

Snohomish County Fire District #4

MEETING MINUTES

REGULAR MEETING BOARD OF FIRE COMMISSIONERS

DATE:	Monday, September 9th, 2025
LOCATION:	Headquarters Fire Station #43 – Harvey Room – Snohomish, WA

BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT:	BRIAN MILLS , Chair CRAIG ERICKSON , Fire Commissioner EVAN MERRITT , Fire Commissioner
STAFF MEMBERS PRESENT:	Don Waller, District Secretary/Fire Chief Jason Hodkinson, Assistant Chief Greg Osborne, Assistant Chief Shauna Harth, Executive Specialist
GUEST PRESENT:	Ralph Rohwer, Turner and Townsend

I. ROLL CALL

Chair Mills called the meeting to order at 15:00 hours. Chair Mills and Commissioner Erickson were present at the time of the meeting being called to order.

II. FLAG SALUTE

III. ADOPT/ADJUST AGENDA

Discussion: The agenda stands as presented

IV. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

Discussion: There were no questions or comments concerning the August 11th, 2025 Regular Board Meeting minutes. They were approved as submitted.

V. OPEN PUBLIC COMMENT

No public comment.

VI. INFORMATIONAL ITEMS

A. Accounts Payable (AP): The following AP Batches were presented:

08/15/2025 for \$	4,556.98
08/22/2025 for \$	151,732.58

A member of the public asked about the occurrence of an IRS penalty noted under 4453. Chief Waller stated that AC Frater, who is currently deployed on a mobilization, would have to speak to that and stated that it is very complicated ongoing discussion with the federal agency. Later in the meeting (15:43) Chief Waller clarified that the IRS penalty was the result of a ACH that process in 2023. Chief Waller stated that AC Frater advised that this process of

clearing the penalty is very slow due to communication and so far the original penalty has been paid. At this time the agency has not been charging the District late fees.

Commissioner Erickson sought clarification on the invoice from Cuz Concrete, which was hired to pump the RLB tank, and the VRBO payment, which is lodging for staff attending a conference in a remote location. Chair Mills asked why there was a payment for the 4th St property water to the City of Snohomish, which is a set meter fee for the property. Chair Mills also asked for clarification on the CommonStreet Consulting bill which is due to the extension. Chair Mills approved the batches as presented.

B. Payroll – August 2025 Payroll of \$1,009,205.46 was presented.

C. Accounts Receivable (AR)- A summary of the August invoices and payments from the City of Snohomish for the Civic Campus and Facility Improvements project was presented.

D. Financial Rating- Chair Mills spoke to being hesitant about a press release regarding the bond rating and that the information should be shared at appropriate times. Commissioner Erickson also spoke to how a positive bond rating shows that Snohomish is a great place to buy real estate. Chair Mills deferred to Chief Waller in how to handle the advertisement of the bond rating. Chief Waller suggested that the Board approve the press release wording so that staff can use the wording as appropriate in the future (i.e, a social media post regarding budgets or audits). The commissioners were in agreement with this suggestion. Chair Mills and Commissioner Erickson thanked staff for their work in receiving this rating.

Chair Mills asked Ralph Rohwer about the significance of the bond rating. Rohwer explained that it is very significant since it shows the District's financial health and that it puts the District in a great way to state they are better than a reasonable risk. This is “ a feather in your cap”. Staff spoke to the rating and stated that the District was one of a few agencies that obtained that rating.

VII. DISCUSSION ITEMS

A. Station 42 General Contractor Construction Management (GCCM)

Discussion: Chair Mills spoke about the current station construction process and had asked staff to seek options for the bidding of the future Station 42 project. The District asked Ralph Rohwer to present a bidding option called General Contractor Construction Manager (GCCM).

