



THURSTON COUNTY FIRE PROTECTION DISTRICTS 1 & 11  
**WEST THURSTON REGIONAL FIRE  
AUTHORITY**

10828 Littlerock Rd SW  
Olympia WA 98512  
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May 12, 2025 – Governing Board Business Meeting at 18720 Sargent Rd SW, Rochester, WA St. 1-1

**Call to Order/Attendance:** Commissioner Culleton called the meeting to order at 17:32.

**Commissioners:** Ricks, Merryman, Reed, White, Scott (Zoom).

**Chief:** N. Drake

**Battalion Chief:** R. Stone, E. Smith

**Captain:** M. Morales

**Lieutenants:** J. Swecker

**Firefighters:** S. Dean, R. Lohse,

**Volunteer:** B. Crabb, J. Spiegelberg, A. Kautz

**Admin:** Admin Svcs Director/Secretary S. Hemminger, Recruit & Retention Coord. A. Reynoldson,

**Union Representative:** A. Trautman

**Guests:** Emily Morales (zoom), Natalie W (zoom)

**Additions/Deletions to the Agenda:** IAFF Contract Negotiations – 7<sup>th</sup> Agenda item. Commissioner Merryman requested April 14, 2025, meeting minutes reflect that under New Business item #4 that he abstained from that vote and in paragraph four reflect that he remained silent for the vote. Board Secretary advised she will review the zoom video and report back in the June 2025 Board Meeting.

**Public Comments/Presentations:** Community Member – Anonymous via Zoom Chat: *“Hi, I would like to stay anonymous. Commissioner Merryman has shown he cannot keep emotions stable (obsessive compulsion) through the issue I am bringing up as well as his aggressive manner and raised voice toward the union rep when concerns of public comment were made, so for my safety, I'd like to keep anonymous.”*

*I would like to direct my comment to Commissioner Merryman. What is your personal vendetta with the new commissioner? In last month's meeting this was stated in a motion that the issue is laid to rest. However, as a community member to understand your motives, I would like to know why had you been pushing so hard to reverse the now set commissioner? There has been so much time wasted in your arguments when you don't get what you want, going as far as wasting taxpayer money contacting the fire attorney. All these men want to help serve their community. Why are you fighting against having different views or people wanting to help positively impact the community?”* Commissioner Merryman's response was that *“it's not a personal vendetta against Chris, I think he's a great guy. It's about how the system works, and it doesn't seem like Littlerock is not a well-oiled machine, so knowing that I could be sued personally I wanted to make sure that what is done here is on the up and up.”* Chief Drake commented that he feels there are changes that need to be made, and that we have made some changes to have more clarity. Certainly, there will be more issues that come up in the future and the goal is to work through those and improve the process. Chief Drake stated that he feels this issue has been put to bed now, and Commissioner Merryman agreed.

**Labor Management:** A. Trautman reported that the Union is getting ready for contract negotiations and one other item that Chief Drake will address for one of the members.

**New Business:**

1. Expenditure Approval – Commissioner Scott moved to approve the total expenditure amount of \$540,836.93. Commissioner Ricks seconded the motion. Motion carried 6-0. Commissioner Scott requested year-to-date expenditures for DH Pace, the Board Secretary advised she would follow up after looking into it. Commissioner Scott also requested that at a future board meeting review how often the Dept. goes out for RFQ on vendor provided services.
2. Meeting Minutes – The April 14, 2025, meeting minutes to be reviewed for Commissioner Merryman's requested changes.
3. Request for donated sick leave Career member – Chief Drake requested the board approve a request for donated leave for an FF/EMT that has been out with extensive medical issues. Commissioner Merryman moved to approve the request for donated leave. Commissioner White seconded the motion. Motion carried 6-0.
4. E1-7 Ladder Truck – Chief Drake advised the board that it is not financially feasible to make the required repairs on the ladder truck based on its age, and the cost of the repairs exceed what we originally paid for it. Recommendation is to surplus the truck.
5. Policy Revision Final Review 1012 Volunteer Reimbursement - Commissioner Merryman moved to approve the revised Volunteer Reimbursement policy. Commissioner White seconded the motion. Motion carried 6-0.
6. Policy Revision First Review 2013 Resident Firefighter Program – Commissioner Ricks pointed out a typo in Section 11.
7. Local Union Contract – Chief Drake advised the board that union contract negotiations will be starting in June, and past practice has been for a commissioner to be part of the negotiations. Commissioner Merryman suggested Commissioner White participate in the negotiations, Commissioner White agreed he would join in the negotiations and from the admin side it would be Chief Drake and Admin Services Director S. Hemminger. Commissioner Merryman moved to approve the members of the negotiation team. Commissioner Ricks seconded the motion. Motion carried 6-0.

