



Snohomish County Chiefs' Association
General Membership
11:35 a.m.
November 3, 2025

PRESENT:

Dave Kraski
Shaughn Maxwell
Jim Haverfield

Brian Park
Eric Andrews
Keith Strotz

President North County Fire
Vice President South County Fire
Secretary/Treasurer Snohomish County FPD 17
Immediate Past President
Large Agency Director
Medium Agency Director Sky Valley Fire
Small Agency Director Snohomish County FPD 19

Jason Allen	Camano Fire
Jeff Cole	Marysville Fire
Jennett Nielson	Marysville Fire
Ned Vanderpol	Marysville Fire
Blake Engnes	Mukilteo Fire
Scott Dorsey	SCEMSA
Seth Henderson	Snohomish County Fire Marshal
Greg Osborne	Snohomish County FPD 4
Jason Hodgkinson	Snohomish County FPD 4
Seth Johnson	Snohomish County FPD 5
Jarrod Spence	Snohomish County FPD 5
Chad Crandall	Snohomish County FPD 17
Travis Hots	Snohomish County FPD 22
Drew Bono	Snohomish County FPD 22
Joel Johnson	Snohomish County FPD 24
Brett Fetcho	SRFR
Michael McConnell	SRFR
Brian Park	SRFR
Todd Anderson	SRFR
John Chalfant	South County Fire
James Curtis	South County Fire
David Sherman	South County Fire
David Wells	South County Fire
Lucia Schmitt	SnoCo DEM
Dara Salmon	SnoCo
Les Hallman	WFCA/WHA

Thank you to our Lunch Sponsor - Stationwise

- A. Call to Order:** Meeting called to order at 11:31 hours.
- B. Additions to Agenda:** .no additions
- C. Approval of Consent Agenda:**
- **Discussion:**
 - **Action:** *Motion by Chief Johnson to approve the Consent Agenda. Seconded by Chief Bono. Approved unanimously.*

D. Minutes:

- **Discussion:** No discussion

E. Treasurer's Report:

Discussion: No new expenses. 3 invoices will be paid this week. All 4 CD's have now been sold and transferred into the checking account.

F. Old Business

ODA - An update was provided on efforts to establish a countywide Officer Development Academy (ODA) program in Snohomish County. The program was modeled after the county media program and aimed to offer both certificate-based and HR-focused training opportunities, such as performance evaluations and managing difficult conversations.

A proposal was developed in partnership with Janelle for the HR-related classes at a cost of \$2,900, and additional certification courses were negotiated with Dollar Fire at \$425 per student—lower than comparable programs such as Fire Tech Academy. The intent was to create a consistent, local training schedule that would reduce travel and provide scheduling flexibility.

Despite initial interest and support from county chiefs and subcommittees, the program struggled to reach the minimum enrollment of 30 students needed for financial viability. Only 19–20 participants committed, primarily from smaller agencies. Due to limited participation and lack of sustainability, it was determined the program could not move forward as planned.

Chief Haverfield of Granite Falls expressed interest in hosting the HR courses independently, with available seats to be sold to interested agencies. Those who originally committed to the ODA program will be given first priority for enrollment. The board acknowledged the work put into developing the program and expressed appreciation for the efforts, though it was agreed that the ODA program will be placed on hold due to low participation.

Countywide CARES program - An update was provided on the discussion regarding a potential countywide CARES program. At the previous meeting, it was noted that the program was supported through Sno 911 assessments and discussion only. Dr. K had shared that the Department of Health approached SCEMSA about a possible grant opportunity to support the development of a countywide CARES initiative.

It was reported that SCEMSA has since applied for an ODEQA federal grant; however, the focus of the grant is specifically on supporting Medication for Opioid Use Disorder (MOUD) work within the county. To avoid confusion with existing CARES programs, the effort is being renamed and will be focused solely on coordinating and collaborating on MOUD-related activities. At this time, there is no funding available for a countywide CARES program.

Hazmat Exercise – no update this month

Snohomish County Paramedic Training Program - The group revisited last month's discussion regarding the potential development of a Snohomish County Paramedic Program. The concept originated from the recognized need for additional paramedics and the desire to have a locally based training option. Chief DeMarco had previously indicated a forthcoming meeting with Harborview to explore possible partnerships; no new updates were available at this time.

It was noted that Harborview is currently operating two concurrent paramedic classes—the first time this has occurred—indicating the growing statewide demand for paramedic training. Discussion followed regarding prior efforts to establish a local program in collaboration with institutions such as Central Washington University and Whatcom Community College. Those past attempts encountered significant barriers related to accreditation, cost, and instructor availability, ultimately proving unsustainable.

Members agreed that hosting a county-based paramedic program at this time does not appear feasible due to the extensive accreditation requirements, resource needs, and lack of instructional capacity. However, alternative training options are being pursued. Chief Park shared that his agency currently has three members enrolled in the Bothell (Boston) Paramedic Program, which offers a largely online format with local clinical components. This model may provide a more practical path forward for agencies within the county.

