

**Walker Fire Protection Association
Monthly Board Meeting Minutes**

13 December 14

Board Members Present:

President:	Bill Loughrige
Vice President:	John Ohanesian
Secretary:	Russ Courtney
Treasurer:	Steve MacIntosh
Director:	Rudy Erdman
Director:	Terry Piske
Fire Chief:	Roger Nusbaum

Board Members Absent:

Director:	Vic Hencken
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9:00 AM Begin General Session

Approve Agenda - Time Index: 003:14

Motion to accept the agenda as amended by John seconded by Terry. Vote. Passed 6/0

Public Comments (questions will be addressed at the end of the meeting) - Time Index: 03:42

None

President Report - Time Index: 03:56

We have been notified that Groom Creek is creating a feasibility study to annex Walker Fire. Many steps are involved. WFPA will remain natural and not support or oppose the annexation.

Secretary Report - Time Index: 04:34

The minutes from the November Meeting were distributed to the Board members and posted on the website along with the Audio file from the meeting.

Data for the Postcard announcing the Newsletter was received via the County on 4 December. The Walker area consisted of 1492 records. After doing a merge of the data and purging duplicate records the final number of records for mailing was 1085.

Sharon Bencze provided a list of new owners in the area. These changes did not appear in the county records and were applied manually.

Motion to wave with the reading of the minutes was made by John and seconded by Terry . Vote. Passed. 6/0

Treasurer Report- Time Index: 05:37

Have met with Adam Rutherford our account and seems very good. Some issues were addressed when reviewing the budget. The October and November financials were posted on the website.

We are considerably below budget. Total income was \$2000 .v. budget of \$16K which appears as a negative amount. Expenses were below budge. YTD we are on budget.

Question – the accumulated depreciation was going to be removed from the balance sheet as it skews the total amount. Steve will review with Adam and Vic.

A motion was made to accept the Treasures report by John and seconded by Terry. Vote. Passed 6/0

Question – we received a receipt for the annual contribution but it was for 1/3 for the value of the donation. Steve will address with Adam.

Fire Chief Report- Time Index: 11:38

Calls four calls; one medical, the one accident on Walker Rd that most people know about, a car fire past Five Points and a vehicle accident on ice that had one patient. **Training** We had our last training in the structure fire module and our first training in the EMS module. As I say every month, the turnout remains in the mid-teens every time. **PRCC** Implemented the change in their computer aided dispatch but this has no real effect on how we are dispatched or respond to calls. **Fleet** Tender 82 is in for annual maintenance, Tender 81 will be next and then we'll be done. **Chiefs Association** No meeting until January, I am still Vice President. SCBA's are due this month. Working with FEMA on deploying the overage due us. **Basin Ops** will tentatively be on March 24 & 25 and focus more on boots on the ground, engine company drills with a focus on establishing better cohesion between fire and YCSO. For the fifth year I am the secretary of the group. **Annexation** I met with Chief Bentley from Groom Creek. He told me that he'd been approached in writing by a few people from Potato Patch about Groom Creek Fire District annexing Potato Patch/Walker/Mountain Pine Acres. He shared very specific information about the state of their finances, their budget, his thoughts on what a combined department might look like and that he hopes it happens. He was also clear that his board would not approve it if it was contentious. I told Chief Bentley some of the history of the three previous attempts at this since I joined the department in 2003. I also made it very clear that I would be neutral in this matter, neither supporting it nor hindering it. That I would provide information as requested by the process in a time manner to them as well as answer any questions that might come from Walker residents related to the basics of district formation as well if there are any questions that Walker residents should be asking but are not (such as economics, etc). Groom Creek Fire District will perform a sort of due diligence process that Chef Bentley set an expectation for completing in February. If at the point the Groom Creek Fire District Board decides to proceed then it would be up to the petitioners who contacted him to collected signatures and then the next step would be a ballot initiative that would either be on the November 2015 ballot or depending on the timeline might not be until November 2016. If the Groom Creek Fire District board decides after the due diligence to not pursue it then the issue would be dead. The fire department will be neutral in this matter. Firefighters are free to discuss personal opinions on the issue

when out of uniform.

Comment – the wreck on Wednesday, which Roger reported on was caused by black ice. The call was initially dispatched as a traffic call however there was one patient from this call.

Motion to accept the Fire Chief Report was made by John and seconded by Rudy . Vote. Passed. 6/0

Committee Reports (Fundraising, By-Laws, and Firewise) - Time Index: 17:30

- Firewise – Loren Bykerk the county has a free slash drop off at their locations. Mayer is the closest. PAWAIC now has 30 recognized communities in the program with an additional 3 to be approved. We have assessed 7 more properties in the 4th quarter. Average cost is \$1154 per HIZ and \$1420 per HIZ. Different criteria are used for each grant. These are all 90/10 grants. It would be useful to have a description for homeowners on keeping track of personal time spent on property. Time sheets are very important in these grants. Previous contract for the grinder has run out and a new contract will be negotiated. We are penciled in for a grinder on 30 March 2015 and 18 May 2015.
- Fundraising -John Ohanesian long way from Walker Days.

Old Business- Time Index: 21:58

- Welcome Information for New Home Owners – some changes are coming from Joyce with a combination of information. This will be printed on the magnet – evacuation map and the alert. File of Life magnet will have the WFPA logo in black and white with a minimum of 1000 pieces. Will need some more of the Walker History and the Firewise information. Loren will provide.
- Facility Maintenance – Gene Tomek made sure the furnaces were on for the vehicles. Roger mentioned that this is something that we need to address in order to get items fixed – be around when access is needed. Gene suggested a spreadsheet using our own experience. Will keep pushing
- Fall Newsletter – on the website. Announcement has been sent to the community. Postcard should be in the post by Monday.

