



CITY OF WHITE SALMON
Joint Meeting with Klickitat County Fire District 3
Wednesday, June 21, 2022
In Person and Via Zoom Teleconference

Council and Administrative Personnel Present

Council Members:

Patty Fink
Jason Hartmann
David Lindley
Jim Ransier

Staff Present:

Marla Keethler, Mayor
Paul Koch, Interim City Administrator
Stephanie Porter, Deputy Clerk
Bill Hunsaker, Fire Chief

Fire District 3 Commissioners:

Thomas Montag
Robert Connors
Charles Virts, Jr

Fire District 3 Staff:

Wes Long, Fire Chief

I. Call to Order and Roll Call

Marla Keethler, Mayor called the meeting to order at 6:22pm. There were approximately 27 people in attendance in person and via zoom. Council Member Ben Giant was absent.

II. Introduction – Purpose of meeting

Wes Long, Fire District 3 Chief and Bill Hunsaker, City of White Salmon Fire Chief provided opening remarks pertaining to the current needs of each department, including how a joint fire effort would be beneficial.

III. Presentation

Bob Merrit, mHc Associates presented potential options for a joining of the White Salmon Fire Department and Klickitat County Fire District 3. The pros and cons of each option were addressed. The top priority being the support of the volunteer fire fighters.

Bob spoke directly to community engagement to determine the level of service that is expected by residents and the benefits of addressing current service challenges regionally. Bob addressed funding including options and potential issues that could arise.

City Council and Fire Commissioners discussed the concepts presented.

IX. Public Comment

Karl Swanson, White Salmon Fire said the base number of volunteers is not strong. Visitors to our area do not understand the volunteer status. Karl said he would like to see recruitment as a priority and said a review of compensation could be helpful. Karl said that there are paid ambulance staff, but fire is most often responding to the same calls that are not fire related. Karl believes this creates a lack of urgency in response time. Karl said he would be supportive of joining the entities if it best serves the community.

Jeremy Grose, Fire District 3 Captain supports the integration of the entities. Jeremy said the messaging of the process will be super important. There has been a negative vibe in the past with a takeover mentality. Jeremy recommends being as transparent as possible through the process and clear messaging to the public of each step moving forward.

X. Action

The City Council agreed to staff moving forward with a draft report that outlines available consolidation options for the City of White Salmon Fire Department and Klickitat County Fire District 3 including a financial layout for each option.

XI. Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 8:51p.m.



Marla Keethler, Mayor



Jan Brending, Clerk Treasurer