

Whatcom County Fire District #5

Point Roberts Fire Department

2030 Benson Road, Suite A
Point Roberts, Washington, 98281

Regular Meeting of the Board of Commissioners

August 12th, 2026

MINUTES

In Attendance: Commissioner Virginia Lester
Commissioner Ray Smith
Chief Christopher Carleton
Financial Manager Markel
District Secretary Linda Hughes

Absent: Commissioner Pat Harper

Guests: All Point Bulletin, Erin Kelly
Tony Kelley, Kelley Insurance
Heather Van Meter, Miller Nash
Bill Zidel
Yeagers
Islena Faircrest
Assistant Chief John Shields

A. CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 4:00 pm by Commissioner Lester.

B. BOARD ACTION

MOTION: Commissioner Lester moved to revise the order of the Agenda to bring New Business to the next position to introduce Heather Van Meter from the law firm of Miller Nash, and Tony Kelley, from Kelley Insurance to make his insurance renewal presentation to the Board.. The motion was **SECONDED** by Commissioner Smith.

Motion Passed: 2 - 0.

C. NEW BUSINESS

C.1 Introduction of new Legal Counsel

Heather Van Meter joined the meeting via online link. She introduced herself as a partner with the firm of Miller Nash, provided an overview of her credentials, and added that she hopes to see us all in person at a meeting in the near future.

Commissioner Smith thanked Heather for accepting the role of Counsel for the District, and added how very impressive he felt her credentials were.

C.2 Insurance Renewal, Kelley Insurance

Tony Kelley introduced himself and thanked everyone for the opportunity to present an insurance policy renewal to the Commissioners.

The policy renewal date is September 1st, 2026.

Mr. Kelley reviewed each aspect of the policy, including current valuations of the assets of the district, including the building, business property and the radio tower.

He then reviewed the proposed coverages of the various insured categories, including assets, vehicles and general liabilities.

The premiums total \$70,086.00, a \$7,697.00 increase over last year (approximately 10%) and noted that it was largely due to the increased property coverage.

Chief Carleton asked about the uninsured coverage, since the Province of British Columbia has adopted a no fault / no coverage stance for incidents involving foreign-owned vehicles. Chief reminded everyone of the incident involving one of our ambulance vehicles, in transit through Canada, which was involved in a motor vehicle accident deemed to not be the fault of district personnel. There was even dash-cam footage proving that motor vehicle accident was caused by the driver of the British Columbia licensed vehicle, and the district was not at fault in any way. However, the Insurance Corporation of British Columbia declined to provide any coverage for the losses incurred in that incident.

Chief noted that he also wants to review and re-work the vehicle asset list and valuations with Tony before finalizing the policy renewal.

Commissioners agreed they have no objections to Chief Carleton meeting with Tony separately to revise the vehicle asset list and valuations.

C.3 Cancer screenings

Chief Carleton noted that as we are discussing new business, he would like to take this opportunity to announce that he has been looking into obtaining cancer screening for the district's members. He noted that the cost will be approximately \$5,000.00 for 15 cancer / cardiovascular screenings which equates to about \$360.00 per member. The Commissioners have no objection to Chief Carleton making these arrangements.

D. PUBLIC COMMENT

Bill Zidel reported that the Point Roberts Park and Recreation District has been doing a lot of work at Baker Field, the property adjacent to the Fire Station. Mr. Zidel thanked Chief Carleton for his valuable input, imparting his knowledge of fuel and ladder trees and the importance of cutting and clearing forest for fire safety and prevention. Especially considering the recent massive fires in Spokane, the Park District wants to take care of our local forests as best we can.

Chief Carleton added that property owners also need to be aware of the dangers of fire fuel and warned that they should keep a clear barrier around homes. Prevention is key.

Chief added that the summer burn ban has mostly been adhered to and only a few people have claimed to be unaware of the statewide burn ban. Chief added that the fire burn ban status sign located at the border (entrance to Point Roberts) had been vandalized but added that Assistant Chief Shields repaired and fortified it.

E. BOARD ACTION

E.1 Approval of Minutes

MOTION: Commissioner Smith moved to approve the Minutes of the Regular Meeting of July 8th, 2026, and the Minutes of the Special Meeting of July 24th, as presented. The motion was **SECONDED** by Commissioner Lester. **Motion Passed: 2 - 0.**

F. FINANCIAL MANAGER'S REPORT

F.1 Financial Report

Financial Manager Markel presented the financial report as submitted.