New Business- Time Index: 27:41

- Groom Creek Annexation –Bill- history with fire districts has not been good in the community. Our business is to run the Walker Fire Department. We will remain natural and not support or oppose the annexation process. Roger reiterated that there a lot of moving parts to this. Remaining natural does not mean we are not available to answer questions. John mentioned that Todd Bentley from Groom Creek Fire District should know that this would be a contentious annexation. The cost to have 2 or 3 guys here is enormous for the few calls we have here.

Community Announcements: (Firewise, WCAA, Others?) - Time Index: 31:37

Tim McFarlan – WCAA membership meeting on 10 Jan at 11:30 AM either at the Firehouse or Highlands Centre.

Victoria Morhous – coat drive is done. 197 coats received. 39 gift cards for Catholic Charities.

Gene Tomek– has his Christmas Trees up. Would be nice if someone saw them!

Public Forum (Two-minute restriction)

Glen Heithold – dumpsters should be hidden. A nice wall or shrubs. Something could be done there.

Mark Herrin – talked with Todd Bentley. There are some discrepancies. None of the letters which were sent to them were from Walker. He has now received over a dozen letters from Walker residents to remain a volunteer department. Personally offended that he did not approach the WFPA Board or Fire Department before starting this process.

Gene Tomek– the probability of this passing is zero. Believe the annexing should not be a contentious issue.

Gary Thomasson– not sure why this direction is being followed . Based on what happed here with a vote from residents as to why this board would take a natural position. Does not seem consistent with what the residents want.

Jack Schlaman – (provided a handwritten note to the President) The note stated his disapproval of the possible annexation by Groom Creek Fire District.

Chad Bruce – here more than 30 years. We oppose the annexation. The fire department is doing a fine job.

Kevin Wilburn – talked with Todd Bentley. Instead of joining Groom Creek Fire District, has Walker Fire considered their own district. Costs would be much less than Groom Creek Fire District.

Victoria Morhous – will the letter that is being sent to Groom Creek Fire District be available for the community to read. The past two elections have not followed the bylaws. There are 4 conditions which must be met to be a member. All four must be met – not one or two.

Chad Bruce– a friend in Groom Creek was told by Groom Creek Fire District that they would not be able to fight a fire due to the road condition.

Brief Board discussion, if any, about public comments

Bill Loughrige The trees didn't seem to work to shield the trash containers. We will look to see what we can do using proceeds from the collection service.

Regarding neutrality: What will occur first is a feasibility study to see if there is support for Groom Creek to annex us. This is legally mandated. A district has been attempted in Walker in the past. Groom Creek Fire District has had discussions for some months with some of the Potato Patch residents, and according to Todd Bentley, some Walker resident. After a request for information, Todd Bentley has provided the letters from the Potato Patch residents He mentioned that the Walker residents did not want to be identified. Those names are being withheld for whatever reason.

They will have to get 50% plus 1 of the property owners and 50% plus one of the appraised values. In the past there has never been more than 13% of the property owners desiring a fire district. With past attempts the WPPFA Boards at those times became involved in the process causing bad feelings amongst the property owners.

The WPPFA receives enough in donations to operate. The WPPFA owns its trucks and has more and better equipment than many fire departments or fire districts. The property owners in Walker support the WPPFA with their donations. These donations only come from 30-40% of the property owners in Walker. There is a feeling by some that the board needs to force other property owners to contribute. This board does not feel that way and has taken the word "Dues" out of the membership description. We are trying to make 'membership' as easy as possible. There is no requirement to pay dues or volunteer. All that needs to be done is to be a property owner and consent to be a member. Consent can be done in several different ways.

As a board we will keep this neutral. As a board, our job is to run a fire department. It does not mean that the individual board members will not speak out privately, but as a board we would remain neutral and keep this process as civil as possible. Hopefully, this will not degrade into what has occurred in the past with the possibility of a fire district.

We have had fire district efforts here before and they were not able to get the required percentage for forming a fire district.

When Chief Bentley was asked by me if he would be coming to the WPPFA Board to ask for their opinion, we were told "no". According to Chief Bentley, the people who have come to him are represented by another group.

Roger Nusbaum— a fire district does not have anything to do with being a professional or volunteer organization. We can do what we want with the money we budget. A fire district does not mean professional – it will be professional if you want it to be professional. The Forest Service will respond to any threat to their land. There were three previous attempts to form a district in Walker.

Bill Loughrige – I’ve looked at the bylaws. The copies which you have use the word “and”, however the copies which we approved use the word “or”. (Later the ‘file copies’ from 2012 were checked and they contained the word “or”.) Bill was not sure if he would make the letter to Groom Creek public. (Subsequently the letter was posted on the web site)

John Ohanesian – when we say “neutral” it does not mean we will roll over.

11:00 AM **Adjournment**- Time Index: 56:19

Motion to adjourn was made by John and seconded by Rudy . Vote. Passed. 6/0 Meeting adjourned at 10:01 AM

**An audio file of this Board Meeting is available on the WFPA website – <http://www.walkerfire.org>
The meeting agenda is used to contain a brief description of the discussion for each topic on the agenda. Please refer to the audio file for an exact replay of the meeting.**