

THURSTON COUNTY FIRE DISTRICT THREE

BOARD OF FIRE COMMISSIONERS

MINUTES OF THE MEETING

June 5th, 2025

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 Kirkbride Commissioner Gamble	Commissioner Roberts	Commissioner Hetzler

I. CALL TO ORDER

Commissioner Kirkbride 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 Kelling
Second: Commissioner Gamble
Carried: Unanimous

III. INTRODUCTION OF NEW PERSONNEL

Claire Fujita, Business Analyst

IV. HEARING OF THE PUBLIC /MEMBERS PRESENT

None.

V. APPROVAL OF THE CONSENT AGENDA

A. Draft minutes of the July 15th, 2025, meeting of the Board of Fire Commissioners.

B. Warrants (AP 6A 2025):

- General Fund 001 (Acct #6630) EFTs numbered 5585 through 5588, and checks numbered 24425 through 24436 for a total amount of \$38,777.31.

- Equipment Repair and Replacement Fund 103: EFT number 5589 and checks numbered 24437 through 24440 for a total amount of \$119,789.30.
- Capital Projects Fund 301: Check number 24441 for a total amount of \$6,043.14.

C. Payroll 5B-2025 in the amount of \$697,824.11.

MOTION: To approve the consent agenda as published.

Motion: Commissioner Gamble

Second: Commissioner Kelling

Carried: Unanimous

VI. COMMITTEE REPORTS

A. Thurston County Medic One

Commissioner Kirkbride reported from the May 22nd meeting:

- The main topic of the meeting was an update on the introduction of the use of suboxone by the three ALS agencies. That day, it had gone live with Olympia, followed by Tumwater, and then Lacey on the 26th. In the first week of use, there was a candidate who accepted the help of suboxone.
- In Microsoft Teams, there is an opportunity to use Reading Assistant AI to record the meetings. This is not allowed in any form at any time in Thurston County government, so this will not be used.
- In the last month, there have been several budget committee meetings (Commissioner Kirkbride is on the budget committee). At the next EMS Council meeting, the budget committee will present the budget for the 2026-2027 years. This will be up for action in July. It will be forwarded to the Board of County Commissioners for their series of actions and ultimately adoption in September.
- Commissioner Kirkbride represents the EMS Council on the West Region EMS Council. There was a meeting yesterday, with nothing significant to report. The next meeting is in September.
- The next EMS Council meeting is June 26th at 1:00 at Medic One.

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

Commissioner Gamble reported from the June 4th meeting:

- Lisa Goss was nominated as the 2024 employee of the year.
- Finances and expenditures in all departments are under budget and expected to remain that way through the rest of the year.
- Regarding TCERN: there is no change at JBLM. All agencies have submitted any change requests that are needed. They are planning on providing more secure terminals as they are going through the change requests.
- The phone system has a new project manager. They plan for the cutover in the first week of November.

- Staffing report: there are five individuals in the process of training.
- 911 calls: there was a slight increase in total incoming calls by 0.3%. There was a drop in nonemergent calls by 3% and outgoing calls increased by 1.5%. Total call volume dropped by 1.1%. There was discussion about asking for a breakdown on types of calls in the future when the report is given.
- 2024 Washington State crime report will be out in the next few weeks.
- New business: subcommittees were formed for the 2025 budget and labor negotiations.
- The next meeting will take place on July 2nd.

C. City/District Liaison

Chief Schmidt reported there was a meeting about a week and a half ago attended by Chief Schmidt and Commissioner Hetzler.

- The city explained that they are looking at some areas of annexation, some of which are in the South Bay area. There will be a report soon regarding what those areas are so that discussions can begin about how that might impact LFD3 borders and call volumes.
- They are continuing to look at the impacts that Quiemuth Village might have on the city.
- They gave an update on the historical naming for Franz Street, which was dedicated to Chief Brooks. A date is being determined for a dedication ceremony.
- The district proposed going to the city council to give the presentation on community risk reduction (more information on this will be given in the administrative report).

D. Thurston County Fire Commissioners Association

Commissioner Kelling reported from the most recent meeting:

- On the program was the director of OFD CARES. The CARES program is associated with Olympia Fire and is a referral-based system based on post-911 calls. The intent of the system is to address the overuse of the 911 system and connect people with community resources. Greater than 50% of the calls are people who are 55 years or older who are generally undersupported.
- This spurred some additional discussion about partnerships within the county. Commissioner Fournier is the representative for the Thurston County Fire Commissioners Association. He is very enthusiastic about partnerships across the county.
- There was also discussion about opioid use disorder and the county's opioid response plan.
- The annual meeting for the Washington Fire Commissioners Association is at the Tulalip Resort on October 22-25.

