

Lake Wenatchee Fire & Rescue, District #9

Special Meeting Minutes

May 20, 2026 6:30 PM to 8:30 PM

I. Open Meeting

- Attendees:
 - LWFR
 - Chief Foley
 - Assistant Chief Peiguss
 - Commissioner Lamar
 - Commissioner Gibbs
 - Metis Global Solutions
 - Tatiana Weiss - Metis Owner/CEO
 - Jenny Crossley
 - Don Trujillo
 - Zach Brady
 - Jennifer Oak

II. Pledge of Allegiance

III. Board Members Present

- Commissioner Lamar, Commissioner Gibbs

IV. Call to Order

V. Agenda

- Community Conversation with Lake Wenatchee Fire & Rescue + Metis Global Solutions

How we got here.

Commissioner Lamar addresses community

Introduction -

- Commissioner Payne is not here, due to graduation of grandchild
- Lots of changes within department
- 1 assistant chief over 2 deputy chiefs
- increased training, multiplying volunteer firefighters
- Working to open cat 12 road
- Improving partner relationships with auxiliary
- Priorities were focused on the bulleted list below and not until digging into administrative processes were issues uncovered
 - Facilities for winter
 - Vehicles
 - Admin
 - Operations

- Financials future

Chief Foley addresses community

- Chief Foley makes decisions based on:
 - Is it the right thing to do?
 - Do we have the resources to do it?
If answers align, it helps clarity in decision making
- The lack of information/data and answers to his questions coming in illustrated the need to clean up processes, and uncovered administrative issues
- The goal is
 - team alignment in process
 - Decisions are made based on clear data
 - Single source of truth in documents (consistency)
 - Consistency and accountability in systems
- Chief Foley appreciated the administrative and outside perspective that Metis offers
 - Team-wide curiosity, and the approach of collecting data to find solutions

Tatiana Weiss - Metis CEO/Owner addresses community

Metis -

- Tatiana worked event tradeshow/logistics for 20 years
- Events stopped during COVID and Tatiana kept her team/office afloat
- In 2022 Tatiana went out on her own, as an operations company
- Microsoft set her up as a vendor immediately (and Metis contracts with other big tech companies as well)
- Skills - Operations expert, working with people, processes, efficiencies
- Tatiana wants to put her skills to work for the betterment of community - wants to work with people and communities
 - Wanted to find out what communities the Metis team was passionate about, came to the school district, by way of Jenny's work in para-education (and volunteered at the school in a variety of areas)
- Excited to work with LWFR and help advise on process development
 - Dug into LWFR 5 yrs worth of meeting minutes, found missing data, and was looking for the answers, working with the county, and working through ledgers, to make informed decisions
 - Relation to Jennifer Crossley brings her to LWFR, wanting to do something good for community

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- End of February came to help and ask the same questions that people at the meeting are asking
 - Came in to help with admin, and was handed issues that weren't appropriate to hand to a new person
 - Found broken processes, lack of documentation, and consistency
 - Wants to develop a "bus plan"—so anyone can step into a role--streamlined and consistent)
 - Notes, yes, there is a lack of communication, lack of transparency, and consistency
 - It would be ideal to create glossary of terms for consistent language
- Team Introductions - (contractors)
- Jennifer Crossley - administrative support & process development
 - Don Trujillo - asset & inventory management consultant
 - Zach Brady - asset & inventory management consultant
 - Jennifer Oak - administrative support
- Where we are.
 - Issues**
 - Bond reversal - the ruling did not go in dept favor because not filed in time
 - Accounting Program (Eden)
 - within county for accounting, for over 9 years, department was told cannot make changes or delete - it's found not to be true
 - When getting into administration processes, there were issues found; the Eden program was in fact changeable, and accounts were past due
 - Example - firefighter at conference was unable to use credit card for event expense because the cc was maxed out—past due
 - The credit card's had dozens of purchases to amazon, and did not provide receipts (as required by law)
 - Minimum payments being made to all utility companies - tax payers money should be used to pay bills on time
 - Communications were broken with public and internally - no responses or acknowledgements
 - Vouchers were not processed in a timely manner - the team found 541k worth of vouchers that had not been paid
 - Warrants (checks) were found in the office, not mailed out

