

**BENTON COUNTY FIRE PROTECTION DISTRICT #1**  
**BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**  
**MEETING MINUTES**  
Tuesday, January 20, 2026

**CALL TO ORDER**

Commissioner Jenkins called the regular meeting of the Board of Fire Commissioners of Benton County Fire District No. 1 to order in-person and via videoconference at 6:00 p.m. at 144610 E. Law Lane, Suite D, Kennewick, Washington. In attendance at this meeting in-person were Commissioner Carpenter, Commissioner Jenkins, Commissioner Phillips, Chief LoParco, Deputy Chief Nicholls, Volunteer Battalion Chief Gutzmer, Captain Bibe, Mechanic/Firefighter Ball, Matthew Martens, Admin. Assistant Misty Ferrell, Finance Manager Christie Brown, Sandi Quesenberry and Secretary/Attorney, Heidi Ellerd.

The District provided a link for interested parties to participate through Zoom. Tess Alder, Masha Sells, Jennifer Browning, and Travis Wakefield attended via videoconference/telephone.

**PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

**ADDITIONS TO THE AGENDA**

- A. Start time for commission meetings.
- B. Annexation of station property into City to avoid water surcharge.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

Commissioner Carpenter made a motion to approve the regular minutes of January 6, 2026, as submitted. Commissioner Phillips seconded the motion, and the motion passed unanimously.

**OLD BUSINESS**

- A. Start time for Commission meetings – Commissioner Carpenter wants to have meetings at 4:00 pm or 5:00 pm instead of 6:00 pm because of staff staying late and public attending the meeting. Motion made by Carpenter to have start times at 4:00 pm or 5:00 pm, no second. Motion did not pass.

**NEW BUSINESS**

- A. The Board reviewed Resolution 2026-01 transferring funds from Capitol Projects Fund to Reserve Fund. It was moved by Commissioner Carpenter that the Board approve the resolution. The Motion was seconded by Commissioner Phillips and passed.
- B. Employment Contracts for LoParco and Brown – Discussion was held about new contracts which will be brought back before the board at the next meeting.
- C. It was moved by Commissioner Carpenter that the Board approve a Step 3 to Step 4 increase for Misty Ferrell. The Motion was seconded by Commissioner Phillips and passed.

- D. Annexation of station into City to avoid water surcharge – Commissioner Carpenter requested research be done on this issue to save the money of the water surcharge. Chief LoParco will investigate it.

### **CORRESPONDENCE**

The correspondence received and sent was reviewed.

### **FINANCIAL REPORT**

#### **Expenditure Transaction Details**

Presented to the Board were 2026 transactions #2661 to #2687. The transactions totaled \$28,036.20. General Fund \$24,266.06, and Custodial Funds \$3,770.14.

Presented to the Board were 2026 transactions #131 and #132. The transactions totaled \$361.86. General Fund \$279.50, and Custodial Funds \$82.36.

Presented to the Board were 2026 transactions #96, 133 to #163. The transactions totaled \$120,305.85. General Fund \$120,120.26, and Custodial Funds \$185.59.

Presented to the Board were 2026 Payroll transactions #38 to #95 and #97 to #121 and #125 to #130. The transactions totaled \$154,807.61. General Fund \$154,807.61.

Commissioner Carpenter made a motion to approve the vouchers. Commissioner Phillips seconded the motion, and the motion passed unanimously.

#### **Budget Revenue and Expenditure Report**

The Board reviewed the Budget and Expenditure Report.

### **STAFF REPORTS**

#### **Fire Chief LoParco:**

- A. Reported on how policy revisions and reviews are going and what process will be followed moving forward.
- B. Reported he is working on revisions to the process for reviewing applications.
- C. Reported he is working on revisions to job descriptions.
- D. Announced the Equipment Committee will be chaired by Marc Crist.
- E. Reported EMS Officer, Trey Irwin, will be doing some ride time on a City of Kennewick Fire Department ambulance to finish certifications. Memorandum of Agreement will be presented at the next meeting.
- F. Reported on SEWOG and transfer of money from Benton I as past administrator.
- G. Reported that there is a crack in the tank rack for Rescue 1143. Braun is warrantying the part and will replace it, but it will be out of service during that time.

**Training Officer – Captain Bibe:**

- A. Reported on active shooter training meeting he attended.
- B. Reported the region is starting Officer Development Program Meetings which he will be attending.
- C. Reported on last week’s live fire exercise which will help get required training completed.

**Maintenance/Firefighter Ball:**

- A. Reported the Ladder Truck is back in service as of last week.
- B. Reported everything is in service as of now.
- C. Reported the Type I Engine is not yet here, but hopefully by next meeting. Other engine is still not ready.

**Logistics - Matthew Martens:**

- A. Reported he is starting to look at ambulances for the District.
- B. Reported the installation of the new pump at Station 120 has been completed.
- C. Reported he hopes to have a janitorial contract signed soon.

**ANNOUNCEMENTS**

- District banquet is March 21, 2026, at the Red Lion in Kennewick, WA.
- The next Board of Commissioner meeting will be on February 3, at 6:00 p.m.

**ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting adjourned at 6:36 p.m.

Approved by:  
  
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Commissioner

Submitted by:  
  
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Heidi Ellerd, District Secretary/Attorney