E. Thurston Regional Planning Council

Chief Cerovski reported from the most recent meeting:

- The Transportation Policy Board met on May 14th. They updated policy related to LOTT and the current activities for that program. They also discussed the high-capacity transportation policy statement. They will be bringing an updated policy statement to the June board meeting, which will take place on June 6th, for review and vote.
- They discussed the Bicycle Connectivity Strategy project briefing. Senior planner Paul Brewster emphasized that the BCS, the Bicycle Connectivity Strategy, is in alignment with the Regional Transportation Plan and the goal of improving bicycle options for the county.
- The agenda for the June 6th covers several items. They are working on an executive director recruitment and succession process. They have interim appointments for the executive director and they will be discussing the Regional Transportation Plan for adoption. They will be accepting public comment before they do that.

F. Community Outreach

Chief Schmidt shared:

- The Lacey Fun Fair took place on May 17th and 18th. LFD3 gave out 4,000 fire helmets and 4,000 badge stickers. There were four overtime on-duty crews both days. Executive staff and commissioners stopped in as well. It was a very successful event.
- On May 23rd, LFD3 participate in the Timberline High School girls' fastpitch state tournament send off. This is a fun activity, and the community seems to appreciate law enforcement and fire's involvement in it.
- On May 23rd, Station 31 had a tour for a special needs student group that came through.
- May 28th was North Thurston Public Schools Day of Champions. There was a competition event on the track.
- On May 29th, Seven Oaks Elementary had Military and First Responder Night, and duty crews were able to attend that.
- The weekend of June 7th, Nisqually PD is going to be at the Nisqually Reservation for National Night Out. The Nisqually Tribe does this event earlier than others. The Lacey Rotary Club Duck Dash takes place on the same day and duty crews will attend that event as well.
- There have been ten fittings for bike helmets. There were also two Senior Safe At Home assessments completed.

G. Capital Facilities and Equipment Activities

Chief Cerovski shared:

- The ISU unit has arrived. Adam Cummings, the chief vehicle mechanic at the VRF, was present on Tuesday and spoke very highly of the product, saying it was one of the finest pieces of equipment he has seen from Braun.
- Chief Frost mentioned that it will need to go back to Braun because they did not receive the front scene light for the vehicle in time, so it will be hauled back the third week in June for the light to be mounted. One of the logos will

also be relocated. Until then, the vehicle is being outfitted, set up with radios, etc.

- Chief Cerovski mentioned that the vehicle is similar in size to the length of the current ISU, but the way the vehicle is configured is slightly different, and a robust training plan will be used with the ISU operators to ensure they are comfortable with it.
- Work has been done to evaluate some software, and the decision has been made to move forward with it for the agency. The software is called Darkhorse. This company does data analytics and provides dashboards on the numbers and types of calls that are responded to, as well as the performance benchmarks related to things in the annual report. This will be a phenomenal enhancement to the organization.

VII. OLD BUSINESS

None.

VIII. NEW BUSINESS

A. Capital Metro Girls Fire Camp

Kelsey Benson

- This event takes place August 2nd and 3rd. This is a day camp (not overnight).
- The event was created in 2017. It was based off of Camp Blaze in North Bend at the state fire academy.
- The attendees have two full days of fire-related experience, learning about the PPE and gear, ladders, etc.
- The age range has changed from 14 – 18 years old to now 16 – 20 years old.
- Campers and volunteers are encouraged to apply before June 20th. More firefighter volunteers are needed.
- Commissioner Kirkbride inquired how many campers are anticipated. The maximum is 48 campers; there can be six crews of eight campers at the most. As of now, 34 campers have applied.

B. Board Handbook Draft

Staff Report

Chief Cerovski reported:

- The handbook has been shared with all of the commissioners, along with a three-page document summarizing the changes that have been made since the handbook was last shared.
- The document in its current state was shared with the commissioners. The changes and edits were reviewed.
- Commissioner Kirkbride asked for the calendar to include the Fire Commissioners Conference in October.
- The final draft for a last board review will probably be ready in July.

IX. ADMINISTRATIVE REPORT

A. Asset Management Review

Staff Report

Chief Cerovski reported:

- In review with the legal team, it was determined that it is not necessary to bring to the Board of Commissioners for approval all of the items that are due to be surplus. Moving forward, this will be more a report of things that are being surplus. There is a robust asset management policy that is in final review.
- Director Kirkwood and Chief Cerovski have been working on the asset management policy, which includes greater accountability for the assets being brought into the system.

Chief Patti reported:

- There has been an increase in call volume, as well as a higher volume of more critical calls than in the past.
- In May, there were more than 1500 calls. There have been 40 CPR calls in the last two weeks. In 19 of those calls, LFD3 crews performed CPR. Eight of those were opioid overdoses, all of which had Narcan and were awake prior to LFD3 arrival.
- There has also been an increase in pediatric calls. In the last two months, there have been six pediatric-related CPR calls. Four of those calls did not have successful outcomes.
- In the last two weeks, there have been ten working structure fires. One of these was a fatality fire, which is still under investigation. There was a situation in which four people were trapped on a second-floor balcony with a fire in a stairwell. Crews were able to respond quickly and get all of the individuals out safely.
- Crews are experiencing this increased volume with increased mental, physical, and emotional stress. Every effort is being made to give care to the members and provide support to them. There are robust in-house mental health programs in place. The Support Services crew has been very helpful as well, both on the scene of these calls as well as at the first station with the crews.

