

New balance \$14,810.14

Dave Zabloutny moved to accept the Treasurer's report. Andrew Chadick seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Guest Presentation – Brigadier General Michael Ake – WA State Army National Guard – National Guard capabilities and experiences in supporting emergency response

Link to Michael's bio - https://www.wavoad.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/12/BG_Ake_bio.pdf

The WA Army and Air National Guard have a dual mission – serving both WA State with the Governor being the Commander in Chief and also serving the United States with the President being the Commander in Chief. The President has the authority to call for active-duty service either domestically or internationally.

Serving at home in WA State:

Covid 19 Response – included support of food banks, covid testing, vaccinations, PPE distribution, Test kit assembly and medical support.

Civil Disturbance – supported communities in dealing with civil disturbances in WA State and Washington D.C.

Wildfire Fighting – support efforts around the state

Cyber attack, Flood response and Snowstorm response

Serving Overseas:

Supported European command in Poland, Ukraine, and Kosovo

Supported Central Command – primarily in the Middle East

Supported Indo-Pacific Command in South Korea, Malaysia, Thailand, and India

The WA State Guard operates on a "Home Rule Basis" which is different than other states. Cities or counties must make requests for support.

Q&A:

Ray Shjerven asked about the Civil Support Team – this is a group of National Guardsmen with technical skills who work with law enforcement and other high-level entities at major events.

Kathy Bryson asked whether the recent election could have impacts on the Guard. Most likely impacts could be in border states related to immigration activities.

Larry Mays asked about the involvement of the Guard in Cascadia Rising simulations/exercises. They are definitely involved in these and would play a key role in any earthquake response.

Christian Burgess asked about mental health programs for those dealing with difficult response situations. There is support available, but it is never enough.

Terri Cooper thanked Michael for the National Guard support relating to the Spokane Valley wildfires last year.

President's Report: Kathy Bryson

Kathy mentioned that the NVOAD Annual Meeting will be held May 18-23, 2025, in Louisville, KY. The website is now up, and hotel reservations are being accepted. Conference registrations will be open soon. Christian Burgess mentioned that workshop proposals are being accepted through December 9, 2024.

Kathy also mentioned that the Mountain West VOAD Conference will take place in Boise, ID from April 14-18, 2025.

Kathy noted there will be two in person WaVOAD meetings in 2025 – in April and October. Locations are TBD and will be shared as soon as confirmed.

Election – WaVOAD Secretary Position:

Kathy mentioned that the Treasurer and Secretary positions are up for election in 2025. Ray Shjerven will remain as Treasurer for another two-year term.

She shared that Dave Zablotsky's will not be continuing as Secretary. Kathy thanked Dave for his service over the past three years.

Jim Cooper, currently an at-large member has agreed to run for the Secretary position. Jim represents the PNW United Way. He shared that he is also a member of the Oregon and Idaho VOADS. He is an Army veteran and has served on the Olympia City Council for 14 years.

Kathy asked for a vote and Jim was approved unanimously for the WaVOAD Secretary position.

Report Outs:

Long term Recovery Updates:

Spokane County Wildfire Update – Terri Cooper – Mayor – Medical Lake

Terri provided the following update:

- Currently eight homes under construction – work on mechanicals should be complete by year end

- Mennonite Disaster Services will be sending volunteer in January, but more volunteer help is needed
- The plan for 2025-26 is for 10-12 additional homes to be built. Will need to raise about \$1million for these homes and volunteers will be needed.

Member Report Outs:

Lisa Arellano – Salvation Army:

- They have been working with the Spokane LTRG handling Disaster Case Management. A total of 277 cases have been completed and there are 34 remaining – 13 in Medical Lake and 21 in Elk.
- The focus is on getting people settled before the winter weather sets in.

Ray Shjerven asked if there are differences in the needs in Medical Lake and Elk. Lisa said those in Medical Lake tend to have insurance coverage and are generally better off than those in Elk.

Andy Royce – Mennonite Disaster Services:

- Volunteers (about 20) will be assisting in Spokane Valley (Elk) in January and also in February and March. Groups will be coming in from Oregon and Arizona and probably from Montana in the future.

Forrest Wilkinson – Brethren Disaster Ministries:

- Six volunteers from the Pacific NW Church of the Brethren District responded to a request from the Spokane Region Long Term Recovery Group, October 28 to November 1 to help a family who lost their home in the 2023 Elk Fire. They drywalled the ceilings and some walls in a 1400 square ft new stick-built home at Elk, WA.

Cindi Barker – Seattle HUBS:

- Mentioned they have a psychological first aid class coming up in February. She will share materials with the group to anyone interested

Christie Merrill asked if there was any need for HUBS activation during the recent Bomb Cycle with phone outages. Cindi noted the situation was monitored but the need was not great enough in Seattle.

Larry Mays – ACS:

- They sent a team to Western Carolina to operate a warehouse, handling donations following Hurricane Helene

Kathy Bryson – UMCOR:

- Will be leading an Early Response team (with husband Dana) to Valdosta, GA for a week
- Will be hosting an Early Response Basic Training in Bothell in March of 2025

Ray Shjerven – Lutheran Disaster Response:

- LDR is working in Western NC

- Mentioned that a Lutheran Church in Hoquiam was severely damaged in last weeks' storm. It housed a food bank, so they are working on getting it back up and running.

Jim Cooper – UW – PNW:

- Asked if there is any opportunity to partner and focus on storytelling to try and put a positive spin on things happening in the disaster response space

Government Partners:

Chris Aronen – FEMA Region 10 VAL:

- 10 disasters active in Region 10 – four requests pending (damage assessments) and two pending – one for recent Bomb Cycle
- Latest event declared – Assistance for the Colville Federated Tribes for fire from August 2024
- Have received approval to hire a second Voluntary Agency Liaison for Region 10. Primarily a deployment/field position and will be based in Bothell, WA. The position is not yet posted but if anyone knows of someone who may qualify, please let Chris know.

Next Meeting – Tuesday, February 4, 2025, 10am via zoom

Meeting adjourned by Kathy Bryson at 11:38 am.

Respectfully submitted by Dave Zablotny, WaVOAD secretary