



## Grant County Fire District No. 8

20643 Rd 22.5 SW  
Mattawa, WA 99349  
(509) 932-4777  
Fax (509) 932-4747

### Board of Commissioner Special Meeting Minutes

The special meeting of the Board of Fire Commissioners of Grant County Fire Protection District No. 8 (District) was held on March 26, 2026, for the purpose of holding a Strategic Planning Workshop. The meeting was held in person and via Zoom and information for the public to participate was posted on our website and at the main station March 23, 2026. The meeting was recorded by Zoom.

The meeting was called to order by Commission Vice Chair Richard Jenkin at 16:02 hours.

The Pledge of Allegiance was spoken.

Commissioners present: Richard Jenkin, Josh Seanard, Scott Nesbit, Debra Crain (Zoom), and Russell Brixey (Zoom). A quorum was established.

Others present: Chief Matt Hyndman, Assistant Chief Les Sandstrom, District Secretary Barbara Davis

There were no members of the public present to be welcomed and invited to comment.

The agenda was reviewed. A motion was made to approve the agenda as presented. **Motion: Seanard. Second: Nesbit. Motion approved unanimously.**

**Strategic Planning Workshop:** Chief presented the Board with slideshows on Apparatus, Facilities, and Staffing (attached). District Secretary Davis presented a slideshow on the Finance Plan (attached). There was discussion on each topic.

1. **Apparatus Plan Overview:** Chief provided a detailed overview of the current fleet, including trucks, ambulances, and tenders, along with their ages, specifications, and maintenance status. The discussion highlighted replacement plans for ambulances (every 12 years) and engines (every 25 years), with specific attention to ongoing efforts to secure grants for replacing older vehicles, particularly the 1994 Ford truck (Engine 831) which is overdue for replacement.

**Apparatus Replacement and Grant Planning:** Chief discussed apparatus replacement and grant applications, particularly for a pumper tender to replace an aging vehicle with over a million miles. The discussion covered standards for future apparatus purchases, including 4x4 chassis for ambulances and minimal 4-man cabs for structure engines. The benefits of tactical tenders for wildland fire responses were reviewed, noting their effectiveness in supporting multiple fire trucks with extended water supply. He also discussed the need for proper off-road capability in quick response vehicles and mentioned an ongoing AFG grant application for Engine 831.

**Fire Station Apparatus and Ratings:** Chief discussed apparatus updates, including a new ambulance being ordered like previous models with minor modifications like slider windows. The District WSRB rating was reviewed, which remains at 6, with goals to improve to a 5 or 4 in the next 5 years through better documentation, life safety inspections, and paperwork improvements. Chief highlighted the need for a mechanic to help maintain equipment, particularly heavy machinery like the Caterpillar D6, and Commissioner Nesbit suggested installing railroad tracks in the shop floor to facilitate equipment maintenance.

**Equipment and Grant Updates:** Chief discussed recent equipment acquisitions, including \$30,000 worth of chainsaws and K12 saws obtained through the PPMS program, and

various shop tools and equipment. He explained the successful grant applications, noting that DNR grants have provided significant funding for equipment and maintenance, with the District receiving \$6,000 this year compared to the typical \$18,000. Chief also described the apparatus fleet, explaining that while the current vehicles are well-maintained and not worn out, they struggle to qualify for grants due to low mileage, and discussed the cost differences between new and used apparatus, with new trucks costing significantly more than used ones.

- 2. Facilities Plan Overview:** Chief provided a detailed update on current and planned facilities at multiple fire stations. He described a new 60x120 shop building under construction at Station 81, which will include air-conditioned space for apparatus maintenance, storage rooms, and training facilities. The discussion focused on resident quarters as the top priority, with options to place them at either Station 83 or Station 82, though Chief noted the significant cost of drilling a well at Station 83. The conversation also covered ongoing needs including Station 82's leaking roof and the potential for future grant funding for a training facility.

**Station 82 Resident Program Expansion Plans:** Chief and AC Sandstrom discussed expanding the resident program by potentially moving a manufactured home to Station 82 in Desert Aire. They considered the costs of moving and setting up the home, as well as the need for bathrooms, showers, and a laundry room. The group debated whether residents should live full-time in the quarters or just be present during shifts, ultimately favoring a shift-based approach to ensure quick responses. The possibility of installing a well at Station 83 was discussed, estimating a cost of around \$50,000, and exploring state funding options for the project was considered.

**Facility Planning Discussion:** Chief and AC Sandstrom discussed resources and facility improvements. They reviewed the access to water bosses and helicopters for fire response, noting that state funding was secured which eliminated upfront costs for these resources. The discussion focused heavily on plans for a new training facility and living quarters, with options including seeking grants, exploring land swaps, or potentially building on existing land. They also considered the pros and cons of different construction approaches, including building versus purchasing a finished product, with the goal of potentially saving millions in construction costs.