Rohwer spoke about the bidding stipulations required by state agencies and the RCW revisions. One of these updates is that a general contractor is brought on during the early phases, after a competitive process based on qualifications, to ensure constructability during the design phase and then are transitioned to general contractor of the project under a set guaranteed maximum price. This process does require that all subcontractors be selected via a competitive bid and that the GC is prepared to manage that bid process. The GC will need to communicate clearly to the subcontractors and advertise to local businesses. Rohwer is ready to submit this option to the Project Review Committee (PRC) if the Board determines that they want to proceed with this option; the application is due October 20th, 2025.

Chief Waller advised that this option would not delay the bidding process and would assist with aligning the project with Station 43's construction. Commissioner Erickson advised that time and financial benefits make the option a positive choice.

Commissioner Merritt arrived 15:35.

Rohwer advised that the Board would need to announce that they want to proceed with this process publicly. The Board and staff spoke to different financial possibilities depending on the station's constructions and contingencies. Chair Mills moved to approve this plan (GCCM) and authorize Chief Waller to enter into a contract with Turner & Townshend for the scope for GCCM. Commissioner Erickson seconded the motion. No discussion. The motion passed unanimously. The Board thanked Ralph Rohwer for his knowledge and time.

B. Bunker Gear

Discussion: Staff advised the bunker gear purchase was initially scheduled for the 2026 budget season, however, the District is able to purchase this gear in bulk via the piggy back/cooperative bid. AC Hodkinson advised that the wait time for this gear has increased and that waiting to purchase can delay the arrival of the gear. Commissioner Merritt motioned to approve the PA for bunker gear (PA2025.41 per Chair Mills). Commissioner Erickson seconded the motion. No discussion. Motion passed unanimously. There was a discussion surrounding the Oregon cooperative bids.

C. Policy Updates

Discussion: Chair Mills discussed staff's updates to policies. Chief Waller advised that there were some grammatical and minor changes, and the definition section was moved. Commissioner Merritt asked if line personnel were mandated to work due to wildland mobilizations. AC Hodkinson advised that mandatory backfill staffing occurs if the backfill positions are not filled via voluntary staffing. There was further discussion surrounding wildland mobilizations with regard to staff deciding to accept a mobilization order and the Local's support of the deployments. Commissioner Merritt stated that he supports the program and wants to ensure that it is sustainable. Commissioner Merritt asked if the District can fill mobilization requests with outside agency personnel. Chief Waller stated that they would like to do that as a partnership eventually.

AC Hodkinson spoke to the progress in which administration and staff have learned about the deployment process. Policy 120 updates were driven by a collaboration between the Local, administrative staff, and the wildland team. There was further discussion regarding debit days and part-time employees on mobilization requests.

D. Merger Statement

Discussion: The Board discussed Labor's statement on a merger, specifically with SRFR, which was provided at the August 2025 Regular Board Meeting of Fire Commissioners. Chair Mills would like the Board to further discuss this statement and decide what action or position to take, whether that be a memo to staff or a direct response to the Local.

Commissioner Merritt believes that the Board should continue having a discussion and relationship with SRFR, regardless of the letter that the Local provided as the Board should still be fact-gathering to ultimately decide what is best scenario for the District's constituents. He discussed including the Local's opinions and concerns into consideration.

Chair Mills agreed with Commissioner Merritt that the Board needs to work with other agencies to decide what is best for the District. Commissioner Erickson also agreed with the sentiment and stated that it is inevitable that the fire agencies regionally will evolve to serve the growing population.

Commissioner Merritt wanted to have a conversation with the Local for clarification on the statement. Chair Mills relayed that one of the Local's concerns is merging with an agency with a newly hired fire chief. Chief Waller spoke to some feeling presented to him from employees (not the Local's position). The concern is surrounding that this is happening at warp speed and there is confusion to what is happening. To his knowledge the Board has not provided a statement and thus the groups are saying slightly different things/biases/ideas to help clarify this.

