THURSTON COUNTY FIRE DISTRICT THREE

BOARD OF FIRE COMMISSIONERS

MINUTES OF THE MEETING

March 19, 2026

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 Kelling		
Commissioner Roberts		
Commissioner Hetzler		
Commissioner Kirkbride		
Commissioner Gamble		

I. CALL TO ORDER

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

II. HEARING OF THE PUBLIC / MEMBERS PRESENT

None.

III. APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA

MOTION: To approve the agenda as published.
Motion: Commissioner Gamble
Second: Commissioner Kirkbride
Carried: Unanimous

IV. SWEARING IN CEREMONY

A. Todd Carson – Deputy Chief of Operations

V. APPROVAL OF THE CONSENT AGENDA

A. Draft minutes of the March 5, 2026, meeting of the Board of Fire Commissioners.

B. Warrants (AP 3A 2026):

- General Fund 001 (Acct #6630) EFTs numbered 5753 through 5758; checks numbered 24801 through 24823; drafts numbered 1721 through 1733 for a total amount of $1,529,624,50.

- Equipment Repair and Replacement Fund 103: EFTs numbered 5759 through 5761; checks numbered 24824 through 24826 for a total amount of $59,188.57.

C. Payroll 3A-2026 in the amount of $2,174,081.84.

MOTION: To approve the consent agenda as published.
Motion: Commissioner Kelling
Second: Commissioner Roberts
Carried: Unanimous

VI. COMMITTEE REPORTS

A. Thurston County Medic One
No report; the next meeting will take place next Thursday. The first phase of the Community Needs Study report will be presented.

B. Thurston 9-1-1 Communications (TCOMM)
No report; the next meeting will take place on April 1.

C. City/District Liaison
Commissioner Hetzler reported from the March 19 meeting:
- Reviewed potential bond measures in the future.
- There was a Quiemuth Village update.
- LFD3 shared Community Risk Reduction updates.
- There was also an update on ongoing annexation attempts.
- The next meeting will take place in May.

D. LFD3/EOFD ILA Committee
No report; the next meeting will take place on March 26.

E. Thurston County Fire Commissioners Association
Commissioner Kelling reported from the most recent meeting:
- The meeting was held at East Olympia Fire Station 61. Chief Schmidt was on the program. She summarized the history of the partnership and how the ILA came about, as well as the shared benefits to the partnership going forward.
- They are trying to get the Commissioner of Public Lands as next month's program speaker.

F. Thurston Regional Planning Council
Commissioner Kelling reported from the most recent meeting:
- The biggest agenda item was the comprehensive plan roundup. The City of Lacey, Tumwater, Olympia, Yelm, and Thurston County all presented a summary of their comprehensive plan updates. These are 20-year updates from 2025 to 2025. Commissioner Kelling can share the link to the presentation.

- Highlights from Lacey: they went through some zoning decoupling, trying to accelerate the review and permitting process for development. Their comprehensive plan is published online.
- Affordable housing development is key for all municipalities and the county. The Sustainable Thurston Plan is still relevant, and they are using that as a baseline for certain domains. Housing densities are going up. Minimums for multifamily housing are going up, which means parking is going up, as well as traffic and congestion on existing road infrastructures. The focus is on low and medium level income levels right now.
- An interesting note from the City of Yelm: they passed an annexation plan that increases the size of their city by 33%. They have the sewer and water infrastructure already built out and just need more land.
- Intercity Transit gave a briefing on the planned Martin Road/Duterrow roundabout. It is one of the key north/south axes. Intercity Transit is interested in this area because it is currently a signal intersection, and it forces their transportation and bus lines to go north into the Hawks Prairie area and then come back around. They are planning for a roundabout there to maximize efficiency and predictability of their schedules.
- The next meeting is on April 3rd. They have a call for projects, process review for 2026, coving $16 million federal transportation grants, and they are looking to implement a Target Zero program and bring on a Target Zero program manager.

