



**Regional Fire Authority (RFA)
Planning Committee Special Meeting Agenda
September 4, 2024 4:00 PM
Camas Council Chambers, 616 NE 4th AVE**



NOTE: The City welcomes public meeting citizen participation. TTY Relay Service: 711. In compliance with the ADA, if you need special assistance to participate in a meeting, contact the City Clerk's office at (360) 834-6864, 72 hours prior to the meeting so reasonable accommodations can be made (28 CFR 35.102-35.104 ADA Title 1)

To observe the meeting (no public comment ability)

- go to www.cityofcamas.us/meetings and click "Watch Livestream" (left on page)

To participate in the meeting (able to public comment)

- go to <https://us06web.zoom.us/j/87202457255> (public comments may be submitted to publiccomments@cityofcamas.us)

CALL TO ORDER

ROLL CALL

WORKSHOP TOPICS

1. Organization Subcommittee Report
Presenter: Cliff Free, Fire Chief
Time Estimate: 10 Minutes
2. Finance Subcommittee Report
Presenter: Bonnie Carter, Chair, City of Camas City Council and Molly Coston, City of Washougal City Council
Time Estimate: 10 Minutes
3. [Governance Subcommittee Recommendation](#)
[Presenter: Michelle Wagner, Chair, Washougal City Council](#)
[Time Estimate: 20 Minutes](#)
4. Communications Subcommittee Members Discussion
Presenter: Bonnie Carter, Chair, Camas City Council
Time Estimate: 10 Minutes
5. [Review of Updated Timeline Relative to Outcomes](#)
[Presenter: Richard Curtis, Project Advisor, ESCI](#)
[Time Estimate: 10 Minutes](#)

COMMENTS OR ADDITIONAL ITEMS TO DISCUSS

PUBLIC COMMENTS

CLOSE OF MEETING

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Section 7: Governance

Governance Sub-Approved Date: _____ RFAPC-Approved Date: _____

Reference

The authority to provide governance for the Camas/Washougal Regional Fire Authority (RFA) is provided by RCW 52.26.080 and RCW 52.26.090.

Activity/Operation

As provided by RCW 52.26.080, the Camas/Washougal RFA Governing Board shall come into existence and authority on **September 1, 2025**, upon approval of the registered voters residing within the jurisdictional boundaries established in this RFA Plan.

As provided by RCW 52.26.080, the **initial** governing Board for this RFA shall be comprised of six voting members consisting of three (3) current members of the City of Camas city council who have been appointed by the appropriate City official(s) and three (3) current members of the City of Washougal city council, who have been appointed by the appropriate City official(s).

RCW 52.26.080 provides the authority for Commissioner districts:

- Subsection (4)(a) states that a regional fire protection service authority plan may create commissioner districts. If commissioner districts are created, the population of each commissioner district must be approximately equal. Commissioner districts must be redrawn as provided in chapter 29A.76 RCW.
- Subsection (3)(b) states that the terms of office for regional fire protection service authority commissioner positions may be established by the plan, however, no single term may exceed six years, and the terms of multiple positions must be staggered.
- Subsection (4)(b) states that: (1) only a registered voter who resides in a commissioner district may be a candidate for, or serve as, a commissioner of the commissioner district and (2) only voters of a commissioner district may vote at a primary to nominate candidates for a commissioner position in that commissioner district, provided, however, that all voters of the proposed regional fire authority shall be eligible to vote in the general election for each of the commissioner districts.

RCW 29A.76.010 establishes criteria for development of RFA Commissioner Districts, that will be applied in this Plan as follows:

- (4)(a) Each district shall be nearly equal in population as every other such district comprising the regional fire authority.
- (4)(b) Each district shall be as compact as possible.
- (4)(c) Each district shall consist of a geographically contiguous area.
- (4)(d) Population data may not be used for purposes of favoring or disfavoring any racial group or political party.
- (4)(e) To the extent feasible and if not inconsistent with the basic enabling legislation for the regional fire authority, the district boundaries shall coincide with existing recognized natural boundaries and shall, to the extent possible, preserve existing communities of related and mutual interest.

On or after **January 1, 2028**, the Governing Board of the RFA shall be composed of the following:

Five commissioner districts of approximately equal population will be established, effective on January 1, 2028, within the RFA jurisdictional boundaries in accordance with RCW 52.26.080 and RCW 29A.76.010. Three districts will be within the City of Camas, and two districts will be within the City of Washougal. The City of Camas' districts will utilize their established ward areas as district boundaries. The City of Washougal will be divided into two districts with approximately equal population of the city. Refer to Appendix A, which is illustrative of district boundaries.

During the primary and general elections of 2027, elections will be held in each of the five districts; or each city shall retain the right to appoint one member from their respective city councils to serve as a commissioner.