Chief Waller stated that the Local has been very supportive of the training academy and are positively engaged in multi-agency groups such as: pre-shift meetings, company officers at the training center, training consortium, medical trust, fire academy, safety officers, tech team trainings, response plans. Their actions show that they are open to collaborative efforts.

On behalf of the Local, BC Mansfield reread the Local 2694 statement. There was further discussion regarding the tone and meaning of the statement. Chair Mills and Commissioner Erickson applaud the labor group for their current collaboration efforts and commented that providing the Local's statement on a merger is a reflection of having ownership within the department. The Board agreed that a clarification statement will be written by Chair Mills.

A short break (recess) was held until 16:50 and returned at 1658.

E. 2024 Annual Report

Discussion: There was a discussion regarding the six years of data interpretation. Discussed the robustness of the data and the strides that the District has made over the last couple of years. Commissioner Erickson moved to adopt the 2024 annual report as written, Commissioner Merritt seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

VIII. ACTION ITEMS

A. Latecomers Agreement

Discussion: Chair Mills discussed the topic. After reviewing the possibility of this occurring and determining that it was small, the Board agreed not proceed with this option.

Action: No action taken.

B. Large Warrants

- a. LG 25.11- GenCap Construction Corp (\$54,060.87)**
- b. LG 25.12- GenCap Construction Corp (\$1,187,724.48)**
- c. LG 25.13- GenCap Construction Corp (\$433,474.02)**

No questions regarding the large warrants. Chief Waller discussed the two types of change orders that could occur and there will be a change in how those are documented. Chair Mills moved to approve LG 25.11, LG 25.12, and LG 25.13. Commissioner Merritt seconded the motion. The motion passed.

IX. COMMENTS

A. Executive Staff (summarized in the written report in the packet)

Chief Hodkinson

Discussed the auto aid and high-acuity calls. Chief Waller spoke to this example of being a cooperative way the agencies have implemented processes to better serve the community. The written report was discussed.

Commissioner Erickson would like water training to occur during a large minus tide on the Snohomish River.

Chief Osborne

Highlighted staff's assistance with annual testing and thanked Gary Jessop for his hard work in this project. AC Osborne reported on the lifejacket loaner program which was an initiative of Commissioner Erickson; the life jackets have arrived and are being put in place. He has also been working with the Explorers to assist with the ACT program and the group will also participate in a ACT class. There was a discussion about the current CPR program and a transition to adopting the ACT program. There is no change to the standard in which first responders perform CPR.

Chief Waller

Chief Waller briefed on AC Frater and FM Hill projects.

There was discussion regarding the possibility of updating fire codes and adopting codes via City Council. Commissioner Merritt asked Chief Waller to clarify the District's ability to enforce fire codes. We work with the businesses to fix issues. Legal and various advisors advised the District not to take on the enforcement portion.

There was discussion regarding WSRB and the District's rating over the next five years.

Staff advised that the fire engines are due for replacement in 2030 and the production time has increased to five years. Chair Mills and Chief Waller asked staff (AC Hodkinson) to form a committee to prepare for purchasing replacement engines. There was a discussion regarding electric vehicle (EV) option, however, it is not suitable for the department at this time.

B. COMMISSIONER COMMENTS

Chair Mills will be attending the Sno- Isle Meeting to report on the SCEMSA as a liaison.

Commissioner Erickson invited staff to a PTSD Seminar occurring in Bellingham on September 25th for first responders.

X. ADJOURN

At 18:02 hours, the Regular Board Meeting was adjourned.

MINUTES OF REGULAR FIRE COMMISSIONERS BOARD MEETING, September 9th, 2025

Minutes prepared and submitted by:

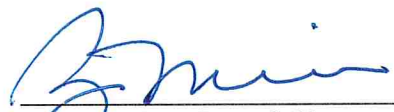


Shauna Harth, *Executive Specialist*



Don Waller, *District Secretary*

MINUTES APPROVED BY FIRE COMMISSIONER:



Brian Mills, *Board Chair*

10/13/25

Date