It was suggested that a small subcommittee, including Dr. K and Director Dorsey, continue to explore partnership opportunities and evaluate whether the Boston program or similar options could meet the county's ongoing paramedic training needs.

G. New Business

Elections - It was announced that elections for board positions will take place next month. The current president noted that the upcoming meeting will be their final one in this role. Traditionally, the vice president has moved into the president's position; however, Chief Maxwell shared that due to upcoming changes within South County, he will be stepping away from the vice president role. As a result, a new individual will need to be nominated for that position. Nominations and elections for both roles will occur at the next meeting.

WSFCA Meeting - The Washington Fire Chiefs Association (WFCA) is encouraging broader participation by rotating their meetings around the state. Snohomish County has been asked to host an upcoming meeting on Tuesday, November 18th. Chief McConnell coordinated with the group, and the Board of Everett has agreed to provide their boardroom, which accommodates approximately 30 attendees.

The meeting will begin at 11:00 a.m., with a 10:00 a.m. board meeting preceding it, and lunch will be provided afterward. Chief Kraski will circulate the official invite, and attendees are encouraged to represent Snohomish County, particularly as the association moves into the live session, which may provide an opportunity to advocate for county priorities. A reminder will be sent to ensure members reserve the date on their calendars.

H. Agency Updates:

DEM - Lucia Schmitt –

Sno911 – Terry Peterson -

Fire Commissioners – Chief Johnson – An update was provided on last week's Fire Commissioners conference, which was reported as well attended and successful. The session rooms and conference programming were noted to be effective, and participation from commissioners in networking and discussions with counterparts from other agencies was encouraged. It was noted that next year's conference will be held in Spokane at the Davenport Hotel.

Fire Resources Coordinator – Travis Hots - An update was provided on the recent Washington State Fire Defense Board meeting, attended on behalf of Chief Anders at the State Commissioners Conference. Key takeaways included:

- **FLRA Forest Land Response Agreement (DNR):** The DNR is issuing a one-year extension for 2026. Agencies must complete and return the agreement by hard copy in order to participate in reciprocal aid, grants, or IMT deployments.
- **State Fire Marshal Office Reimbursements:** Approximately \$3.8 million in reimbursements for casual hires and equipment have been processed, with backfill and full-time crew reimbursements now underway. The total reimbursement workload is around \$7 million, managed by a small staff, and processing may continue into next year. Additional staffing for the office is under consideration.
- **Mobilization Delays and After-Action Review:** Delays in resource mobilization were noted, often due to the need for local Fire Chief sign-offs, particularly in rural areas. Concerns were raised about late-day approvals creating safety risks during nighttime deployments. The State Fire Marshal's office has been encouraged to refine and expedite these processes.

Fire Marshal – Seth Henderson –

- **Staffing and Stability:** The office has experienced significant turnover over the past decade but is now largely stabilized, with the exception of one investigator planning to retire next year. Recent hires have required training on office procedures and district interactions.
- **Office Retreat and Annual Report:** A full-day retreat was held in Mukilteo to review operations and identify improvements. It was decided to begin producing an annual report summarizing the office's accomplishments.
- **Training and Recognition:** The Fire Prevention Institute in Chelan was recently attended, with Chief Maxwell presenting. Additionally, one office member was elected to both the Washington State Association of Fire Marshals Board and the International Association of Arson Investigators, Washington Division Board.
- **State Building Code Update:** The Washington State Association of Fire Marshals submitted a rule request regarding property line setbacks for accessory dwelling units (ADUs). The request was not deemed an emergency, but a special committee will review the proposal for inclusion in the 2027 building code adoption. Currently, Snohomish County requires a minimum 5-foot setback under certain conditions.
- **Arson Investigations:** There has been an increase in incendiary fires, with 47 investigations this year compared to 18 last year. The office's investigation unit, including two former law enforcement officers, has enhanced follow-up capabilities and prosecution outcomes using previously underutilized resources and tools.

I. Liaison Updates:

Fire TAC – Eric Andrews - An update was provided on recent discussions regarding radio communications and interoperability. A subcommittee is implementing a new elevator-type code response plan and coordinating Phase One of a broader implementation to ensure all agencies are on common radio channels, including coordination with DNR and neighboring counties. No specific timeline has been established, and the program involves significant expense (approximately \$600 per radio).

During the committee meeting, a sheriff's office representative announced that police agencies are seeking to remove fire access to encrypted police channels, citing liability and security concerns. Fire representatives noted that the ability to monitor police communications has historically improved response and safety during critical incidents, such as officer-involved emergencies, pursuits, and barricaded subjects. Challenges with relying on patched channels (e.g., Sno OPS) during rapidly evolving situations were highlighted.