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- Pension - work 25 years, as incentive (350 a mo) for rest of life-pensions were being paid to workers from day one of starting work
 - Missing and inconsistent documents - multiple versions of the same thing
 - Employee & volunteers
 - Part time employees - presented to commissioners to decide what the department can afford
 - Issues were found that more than approved part time hours were being worked and paid out (closer to Chief wages)
 - Stipends, sick leave, and pension, not approved by the board were being distributed
 - It's not common to have someone start volunteer working prior to onboarding - there are regulations (L&I), where onboarding is required
 - Ex- volunteer workers were hurt on the job and processed as regular paid employees - creating error and creating major delay to processing
 - There were no employee evaluations happening
 - Commissioner Payne went thru policy manual - picking /editing what policies are appropriate for the department (and all of the work done to update the policy manual had not been memorialized)
 - Reimbursables - LWFR puts out grants and monies that have not been reimbursed 250 - 400k are not processed
 - Department is blessed w/ grants that are used for
 - Fuel reduction
 - Outreach
 - Assistance for FF
 - Told there was a grant manager, found not to be true, and no reimbursement completion or processed
 - When the financials presented to the board - all payments were lump sum put together, not distinguishable
 - Lack of regular office hours contributes to work distractions of Chiefs and department staff

Why Metis?

- Operations in the past that Commissioner Lamar noted are different than today
 - Vouchers and warrants were processed on the day received
 - There were controls over purchasing, debt, etc

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- The approval from the board was not until after review with fire district
 - Administration doesn't take action unless something serious happens, and Commissioner Lamar states this is serious, which is why a 3rd party vendor has come to help with solutions
 - In 2015 another vendor came in and worked onsite twice and the rest of the work was done remotely
 - Metis is connected to Jenny, who worked within the school district with special needs students and Tatiana came to assist - helping identify issues and find solutions for some of the issues affecting the students within the school district
 - Commissioner Lamar introduced Metis to Chief Foley to help address the critical failures, because he feels passionately about helping the administration of a department, he has pride in and depends on as member of the community
 - Observed Metis/Tatiana listen to needs, collect and use data to find solutions to current issues
 - Observed Tatiana learning about regulations, governances, and felt her approach and skillset would be effective to help the organization
 - Through engagement came to understand decisions were being made without understanding the actual data, like what the debts and actual budgets are
 - Tatiana pulled together a proposal
 - Began with a discovery - (the contract distributed at meeting lists Tatiana's findings)
 - As a responsible commissioner, Commissioner Lamar advocates for spending money where it should be spent, with processes and regulations put into place
 - After this experience with engagement, there will be a limit of money spent
 - The contract was negotiated by Chief Foley; Commissioner Lamar didn't want to participate in contract negotiations to avoid conflict of interest (Jenny Crossley)
 - The part he wanted to know was, clarity with Metis's scope, and what was found during research about existing processes, and that Metis could set up financial tracking measures, and processes for upcoming events
 - In the past, it was Identified that an auditor needed to come in and review the books, but after CPA engagement - the administrative person at the time said the CPA was unresponsive

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- Additionally, Metis had a training session concerning Eden - went into district 3 and secretary showed how to print reports and make changes in the accounting system
 - There is now a purchase process - requiring approvals and receipts
 - Clear job descriptions - instituted
 - Commissioners will sign for payroll; AP batches before they go to county for warrants to be issued
- **Note to Community:** you all likely have a skill that the department could use, and if you have a skillset you can share, please let us know (department is eager for help)
- What happens next.
 - Open Q&A
- Community Questions/ Comments -**
- Retired CPA notes that a good CPA will provide a clear / official work agreement - (a forensic audit is what's needed when such issues have been found)
 - Will Metis provide feedback to board?
 - Metis will brief on where they're at, (updating frequently), Chief Foley engages board as necessary
 - What's plan for post Metis contract?
 - **Dual (?)**
 - Need to start recruiting - however, processes need to be put into place before bringing on a new admin employee[s]
 - Procedures are developed by Metis, but working with department & RCWs
 - Advised by community member for future to do an RFP, due to optics of the conflict of interest between Commissioner Lamar & Metis (as a best practice)
 - Commissioner Lamar acknowledges the optics and stepped aside in the negotiation process in attempt to be fair
 - Request for community member name/number after meeting
 - Acknowledgment that Metis FB & website - lacking presence and clarity
 - The website is being redesigned because Metis is rebranding