To maintain staggered terms for the governance board, as required by RCW 52.26.080 (3)(b), one commissioner of Camas and Washougal, respectively, shall each serve a six-year term; one commissioner of Camas and Washougal, respectively, shall serve a four-year term; one commissioner of Camas, shall serve a two-year term, provided that the determination of the term lengths for Camas and Washougal districts shall be done by lot.

After the expiration of the terms above, each district commissioner should serve six-year terms, except in circumstances that a City appoints one of their commissioners, then such appointees shall serve two-year terms. If the cities continue to appoint a commissioner after the initial appointment effective January 1, 2028, every effort shall be made to preserve staggered terms of office.

The RFA Governance Board shall have all the power and authority granted governing boards under Washington State Law, including but not limited to all of the chapters and sections of Title 52 of the Revised Code of Washington. It shall include the power and authority to make any decisions appropriate for the RFA and issues related to RCW 52.26.

Upon ratification of the RFA Plan by the registered voters, the RFA Governance Board shall adopt governance bylaws, policies, rules, and regulations for conducting the business of the RFA upon formation after the effective date of **January 1, 2028**, in accordance with RCW 52.26.080.

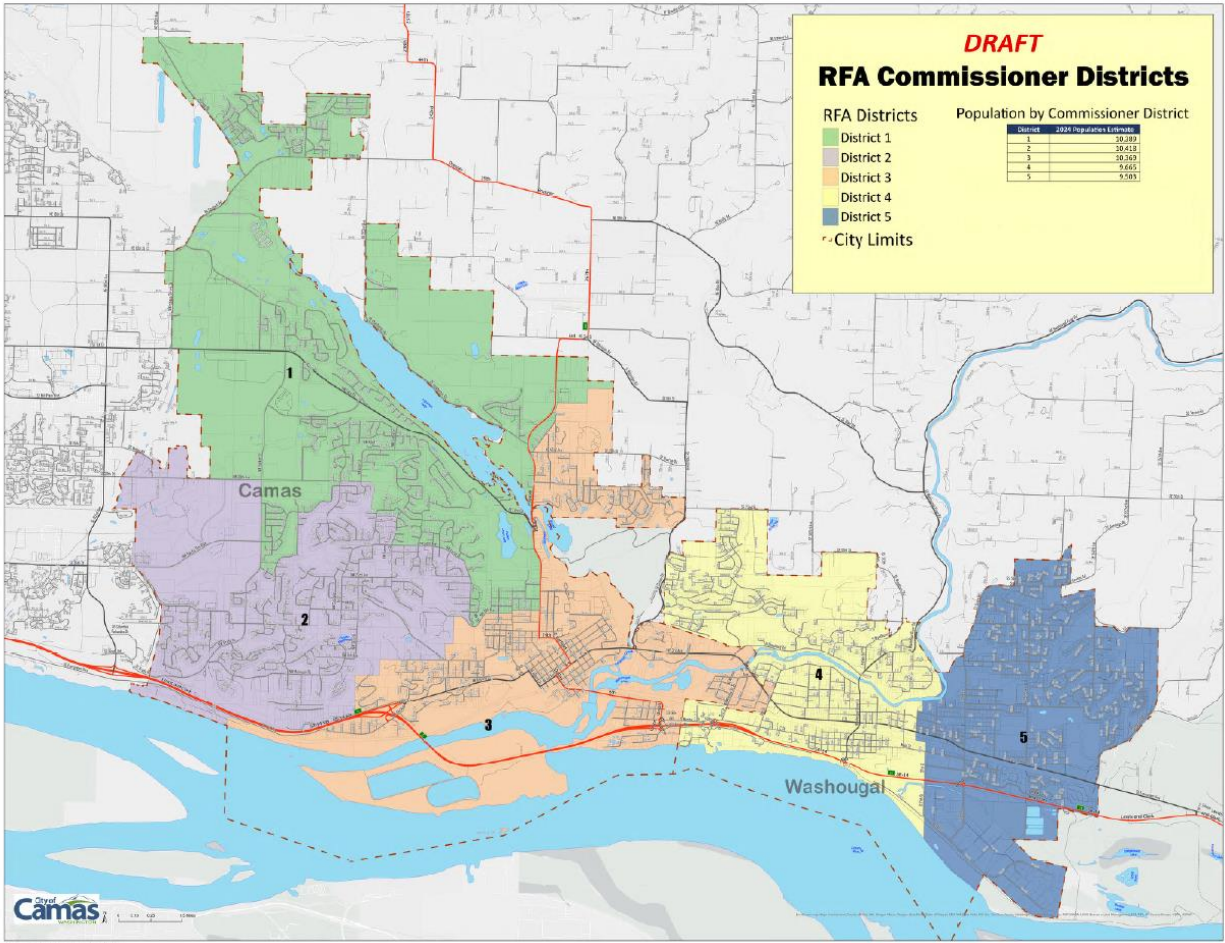
Members of the RFA Governing Board may receive compensation in the same manner and under the same conditions as provided by law for commissioners of a fire protection district organized under Title 52 RCW, except if appointed by a city, that commissioner shall not be afforded such compensation from the Regional Fire Authority.

