

CLE ELUM PUBLIC SAFETY & HEALTH COMMITTEE

MINUTES

SEPTEMBER 17, 2025

2:00 PM

119 W FIRST STREET

CLE ELUM, WA 98922

1. Call to Order/Pledge of Allegiance

Cassidy Buechle-Curtis - present
Ken Ratliff - absent (arrived at 2:30 p.m.)
Beth Williams - absent

Debbie Lee - Clerk
Mathew Bailey - Public Works Director
Ed Mills - Fire Chief
Rich Albo - Police Chief
Rob Omans - City Administrator

Attendance Note: Ken Ratliff may arrive late to the meeting.

2. Unfinished Business

a. Municipal Code - Addressing (fire/police)

Update:

Thanks were extended to the staff for their additional edits and a few minor changes.
The updated version is currently in queue awaiting review by City Legal.

3. New Business

a. August 20, 2025, Public Safety & Health Committee Meeting Minutes

Motion by Committee Member Buechle-Curtis to approve the minutes as presented.
Motion carried.

b. Interlocal Aid Agreement Between the City of Cle Elum and Kittitas County Fire District #7

Chief Mills provided background on a prior Interlocal Agreement (ILA) from 2012, which included various areas for automatic response, such as Bullfrog Road. The current ILA was found to be outdated.

He emphasized that this is not a binding agreement and may be terminated at any time with written notice.

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Chief Lowe from District 7 expressed the desire to reestablish the agreement with a few updates.

The agreement covers automatic response with Kittitas County, Kittitas County Sheriff (for South Cle Elum), Roslyn (District 6), Department of Natural Resources (DNR), and the U.S. Forest Service—all of which currently have agreements in place.

Legal counsel reviewed the proposed updates and provided recommended changes, which were incorporated.

Chief Mills noted that mutual aid is determined by a threshold of response, and either way, an agreement needs to be in place to ensure legality and coordination among districts. The updated ILA ensures that all parties are on the same page legally and operationally.

Assuming District 7 has no significant objections, the recommendation is to move forward.

It was clarified that this agreement does not change how individual districts are currently operating.

The proposed ILA is recommended for Council approval.

4. Other Committee Comments

Discussion: Basic Life Support (BLS) Transport Unit in South Cle Elum

The Fire Department is exploring the possibility of placing a Basic Life Support (BLS) transport rig at the South Cle Elum station. This would require review and coordination of the Interlocal Agreement (ILA) and associated insurance requirements, as well as staffing with a certified driver and an EMT.

This potential placement has been under consideration since 2017, particularly due to the geographic concerns posed by the river and railroad tracks. Should either route become compromised, having a unit stationed in South Cle Elum would ensure that resources are available on both sides. The alternative response route adds an estimated 20–25 minutes, making this addition highly beneficial to South Cle Elum and Cle Elum residents.

It was noted that the BLS unit would be housed inside the South Cle Elum fire station. However, final approval requires coordination between both Fire Chiefs and formal approval from each City Council. It is unclear if South Cle Elum Council has been made fully aware of the proposal. Chief Mills indicated that the South Cle Elum Fire Chief planned to present it to their council but has not yet reported back.

The matter will be added to the next meeting agenda for continued discussion.

Topic: Community Wildfire Preparedness

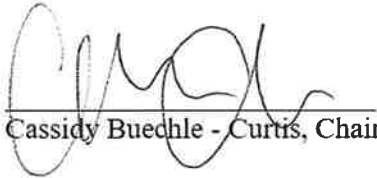
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- **Incident Update:**
The recent fires on I-90 were dangerously close to home and raised concerns in the community.
- **Community Engagement:**
This event presents a strong opportunity to begin sharing insights and preparedness strategies within the community.
- **Evacuation Planning:**
The Community Wildfire Protection Plan (CWPP) is actively working on an evacuation plan and conducting analysis of possible evacuation routes for the city.
- **Safe Zones:**
Discussion on identifying and potentially beginning to implement designated safe zones or areas for evacuation.

5. Adjourn

The meeting was adjourned at 2:35 p.m.


Cassidy Buechle - Curtis, Chair


Debbie Lee, Clerk