



Camas-Washougal Fire Department Newsletter

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Our Mission:
To provide the highest quality service to our community through the protection and preservation of life and property



Fire Department Merger Takes Major Step Forward

As most of our readers know, the Camas and Washougal Fire Departments have been involved in a temporary functional consolidation since July of 2011. The current agreement ends on December 31, 2013. The Regional Fire Authority Planning Committee has been meeting since that time to determine whether the temporary consolidation should be made permanent, and if so, by what method. A major milestone was reached on January 29 when local financial consultant Paul Lewis delivered his conclusion that continuation of the merger was in the best interests of the cities. On February 26, 2013, the RFA Planning Committee made their long awaited recommendation. At that meeting, committee members unanimously decided to recommend to their full councils that steps be taken to make the fire department consolidation permanent. Based on the Lewis Study, formation of an RFA was deferred in favor of investigating a long term interlocal agreement between the two cities.

Since the merger efforts began in July of 2011, our goals have always remained the same: To slow or stop increases in expenditures (and try to decrease where possible) and to become more efficient through the elimination of redundancies. Our other goal has been to maintain or increase levels of service wherever possible. The stabilization of the EMS budget, along with the decreased response times and doubling of staffing at the Washougal station are evidence that we have been successful in this endeavor. The merger has also enjoyed wide support from within the department as well, a development not entirely expected when we first started down this road in 2011. In a recent anonymous internal survey of fire department personnel, over 82% of the staff stated they were in support of making the partnership permanent. Further merger discussions are anticipated in the near future, including an upcoming joint council meeting between both cities.



Personnel Timelines

On March 1, Firefighter/Paramedic Nick Ober resigned from CWFD to take a job in Oklahoma. He was hired at the Camas Fire Department on February 27, 2006. Nick and his wife Amanda and children Daniel, Natalie, and Grace, are making the move to be closer to family. Nick will be greatly missed by the staff of CWFD, and we wish him the best of luck in his new endeavor.

On January 1, CWFD volunteer firefighter Tim Kutchera was elected as the new president of the volunteer firefighters association. In his other life, Tim works as a pilot with Alaska Airlines. He joins Vice President Jake Grindy, and Secretary/Treasurer Charlie Dawson, in serving one year terms. Tim and his executive staff have many plans for improving the volunteer organization in the coming months. CWFD congratulates all three personnel on their recent elections and thanks them for their tireless service to their community.