Clark-Cowlitz Fire Rescue
Board of Fire Commissioners Meeting Minutes
911 N 65th Avenue, Ridgefield

June 12, 2025

Present:
Commissioners Stan Chunn, David Town, Larry Bartel, Jade Bourke, Ken Ayers.
Chief John Nohr. ACs Ben Peeler, Eamonn Ryan, Mike Jackson.

PUBLIC COMMUNICATIONS WORKSHOP
Workshop called to order by Commissioner Chunn at 3:05 p.m.

Flag Salute. Introductions.

Presentation on strategic communications options and opportunities by POINTNORTH. Discussion. CCFR plans to determine its communication priorities and establish a scope of work. Discussed strategic planning – estimated the process may take 6 – 12 months.

Workshop adjourned at 3:55 p.m.

REGULAR BOARD MEETING
Called to order by Commissioner Chunn at 4:00 p.m.

CALL FOR LATE AGENDA ADDITIONS
None.

CONSENT AGENDA
Motion by Commissioner Town to adopt the consent agenda as presented. Second by Commissioner Bartel. Discussion on the purchase of two vehicles; one pickup and a transport van for the new CARES behavioral health program. Advised the pickup was budgeted. No further discussion. Motion passed unanimously.

COMMUNICATIONS
Thank you card from students at Dwight D. Eisenhower in Hazel Dell thanking the firefighters for participating in the California wildfires. Card from St. Vincent de Paul in thanks for a fundraiser auction item; a fire engine ride in one of the local parades. Thank you from the Ridgefield Library to Chief Nohr and retired Fire Inspector John Zanzi for participating in its children's reading program on May 30.

CITIZEN COMMENTS
Katie Favela thanked the Board members who attended the Fire Cadet graduation. She appreciated seeing public officials at these types of events. Also thanked BC Leavitt and Firefighter Borrelli for their program leadership. Commissioner Town commented we could do more to promote the program. BC Leavitt shared the program is extremely popular. Students come from Ridgefield, La Center, Woodland, and Battle Ground. Due to high demand, candidates must submit an application and be interviewed. There are more applicants than available slots for the 25-26 school year. 18 First year students will

be returning for the second year. Both the district and the students benefit from the program. Discussed the girls fire camp occurring this summer.

STANDING COMMITTEES

Clark County Fire Risk Management Group

Chief Nohr and AC Peeler met with Winslow Cervantes of WHA Insurance to discuss the district's policy needs. WHA is breaking down each agency's coverage, what they are responsible for, and the estimated cost if they were to be individual policies. This will give everyone the opportunity to make an informed decision on their insurance needs before the next renewal. Some of the smaller agencies are considering withdrawing from the group. WHA is working to move the policy back to VFIS. There is disappointment with the current policy provider. Quotes will be provided in July or early August. Verifying vehicles, buildings, and equipment to ensure we are accurately covered. WHA will attend a future meeting to present the information.

Fairgrounds Fire Facility Board

No report.

Finance Committee – Town/Bourke

Commissioner Town shared that the Finance Committee met on Wednesday, May 28 to review and approve the annual financial report prior to it being finalized and submitted to the Washington State Auditor. Items of note: due to new reporting requirements, the personnel leave liability increased significantly over what was reported for 2023 and expenditures exceeded revenues due to the purchase of the property next to Station 21.

Local BVFF – Chunn/Ayers

No report.

WFCA Region VIII – Bartel

Previously reported in error, the legislature did actually pass the City of Bellevue tax increment area value limit increase to $500 million in value. The bill has been signed by the governor. Language was added to ensure the authorized increase would not impact fire districts. Though the governor cut the proposed funding to facilitate TIA discussion meetings at the State level, fire districts continue working to pull together stakeholders to meet with legislators to discuss the impacts of tax increment financing.

Cowlitz Indian Tribe – Contract Liaison Bartel/Bourke

Chief Nohr advised a meeting will happen in July.

EMS District 2 – Bourke

Commissioner Bourke advised the May meeting was postponed to June. Chief Nohr shared information from the work group meetings on the administrative board and progress with the EMSD2 service contract going forward. Discussion. There is no concern with continuity of service after January 1, 2026.