Subject to state law, after the effective date, ballot measures may be placed on the ballot by the members of the Governance Board of the RFA by a Simple majority vote of the Governance Board. The Board shall adopt a resolution requesting such an election at least 90 days in advance of the Clark County election filing deadlines.

RFA PLAN Revision Disposition

The **GOVERNANCE** portion of the RFA Plan may be revised by a super majority vote, defined as follows: **Initial Governing Board** requires five (5) of six (6) members, or a **Distriected Governing Board** requires four (4) of Five (5) members on the sitting RFA Governance Board.

APPENDIX A: RFA Commissioner District Map



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Statutory References: The following statutes are pertinent to the topic and need to be understood so that one can consider the advantages and disadvantages of “districting”:

- RCW 52.26.080
- RCW 52.14.013
- RCW 29A.76 Redistricting
- RCW 44.05
- RCW 52.06.085

The following are basic principles or requirements that are inherent in the statutes applicable to writing a plan that is consistent with RCW 52.26 and other applicable laws.

1. Only elected persons may serve as RFA commissioners. See RCW 52.26.080(2). Although the board is determined by the plan, this law requires that board members be “elected officials of participating fire protection jurisdictions” or “elected commissioners of the authority.” The details of that second sort of elected board member are set out in RCW 52.26.080(3).
2. That statutory subsection—RCW 52.26.080(3) – provides for the qualifications, compensation, terms and other matters by simply referring to other statutes in the fire district title (Title 52 RCW). RCW 52.14.010 makes it clear that the only real qualification to be a fire commissioner is that the person be a resident elector, i.e. a registered voter who resides within the fire district, or here, the RFA.
3. The RFA statute, at RCW 52.26.080(4) allows creation of commissioner districts within the RFA’s jurisdictional boundaries. The fire district statute, at RCW 52.14.013 allows the same process, and RCW 52.06.085 mentions districting in the context of mergers of fire districts.
4. So what does “districting” mean in these contexts? It means dividing the entity—whether an RFA or a fire district—into sub-regions or districts of “*approximately equal*” population. But how does it work, or what is the purpose of districting? The created commissioner districts require:
 - Only registered voters residing within the district may file for the position of commissioner of that district;
 - Only registered voters residing within the district may vote in the primary election, where persons are nominated to represent that district;
 - **ALL registered voters residing within the RFA or fire district must, however, be allowed to vote for each commissioner who is eligible in the general election.**

5. The upshot of this comparison is that, regardless of whether the commissioners are elected “at large” or within districts of the RFA, ultimately all of the registered voters of the RFA get to vote on the (in this case, five) commissioners of the RFA.
6. There does not seem to be room in this interpretation of the plain meaning of the statutes for a governance model that only allows some of the RFA voters to elect one or more of their commissioners. It smacks of “taxation without representation”, which was a rallying cry in the formation of our nation.
7. If districting turns out to be an acceptable compromise, arguably the RFA could be divided into five districts, with three roughly equal districts, by population, within the City of Camas and two roughly equal districts, by population, within the City of Washougal. The Plan could simply state that “Since approximately 60% of the population of the RFA are Camas residents and 40% are residents of Washougal, the cities agreed that three Camas residents should serve on the governance board, along with two Washougal residents.”
8. If the 2022 population of Camas was 27,371, then those three districts would have a population of about 9,123 each. If the 2022 population of Washougal was 16,926, then those two districts would have a population of about 8,463 each. One could argue that those are approximately equally populated districts (within about 8% of each other). However, if you did that, you would still have to follow RCW 52.26.080 (4)(b) so that all voters in the RFA get to vote on all elected RFA commissioners except any that are appointed by Washougal from their slate of elected council members.
9. If the Plan is approved by the voters of the RFA by a simple majority, then the Plan is final and binding as long as no court challenge is filed within thirty days after certification of the election results. “Failure to challenge within that time forever bars further challenge of the authority’s valid formation.” RCW 52.26.070. A legal challenge on the basis that the districts are in fact not “approximately equal” might never be lodged, as it is not that strong a legal argument once the voters have approved the plan, so we should not advise the clients against the above “three and two” proposal with districting allowed. The plan could still allow Washougal to appoint some council member or members to one or both of their commissioner positions.
10. The foregoing three and two arrangement is a lot easier to explain to the voters than some sort of hybrid plan with each city appointing an equal number of commissioners. Besides, Camas does not really want to have council members on the governing board.