G. Community Outreach
Chris DeBell reported:
- With the arrival of spring, outreach is starting to pick up. LFD3 participated in the Lacey Cultural Celebration, providing both outreach and EMS standby at St. Martin's. Attendance there was estimated at around 3,000 people.
- We hosted a group of 15 preschoolers for a station tour last week.
- Volunteers completed four Senior Safe at Home appointments this month.
- The first round of CPR 7 instruction just wrapped up at Salish and Chinook Middle Schools with a reach of 9 classrooms and about 200 students.
- Looking ahead: on March 27th, LFD3 is partnering with Joint Animal Services on a social media campaign. They are bringing a van full of dogs to Station 31. Firefighters will be paired with dogs that are available for adoption, with the goal of increased pet adoptions.

H. Operations and Logistics
Chief Carson shared:
- There was a significant issue on March 16th on the Nisqually River. There was a water rescue in which was a mutual aid response with Thurston County Sheriff, Southeast Thurston, and Nisqually Tribal Police. Crews performed very well. A boat motor had became compromised, and the occupants were backed into a log jam with one individual still in the boat.

LFD3 did an exceptional job getting the individual off the log jam and to safety.

- A post incident analysis was conducted for the Second Hand Rose fire. This is part of the continuous improvement model that LFD3 strives to follow. This review is a great way to accelerate the learning process.
- The department is still engaged in the Officer Development program. So far, five (out of eight scheduled) officer development sessions have been completed. Battalion Chief Ryan Cox just did his three-part series with the title Three Rung Leadership. The turnout has been really outstanding with upwards of 40 members. This is a great example of succession planning. It is encouraging to see capable individuals within the organization who are giving back and developing the next generation of leaders.
- Commissioner Kelling inquired who served as incident command for the water rescue. Chief Carson responded that it was Battalion Chief Hulse. Commissioner Kelling clarified that LFD3 was overall command, and Chief Carson affirmed this. There was a little confusion on the front end based on the geographic confusion, which is what pulled in the other resources.

Chief Patti reported:

- In the last two weeks, there have been no major incidents to report. Today there was a motor vehicle accident today in which Chief Patti provided traffic control.
- ILA items: vehicle inspections at the shop started last weekend. These are probably inspections on the apparatus that they have never had in the past, as the LFD3 shop is very detail-oriented. For the rig inspections, there is a priority list and an ongoing list, looking at the budget to plan those appropriately. Nothing has been marked as out of service, but there are some items that are DOT required, as well as some mechanical things to address.
- Continuing to work through division meetings with the District 6 staff. These have been well received with both the division staff members as well as the crews out there.
- Regarding Logistics: working through outfitting the Aid Units. While going through and outfitting the rigs, some manufacturer defects have been identified. One door fell off its hinges and was only held on by a strut. The shop was quick to get that reinstalled. There have been other things identified; for example, when they ran cables for radios and Wi-Fi antennas, because the radio wasn't installed at the factory, it was discovered while installing the radios that the cables had been installed backwards. The wires are put in as the rig is being built, so this has been challenging to change. This has delayed Aid Unit 33. In talking to Chief Frost and his team, the hope is to have everything resolved in the next two weeks.

- Engine 31 continues to wait on the back burner, but the hope is that within the next week, that rig will go in for outfitting. The station patch logo was added to the side of the engine and looks great.

I. Standards and Resilience

Chief Cerovski shared:

- Training Division: the SSRA is in Week 4 of the fire section and Week 10 overall. Activity continues on the fire training ground. The primary focus the past two weeks has been ladders and hose management. The SSRA will get their first introduction to live fire next Friday. That will take place at Station 64.
- In concert with the discovery process of the ILA, the training division has been supporting Chief Patti and the team at Stations 64 and 61 with an evaluation of the training facility, helping to build some systems and structures, as well as helping with minor maintenance.
- There was a moderately serious accident and injury that happened with one of the recruits. As part of that process, the team at L&I can make an unannounced visit and ask for an audit of that process. They were satisfied with the work that the team has done. They also meet with the employee to determine if the member's version of events matches with LFD3's report. Everything has gone very smoothly so far and the report back from L&I is expected around the end of the month with their findings and any recommendations.
- A Training Division audit is wrapping up. Chief Cerovski started working with the training division back in October for a SWOT type analysis with the members of the organization and the division, compiling that data and providing some observations and recommendations for the membership.
- Community Risk Reduction: currently has completed 179 inspections since the beginning of the process of business safety inspections. This is a big number and places LFD3 on track for 210 inspections in the first quarter of 2026.
- Another major achievement is the project of providing fire investigations for all fires in the response area. LFD3 is working with other agencies in the county. At a meeting yesterday, all but one agency in the county was represented. The Thurston County Coroner's Office was there, as well as Thurston County Sheriff's Office. The deputy prosecutor and the chief prosecutor were there, as well. A designated deputy prosecutor was assigned for any potential arson case, which is a landmark move for the community. The deputy sheriff who was present has been assigned to any arson case.
- Safety and Compliance: the safety committee had its first meeting today. There is a goal of developing improved processes for confronting safety considerations and providing feedback that will have a better outcome in implementing changes.
- L&I is scheduled for visits in May to all facilities to check and verify that all of the right things are happening at all of the facilities.

- A district peer fitness lead trainer has been identified, Firefighter Jeff Beaulieu. He is a phenomenal individual who will bring forward good vision and direction for the peer fitness trainers.
- Continuing to review and revise exposure and accident reports; close to having that implemented in April to have a more streamlined process for reporting incidents.
- Commissioner Hetzler inquired, on the topic of Community Risk Reduction, how many businesses are in the City of Lacey. Chief Cerovski responded it has been a moving target, determining the actual number. The team did an analysis, pulling as many records from the Thurston County Assessor's Office and the City of Lacey and Thurston County as possible. The estimate is between 900 and 1300 businesses. The goal has been to complete 20 a week for a total of about 800 (subtracting out vacation and training time). Currently above that target for the year. There is a plan to have another inspector within the next year.

VII. OLD BUSINESS

None.

VIII. NEW BUSINESS

A. Draft 2025 Annual Report Review — Staff Presentation

Chief Kirkwood presented:

- An outline of the Annual Report was given:
  - It begins with a Reader's Guide.
  - Message from the Fire Chief.
  - Introduction (including The LFD3 Way, History of the District, and Strategic Plan 2023 – 2027, Organizational Structure.
  - 2025 Incident Response and Performance Data.
  - Budget and Funds Summary Overview (including 2025 Year End Financial Summary).
  - Department Summary (including Division Relationship and Administration Support, which is broken down into further subsections).
- Once the Annual Report has been approved by the board and any necessary edits have taken place, it will be posted on the webpage. It will be available in this format, but it can also be exported as a PDF.
- The commissioners are encouraged to read through the annual report and send in any comments or edits.
- Chris DeBell commented that if the goal is to approve the document at the workshop on the 28th, then edits should be sent in by next Wednesday. Alternatively, the approval of the document could take place at the next regularly scheduled meeting on April 2nd.

IX. ADMINISTRATIVE REPORT

A. District Monthly Financial Report Staff Presentation

Chief Kirkwood presented the Summarized Statement of Activities:

- General Fund 001: net excess of $5.6 million, which is about 14% of appropriations. The first round of revenue from property taxes will be received next month.
- Donation Fund 101: no activity; $16,000 remaining in the fund.
- Reserve Fund 102: net excess of $1.1 million.
- Equipment Repair and Replacement Fund 103: net excess of $763,000.
- General Fund Summary: net excess of $7.6 million (18% of total appropriations).
- Bond Fund 201: no activity; excess of $995.
- Bond 2017 Fund 202: net excess of $101,521.
- 2025 Bond Fund 203: no activity at all. Money will be transferred into this fund prior to the first required payment of interest, which will happen in June.
- Capital Projects Fund 301: net excess of $988,000.
- 2025 Capital Projects Fund 309: net excess of $5.8 million.
- Summarized Statement of Activities: total revenue at $21.6 million; total expenditures at $7.1 million, with an overall balance as of February of $14.5 million.
- Additional data was displayed with graphs and charts.

B. Chief Schmidt reported:

- There had previously been a question from a board member about FIFA being in the area. This is expected to have some impact on the community as the soccer matches start taking place in mid-June. About 750,000 international visitors are expected.
- There will be a Fan Zone in Olympia at the Port of Olympia. The City of Olympia, law enforcement, fire agencies, and other partner agencies are working together to create a plan. It is anticipated that there will be about 2,500 on the days when the Fan Zone is hosted. The Fan Zones will be family-friendly, with at least one giant screen where the games can be watched. There are not expected to be major crowd issues.
- The City of Lacey, City of Olympia, and City of Tumwater have all been included in meetings hosted by the Thurston County Chamber to plan for potential impacts of the World Cup.
- There has been an invitation from South Bay Fire District. Their board of commissioners is doing a workshop next Friday. They have asked for Chief Schmidt and the board chair and Local 2903 President Greene to attend. They are going to start discussing opportunities in the future and whether they want to consider looking at regionalization or mergers.
- Documents have been provided to the commissioners regarding a work group that got together last Friday, consisting of Commissioner Roberts and staff members, to review some of the documents

regarding station security, how members operate and engage with the public, restricted areas versus public areas, etc. Current procedures were reviewed. It was realized in the review that it would be appropriate going forward to create a directive for members to help take the procedures and give them real direction in how they should interact and how they can best follow safety procedures. To that end, a second document was created, a directive that will be shared with the members tomorrow. The other recommendation from the workgroup was to initiate conversation at the policy committee level to find out if an overarching policy should be considered.

- It was mentioned at that meeting that a community member who is known to the district had reached out after seeing events in the Station 34 parking lot with federal agents. Chief Schmidt engaged with that community member and shared that document review would be taking place. That individual may have an interest in Chief Schmidt and perhaps a board member communicating with some community members who want to know more about the policies and procedures and the directive that has been created.
- In this entire process, staff has been communicating with legal counsel and staying in touch with the State Chiefs for best practices.
- No board action is needed at this time. The commissioners are requested to please review the documents shared with them.
- Chief Schmidt and Chief Kirkwood were able to connect with an HOA group, McAllister Park, about a week ago and spoke a bit about some of the things going on in Lacey.
- There is a list of upcoming HOA meeting dates. Staff will be attending each of the meetings. The commissioners are welcome to look at the list and attend as well.

X. COMMISSIONER COMMENTS

Commissioner Kelling – great to hear the update from the Community Risk Reduction team. Welcome to Chief Carson. Will there be a discussion of the workshop agenda?

Chief Schmidt responded that a primary agenda item includes education and conversation around the bond and possibly the annual report. A draft agenda will be out on Monday.

Commissioner Roberts – welcome to Chief Carson. It is always amazing to hear about all of the things that are going on and going so well. Very excited about the dogs coming. Congratulations to everyone who made the climb; it was lovely to see it on social media.

Commissioner Gamble – welcome to Chief Carson. Also excited for the dogs. All of the reports this evening were great. The annual review looks very thorough.

Commissioner Kirkbride – it is exciting to hear all of the reports. This is a successful and dynamic organization, and the citizens should know what a great

job is being done on their behalf. There is a visitor tonight from the East Olympia board – welcome. East Olympia visitors are always welcome. The City District Liaison meetings are extremely valuable.

Commissioner Hetzler – regarding the meeting this morning with the City: although it is not finalized yet, they have made an offer on the original fire station property. It would be wonderful to have that property back again. It would be nice in the near future to have an update on Station 33.

XI. OTHER INFORMATION

A. Correspondence
None.

XII. HEARING OF THE PUBLIC / MEMBERS PRESENT

None.

XIII. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned as of 6:49 PM.

Workshop Meeting: March 28, 9:00 a.m.
Next Regular Meeting: April 2, 2026 – 5:30 p.m.
Available via remote meeting.

LIBERTY HETZLER (04/03/2026 10:53:10 PDT)
Chair

Vice Chair

Sylvia Roberts (04/03/2026 09:12:24 PDT)
Commissioner

Commissioner

Richard Kelling (04/03/2026 11:23:42 PDT)
Commissioner

ATTEST: District Secretary

03 19 2026 BoFC Meeting Minutes Final

Final Audit Report 2026-04-04

Created:	2026-04-03 (Pacific Daylight Time)
By:	Chris DeBell (cdebell@laceyfire.com)
Status:	Signed
Transaction ID:	CBJCHBCAABAAqm2a32ZxIj7FCzNaEJZRgU7Ncr3X_D0b

"03 19 2026 BoFC Meeting Minutes Final" History

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2026-04-03 - 9:04:31 AM PDT

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