

WHATCOM COUNTY FIRE PROTECTION DISTRICT 18

Regular Meeting Minutes

August 14, 2025

Chairperson Wolf called the regular meeting of the Whatcom County Fire Protection District 18 Board of Commissioners to order at 19:13.

ATTENDANCE: Chairperson Steve Wolf, Commissioner Socorro Ruiz, and Chief Troy Patrick. Administrative Services Manager Christine Love Johnson is excused.

PUBLIC COMMENT

None

CONSENT AGENDA

- A. Comment Cards: No comment cards were received.
- B. Financial Reports: The August financial report will be handed out during the next meeting.
- C. Minutes from July 10, 2025, WCFPD18 regular meetings.
- D. Expense Vouchers for July 2025 for \$7,090.38.
- E. Payroll Vouchers for July 2025 for \$12,108.15.

Commissioner Wolf moved to approve the consent agenda action items. Commissioner Ruiz seconded the motion; the motion carried 2-0.

GENERAL REPORTS

A. Chief / Training report

Chief Patrick provided the Commissioners with a copy of his Chief's report. During this period, we ran seventeen calls, of which South covered three. Two of which were solely covered by South, and one where only Jose responded.

The County Chief's meeting discussed the County EMS study. There were some negative feelings regarding the findings regarding the quality of work. There were two proposals for mergers: WCFD18 and South Whatcom County and District 17 with Ferndale. Chief Patrick spoke with Chief Nolze after the findings, and there is no current interest in a merger between South Whatcom and WCFD18. Chief Patrick will forward a copy of the proposed report to the Commissioner for review.

Chief Patrick had a meeting with the Chief of Acme, and is open to ongoing dialogue on how they can collaborate or share resources. One idea discussed was storing the current Engine 26 as a reserve engine for both Districts, with Acme covering some of the maintenance costs.

B. Administrative Services Manager

No report, on vacation.

C. Association

No meeting this month.

D. BVFF & RO Local Board Report

No meeting this month.

OLD BUSINESS

A. LexiPol

Tabled until next month.

B. Administrative Service Manager Position Description

Tabled until next month.

C. Performance Evaluation Process

Tabled until next month.

D. Levy Lid Lift

The levy lid lift made it onto the November 5, 2025, ballot. The current out-of-pocket cost to the district is approximately \$700, primarily legal costs. There will be a small additional cost for an informational mailing. The Association will purchase lawn signs and will do two mailers before the ballots go out.

E. Open Commissioner's position

The Commissioners have directed Chief Patrick to invite the Commissioner Candidate, Val Miller, to the next Commissioner's meeting to offer her a position and perform the Oath of Office. The Commissioners would request that the Administrative Services Manager be present to prepare the necessary paperwork.

NEW BUSINESS

A. Fuel Tank Removal

The District is working with Marrissa Krumb from the State on the tank project. The state has requested a Project Contact and Approver for the project. Commissioner Wolf reached out and asked for clarification of the details of the request. Commissioner Wolf has currently placed Chief Patrick in both positions. There is no current timeline for this project.

B. DRS Changes for Volunteers

DRS covers the 401K service for Firefighters. The new law enables the volunteers to sign up for it as an agency. This program would be at no cost to the district and would be entirely voluntary.

Commissioner Ruiz moved to approve directing Chief Patrick to sign the district up for the DRS retirement plan and to offer this benefit to our volunteers. Commissioner Wolf seconded the motion; the motion carried 2-0.

C. Bunker Gear trials

The current bunker gear is set to expire in the next year, to year and a half. Gabe and Chief Patrick were fitted with a set from Globe, and they will wear test them for the next year. The

Commissioners directed Chief Patrick to reach out to Lion and see about getting a set for Craig to test as well.

D. Expense Audit

Chief Patrick has begun looking into services that the district is paying for and determining if they are still necessary. Chief Patrick has located a cell tablet that has not been in service for the last few years. He has switched to T-Mobile for his cell service.

He is also exploring changes to the pest control process and developing a more cost-effective model.

E. 2026 Budgets

Chief Patrick will begin the budget process for 2026 next month. He will need to create two proposed budgets, one if the levy passes and one if the levy does not pass.

Chief Patrick is going to take a look at increasing the stipends for the captains to spread the workload and ownership.

F. SWFA Letter to Commissioners

SWFA sent a letter to the district proposing a \$4500 per call cost. The Commissioners are concerned with this drastic change in direction, as when discussions began two years ago, WCFD18 offered to pay a per-call cost, and SWFA directly stated that they were not interested in pursuing that discussion path.

The Commissioners would like Chief Patrick to reach out to neighboring departments (Alger and Acme) about changing the response order. This may also include a change in response plan zones.

Commissioner Ruiz proposed reaching out to non-legal counsel, such as Roger Farris, and the Fire Commissioner's Association in Olympia for options.

G. Changes to mutual aid agreement

Chief Patrick will provide a copy of the Mutual Aid agreement to the Commissioners. Further discussion on options will be brought forward to the September meeting.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

The meeting was adjourned at 21:03.

Respectfully Submitted,

Christine Love Johnson, Administrative Services Manager
Whatcom Fire Protection District No.18

Approved by the Whatcom County Fire District No. 18 Board of Fire Commissioners, this 11th day of
September 2025.



Christine Love Johnson,
Administrative Services Manager