



Whatcom County Fire Protection District 21

Whatcom Fire Protection District 4

North Whatcom Fire & Rescue

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Whatcom Fire Districts 21 and 4

Announce Working Agreement and Goal for RFA Proposal in 2022

(Lynden, WA)-District 21 Fire Commission Chair Bruce Ansell and District 4 Fire Commission Chair Mark Lann have announced that the two districts will be signing a new Inter-Local Agency agreement for District 21 to continue providing service to District 4 after January 1, 2022. This agreement is similar to the contract that has been in place for nearly ten years but was set to expire on December 31, 2021.

Each district also plans to put a levy lid lift ballot measure before their respective voters in the August 3, 2021 primary election to maintain current fire and emergency response services and to meet future demand. District 21 has not asked for a levy lid increase since 2009, and District 4 has not asked for a fire levy lid increase since 1994. Finally, the districts will resume their Regional Fire Authority (RFA) planning commission in 2022, anticipating a ballot measure in August 2022.

District 21 Commissioner Bruce Ansell said, "We wanted to put the RFA vote on the ballot this year, but with the resignation of District 4's former board chair, that work will have to wait until 2022. We do need financial support from our communities now, and we're asking for the first time in 12 years. With our growing population and a 52% increase in calls for service in the last ten years, we cannot rely on our current levy rate to make ends meet."

District 4's Commissioner Mark Lann added, "Our residents and businesses have benefitted from our joint operating agreement with District 21 for many years. An RFA is the best option for us, and we are committed to working together to achieve the RFA next year. District 4 is under new governing leadership that is committed to renewing and revitalizing the cooperative working relationship we've historically enjoyed with District 21.

"Our combined EMS and fire levy rate today is just \$1.03 per \$1,000 assessed value. Like District 21, we will be seeking voter approval for fire levy rate increase to \$1.45 per \$1,000 assessed value in the August primary election. Our budget forecast tells us that we simply cannot operate at current service levels with our current budget."

For further information, please see <https://www.nwfrs.net/levy-lid-lift/> for District 21 and <https://www.wcf4.com/> for District 4.

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