Chief Carleton reviewed the expenses over \$1,000.00, including a hotel expense of \$4,499.81 for Thermal Imaging Training. 70 firefighters attended the training session, 30 of which were from the County. The session lasted 3 days and the cost was

subsidized by a \$15,000.00 grant received from the Colton Foundation. Our portion of the training will be come from funds allocated to the training budget.

F.2 Approval of the Fire District Vouchers

MOTION: Commissioner Lester moved to approve the Vouchers in the amount of \$45,525.90 for payment. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Smith. **Motion Passed 2 – 0**

F.3 Approval of Fire District Payroll

MOTION: Commissioner Lester moved that payroll in the amount of \$25,794.18 be approved for payment. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Smith. **Motion passed 2 – 0**

F.4 Budget Update

Financial Manager Markel reported that 50.96% of the budget remained at the end of July 2026, compared with the July 2025 amount remaining of 50.49%.

D.5 Void Warrants

Financial Manager Markel advised the Commissioners that she was requesting approval to void warrant #01279716 payable to John Shields and reissue two to him in the amounts of \$644.40 and \$50.00, which should have been a reimbursement to the district's petty cash and a separate check to John for expenses.

MOTION: Commissioner Smith moved to approve the request to void warrant #01279716 and issue the two separate warrants as requested. The motion was **SECONDED** by Commissioner Lester. **Motion Passed: 2 - 0.**

Financial Manager Markel requested approval to void the lost warrant #12830 payable to Linda Hughes in the amount of \$226.87 and reissue a new warrant in the same amount.

MOTION: Commissioner Smith moved to approve the request to void warrant #12830 and reissue a new one as requested. The motion was **SECONDED** by Commissioner Lester. **Motion Passed: 2 - 0.**

G. CORRESPONDENCE

None at this time.

H. CHIEF'S REPORT

Chief Carleton did not have a hard copy of his August Chief Report for the month of July available but reported that he would forward it to the Commissioners and Secretary by email.

Chief again reviewed the overall content and success of the Thermal Imaging Training session.

Chief reported that he published an article in the periodical Firefighter Nation regarding advocating for oneself during a health crisis, based on lessons he learned during both his wife's recent health crisis and his own experience with prostate cancer. Chief reported that he now volunteers with the Firefighter Cancer Network.

The Annual Open House will be held on Saturday, August 22nd. Chief noted that it is usually very well attended and he is looking forward to a day of fun, food, community and a visit by two helicopters, always a great thrill to for the attendees and especially the kids.

There was a total of 67 calls, and 26 Community Paramedic home visits. That program has gained a lot of traction, mostly by word-of-mouth and it is also advertised in the local paper.

I. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

Chief reported that the upgrades to the radio equipment are moving forward. He added that the Sheriff's office has been collaborating with the district. As reviewed in the Special Meeting of July 24, this district does not get reliable FARS service in Point Roberts and therefore the decision to use the tower we now have, and have been using for 11 years, is based on its reliability and effectiveness. He added that in order to upgrade it to replace outdated equipment with new and need equipment, the cost will be \$14,668.28 which will be paid for from the capital improvements funds.

Chief asks the Commissioners to approve expenditures of up to \$20,000 toward this project, as the initial price quote won't cover everything that is needed. He added that he needs to meet with Whidbey Telecom to take down the district's microwave dish from their tower and replace it with other necessary equipment

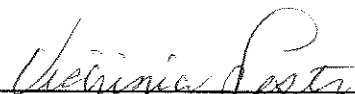
MOTION: Commissioner Smith moved to approve radio equipment expenditures from the capital account up to \$20,000.00. The motion was **SECONDED** by Commissioner Lester. **Motion Passed: 2 - 0.**

Chief reported that Day Wireless is coming to Point Roberts tomorrow to complete the work on the ham radio tower.

J. ADJOURNMENT

As there was no further business, Commissioner Smith moved to adjourn the meeting at 5:00 pm. Commissioner Lester seconded the motion. **Motion passed 2 – 0.**

The next Regular Meeting of the Board of Commissioners will be September 9th, 2026, at 4:00 pm.



Commissioner Virginia Lester

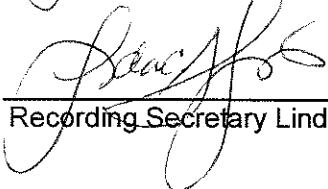


Absent for August meeting
Commissioner Pat Harper



Commissioner Ray Smith

Dated September 9, 2026

Attest: 

Recording Secretary Linda Hughes