

THURSTON COUNTY FIRE DISTRICT THREE**BOARD OF FIRE COMMISSIONERS****MINUTES OF THE MEETING****February 1st, 2024**

The meeting was conducted remotely via Zoom and with in-person attendance at Station 31.
1231 Franz St SE, Lacey, WA 98503

Present:	Present (Virtual):	Excused:
Commissioner Kirkbride Commissioner Hetzler Commissioner Gamble Commissioner Kelling	Commissioner Roberts	

I. CALL TO ORDER

Commissioner Kelling called the meeting to order at 5:30 PM, followed with a salute to our Nation's Flag.

II. APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA

MOTION: To approve the agenda as published.

Motion: Commissioner Hetzler
Second: Commissioner Kirkbride
Carried: Unanimous

III. HEARING OF THE PUBLIC /MEMBERS PRESENT

None.

IV. APPROVAL OF THE CONSENT AGENDA

- A. Draft minutes of the January 18th, 2024, meeting of the Board of Fire Commissioners.
- B. Draft minutes of the January 25th, 2024, meeting of the Board of Fire Commissioners Special Meeting.
- C. Warrants (AP 2A 2024):
 - General Fund 001 (Acct #6630) EFTs numbered 5322 through 5327; checks numbered 23816 through 23821 for a total amount of \$71,465.56.
 - 2017B Capital Improvement Project Fund 307: EFTs numbered 5328 through 5330 for a total amount of \$379,094.04.

D. Payroll 1B-2024 in the amount of \$638,791.40.

MOTION: To approve the consent agenda as published.

Motion: Commissioner Gamble
Second: Commissioner Kirkbride
Carried: Unanimous

Chief Brooks noted an error on the consent agenda referring to a meeting of January 4th. It should say January 18th. The correction was made.

MOTION: To approve the consent agenda as amended.

Motion: Commissioner Gamble
Second: Commissioner Kirkbride
Carried: Unanimous

V. COMMITTEE REPORTS

A. Thurston County Medic One

No report; the next meeting will take place on February 21st. Commissioner Hetzler will be attending at that time.

B. Thurston 9-1-1 Communications (TCOMM)

No report; the next meeting will take place on February 7th. Commissioner Gamble will be attending at that time.

C. City/District Liaison

Chief Brooks reported that he does not yet have an update on the next meeting date. The original meeting date was February 20th, but the vice chair is not available, so the chief is looking at other options.

D. Thurston County Fire Commissioners Association

No report; the next meeting will take place on February 20th.

E. Thurston Regional Planning Council

No report; the next meeting will take place on February 2nd.

F. Community Outreach

Chief Brooks shared:

- Preparing for the 75th Anniversary.
- Chris DeBell is taking the lead on a regional car seat safety training coming up that LFD3 is co-hosting and helping the City of Olympia with. There may

be additional staff who are interested in becoming car seat certified. Commissioner Kirkbride mentioned that he was asked recently by an expecting community member if there are specific car seats that the public should be buying. Chief Brooks responded that the technical answer is that Safe Kids will not allow recommendations to be made. There are ratings available, however, for ease of installation. Interested people can also be directed to Chris DeBell, who can answer questions via email or phone. All car seats available in stores are required to meet federal safety standards. Commissioner Kelling asked whether there are any uniform or operations personnel attending the car seat event or whether they are all admin personnel. Chief Brooks responded that in recent years, it has been non-uniform or day shift assigned uniform. The focus has shifted to non-responder personnel in order for there to be better availability of assistance when needed. Chris DeBell usually has people who want help with car seats come to Station 31. That is the location of most of the resources, including seats that have been provided through Safe Kids which can be given to people who have a damaged or expired car seat.