Port of Ridgefield

Commissioner Bartel advised the new port director has been appointed. There is a groundbreaking ceremony for the new Ridgefield elementary school on

Wednesday, June 18 at 1:00 p.m. Suggested that CCFR implement a public partner report section on the agenda similar to that of the Port.

Commissioner Updates
Woodland Planter's Day – Saturday, June 21. CRR will conduct a fire sprinkler demonstration, and the Association will have its BBQ sandwich booth.

CHIEF'S REPORT
Chief Nohr summarized significant incidents since the last meeting. Station inspections are complete – the crews really raised the bar this year. All are looking great. The FD6 crew helped out at Station 151. Streissguth and AC Peeler met with DeAnn Cordes from Clark County to review space use to establish a new cost allocation for Station 151. The County is developing the fifth amendment to the agreement to capture the reallocation. Update on the Standard of Cover. The scope of work with CityGate has been modified to include an analysis of how CCFR and FD6 might be able to work more effectively together. Information on the location recommendations for Ridgefield Station 24 is a couple weeks out. Should have something for the June 26 meeting. Upcoming events: the Ridgefield 4th of July parade and La Center Our Days in August. Special thanks from the Friends of Ridgefield Community Library for assistance provided in hauling books between the library and their Port storage unit before and after their book sale on Saturday, June 7. Friday helpers: Chief Nohr, AC Peeler and his son, the Station 26 crew (Bridges, Borrelli, & Walker), and Fire Cadet Andrade. Saturday helpers: Bryan Borrelli and Fire Cadets Andrade, Plyler, and Murray. The Friends would have struggled without this help.

CARES PROGRAM EXPANSION
AC Jackson presented a staff report on expansion of the CARES program to provide acute behavioral health crisis response. CCFR is now a licensed Behavioral Health Agency which opens the door to directly employ behavioral health providers. The Health Care Authority is providing funds under an establishment grant with dedicated funding allowing CCFR to provide 24/7 behavioral health services. Reimbursable expenses include a transport vehicle (purchased) and other necessary equipment (on order). Timeline and hiring plan. Discussion. Motion by Commissioner Bartel to approve the service agreement with the HCA to provide behavioral health response. Second Commissioner Bourke. No discussion. Motion passed unanimously.

TAX INCREMENT AREAS – UPDATE
No report.

LATE EDITIONS TO THE AGENDA
Chief Nohr added that staff are working with DSHS regarding fire protection contract for the new building on 159th Street. They will pay $10,000 for the 2025-26 budget year and planning for the building value at our rate for the following year when the building is occupied.

Commissioner Chunn expressed his thanks to the Station 29 crew for the quality service provided on a couple minor incidents at his residence.

CITIZEN COMMENTS
None.

EXECUTIVE SESSION
None.

No further discussion. Meeting adjourned at 4:54 p.m.

Attest, John Nohr
District Secretary/Fire Chief

Clark-Cowlitz
FIRE RESCUE

CLARK-COWLITZ FIRE RESCUE
CONSENT AGENDA
June 12, 2025

1. Minutes
   - Board Meeting – May 22
2. Prepaid Invoices
   - $ 11,558.90 (CCFR Fund 6228)
     i. $ 4,551.43 Chk Nos. 103027 – 103031 dated May 30
     ii. $ 5,730.00 ACH Nos. 1289 – 1290 paid June 2
   - $ 1,393.41 (CCFR Fund 6228)
     i. EFT No. 1517 paid June 10
3. Current Invoices
   - $ 3,428.80 (FFFB Fund 6254)
     i. $ 3,341.17 Chk Nos. 103032 – 103035 dated June 12
     ii. $ 87.63 EFT 1518 to be paid June 13
   - $ 327,035.59 (CCFR Fund 6228)
     i. $ 142,187.07 Chk Nos. 103036 – 103087 dated June 12
     ii. $ 2,463.14 EFT 1523 paid June 12
     iii. $ 10,103.48 EFT 1524 paid June 12
     iv. $ 172,281.90 ACH 1577 – 1583 to be paid June 13
4. Fund Transfers
   - None
5. Payroll
   - May Life & Disability Premiums
     i. $ 8,939.61 EFT 1292 paid May 28
   - May 1 – 31 Payroll paid June 6
     i. $ 1,328,611.17 Gross Payroll
     ii. $ 874,592.82 Net Payroll ACH 1377 – 1482
     iii. $ 178,573.48 941 Tax Deposit EFT 1484
   - May Payroll Benefits
     i. $ 453,840.84 Chk Nos. 22621 – 22628 dated June 5
     ii. $ 97,385.49 EFT 1493 paid June 6
6. May Use Tax paid June 12
   - CCFR $ 276.12 EFT 1516
7. Approved Commissioner Stipends

