

BENTON COUNTY FIRE PROTECTION DISTRICT #1
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
MEETING MINUTES
Tuesday, February 17, 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, Finance Manager Christie Brown, Sandi Quesenberry and Secretary/Attorney, Heidi Ellerd.

The District provided a link for interested parties to participate through Zoom. Tess Adler, J. Simpson, and Station 120 attended via videoconference.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

ADDITIONS TO THE AGENDA

- A. Resolution 2026-02 Amending the 2025 Budget.
- B. Policy 1002 provided to commission for their review for next meeting.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Commissioner Carpenter made a motion to approve the regular minutes of February 3, 2026, as corrected. Commissioner Phillips seconded the motion, and the motion passed unanimously.

OLD BUSINESS

- A. It was moved by Commissioner Phillips that the Board approve the Equipment Use Agreement between the District and Finley School District No. 53 in the form presented and that Chief LoParco be authorized to sign on behalf of the District. The Motion was seconded by Commissioner Carpenter and passed.

CORRESPONDENCE

The correspondence received and sent was reviewed.

FINANCIAL REPORT

Expenditure Transaction Details

Presented to the Board were 2026 transactions #290, 333 to 375. The transactions totaled \$89,449.47. General Fund \$88,640.81 and Custodial Funds \$808.66.

Presented to the Board were 2026 Payroll transactions #230 to 289 and #291 to 315 and #322 to 330. The transactions totaled \$254,684.63. General Fund \$254,684.63

Presented to the Board were 2026 transactions #331 and 332. The transactions totaled \$113.55. Custodial Funds \$113.55.

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.

Resolution 2025-02

The Board reviewed Resolution 2025-02 Amending the 2025 Budget. It was moved by Commissioner Phillips that the Board approve the resolution. The Motion was seconded by Commissioner Carpenter and passed.

STAFF REPORTS

Commissioner Carpenter:

- A. Reported on Tri-County meeting he attended.
- B. Prosser (West Benton) will be holding the August 8, 2026, Tri-County meeting.

Fire Chief LoParco:

- A. Reported he is conducting annual employee evaluations.
- B. Reported on the status of computer upgrades.
- C. Reported he is continuing to review and update policies.
- D. Reported on the Water Tender bid packet.
- E. Reported he is holding a staff meeting tomorrow and intends to return to holding these on a regular basis.

Deputy Fire Chief/HSO Nicholls:

- A. Reported he is working with Chief LoParco on conducting annual employee evaluations.
- B. Reported on the Incident Management Association Symposium in Tacoma February 2-5, 2026.
- C. Reported on training for incident management.
- D. Reported on his efforts in researching and drafting a vendor package for the purchase of a new ambulance and purchasing options for two staff vehicles.
- E. Reported he will be attending the Regional Chaplaincy Banquet representing the District on February 21, 2026.

Volunteer Battalion Chief Gutzmer:

- A. Reminder next Saturday, February 28, 2026, is the Tri-County Recruit Academy Graduation at Riverview High School.

Training Officer Captain Bibe:

- A. Reported that EVIP cards distributed
- B. Reported on the status of recruit testing.
- C. Reported he is still working on a new training platform.
- D. Reported he is preparing for lieutenant’s test in late March.
- E. Reported he is getting ready for wildfire refresher courses.

Maintenance/Firefighter Ball:

- A. Reported he is working on the new Type I engine and getting it outfitted.
- B. Reported second new Type I engine will be delivered February 18, 2026.
- C. Reported Type 3 engine is at the dealer to get a repair estimate. Looking at selling it without repairs.

Logistics - Matthew Martens:

- A. Reported that he filled out and submitted the form for the Dept. of Ecology on the AFFF the District disposed of before March 1, 2026.
- B. Reported that Chief Loparco signed the contract with Republic to remove fire retardant which was completed yesterday.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

- The next Board of Commissioner meeting will be on March 3, 2026, at 6:00 p.m.
- Academy Graduation as set forth above.
- March 21, 2026 banquet.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 6:29 p.m.

Approved by:



Commissioner

Submitted by:



Heidi Ellerd, District Secretary/Attorney