G. Capital Facilities and Equipment Activities

Chief Cerovski shared:

- There are new photos of the progress on the VRF. These were reviewed.
- LFD3 applied for a Wave grant for an electric vehicle charging program for EV charging stations for employees. The grant was awarded in the amount of approximately \$780k. There was a partner grant also applied for through Puget Sound Energy. They said they wanted to see the outcome of the Wave grant before they decide or proceed. Chief Brooks clarified that the charging stations will be specifically for employees not for public use. The plan is to place two charging stations at Station 33 and Station 35 and three charging stations at Station 31, the TEC, and Station 34.
- Applied for a grant for Unmanned Aerial Vehicles (UAS) drones. With help from one of our members, Kevin Davenport, the District submitted a grant totaling \$96,388 for two drones, all licensing requirements a Certificate of Authorization (COA), training for the pilots, as well as overtime for pilot training, are included in this grant application. This is expected to be a competitive grant. We will update the Board on whether the grant is awarded.
- Chief Schmidt reported that there is new response technology in which dispatchers can send 911 callers a link. The caller can click the link and allow access the camera on their phone and do a feed to crews who are responding so they can have an active picture of the situation (vehicle collisions, fires, etc.) There are also several law enforcement agencies working on drone teams and projects to help with identifying events and working with different agencies cooperatively.
- Chief Brooks mentioned that the review period for the drone grant is February 5th.

VI. OLD BUSINESS

A. 75th Anniversary Planning

- The actual date of the 75th Anniversary is April 2nd. That week is spring break, and many people will have travel plans. There was a meeting with staff from the Catholic school in the old station. The staff is very excited to support LFD3 and help with the celebration. It is staff's recommendation to stay with the date of April 2nd due to complexities (events on the weekends, kids in the school during the week other than spring break) with the school in using any other dates. There will be streaming available during the celebration for those who cannot attend due to spring break.
- Commissioner Kirkbride asked for clarification on the time. Chief Brooks responded that the outward-focused events which are advertised would likely begin around the lunch hour. This would involve guided tours of the old building and partnering with the school staff to discuss the history and current use of the building. Also working with the Retired Firefighters Group. There are seven or eight antique fire apparatuses, and the goal is to host an antique truck show in the parking lot at the old station. The hope is to coordinate with Lacey PD for a brief closure of the road for a parade from the old facility to the new one, followed by an open house from 4:00 to 6:00. There would be vehicles on display, staff doing tours, and a history talk. Chief Brooks reported that he is having lunch with Chief Broman to discuss involving him to talk about his time as chief in the organization.
- The commissioners reported that many will be away on April 2nd, including Commissioners Roberts, Kelling, Kirkbride, Hetzler. The many absences during that week will also affect the commissioners' meeting. Chief Brooks mentioned that there may need to be a special meeting the date prior or determine the return date of a quorum of the commissioners, or host an abbreviated Zoom session just to do warrants. As the date gets closer, a plan will be made.
- Commissioner Kelling asked if any member of the board wanted to take the lead on developing options to participate remotely. Commissioner Roberts commented that it would be helpful to discuss options in person together and perhaps create a statement to deliver remotely.

VII. NEW BUSINESS

- A. No items.

VIII. ADMINISTRATIVE REPORT

Chief Brooks reported:

- Legislative Day for the joint commissioners and chiefs was different this year because the Columbia Room was not available at the Capitol. It was moved over to the State Patrol Headquarters. It was well attended. It was great to have a strong showing. Some of the attendees were late to the meeting because they testified on the key bill in one of the most important

committees. Thankful that a bill did come out of the committee. It was significantly modified, but it is still alive.

- There are many restrictions on the bill. Commissioner Kirkbride asked for clarifications on the restrictions. Chief Brooks reported cities, counties, or ports can designate or overlay a tax increment area for infrastructure improvements that are of public benefit. When they do that, they are able to set a rate by the sole action of their elected bodies that they can then freeze the assessed valuation of all impacted sub jurisdictions, including special purpose districts to include fire districts, library districts, etc. The only ones originally excluded in the initial legislation were school districts. The argument being made by the joint commissioners and chiefs is that fire and other critical services should also be excluded. The example given by Clark-Cowlitz Fire and Rescue is that under the statute, they could have up to 14 separate tax increment areas overlayed by the counties, ports, and cities that they serve. If they were to levy the full amount, it would negatively draw down about \$33 million available to that one fire agency over the 25 years of the tax increment area. There was no requirement for any mitigation if it is anything under 20% of the district's assessed valuation. Even at the 20% threshold, it only says that they have to negotiate mitigation, but there are no penalties and nothing binding about it. Chelan also attempted to negotiate with the city, to no avail. Both their fire district and their hospital district testified about the potential impacts.
- The asks were to allow an opt-in provision. Right now, it was at all special purpose districts. There was some push to modify it to say only hospital and fire districts as critical services. For example, if the City of Lacey or Port of Olympia wanted to do one that impacted LFD3, they would have to come to the commissioner board with a proposal, and the board would have to opt in; otherwise, the district would be exempt. The response to allowing the opt-in was that this would make the entire process useless because no one would ever opt in. However, this is because it is beneficial to no one other than the senior agencies. Chief Brooks reported that there were more testimonies to this bill than he has ever seen, and possibly the most contentious. It seemed to be almost unanimous support from both committees, with the unfortunate exception of the chairs.
- The other big issue is a hearing on February 2nd in fiscal committees regarding the fallen firefighter memorial. This has been of interest to the fire service for at least the 18 years since the law enforcement memorial was placed on the capitol grounds. This became a primary issue for the Commissioner of Public Lands this year. Hilary Franz brought this forward as an agency ask and initiative from DNR. One of the questions that came through the committee is how the memorial would be funded. The law enforcement memorial is long-term funded through the sale of their license plates. There are fire service license plates, and a portion of those proceeds could go to the memorial. Chief Brooks is optimistic that the process will continue moving forward.

- Thanks to the commissioners who were able to join on January 31st and to all the staff who worked hard to organize Director Huff's retirement.
- Chief Brooks was in Walla Walla last weekend for the fallen firefighter memorial. The procession was very remarkable, as was the way the community rallied around the family.
- Chief Schmidt reported that EMT school is halfway completed for the South Sound Recruit Academy. It is going wonderfully. Chief Flowers volunteered to step in and be the SEI (Senior EMS Instructor) for this EMT portion, which was a huge win. Lacey fire truck academy is kicking off next week. This is important because succession planning is necessary. There are retirements pending. The truck is a unique apparatus to staff. A full week of dedicated training is necessary.

IX. COMMISSIONER COMMENTS

Commission Roberts – thanks to everybody for putting together the retirement celebration for Dale. It was lovely to meet his family. It was well-represented and very well done, and he looked very relaxed and happy. Thanks to Melissa for rearranging her schedule to get to the TCOMM meeting next Wednesday; it is very much appreciated.

Commissioner Kirkbride – the retirement celebration for Dale was wonderful. Thanks to everyone involved in getting it organized. There was a great turnout. Thanks to Commissioner Hetzler for attending the EMS Council meeting later this month.

Commissioner Gamble – thanks to all the staff for putting together the retirement celebration. Thanks to Commissioner Kelly for making a funny pie chart with Dale's face. Thanks to Chief Cerovski and staff for the grant applications. It is exciting to see the districts being a part of the new technology with drones and car charging stations. It is a big step forward for the district.

Commissioner Hetzler – it is important to remember to plan for the BoFC meeting on April 4th as it approaches. Sorry to have missed Dale's retirement celebration.

Commissioner Kelling – Dale seemed very pleased and happy during his celebration.

X. CORRESPONDENCE

Chief Schmidt shared that a community member reached out on December 4th. Engine 35 responded to a DOA. In addition, support services responded. The family wrote to report how compassionate, kind, and caring the crew that responded was, and they specifically want to give thanks for Jordyn's presence being able to help them navigate through the unexpected passing of their family member. There was discussion about how many of these types of calls happen annually, and Chief Brooks said there about 300 county-wide. The Thurston County Association of Public Safety Chaplains, TCAPSC, serves areas extending outside the county. Commissioner Kelling reported that TCAPSC presented at

the Rotary Club about a month ago, and that this group goes above and beyond by giving support to the affected families but also to the members who have to respond to these types of events.

XI. HEARING OF THE PUBLIC / MEMBERS PRESENT

XII. REQUEST FOR EXECUTIVE SESSION

A. In Accordance with RCW 42.30.110(1)(g) to evaluate the qualifications of a candidate for public employment and to review the performance of a public employee.

- a. The initial Executive Session was for 30 minutes; followed by two extensions. The Board came out of Executive Session with no action taken.

XIII. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned as of 7:32 PM.

*Next Regular Meeting: February 15th, 2024– 5:30 p.m.
Available via remote meeting.*

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Rick Kelling

2/16/2024

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Chair

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Liberty Hetzler

2/16/2024

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Vice Chair

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Melissa Gamble

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Commissioner

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2/16/2024

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Commissioner

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Sylvia West

2/16/2024

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Commissioner

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Michael Cerovski

2/16/2024

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ATTEST: District Secretary