



Board of Fire Commissioners

Regular Meeting Minutes October 7, 2025

Clark County Fire District 5
11606 NE 66th Street, Suite 103
Vancouver, WA 98662

Call Meeting to Order

Chair Rhine called the meeting to order at 5:30 pm. Commissioner Gibson was in attendance. Commissioner Lyons joined the meeting at 5:42 pm via telephone. Also present at the meeting were VFD Deputy Chief Leek, District Administrator Jennifer Bethke and Deputy Administrator Chris Cohen.

Pledge of Allegiance

The Pledge of Allegiance was led by Chair Rhine.

Approval of Minutes

Commissioner Gibson motioned to approve the September 9, 2025 regular meeting minutes as submitted. Chair Rhine seconded the motion. All were in favor. The motion passed.

Chief's Report

Fire Chief Recruitment – Chief Leek updated the Board on the VFD Fire Chief recruitment process. Screening interviews are being conducted this week.

Deputy Chief Recruitment – Recruitment for Deputy Chief opened this week. The first review of applicants will be conducted on November 2nd.

Division Chief Internal Recruitment – Chief Leek informed the Board that the Internal Recruitment has closed with no applicants. This recruitment will be paused for the time being.

Fire Academy – There are currently 17 line personnel vacancies. The next Fire Academy is slated to begin late February 2026. The new-hire Chief interviews are ongoing. So far, there are 7 contingent offers.

Burn Ban – The County and City Burn Ban was lifted on October 1st.



New Truck Delivery – A truck that was scheduled to be delivered in early 2025 has been postponed to the first quarter of 2026.

Station 8 – The construction management contract was passed by the city council. The architect and construction management company have been assigned.

Columbian Article – Chief Leek informed the Board that there was a recent article written in the Columbian Newspaper reporting on the increase in Fire Apparatus costs and delivery issues.

Citizens' Communications

None.

Consent Agenda

Commissioner Gibson moved to approve items A through E as submitted. Chair Rhine seconded the motion. All were in favor. The motion passed.

The consent agenda included the following items:

A. Commissioners' Fund 6209	\$	32,275.64
B. Commissioners' Fund 6209	\$	27,382.53
C. Commissioners' Fund 6209	\$	4,442.52
D. Commissioners' Fund 6209	\$	2,197.61
E. Commissioners' Special Revenue Fund 6256	\$	59,875.73

Secretary's Report

- A. **Commissioners' Fund Financials – August 2025** - Provided to the Board for informational purposes.
- B. **Total Revenues and Expenses 100 Fund Years 2021, 2022, 2023 and 2024** – Provided to the Board for informational purposes.
- C. **Classes Taught – September 2025** - Provided to the Board for informational purposes.
- D. **Front office remodel** – Administrator Bethke reported on the completion of the front office remodel project.



Board Communications

Joint Commissioner Meeting – Administrator Bethke updated the Board on the potential meeting with Clark-Cowlitz Fire Rescue. The Board discussed possible dates for early next year. Administrator Bethke suggested CCFD5 host CCFR at a future Board meeting. She will be in contact with Chief Nohr to try to set this up.

Southwest Washington Fire Commissioner's Meeting – Chair Rhine informed the Board that he attended the Southwest Washington Fire Commissioner's meeting on October 6, 2025.

Increased Security – Chair Rhine opened a discussion with the Board, exploring vulnerabilities in the District building to possible threats. He offered options for restricting access to areas of the building and customers having to be let in to attend classes. The Board agreed to explore the possibility of upgrading the security access.

Administrator Bethke Medical Leave – Administrator Bethke informed the Board that she will be taking time off for two medical procedures. The first will occur on November 6th, and she intends to use Washington Paid Family Medical leave and PTO to cover the time off. The Board was formally notified by Administrator Bethke via email on 10/7/25. Chair Rhine requested a more specific plan to ensure District business is appropriately covered.

Old Business

Administrator Bethke Performance Review – The Board elected to give Administrator Bethke a 1% merit increase which put the Administrator position at a cap of \$175,000.00/year. Chair Rhine and Administrator Bethke will meet in the next couple of weeks to go over her performance review that is due.

New Business

None.

Administrator Bethke requested a short recess from the Board. Commissioner Gibson made a motion at 6:21 p.m. to recess for 9 minutes. Chair Rhine moved to recess for 9 minutes or until 6:30 p.m.

Chair Rhine called the meeting back to order at 6:30 p.m.

Executive Session

At 6:30 p.m. Chair Rhine requested to move to Executive Session to discuss employee performance for 20 minutes. The executive session will be until 6:50 p.m.

At 6:50 p.m. Chair Rhine requested to extend Executive Session for 15 minutes. The Executive Session will be until 7:05 p.m.

At 7:05 p.m. Chair Rhine moved the meeting back to regular session.

No official board action was taken following the Executive session.



The Board had a brief discussion about future meetings and upcoming Budget readings.

Adjournment

The next Regular Meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, October 21, 2025 at 5:30 pm.

Chair Rhine adjourned at 7:23 pm.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that appears to read "Ray R. Rhine".

Chair

A handwritten signature in blue ink that appears to read "J. L. Betske".

Secretary to the Board

A handwritten signature in black ink that appears to read "Michael Lynn".

Commissioner

A handwritten signature in blue ink that appears to read "Michael Lynn".

Commissioner