Month of May paid June 6						
Name	Board Meeting	Committee Meeting	Assn Meeting	Educ	Other	Total Paid
Ayers	1		1			2
Bartel	1	2	1			4
Bourke	1	2				3
Chunn	1		1			2
Town	1	1	1		1	4

8. CCFR Fund 6228 Voided/Destroyed Claims Warrants
   - None
9. FFFB Fund 6254 Voided/Destroyed Claims Warrants
   - None

Clark-Cowlitz
FIRE RESCUE

CLARK-COWLITZ FIRE RESCUE
CONSENT AGENDA
June 12, 2025

Commissioner Stanley Chunn – Chair

Commissioner David Town – Vice Chair

Commissioner Larry Bartel

Commissioner Ken Ayers

Commissioner Jade Bourke

Staff Report

To: John Nohr, Fire Chief; Commissioners

From: Michael J. Jackson, Assistant Chief

Date: 06/9/2025

Re: Program Update – C.A.R.E.S. Behavioral Health Crisis Response

C.A.R.E.S. 21 Acute Behavioral Health Crisis Response Program

Background

BH-ASO and Co-Response Program Start
Behavioral Health Crisis services in Washington State are coordinated and largely funded by the regional Behavioral Health Administrative Services Organizations (BH-ASOs). In 2022, CCFR staff began conversations with Carelon, the administrator for the Southwest regional BH-ASO and SeaMar, one of their crisis service contractors. These discussions led to a fully-funded pilot co-response program that launched in April of 2023, operating 12-hours/day and 6 days/week. The pilot program consists of CCFR Paramedics partnered with Behavioral Health Professionals from SeaMar and is fully funded by Carelon, as part of their crisis service delivery for Clark County.

Mapping Program Outcomes
With a positive relationship and several demonstrated program outcomes, Carelon asked us to participate in a “Ripple Effects Mapping” outcomes exercise that they funded to demonstrate and document the program value in 2024. Following the mapping exercise, Carelon engaged our team in discussions about potential program expansion in coordination with integration of response for 9-8-8 service that was to be implemented. Discussions included Carelon’s interest in supporting us to have the entire program in-house, including the behavioral health specialists.

State Efforts, Collaboration, and Grant for Innovation Effort
In 2024 CCFR staff was also substantially engaged with the Co-Responder Outreach Alliance of Washington (CROA) and related efforts at the state level to better define co-response programs; support fire based programs; and avoid duplication of related programs as considerations for 9-8-8 crisis response began to evolve.

With defined 9-8-8 crisis legislation that passed and significant collaboration around the State, the University of Washington offered competitive grant funding around the specific tasks of furthering fire and EMS based co-response to meet changing needs and evolving landscape with 9-8-8 crisis response. CCFR staff submitted for and received innovation grant funding through the UW program to target defined "innovation" areas around fire-based crisis response. Specifically, we received funding and support exploration and pursuit of licensure as a Behavioral Health Agency with scope specifically for crisis field response and to explore integration of our co-response program into the 9-8-8 system to avoid duplicate programs in 9-1-1 and 9-8-8 that would serve similar purposes. These initiatives along with our deployment of MOUD / Buprenorphine in the field aligned with our mission and beliefs for program funding efficiency and sustainability around shared resources for diverse crisis response needs in both the 9-1-1 and evolving 9-8-8 system.