The group discussed gathering specific incident data from agencies to support a fire service perspective and potentially advocate for continued access to police channels or alternative solutions. It was noted that SNO911 manages the radio system, and final decisions would be made by the board, which currently has a majority of law enforcement representation. Agencies were encouraged to coordinate with battalion chiefs to document incidents where fire monitoring of police channels improved operational outcomes.

SCEMSA Board Update – Ned Vanderpol - The SKEMSA budget will be released following the next meeting. The countywide MCI (Mass Casualty Incident) plan is under discussion for updates, and SKEMSA's involvement in the process was emphasized. Policy development for SCEMSA is ongoing, with a subcommittee reviewing and drafting policies one at a time.

Policy/Procedure Review Committee – Eric Andrews –

Fire Prevention – Shawneri Guzman –

Training Consortium – Deputy Chief Fetcho – An update was provided from the Academy: Chief Wharton continues to perform well in his role. Graduation is scheduled for December 11th at Stanwood High School, with a family day planned for December 2nd. Live fire training is progressing successfully, and the next Academy session is set to begin on February 16th of next year.

Training Officers/Safety Officers – Deputy Chief Fetcho –

- **Training:** Appreciation was expressed to Chief Crandall for efforts on the ODA program, though it did not come to fruition. Tulalip recently facilitated high-rise training at a local resort/casino, attended by multiple departments from the county and surrounding areas. The Naval Base training day, originally scheduled for November, has been moved to February, and departments were encouraged to send personnel to participate.
- **Health & Safety:** A safety notice was issued regarding Scott SCBA packs, specifically the buddy breather component. No field failures have been reported; testing revealed issues in less than 1% of packs. Departments will receive a tool to test their own packs, with health and safety officers overseeing the process. Communications regarding this notice are being disseminated to all departments.
- **Additional Note:** November is recognized as Men's Health Awareness Month.

Special Operations – Dave Ruddell – Training and make-ups are wrapped up for the 2025 year. 2026 training calendars were submitted to the Training officers.

Working on needs analysis and risk assessment for HZ and TR.

Dr. Corsa is the SWAT and HRT overseeing physician and reached out to incorporate the SOPB paramedics into an advanced training sub-group. We brought this to the Ops committees and have their endorsement. Next step is to speak with Dr. Keay and discuss any issues she may have with this. After that meeting I will bring this back to this board for discussion and a plan moving forward.

HZ is continuing to study the ever changing "alternate energy" incidents and will bring recommendations and lessons as they are gathered.

Washington Fire Chiefs/Legislative– Michael McConnell –

Legislative and Event Updates:

- Thank you to Chief Kraski for helping to procure a location for the board meeting on November 18th.
- The joint Fire Chief/Fire Commissioners' Legislative Day is scheduled for January 29th in Olympia.
- The State Fire Chiefs Conference will be held in Wenatchee the week of May 18th.
- Positive recognition was given to FPI and the WPFE group for their public education efforts.

WSRB and Fire Flow Data:

- Ongoing discussions with WSRB and OIC are focused on updating the fire insurance rating schedule, particularly addressing water flow and hydrant data.
- Accurate fire flow and hydrant information remain a challenge due to multiple water purveyors, limited on-site flow testing, and reluctance to share modeling data.
- Efforts are being made to integrate hydrant and flow data into Sno911 and First Due systems for operational planning.
- Legislative or county-level solutions, such as requiring water purveyors to provide modeling data, were suggested to improve data availability and accuracy.
- Hydrant data is critical for planning response, assigning tenders, and ensuring firefighter safety.

Other Notes:

- While hydraulic modeling provides estimated flow rates, real-world verification is often lacking.
- Collaboration and outreach with water purveyors may improve the accuracy and timeliness of the data.

Western Fire Chiefs – Les Hallman – Appreciation was expressed to the Association for their support and letter submitted for the October 23rd hearing. The hearing lasted approximately four hours, was uneventful, and attendees are hopeful for a positive resolution regarding the proposed changes. Future engagement may be requested as the process continues. The Northwest Leadership Seminar was highlighted as a valuable event for current leaders is scheduled for March 6–8, with approximately 700 attendees expected from across public safety. FEMA has extended the deadline for AFG and SAFER grant submissions to November 25th, though website access may still be limited.

J. Announcements/Good of the Order

- John Chalfant was promoted to Assistant Chief of Operations.
- Tom King was promoted to Deputy Chief of Operations.
- Chief Eastman is expected to begin stepping back from duties starting in January.

K. Adjournment Motion to adjourn proposed by Chief Johnson **seconded** by Chief Bono and approved unanimously. The meeting adjourned at 1:02 **pm hours**.

Minutes prepared and submitted by:

Theresa Ramey / Administrative Coordinator – NCRFA

Next Meeting: December 1, 2025

Attachments: