

March 7th, 2024

The meeting was conducted remotely via Zoom and with in-person attendance at Station 31.
1231 Franz St SE, Lacey, WA 98516

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

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. PROMOTION, SWEARING, AND RECOGNITION CEREMONY

A. Iver Nitz – Firefighter Paramedic

V. APPROVAL OF THE CONSENT AGENDA

A. Draft minutes of the February 15th, 2024, abbreviated meeting of the Board of Fire Commissioners.

B. Warrants (AP 3A 2024):

- General Fund 001 (Acct #6630) EFTs numbered 5343 through 5353, checks numbered 23852 through 23875, and drafts numbered 1281 through 1311 for a total amount of \$1,898,597.66.
- 2017B Capital Improvement Project Fund 307: EFTs numbered 5341 through 5342, and check number 23851 for a total amount of \$227,642.67.

C. Payroll 2B-2024 in the amount of \$633,872.73.

D. Payroll 3A-2024 in the amount of \$1,827,456.23.

MOTION: To approve the consent agenda as published.

Motion: Commissioner Kirkbride

Second: Commissioner Roberts

Carried: Unanimous

Chief Brooks reported that was a question about a \$34,000 expenditure to a media company. This is the holding corporation that owns a product used for several things, including preplanning efforts and pre-incident preparedness. This would include uploading critical information of addresses and the like, along with a software shared with the City of Lacey for the inspection program called First Due. The expense shown is a one-time annual expense to renew access to these products.

VI. COMMITTEE REPORTS

A. Thurston County Medic One

No report; the next meeting will take place on March 20th. Beginning in April, the meetings will be moved to the last Thursday of each month at 1:00 p.m.

Commissioner Kirkbride reported attending the West Region EMS Council meeting on March 6th. There was considerable discussion about the need and the challenges for mental health here in the state of Washington. West Region is made up of almost 40 members. Commissioner Kirkbride represents Thurston EMS Council. It is the next level above the County EMS that then reports to the Department of Health. West Region is Pierce, Thurston, Lewis, Grays Harbor, and the northern half of Pacific County. The membership is made up of individuals and representatives from those county areas. That discussion was first initiated by the MPD in Pierce County. The bottom line of the conversation was that this is something the legislature needs to make a priority because it is a statewide issue, not merely local. It should be addressed at the state level, not at the county level.

There was also a presentation by the Thurston County Public Health Department regarding their Narcan distribution program. The county has a grant to buy Narcan kits for \$41 each. These are given to a select group of people in the county, including individuals experiencing homelessness. The priority is for them to be given to youth (25 or under) and those at risk of witnessing an opioid-related

overdose. They have partnered with others in the community to be able to get more kids to give out. They have both the intramuscular and nasal versions of Narcan. They are also trying to educate people about the protections that they would have under the Good Samaritan law.

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

Commissioner Roberts reported from the March 6th meeting:

- Slightly below budget for revenue, probably due to not receiving a payment. This is the first time this has happened with the budget in a very long time. Sales tax remains still about 2.3% over what it was in 2023.
- There was a recognition of the employee of the year, a supervisor named Andrea Gould.
- Executive summary: the cutover to the new system is anticipated to be ready on July 15th.
- Good news on the civil site work: the fire department 82 building permit is in process. There is more hope for the Dupont site. The paperwork has left JBLM and is now at Fort Liberty. It needs to spend 30 days there, and then it will go to San Antonio, Texas, for another 30 days. In the meanwhile, there is another tack being taken through the Army Corps of Engineers to see if site work can begin in the hopes that the paperwork will be approved.
- Staffing is going well. Still down by five, but that is the lowest it has been in a while, and there is another academy coming up on the 15th.
- Regarding legislation impacting 911: the First Responder Wellness and Peer Support has been delivered to the governor's desk (Senate House Bill 2311).

C. City/District Liaison

No report; the next meeting is on March 21st.

D. Thurston County Fire Commissioners Association

Commission Kelling reported from the February meeting:

- The Lacey OCED (off campus emergency department) regional nurse and the lead nurse brief the group. Their license is under the Capital Medical Center. There are ten beds. It is open 24/7. There are LPNs, RNs, ER doctors, and general care doctors. They are seeing between 20 and 110 patients a day with a focus on lower acuity patients. There are two behavioral health rooms, but they do not have capacity to retain any combative patients because they do not have the licensure to lay hands on those patients. They cannot retain or care for any DCR holds greater than six hours. They have a low supply of unmatched and uncrossed blood. (Chief Brooks clarified that this is universal blood that is available without typing and crossing.) They are limited in their high intensity respiratory care. Tours are available Monday through Friday.
- There were legislative updates, which will be covered by Chief Brooks in his administrative report.
- The new Thurston County medical protocols will be live on April 1st.

- The next meeting will take place on March 19th.

E. Thurston Regional Planning Council

Commissioner Hetzler reported from the last two meetings:

- In February, new officers were elected.
- New meeting dates were approved for 2024 and for January and February of 2025.
- There was a new member orientation.
- There was a lengthy discussion about the Growth Management Act Housing Need Allocation. This topic took up almost the entirety of the March meeting. House Bill 1220 from 2021 amended the Growth Management Act to instruct local governments to plan and accommodate housing affordable to all income levels. The local jurisdictions created a work group which is run through TRPC to come up with a plan on how to recommend that different jurisdictions consider the information in their next comprehensive plan in 2025.
- Nearly all of the discussion and debate was around the confusion in the intentions, as well as discussion about why there were suggestions for allocating housing needs in areas such as rural areas which do not have services. The point of the exercise was to determine where the needs are, not to suggest where the needs should be. By 2025, over 54,000 additional housing units will be needed.
- This discussion went beyond looking for low income housing to looking for income appropriate housing. Ultimately, it will be up to different jurisdictions to decide how they want to proceed.
- Commissioner Hetzler also reported that she attended Commissioner Kirkbride's Medic One meeting. The office hours are changing there from 7:00 to 4:00 in April. They are changing from Zoom to Teams for online meetings. They approved minor language changes in the EMT class policy booklet.
- Even though there was funding for the 8th week of the medic unit, for 2025, it is likely that there will not be staff to make that happen on time.
- It was mentioned that on April 9th, there will be a Board of Health State of Affairs address. Commissioner Hetzler also commented that she has been unable to confirm this date and that it is not scheduled online.
- Commissioner Kelling added that projections show that they will be 18 paramedics short by 2025 (based on projected retirements) which would impact staffing of the eighth medic unit.
- Commissioner Kirkbride made a comment about the goal of providing appropriate housing. One of the goals is to have housing for senior citizens, including assisted living, independent living, etc. These are individuals who sell their homes to move into these types of facilities, leaving homes which are most likely 20-30 years old, which would then provide affordable housing for first-time buyers. New houses are much more expensive and are more challenging for first-time buyers.

F. Community Outreach

Chief Brooks shared:

- There was a community dispatch sent out a couple of weeks ago. This was the first outward facing notice to the public about the 75th Anniversary celebration.
- On March 12th at City Council, Director Miller-Todd from Medic One, Chief Brooks, and representatives from Providence and MultiCare will be offering updates. It has been about a year since the last update to a City Council workshop regarding the state of EMS. There has been collaboration on the event presentation. This will be the first opportunity for MultiCare to speak to the council since the opening of the freestanding emergency department.
- Chris and Chief Cerovski have been doing a tremendous amount of work towards the 75th Anniversary.
- The Model T is running and has made two successful laps around the TEC.

G. Capital Facilities and Equipment Activities

Chief Cerovski shared:

- The VRF is scheduled to have an electrical connection to PSE on March 14th. There will be a significant shutdown for about 12 hours, after which there should be power to the new building as well as restored power to the TEC facility and the existing VRF.
- By the end of the March, the connection to natural gas should be completed, as well.
- All of the concrete pours on the exterior of the project were completed today. Waiting for the break tests on that concrete to come back in the next 7 to 10 days, after which everything can be driven on.
- Expecting to see asphalt paving in the next month.
- Moving forward on the interior. All of the other previous difficulties have been completed, including the connection to the sanitary sewer, the decommissioning of the existing septic system, and other tasks such as the oil water separators which are all now connected correctly.
- There were difficulties with this project, many of which were due to previous work being done with prior code reference. Improvements have been made to the infrastructure code requirements and everything is now compliant with that.
- Hoping to have a final punch list and substantial completion by March 20th.
- Chief Brooks reported that the newest member of the fleet, Transport 31, had its inaugural voyage and is taking recruits to and from the training center, starting last week.

VII. OLD BUSINESS

A. 75th Anniversary Planning

- Chief Brooks reported that a safe was found on the property at the old station. Christ DeBell and Battalion Chief Harn have worked with the

administration at the school and received permission to turn the project into a training exercise for the technical rescue team. They were able to penetrate the room through a utility box with a camera. Unfortunately, there were four empty shelves inside. In speaking with the curator at the museum, Erin Quinn Valcho, she reported that the safe was installed by the City of Lacey when City Hall was in the adjacent building. It originally held some of the city archives. It was unfortunate that there was nothing to be found in the safe at this time.

- The celebration will take place from 2:00 to 4:00 at the old facility and will then move to the station with a parade. In talking with Olympia and Tumwater, there should be a good showing of antique apparatus from the region.
- Once at the fire station, there will be in service vehicles out for display. The fire bounce house will be set up for kids.
- The logistics team has been working on the memorabilia for the occasion. The newest logo has been combined with the 75th Celebration logo and will become part of the uniform for the crews.
- Commissioner Kirkbride inquired about approval from the city for the parade. Chief Brooks responded that this conversation has not yet taken place. The plan is to have an in-person conversation with the city manager. Instead of seeking a closure of the road, which is fairly significant in terms of city policy, the plan is to let the police department know that an escorted transition will take place by pulling out the rigs and turning on the lights. This will avoid the formal process of closing the roads.
- There was discussion amongst the board of capturing a voiceover from the board, given that most of the fire commissioners will be unable to attend the celebration. It would be helpful to coordinate that at the next meeting on March 21st. The commissioners will come to the meeting early at 5:15, wearing logo wear, for photos.

VIII. NEW BUSINESS

A. Community Risk Reduction – Division Buildout

- Chief Cerovski gave a presentation with accompanying slides.
- The division objectives are an emphasis in emergency preparedness and prevention services to the community at large, community outreach, business safety inspections, preplanning efforts, fire investigations, and when applicable, code enforcement support.
- The timeline for the development of the goals was shared.
- The areas of responsibility were reviewed.
- An inspection schedule has been developed with future potential opportunities with county and tribal stakeholders.
- The division of labor: there would be a CRR assistant chief. This would be assigned to the Deputy Chief Administration. The fire inspector workload would consist of 20 inspections per week for 40 weeks per year. The workload suggests the potential for up to 3 certified fire inspectors to fulfill

future division objections. A public information position would be needed as well. Also required would be a community outreach office, which is already in place.

- Comments were welcomed. Commissioner Kirkbride commented that he did not see the need for this, and that this would be a good topic for a workshop for further discussion. Commissioner Kelling commented that he is aware this has been planned for some time and looks forward to hearing more.
- Chief Brooks commented that from staff's perspective, the vast majority of the responsibilities outlined are things that LFD3 has taken on as responsibilities for years and has understaffed or underserved them.
- Chief Schmidt offered further clarification on the need for the CRR Division and the benefits it will provide.
- There was agreement that going into further detail about what is envisioned for the CRR Division would be helpful.

IX. ADMINISTRATIVE REPORT

Chief Brooks reported:

- Today is the final day of the legislative session. From the fire service perspective, it was one of the more consistently successful, although there were some compromises. There was an issue around tax income financing. Chief Brooks had the opportunity to testify on this topic three or four times. Significant progress was made and light was cast on the issue for future work. What came out is some language around earlier notifications, better coordination, and ultimately binding arbitration if cities, counties, and the like cannot come to terms with the special purpose districts they serve. This will give some outlets to the fire service.
- Regarding the Fallen Firefighter Memorial: prior to the Nisqually Quake, there was a physical presence of a firefighter memorial on campus. It was not a permanent one, and it was damaged beyond repair in the quake. There has been a permanent law enforcement memorial on campus ever since 2008, and there is an effort to have parity for the fire service.
- There was good success on the part of the state fire marshal's office. There are still a lot of open questions about the long term structure and organization of the fire marshal, with the possibility of becoming a standalone entity. There was nothing definitive during the session about that, but there was an effort to better fund the training accounts. There was a 2% increase, which is about a half million dollars, dedicated for training.
- There were several smaller cleanup elements that the Firefighters Association is working through on pension eligibility and funding. Largely, it was successful on the major issues that the fire service was advocating for.
- Chief Schmidt gave an update on the recruit academy. This was the first in-house EMT in collaboration with Tumwater. Chief Flowers stepped in, as well as a huge cadre of instructors from several agencies who came in. All of the recruits passed. There are now 35 recruits in the fire academy. The transport bus is working out well. The Pump Academy begins next week.

X. COMMISSIONER COMMENTS

Commissioner Roberts – very pleased to see that the memorial came out of the legislative session this year. Thank you for the community dispatch.

Commissioner Kirkbride – in clarification of the previous conversation about the Community Risk Reduction buildout: in favor of it. Commissioner Kirkbride shared his appreciation of all of the efforts and ideas. There are some ideas that may require more education and explanation. There was one piece of legislation that just passed regarding speed cameras. There was a speed camera bill approved under which fire engines, ambulances, and police cars that are speeding will get tickets. Fire engines and ambulances have been removed from that legislation.

Commissioner Hetzler – will not be available on April 4th.

Commissioner Kelling – will also not be available on April 4th.

XI. CORRESPONDENCE

None.

XII. HEARING OF THE PUBLIC / MEMBERS PRESENT

None.

XIII. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned as of 6:53 PM.

***Next Regular Meeting: March 21st, 2024– 5:30 p.m.
Available via remote meeting.***

Chair

DocuSigned by:

Liberty Hetzler

3/21/2024

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Vice Chair

Commissioner

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Commissioner

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Sylvia Roberts

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Commissioner

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Michael Cerovski

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ATTEST: District Secretary