**Unfinished Business (action items):** None

**Unfinished Business (non-action items):** None

**Communications:** Chief Drake presented his annual report, refer to printed handouts.

Chief Drake provided an update on the WSRB final rating, and that we will maintain a rating of 5 due to opening St. 1-4 Scott Lake to the revised resident program and having more FF/EMT's living within the five-mile radius of St. 1-6 and 1-4. The Board Secretary brought forward information on Lexipol services on policy development, updating and implementation. Commissioner Ricks asked that this be a priority during the 2026 budget development.

**Chief/Training/EMS/Shift Reports:** Refer to printed reports.

**Recruit & Retention Coordinator Update:** Refer to printed report.

**Commissioner Reports:** Commissioner Ricks reported on the EMS Council and their submission of the comprehensive plan to the County Commissioners. The ALS contract negotiations have reached a tentative agreement pending the attorney's approval. The 2026-2027 Budget planning is for seven new aid units, unsure if they will get funded. Commissioner Culleton reported the county fire commissioner meetings are now held in person and Dist. 6 is looking for an Asst. Chief.



**EXECUTIVE SESSION. THE PURPOSE OF THIS EXECUTIVE SESSION IS PURSUANT TO RCW 42.30.110 (1) (I) LITIGATION THAT HAS BEEN SPECIFICALLY THREATENED TO WHICH THE AGENCY, THE GOVERNING BODY, OR A MEMBER ACTING IN AN OFFICIAL CAPACITY IS, OR IS LIKELY TO BECOME, A PARTY. THE DURATION OF THE EXECUTIVE SESSION IS SET AT 30 MINUTES BUT THIS MAY BE EXTENDED BY THE PRESIDING OFFICER. ACTION MAY OR MAY NOT BE TAKEN AFTER THE BOARD RECONVENES INTO REGULAR SESSION, AND NO ACTION SHALL BE TAKEN IN THE EXECUTIVE SESSION.**

**Executive Session Began: 1840**

**Executive Session Ended: 1902**

**No actions taken.**

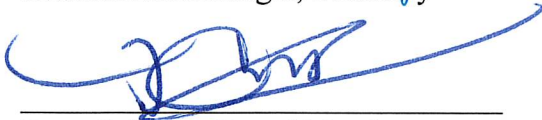
**Good of the Order:** Chief Drake thanked Recruit and Retention Coordinator A. Reynoldson and Admin staff for stepping up and getting the Resident Program Volunteers the necessary training and ready to begin the Resident program. Commissioner Merryman thanked Recruit and Retention Coordinator A. Reynoldson for her work on the fund raiser and coordinating rides to school on the fire truck. Commissioner Merryman asked if the contract with the Chehalis Tribe was up for negotiation in 2025, Chief Drake confirmed.

**Adjournment:** The board adjourned the meeting at 1904 hours.

Submitted for Board approval by:



Shannon Hemminger, Secretary



Tom Culleton, Board Member

Robert Scott, Board Member



John Ricks, Board Member



Jeff Merryman, Board Member



Mike Reed, Board Member



Chris White, Board Member