

BENTON COUNTY FIRE PROTECTION DISTRICT #1
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
MEETING MINUTES
Tuesday, August 18, 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, Deputy Chief Nicholls, Volunteer Battalion Chief Gutzmer, Mechanic/Firefighter Ball, EMS Officer Trey Irwin, 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. Travis Wakefield and Michael Miller attended via videoconference/telephone.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Commissioner Carpenter made a motion to approve the regular minutes of August 4, 2026, as submitted. Commissioner Phillips seconded the motion, and the motion passed unanimously.

CORRESPONDENCE

The correspondence received and sent was reviewed.

FINANCIAL REPORT

Expenditure Transaction Details

Presented to the Board were 2026 transactions #1532 to #1559. The transactions totaled \$206,526.88. General Fund \$193,142.16, and Custodial Funds \$13,384.72.

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

Commissioner Carpenter:

- A. Reported on the Tri County Meeting he attended in Prosser, next meeting is November 14, 2026 at Walla Walla 4 at 9 am.

Chief LoParco (report given by Deputy Fire Chief/HSO Nicholls):

- A. Reported he is continuing to review policies.

- B.** Advised letter to report EMS Council Representatives still needs to be submitted.
- C.** Reported he is working on re-writing some job descriptions.
- D.** Reported the District is working on a landscaping project at Station 160.
- E.** Reported on a piece of property that the District continues to have to monitor and respond to because it continues to burn. The District is investigating who is responsible for taking care of this piece of property and the cleanup of an underground dump on the property so that the District does not need to continue to respond. It is owned partially by the County, partially by the City and partially by a private landowner.
- F.** Reported on invoice for attorney for litigation matter and reported that it should be the last invoice.
- G.** Reported on which personnel are currently assigned to what fires.

Deputy Fire Chief/HSO Nicholls:

- A.** Reported that the grant submitted through the WA L&I FIIRE program has been awarded at approximately \$25K. Acceptance documentation has been finalized and submitted and he has begun the purchasing process.
- B.** Reported that the Pierce 4x4 T1 engine has been put in service at Station 130.
- C.** Reported he has begun working with a fire equipment sales company to post and sell the two American LaFrance T1 engines that the District is excessing.
- D.** Reported on the anticipated capital expenditures for two wildland engines and an additional ambulance in the upcoming budget cycles. He has been obtaining quotes from various vendors to determine budget needs. Most newly built apparatus have an 18-month delivery timetable.
- E.** Reported he has started fact-finding on the advertising of upcoming FTE positions through an outside vendor that specializes in emergency service government employment.
- F.** Reported several excessed radios have been sold to Walla Walla Fire District No. 6 for an acceptable negotiated market value of \$5,500.00. Both parties are very pleased with the transaction.
- G.** Reported he is working with the dispatch center on changes to run cards that will be implemented in the coming weeks.
- H.** Reported he is working with the regional radio project workgroup on the update of the frequency template to be utilized in the Benton/Franklin region.

Volunteer Battalion Chief Gutzmer:

- A.** Reported structure academy starts in about a week.

EMS Officer Trey Irwin:

- A. Reported he is working on policies which will be presented at the next meeting.
- B. Reported he is working on DOH license renewal and GEMT submission.

Maintenance/Firefighter Ball:

- A. Reported the ambulance is back in service.
- B. Reported the Type 5 Engine is currently out of service.

Logistics - Matthew Martens:

- A. Reported on garden hoses purchased for stations.
- B. Reported on replacing faded signs for the District.
- C. Reported he is working on replacing ceiling fans at Station 170.
- D. Reported he is working on getting trees removed at Station 140.
- E. Reported he is working on budget requests for next year.

Other:

- A. Deputy Chief Nicholls read a personal statement of thanks to the District.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

- The next Board of Commissioner meeting will be on September 1, 2026, at 6:00 p.m.
- Southeast Washington Fire Commissioner Meeting is September 18, 2026, at 6:30 pm in Dayton.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 6:25 p.m.

Approved by:


Commissioner

Submitted by:


Heidi Ellerd, District Secretary/Attorney