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- The social media presence is lacking because Metis is not a marketing company and doesn't focus on marketing (wanting to put time and resources to better use)
 - Boards have task forces and committees - temporary or permanent (recommended to have around 10 committees that could help address the issues brought up at this meeting)
 - Commissioner Lamar notes that they've been relying on auxiliary committee, and would love the community members with special skillsets to volunteer to help
 - Noted that board went to auxiliary committee after engaging Metis
 - Question about auxiliary feedback/questions and engagement - there was little
 - There was a minimal presentation to the auxiliary committee that was late to come
 - Question about reaching out to another contractor (there was another contractor the department reached out to)
 - Because they're paid by federal money, Metis has to be set up to receive federal money
 - The county can't go out for grants right now, and the department is not a position to go out for grants either
 - The state audits the department every 3 years, and Commissioner Lamar is concerned with identified issues, the department is likely to fail
 - There's great concern and lack of confidence in the department issues and the leadership
 - There's a lack of connection and inclusivity with the community - Commissioner Lamar acknowledges the lack of inclusivity
 - Commissioner Lamar apologizes for failing to catch the issues and says he's committed to wants to working through departmental issues with transparency
 - Community notes *Trust but verify*
 - There's a note about concern for the amount of money being spent on the Metis contract
 - Commissioner Lamar does not feel able to make a decent budget decisions based on the current financial situation, with the inaccurate information that was given
 - It's noted that a standing audit committee, staff, board, and community - to look at the budget constantly for assistance in management and accountability

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- How far back did the credit card issue go? (About 9k worth of debt)
 - It was discovered relatively recently during the Metis data collection process
 - Commissioner Lamar talks about credit card being used for amazon orders - and it's cleared up that using an account number doesn't gain personal points for user
 - Commissioner Lamar notes that Metis has gone back to collect the data for further understanding of items purchased
 - How does Dave Walker feel about all this?
 - Commissioner Lamar says that he hasn't heard, and that he's not present at the meeting
 - Community members are thankful for the audit, but nice to know if the people representing LWFR know about the industry?
 - How much percentage of department funds are grants?
 - \$1.9 million by tax accumulation - grants vary by year - fire mitigation (450k)
 - What's the timeline for consultants getting everything back in place?
 - What is the priority with getting everything back in place?
 - Noted Tatiana will address when Metis is introduced
 - Commissioner Lamar notes that the department needs IT help, tech help, webmaster, so community can access documents and info on demand
 - Appreciation from community member for LWFR owning and acknowledging department failings
 - Want assurance of after 90 days, there is a post-mortem on what was found, where it stands, what's the solution, and what's the future?
 - And to note in the post-mort--what was lost w/ mismanagement, to prevent it from happening again
 - The community has been ignored, and LWFR needs to be better at engagement with:
 - Zoom commissioners meeting - for accessibility, accountability and insight for help
 - Public information person to help facilitate engagement
 - Minutes from commissioner meetings to be posted at least 1 - 2 days before (water district publicly posts draft meeting minutes until approved at the next meeting, and has a lot in ways of community engagement to model after)

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- Clarification on what auxiliary is: not an overseeing committee, they're a fund raising committee
 - Will Metis evaluate commissioners and leadership? Is there a conflict of interest?
 - Commissioner Lamar works with Tatiana, and the only person Metis works with directly is Chief Foley
 - This chief works fulltime because there is too much to do
 - If you have a skillset that you can offer help to the department, please connect with (missed because CL pointed rather than named)
 - Was there an official Metis contract with the school district? - Tatiana notes yes, and community notes that it is not found
 - 3 sentences - Metis Scope
 - Administration processes and procedures (everything in and out of the threshold needs to be accounted for - Metis makes recommendations to Chief & Commissioners)
 - Want to help, volunteer to work with scope creep (volunteering hours to community to address issues)
 - Original agreement was 70k, w/ revision on 3/27 and start date of 4/15 - Tatiana volunteered to work in front office until official start date - increased to 189k to address the issues found
 - Not getting paid for back work - Question if there is a liability issue having a non-paid person working on the back work? - attorney was consulted
 - Is there a project plan and objective outline for the community to understand?
 - Yes, there is a plan, but it is fluid as things are being worked through
 - There is a task tracker that has been created—community would like insight into the plan as it evolves, and what is completed and what's left to complete
 - If Metis doesn't meet timeline, will they work/stay unpaid? Is there a performance guarantee?
 - What was committed to be done, will be completed, and as issues are being uncovered, it's evolving
 - For fulfilling the admin office position, will there be an overlap with the Metis team?
 - The admin role is at least a 40 hour week role, and maybe more

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- Before fulfilling the role, the budget data needs clarification, clean up, and accuracy before understanding what the salary for the role[s] will be?
 - Are there temp admins from other districts that can help?
 - Is there concern that since Metis is not an accounting firm working amidst forensic accounting issues?
 - Metis came to investigate and understand and the existing processes, and uncovered accounting issues—yes there is concern
 - Metis requests accounting help (specifically forensic accounting), as it is not a skillset Metis possesses
 - Are there job descriptions currently for admin role?
 - In process and review in with Chief and commissioners

VI. Conclude