**Station 82 Maintenance Planning Meeting:** Chief and AC Sandstrom discussed plans to dedicate a week to fixing a panel and roof at Station 82, including gathering materials and watching YouTube tutorials.

- 3. Staff Planning Overview:** Chief discussed the fire district's vision to prioritize exceptional training and empower both paid staff and volunteers to reach their highest potential. He highlighted the District's recent success in training and staffing, mentioning the recent hiring of Cameron Gumke as a career firefighter. The District currently has six career firefighters, and the resident program has five participants. Chief also noted that the District has around 30 volunteers and plan to do more recruitment once additional gear becomes available.

**Department Staffing and Financial Planning:** Chief discussed staffing challenges and financial planning for the District. He noted that seven staff members had left in the past two years, but that morale had improved in 2025 due to better wages and working conditions. He decided not to pursue paramedics or ALS services at this time, citing licensing constraints from DOH.

- 4. Financial Plan Overview:** Davis reviewed the budget and fund balances, noting that while the EMS operating fund balance was higher than budgeted, money would be kept there to cover future expenses like ambulance chassis and equipment. She presented historical assessed values and levy data, showing a significant increase in assessed values following

the annexation of Mattawa, and projected the general levy to reach \$1.03 per thousand by 2028 under current growth assumptions. Chief mentioned a potential data center project that could impact future levies, though specific details were not discussed.

**District Planning and Funding Update:** Davis presented a comprehensive update on District planning and funding, including potential levy increases in 2028, staffing plans, and infrastructure improvements. She outlined various projects spanning 3-10 years, including hiring a mechanic, replacing apparatus, and building a training facility, while discussing funding sources like grants and bonds. The discussion covered community health programs as a potential new revenue stream, though this remains exploratory. The conversation ended with plans to finalize the mechanic position job description for the April regular commissioner meeting, with hiring expected to begin in June.

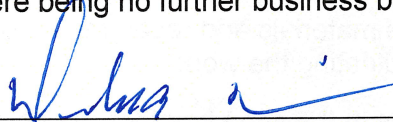
### **Next steps**

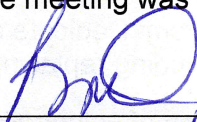
- Chief: Obtain pricing for both double-wide and triple-wide resident quarters for Stations 82 and 83, and present numbers at the next commissioners' meeting.
- Chief or designee: Get well data and obtain an estimate for the cost of drilling a well at Station 83, including checking neighboring well depths and consulting with local well drillers.
- Chief and AC Sandstrom: Dedicate a week to purchase materials and repair the leaking roof at Station 82, including replacing screws and coordinating the work.
- Chief: Bring up the idea of using railroad iron or I-beams in the shop bay for working on the dozer with Halme Builders and explore feasibility.
- Chief: Submit final plans to the county for storage rooms inside the new shop building after shop construction is complete.
- Chief and Davis: Continue pursuing AFG grant for pumper tender replacement for Engine 831.
- Chief: Continue pursuing DNR operating grant to help pay for apparatus and related expenses.
- Davis: Finalize and present the mechanic job description at the April meeting for approval.
- Davis: Post, interview, and hire a full-time mechanic after job description approval, targeting a Q2/Q3 start date.
- Davis: Monitor and potentially update the funds management policy regarding reserve fund allocations if apparatus replacement needs change.
- Chief: Schedule and conduct a town hall meeting with the community to discuss facility needs, funding options, and gather feedback before the next levy/bond decision.
- AC Sandstrom and Davis: Continue to monitor and explore community health or similar partnership opportunities with the local clinics and/or health district.
- Chief: Order new PTO switch and complete repairs on Engine 830 (tender), including alternator replacement, to return it to service.

- Chief: Coordinate with Halme Builders and team regarding the installation of fuel tanks at the new shop, including gas and diesel, and ensure state bid pricing for fuel delivery is arranged.
- Chief: Coordinate with AC Sandstrom to fix the panel at Station 82 as discussed.
- Chief and Davis: Continue to monitor FEMA/AFG grant status and resubmit or pursue additional grant opportunities as appropriate.
- Chief or designee: Begin planning for resident quarters to be in place before the next WSRB rating review in 2029, including temporary or permanent solutions at Desert Air and/or Station 83.
- Chief: Continue to pursue acquisition of M108 or similar trucks as they become available through military surplus programs.
- Chief: Distribute and offer excess PPMS program chainsaws and equipment to other departments as appropriate.

**Additional Business: None**

There being no further business before the Board, the meeting was adjourned at 18:25 hours.

  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 Board Chair  
 4/14/2026  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 Date

  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 District Secretary  
 4/14/2026  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 Date