



# Central Whidbey Island Fire & Rescue

1164 Race Road  
Coupeville, WA 98239

---

Professionalism • Integrity • Compassion • Excellence

(360) 678-3602

[www.cwfire.org](http://www.cwfire.org)

## Board of Fire Commissioners Meeting Minutes

*DRAFT*  
**January 8, 2026**

**5:00 PM**

### Pledge of Allegiance

### Swearing In

Larry Goff was sworn in as Fire Commissioner by Fire Chief Jerry Helm.

### Call to Order

This meeting of the Central Whidbey Island Fire & Rescue (CWIFR) Board of Fire Commissioners was called to order by Commissioner Steve Hutchinson at 5:00 pm.

### Commissioners and Staff Present

Commissioners Larry Goff, Paul Messner, Steve Hutchinson, Fire Chief Jerry Helm, Deputy Chief James Meek, Finance Officer Cathy Niiro, and Administrative Assistant Sonja Lindensetein.

In attendance: LT Jim Huff and FF Justin Burnett

Guest: Shelley Goff

### Consensus Approval of the Agenda

Commissioner Hutchinson received consensus approval of the agenda.

### Input from the Public

There was none.

### Approval of Previous Minutes

Commissioner Messner moved to approve, and Commissioner Hutchinson seconded the approval of the minutes for the Regular Board Meeting on December 11, 2025.

**Action:** *Approved by Fire Commissioner Hutchinson and Messner. Abstained by Commissioner Goff.*

### Approval of Vouchers

M&O Vouchers # 202642 - 202671	\$144,398.00
WA State Dept of Retirement Systems EFT	\$35,674.19
Payroll-Direct Deposit	\$124,752.42
IRS EFTPS	\$22,107.14
Grant Management #202672	\$3,633.88
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$330,475.63</b>

Commissioner Goff moved to approve, and Commissioner Messner seconded the approval of the vouchers.

**Action:** *Approved Unanimously.*

### Chief's Report

Chief Jerry Helm and Deputy Chief James Meek shared with the Fire Commissioners the Chief's Report as of January 8, 2026.

### Finance Officer's Report

Finance Officer Cathy Niiro shared the Budget Position for January 8, 2026 noting that the ending balances from 2025 are not yet recorded, with no beginning balances reflected for 2026.

### New Business

1. Motion was made by Commissioner Messner and seconded by Commissioner Goff to approve Resolution 26-01 Appointment of Sonja Lindenstein as the District's Finance Officer

**Action:** *Approved Unanimously.*

2. Motion was made by Commissioner Messner to approve Resolution 26-02 Authorizing Sonja Lindenstein to sign Petty Cash Fund, Advance Travel Fund and Recruitment & Retention Fund checks at Heritage Bank.

**Action:** *Approved Unanimously.*

3. Motion was made by Commissioner Messner to approve and seconded by Commissioner Goff Resolution 26-03 Appointment of Sonja Lindenstein as District Secretary

**Action:** *Approved Unanimously.*

4. Motion was made by Commissioner Messner to approve and seconded by Commissioner Goff the 2026 Contact Sheet & Signature Form for the Island County Auditors' Office

**Action:** *Approved Unanimously.*

5. Motion was made by Commissioner Messner to approve and seconded by Commissioner Goff the selection of the 2026 Local Board of Volunteer Firefighters for Central Whidbey Island Fire & Rescue as 2026 Board Chair Steve Hutchinson, Fire Chief Jerry Helm, Deputy Chief James Meek, District Secretary Sonja Lindenstein and Firefighter Travis Dotson.

**Action:** *Approved Unanimously.*

6. Motion was made by Commissioner Messner to approve and seconded by Commissioner Goff S.O.G. 1.2.11 2026 Executive Staff Salary Benefits

**Action:** *Approved Unanimously.*

7. Motion was made by Commissioner Messner to approve and seconded by Commissioner Goff S.O.G. 1.7.2 Public Records Request

**Action:** *Approved Unanimously.*

## Old Business

Executive Session to review personnel matters in accordance with RCW 42.30.110(1)(f) was started at 5:35 pm for 20 minutes.

*RCW 42.30.110(1)(f) To evaluate the qualifications of an applicant for public employment or to review the performance of a public employee. However, subject to RCW 42.30.140(4), discussion by a governing body of salaries, wages, and other conditions of employment to be generally applied within the agency shall occur in a meeting open to the public, and when a governing body elects to take final action hiring, setting the salary of an individual employee or class of employees, or discharging or disciplining an employee, that action shall be taken in a meeting open to the public;*

*The following except from the Central Whidbey Island Fire & Rescue Board of Fire Commissioners Policy Manual explains the process used for an executive session:*

*An executive session is a portion of a meeting of the Board of Fire Commissioners that is closed, or limited to members of the Board and other people whose presence is necessary to conduct the business at hand. The Board's use of an executive session is limited to a narrow set of specific circumstances. In order to qualify for an executive session its purpose must meet one of the provisions of RCW 42.30.*

*In convening an Executive Session, the Chairperson announces:*

- *That the Board is going into Executive Session*
- *The statutory reason for the Executive session*
- *That the public is excluded and that they should leave the room*
- *The time that the Executive session will be concluded (and the public may reenter the room)*
- *If Board action is expected following the Executive Session*

## Board of Fire Commissioners Meeting Minutes January 8, 2026

*An Executive Session may be extended to a stated later time by announcement of the presiding officer or his/her designee to those waiting outside the meeting room to reenter at its conclusion. Under no circumstance shall the Board ever take any action during an executive session; Board action may only occur during its meetings open to the public.*

*No minutes are recorded in executive session.*

Executive Session ended at 5:55 pm with no decisions made.

### Good of the Order

Recognition Banquet  
January 23, 2026  
Oak Harbor Yacht Club, 1301 SE Catalina Dr., Oak Harbor, WA  
Time: 5:30 Cocktails, 6:30 Dinner

Northwest Leadership Conference  
March 4-6, 2026  
Holiday Inn Portland – Columbia Riverfront  
Portland, OR

WFOA Seminar  
June 5-6, 2026  
Campbell Resort  
Chelan, WA

WFOA Conference  
October 21 -24, 2026  
Davenport Hotel  
Spokane, WA

Commissioner Hutchinson conducted a fiscal oversight audit on December 16, 2025.

### Regular Meeting

February 12, 2026  
Time: 5:00 pm  
Location: Station 53, 1164 Race Rd., Coupeville, WA

There being no further business, Commissioner Hutchinson adjourned the meeting at 6:00 pm.

Submitted, *Cathy Nitro, Secretary*