussion Items- None

- ❖ **EXECUTIVE SESSION** (as needed per RCW 42.30.110). – None needed.

❖ **Action items** – covered above.

❖ **Good of the order.**

- Robert Connor noted there are plans to widen Snowden Road which will improve safety. Snowden residents had submitted a petition to the County, The work is planned, but no dates are known.
- Chief noted there is another project planned for Hwy 141 that will incur a diversion between at the top of the 141 Alternate. There will also be a reduction in speed limit on 141 in Husum to 35.
- David Lindley asked if we had received any response from the email to City of White Salmon regarding the \$25,000 Capital funds that was removed from the Fire Reserve Fund to help with the transition to the RFA. The funds do not appear to have been transferred to the RFA with the rest of the Fire Reserve funds. No response yet.

❖ **Next Meeting:**

Regular Board meeting Thursday February 19th 18:30. Location: Station 30, 119 NE Church Street White Salmon.

❖ ***“Motion to adjourn,” made by Robert Connor, seconded by Charles Virts. (4 in favor 0 opposed). Motion passed.***

Meeting adjourned 19:58.

APPROVED:



WKRFA Chair - Thomas Montag (date)

Attest:



Administrative Manager - Rozalind Plumb