ID	Task Name	Start	Finish	Total Days	2nd Quarter		3rd Quarter			4th Quarter	
					Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct
1	FINANCE SUBCOMMITTEE	Wed 5/15/24	Tue 10/1/24	139							
2	Determine Debt Service Requirements	Wed 5/15/24	Fri 6/7/24	23							
3	Establish Inventory of Capital Assets	Mon 5/20/24	Thu 6/20/24	31							
4	Identify Assets that will be Transferred	Mon 5/20/24	Thu 6/20/24	31							
5	Determine Outstanding Debts & Contract Obligations	Mon 5/20/24	Thu 6/20/24	31							
6	Develop a Capital Improvement Plan	Mon 5/20/24	Wed 7/10/24	51							
7	Develop Pro forma Budget	Wed 7/3/24	Wed 8/7/24	35							
8	Determine the Taxation-Levies, Rates, and Valuation	Thu 8/8/24	Thu 8/29/24	21							
9	Develop ILA for Interim Financing (9-1-25 through 4-15-26)	Thu 8/8/24	Thu 8/29/24	21							
10	**RECOMMEND - Budget, Levy, Rate, City Offset to RFAPC	Fri 8/30/24	Tue 10/1/24	32							
11	ORGANIZATION SUBCOMMITTEE	Mon 5/20/24	Fri 9/6/24	109							
12	Determine and Address Support Services	Mon 5/20/24	Fri 6/28/24	39							
13	Determine the Total FTE Positions	Mon 5/20/24	Fri 6/14/24	25							
14	Develop an RFA Organizational Chart	Mon 6/17/24	Fri 7/12/24	25							
15	Service Delivery - SOC	Thu 7/18/24	Mon 9/2/24	46							
16	**RECOMMEND - SOC, Organization, FTEs, Support Services	Wed 7/24/24	Fri 9/6/24	44							
17	GOVERNANCE SUBCOMMITTEE	Mon 5/20/24	Tue 10/1/24	134							
18	Determine RFA Board Size	Mon 5/20/24	Fri 5/31/24	11							
19	Determine members/positions recommended for the RFA Board	Mon 6/3/24	Thu 7/18/24	45							
20	Determine the makeup of the future of the Board, if different	Mon 7/29/24	Tue 9/3/24	36							
21	Establish Jurisdictional Boundaries and contract services	Tue 6/18/24	Tue 7/30/24	42							
22	Determine Facility Asset Transfers	Sun 7/7/24	Tue 7/23/24	16							
23	**RECOMMEND - Governance Model & Jurisdictional Boundaries to RFAPC	Wed 9/4/24	Tue 10/1/24	27							
24	COMMUNICATIONS SUBCOMMITTEE	Mon 6/17/24	Mon 5/12/25	329							
25	Meet & Develop COM Plan Framework	Mon 6/17/24	Fri 7/12/24	25							
26	Determine Core Messages	Mon 7/15/24	Fri 8/9/24	25							
27	Determine Target Audiences	Mon 8/12/24	Fri 9/6/24	25							
28	Develop Messaging Strategy	Fri 9/13/24	Fri 9/27/24	14							
29	**RECOMMEND Messaging Strategy to RFAPC	Mon 9/30/24	Mon 10/14/24	14							
30	Implement Messaging Strategy & Plan	Mon 9/30/24	Mon 5/12/25	224							
31	ESCI WORK PRODUCT	Mon 5/20/24	Wed 8/7/24	79							
32	ESCI - Introduction, History, and Needs Statement	Mon 5/20/24	Wed 5/29/24	9							
33	ESCI - Legal Authority and Powers of the RFA	Thu 5/30/24	Tue 7/2/24	33							
34	ESCI - Definitions	Fri 7/5/24	Wed 8/7/24	33							
35	**ESCI - RECOMMEND - History, needs statement, legal, and definitions to RFAPC	Fri 7/5/24	Wed 8/7/24	33							
36	DELIBERATIONS	Thu 10/17/24	Tue 12/31/24	75							
37	RFA Planning Committee	Thu 10/17/24	Thu 11/14/24	28							
38	Camas/Washougal City Deliberations & Resolution	Fri 11/15/24	Tue 12/31/24	46							
39	DEADLINES	Mon 12/30/24	Thu 4/30/26	486							
40	Camas & Washougal Pass Resolutions 60 Days prior to Election	Mon 12/30/24	Thu 1/23/25	24							
41	60 Day Notice Requirement for County Elections	Tue 1/28/25	Mon 4/21/25	83							
42	April Election - April 22, 2025 (RCW 29A.04.330)	Mon 4/21/25	Tue 4/22/25	1							
43	Set Effective Date for RFA (RCW 84.09.030(b)) (Before Oct 1)	Mon 9/1/25	Tue 9/2/25	1							
44	Collect Taxes for RFA	Wed 4/29/26	Thu 4/30/26	1							