Recent Status Change and Accomplishments

Licensed Behavioral Health Agency

After receiving the innovation grant from UW, we began researching and ultimately applying to become a licensed Behavioral Health Agency with support and encouragement from Carelon, our BH-ASO. Three agencies received funding from UW to explore this option, and to Date, I believe CCFR is the only Fire Agency to have successfully applied for this licensure. Our license was received last week after a lengthy application and review process. Our BHA license opens the door for us to directly employ the behavioral health providers serving our co-response program as well as appropriately credential our team to become endorsed by the Health Care Authority (HCA) for 9-8-8 response, to provide service and receive contractual funding for the service. The licensure helps ensure various funding possibilities for provision of services around crisis response in our area.

Community Based Crisis Response Team Endorsement

In line with the innovation funding we received from the University of Washington and with support and a contractual commitment from Carelon, we are in the process of establishing a Community Based (Fire or EMS) Crisis Response Team. The State has encouraged and supports our model of a single funded team to serve crisis response needs in both 9-1-1 and 9-8-8 systems. Additionally, in April, we were awarded additional funding through an "Establishment Grant" to help cover costs of standing up the team for initial endorsement by the Health Care Authority (HCA) with a short turn-around for payment of expenses through June.

We are continuing to address the requirements for team endorsement with the help of Carelon. The BHA license was a significant piece that is being followed by procurement of a vehicle and equipment along with increased staffing for consistent 24/7 coverage.

Recent and Anitcipated Near Term Outcomes and Changes

Budget and Grant Awards 2025

Establishment Grant from HCA (Health Care Authority)
$416,000 April-June 2025 (procurement steps must be completed in June)

- *Vehicle*
- *Lifepak and Equipment*
- *Training*
- *Communications Equipment*
- *Some initial salary and hiring costs*

Amended Contract with Carelon (for July 2025 – June 2026)

**Existing contract will cover existing program costs through June*
**Amended contract has been committed to and should be in hand by mid June and will be renewed for ongoing service in subsequent years – funded by 9-8-8 program taxes and funds.*

- *$2,044,875.00 initial amount for year 1, possible expansion and increase later this year or in subsequent years*
  - *Up to 5 FT Paramedic Positions*
  - *Up to 5 FT Behavioral Health Positions*
  - *1 PM Supervisor and 1 BH Supervisor*
  - *1 Certified Peer*
  - *OT Coverage*
  - *Vehicle Fuel and Maintenance*
  - *Supplies*
  - *Overhead*

Current Work and Next Steps

- Current Contract and Arrangement with SeaMar ends on July 6th
- Program will continue with funding from Carelon on current model (including our own BH staff), until we can expand hours of coverage with new staff.
- Meetings and coordination continue with Carelon and HCA to meet 24 hour staffing and establishment criteria as soon as practical
- BH Specialist Jobs Posted – working on 1 direct hire based on experience in existing program. Additional positions to be filled competitively

- Paramedic Positions to post this week. OT for shift staff will cover until new medics are on boarded (paid by Carelon)
- Peer Support Position will be posted following Paramedic Positions
- Vehicle and equipment have been / are being ordered for June and July service ramp-up.
- Anticipated need to backfill a CARES follow-up position or possibly two, if/when they transition to new dedicated co-response roles.

Summary

Our new endorsed community based response team is anticipated to be operational 24 Hours / day by late summer with coordinated training using the curriculum we helped the University of Washington to develop for co-responders. This program will be funded by our BH-ASO (Carlon) through a contract for ongoing service through funding they facilitate through the Health Care Authority (HCA). Similar to our current pilot model, the program is based on payments to have the service staffed and available and not based on specific responses or services delivered. As 9-8-8 response is new and evolving, there are many unknowns yet that we are committed to coordinating around with Carelon and the HCA. We are still working on what the dispatch process for 9-8-8 responses will look like, but are engaged with CRESA and other players to coordinate that piece, as it evolves in this new system.