

**West Klickitat Regional Fire Authority**  
**Planning Committee Meeting**  
119 NE Church street White Salmon WA 98672.

Thursday March 21, 2024. 6:30pm.

- **Meeting called to order at 18:30.**
- **Attendance:**  
**WKRFA Planning Committee:** Quorum. Ben Giant, David Lindley, Thomas Montag, Robert Connor, Charles Virts.  
Absent: Jason Hartmann  
**Advisory groups/staff:** Captain Jess Wardwell, Eric Bosler, Captain Jerremy Grose (KCFD3), Chief Hunsaker (WSFD), Chief Long (KCFD3), Rozalind Plumb (KCFD3 Secretary), Jennifer McLean (KCFD3 Admin).
- **Agenda:**  
***Approval of the agenda made by Ben Giant, seconded by Charles Virts. ( 5 yay, 0 nay) motion passed.***
- **Minutes of February 22 Meeting.**  
***Motion to approve minutes as presented made by David Lindley, seconded by Robert Connor. (5 yay , 0 nay ) motion passed.***
- **RFA Transition Projects:**
  - Subcommittee reports
    - *Governance and Administrative.* See report attached.  
Eric Bosler reported that the group met twice. Focus of the group is on Section 5. B.4 – “...shall develop and adopt governance policies and rules for the WKRFA Governing Board to conduct business beginning September 30<sup>th</sup>...”  
The Governance subcommittee’s priority is on those policies, procedures and tools needed by the RFA Board of Commissioners to enable formal adoption of the Regional Fire Authority on October 1<sup>st</sup>.
    - *Finance & HR*  
*Focus is on Sections 6 Funding and Finance, and section 8 Administrative/Management/Personnel. The 1<sup>st</sup> meeting was held on March 14<sup>th</sup>. The County Treasurer Greg Gallager and County Auditor Heather Jobe were in attendance. Their involvement at this early stage is vital and they are very supportive. The most significant issue raised was the timing of the movement of funds to the new RFA accounts. While the ‘Effective Date’ of the RFA is September 30<sup>th</sup> there was discussion about the effect of moving funds on that date and the significance of year end closures for both the County and KCFD3. Both KCFD3 and WSFD are funded through to the end of 2024. Further investigation is needed to clarify if funds can be held until the end of 2024. The RFA board would have to authorize a resolution to take*

*effect between September 30 to December 31 to operate under the existing funding structure.*

*Discussion on the transfer of funds on the effective date and potential change for an operational date of January 1, 2025. The WKRFA plan is specific, but also allows the governing board to adapt. Legal counsel should be consulted. Funding for the cost of legal counsel needs to come from KCFD3 and City of White Salmon.*

*Additional discussion on the funding of the RFA from Sept 30 to January 1 if funds are not transferred on the effective date. Would the contribution from each agency be equal? Ultimately it would still result in less funds being transferred on January 1. This would need further discussion.*

- Operations subcommittee

*Captain Wardwell noted the subcommittee has sent out a survey to volunteers. The focus has been on discussing levels of service and duty shifts of the volunteers. Page 6 of the transition guide. Other items include the name of the RFA -Doing Business As (DBA), and a logo. The WKRFA is the legal name, but it is hoped we can have a more easily marketable name.*

*“Return with Honor” – Jeremy Grose introduced the concept as a proposed WKRFA mantra for the volunteers to maintain in all their actions.*

*The draft budget will rely on volunteers and eventually allow for recruitment of paid personnel to support the volunteers.*

- **Ben Giant asked- How are the subcommittees feeling about the scope of work and the ability to accomplish the tasks?**

Eric Bosler felt confident that it can be done by the subcommittees. He stated that we have access to examples, and tools (such as policy software -Lexipol) and can call in subject matter experts and legal counsel when needed.

Rozalind admitted that the tasks are intimidating. There is a lot to do. The priority is to ensure continued service to the community through the transition period, and clearly identify what the governing board needs to be effective on September 30. Identify what is needed now and what can wait until later.

Chief Long noted that he is monitoring the workload the admin staff are taking on with the RFA and suggested we reassess the workload in June. He is optimistic that the tasks can be achieved through the subcommittees.

- **Financial Need of the planning Committee**

KCFD3 Board has authorized spending for RFA needs, but all costs will need to go to the KCFD3 board for approval.

- **Legal Counsel- Who should the Planning Committee engage for legal counsel?**

The city has legal counsel that they engage for matters relating to the city. KCFD3 has legal counsel with specialized knowledge of Fire Districts and RFAs. Recommendation from Chief Hunsaker and Charles Virts was to use Brian Snure for his expertise. David Lindley also agreed that having someone already well versed would be more cost effective. All correspondence to legal counsel to be addressed through KCFD3 District Secretary Rozalind Plumb.

***Motion to retain Brian Snure as legal counsel on time and materials basis for the Planning Committee made by Charles Virts seconded by David Lindley, (5 yay, 0 nay) motion passed.***

- **IT planning and implementation-** Rozalind noted that planning for the RFA will require IT costs. While all the existing equipment will be transferred there will be advantages to creating new platforms specifically for the RFA. Discussion with IT specialists will help define the best practice. Jenifer McLean has already begun discussion with the State Archivist to transition out of KCFD3. There will likely be a longer list of needs for IT before the RFA is effective (e.g. Emails and Web site). No decision required at this time.
- **Consultant / Project Management**
  - Last meeting the Planning Committee discussed the need for a consultant to help lead the process. The decision then was to create sub-committees to achieve the goals, and to call in specialist help when needed.
  - Ben Giant put himself forward to be Project Manager for the Planning Committee to ensure the subcommittees meet the deadline. He proposed he sit in on the subcommittee meetings and use a project planning platform (Asana) to coordinate the critical items. Ben is a Project Manager by trade and offered his service to the Planning committee as a volunteer. The Committee members expressed their gratitude to Ben for offering to take on the task. Some concern was expressed by Charles Virts about not using a subject matter consultant. His concern is about the potential to get in a bind by missing details that a consultant would be aware of. A consensus was established to re-evaluate the situation with staff and volunteers on 1<sup>st</sup> June 2024.

***Motion to approve Ben Giant to take on Project Management made by David Lindley, seconded by Charles Virts. (4 yay, 1 abstained, 0 opposed).***

- Next step will be to get each sub committee set up on Asana.

- **Levels of Service**

RFA Plan Section 7. Operationally we will phase in increased levels of service. Creating duty shifts will increase the opportunities for volunteers to be in the station and available for immediate response. Increased training and increased credentialing of volunteers. The focus needs to be on staffing to support the volunteers. The goal is to have 50 to 70 volunteers in the future. Fire, EMS, are the standard service. Rope rescue and white-water rescue are also services that would be beneficial in the region. Prevention, first aid and CPR in the community will be a strong focus. Discussion on training, and fire academy and the issue of training facilities.

**Adjournment:**

**Motion to adjourn made by Thomas Montag seconded by Ben Giant. Meeting adjourned 19:50.**

**Next Meeting – Thursday 18 April White Salmon.**

**APPROVED BY:**

Absent at April meeting.  
Committee Chairman - Thomas Montag (date)

[Signature]  
Vice Chair- Jason Hartmann (date)

**Attest:**

[Signature]  
District Secretary Rozalind Plumb