Chief Schmidt reported:

- Support Services also serves the administrative team. There was a mental health awareness month in May.
- The Community Risk Reduction Team presented at the Mark Noble facility. The opportunity was available to capture the recruits doing multi-company operations. Several key members from the City of Lacey were able to watch and see the impact of a ladder truck operating with the outriggers out. This will help everyone realize what is involved when there are bigger scenes to respond to.
- Executive staff started crew updates this week. Every quarter, there is a Zoom meeting to provide updates.

- Chief Patti is working with the City of Lacey on the 3rd of July event. On June 12th, the PD is doing a tabletop exercise and invited a bunch of key leadership teams to come in to see the layout of the big July event and ensure that everyone is on the same page for communication and incident command.
- The multimedia specialist interviews have been completed. There were about 12 people brought in for panel interviews. The top four candidates then interviewed with Chief Schmidt and Chief Hulst. One candidate stood out and a preliminary offer has been made.
- The HR benefits coordinator position was awarded to Heather Patti. Her position out front will now need to be replaced (admin specialist). So far there have been 80 applicants.
- Chief Cerovski and Chief Schmidt, accompanied by several staff members, gave a presentation to the city council on Tuesday evening. They presented the body of work that Chief Roberts and Chief Cerovski have been working on and talk about what Community Risk Reduction has been doing for the community, as well as what it looks like to do business inspections. (Chief Roberts was ill and unable to attend.) There was great feedback from the council members about how this process would positively influence insurance rates. They appreciated the comments about what WSRB might consider with this type of program. The ask is not for a new intergovernmental agreement; the original one from 2009 can stand. Rather, the ask is for an MOU allowing charging for inspections. They asked for more information and would like to invite the team back out for a resolution.

X. COMMISSIONER COMMENTS

Commissioner Kelling – thanks to Chief Patti for the update on the recent calls. Thanks to the crews for all of their hard work. Thanks for the work on the handbook; it is much appreciated. Of note, an article in The Olympian reported that Olympia Fire is now charging a fee for transportation services because of some of their budget shortages.

Commissioner Gamble – thanks to Chief Cerovski for all the work on the handbook. It is refreshing to hear how mental health support has been normalized for the members after these challenging calls. It is a refreshing change to the environment.

Commissioner Roberts – thanks to Chief Patti and Chief Cerovski for the reports and all the hard work. Thanks to Kelsey for all of her work. Looking forward to meeting Claire in person. Thanks to Commissioner Gamble for attending TCOMM yesterday.

Commissioner Kirkbride – continually impressed with the organization. Adding Support Services has been wonderful and they are doing a phenomenal job. Thanks to the entire team for all of their hard work.

XI. OTHER INFORMATION

A. Correspondence

Chief Schmidt reported:

- A private message was sent from a citizen. She shared that she and her son were in their personal vehicle stopped at a stop light, and her son was waving at firefighters in Engine 31. The firefighters went above and beyond by honking the horn and rolling down the windows, and her son was thrilled. Chief Hulst was able to respond to the message and it was a very nice interaction.

XII. HEARING OF THE PUBLIC / MEMBERS PRESENT

There was a comment from Jonathan Clemens, district president and volunteer chief officer at South Bay Fire. On May 10th, there was a multi-chaplain incident. A driver was hit in a road rage incident and got out of the car and passed away, with his children present. Director Chris Gorman came and was exceptionally helpful. He knew some of the people involved and was a very welcome and calming presence. Thanks to the commissioners for their participation, along with various Lacey Fire members, in the May 29th South Bay career lieutenant promotion board. The amount of work that Lacey Fire District 3 does in supporting adjacent districts is exceptional.

XIII. EXECUTIVE SESSION

A. In accordance with RCW 42.30.110(1)(b) to consider selection of a site or the acquisition of real estate.

The executive session was scheduled for ten minutes. Both deputy chiefs and Director Kirkwood were present for the executive session. The session began at 7:07 p.m.

The executive session ended 7:17 p.m.

MOTION: To authorize Chief Schmidt to execute the real estate purchase and sale agreement with Econet Inc and pay \$250,000 in earnest money payment as provided by the purchase and sale agreement.

Motion: Commissioner Kelling

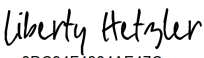
Second: Commissioner Gamble

Carried: Unanimous

XIV. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned as of 7:20 PM.

*Next Regular Meeting: June 19th, 2025 – 5:30 p.m.
Available via remote meeting.*

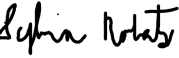
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Chair

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