

THURSTON COUNTY FIRE DISTRICT THREE**BOARD OF FIRE COMMISSIONERS****MINUTES OF THE MEETING****July 2nd, 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 Kirkbride Commissioner Roberts Commissioner Gamble Commissioner Kelling	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 Gamble

Second: Commissioner Roberts

Carried: Unanimous

III. HEARING OF THE PUBLIC / MEMBERS PRESENT

None.

IV. APPROVAL OF THE CONSENT AGENDA

A. Draft minutes of the June 18, 2025, meeting of the Board of Fire Commissioners.

B. Warrants (AP 7A 2025):

- General Fund 001 (Acct #6630) EFTs numbered 5598 through 5599; checks numbered 24472 through 24475 for a total amount of \$55,783.94.
- Equipment Repair and Replacement Fund 103: Checks numbered 24476 through 24477 for a total amount of \$361,409.31.

- 2017B Capital Improvement Project Fund 307: Checks numbered 34478 through 24480 for a total of \$42,471.63.

C. Payroll 6B-2025 in the amount of \$696,677.21.

MOTION: To approve the consent agenda as published.

Motion: Commissioner Kelling

Second: Commissioner Gamble

Carried: Unanimous

V. COMMITTEE REPORTS

A. Thurston County Medic One

Commissioner Kirkbride reported from the most recent meeting:

- The suboxone plan went live a few weeks ago. Within the first week, there was one person that accepted the opportunity, and there have been a few more since. This is a pilot program. Seattle and Spokane are both in pilots as well.
- Because Narcan is handed out free from the health department and other sources into the community, there is not a good way to monitor its use.
- There was conversation about some type of marketing to get the word out to those on the streets about the suboxone opportunity. As of now it is usually shared with people when emergency services respond to an overdose.
- The budget committee has been meeting since February to work on the budget for 2026/2027. Part of the ongoing discussions have been about reorganization of Medic One. This plan was presented to the council members last week for their overview. Formal approval will be sought in August or September. This is the first major step of an agency – in this case, Medic One – to start to implement the Comprehensive Plan that was adopted several months ago to reflect the changes and philosophy of how services are delivered.
- There will be a new division between delivery of services and the teams that work to support the delivery of services. This requires some new people and some restructuring. One of the main changes is in education. Previously, the person in charge of education was an ALS coordinator or BLS coordinator. Now, the intention is to fill those roles with an educator. There is a focus on how to improve education. There will be small changes made in 2026 with more major changes coming in 2027 and 2028.
- Regarding the budget, there is a bit of a problem because Thurston County has not closed out 2024 yet and it is unknown how much money will be carried forward. A 2026/2027 budget has to be submitted to the county by August 4th, which will be challenging given the lack of information about last year.
- At the July meeting, there will be an opportunity to adopt the budget.

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

Commissioner Roberts reported that the TCOMM meeting scheduled for today was cancelled due to lack of agenda items. The next meeting is scheduled for August 6th.

C. City/District Liaison

Chief Schmidt reported that the next meeting will take place on July 17.

D. Thurston County Fire Commissioners Association

Commissioner Kelling reported that the next meeting will be on July 15th. Commissioner Gamble will be attending in Commissioner Kelling's absence.

E. Thurston Regional Planning Council

Chief Cerovski reported that the next meeting is on July 11th.

F. Community Outreach

Chief Schmidt shared:

- There has been a great deal of preparation for the July 3rd event. Chief Patti shared more about this:
 - There will be crews on a couple of UTVs within the crowd to provide for any medical needs.
 - The Smokehouse will be up for the kids with an outreach team staffing that.
 - The event will be worked in joint command with law enforcement. There have been meetings with them for planning and communication.
 - LFD3 will be on standby in the evening, with an influx of more people into the park expected. There will also be crews on the outside watching some dry fields that have been identified to ensure that no spot fires get started.
- Chief Schmidt resumed sharing about community outreach: there have been multiple bike helmet fittings, as well as four car seat installations.
- Local 2903 has done some big events in the last week. Their golf charity event was this past Saturday. Chief Patti and Chief Schmidt were able to attend the tee-off.
- Members of 2903 used the antique rig and joined the pride parade in Olympia on Sunday. There was great attendance there.

G. Capital Facilities and Equipment Activities

Chief Cerovski shared:

- The ISU is nearing completion and is almost ready to go into service. There is a target date of July 14 for a push ceremony to honor that unit going into service; however, that will be delayed a bit; tentatively

rescheduled as of now for August 1st. That service will be at the TEC in the afternoon.

- Work is underway to replace the two personal watercraft (jet skis) at Station 31. The logistics team has done a fantastic job working with the water rescue crew to identify the best watercraft vehicle to replace them with. Two new watercraft have been received; they are much larger, with a more stable platform for providing rescue, whether in a lake or in rough waters or in the Sound.
- A pack washer has been added (through a grant) and that process has been completed. The unit has been installed and all of the retrofits have been done with plumbing and electrical and water systems at Station 31. There are now two pack washers in the system, one at the TEC and one at Station 31.
- A grant was applied for through the Department of Commerce for an EV charging station. That process has been a little bit arduous. A vendor has been identified, and a contract has been signed. That vendor is currently ordering equipment. There will be two charging capability vehicle bays at Station 31, 33, 34, and 35. In the future, Station 32 will probably be added. These are workforce-only charging stations.
- The Vehicle Repair Facility is nearing total completion.

VI. OLD BUSINESS

A. Commissioners Handbook Follow Up

Staff Report

Chief Cerovski reported:

- There are two section improvements: one related to the fire chief's annual review. There will also be an appendix that includes the actual review document, the tool that is used for the review.
- Another area of improvement is the ability to streamline the pay process for the commissioners' body of work.
- Chief Cerovski encouraged the commissioners to email in their feedback so that any suggested changes and updates can be made. The document itself can also be used to make comments, with suggested edits inserted into the document.

VII. NEW BUSINESS

A. No items.

VIII. ADMINISTRATIVE REPORT

Chief Schmidt reported:

- There will be a lengthy administrative report this evening. Director Toy has an update from HR on hiring and promotional processes:
 - On July 1st, a new hire started, the multimedia relations specialist, Tiffany.
 - Two members moved into different roles: Kevin Davenport is the new CR&R lieutenant and fire inspector. Heather Patti has moved

- into an HR benefits specialist position. Her current role needs to be backfilled before she can fully transition into this new role.
 - There has been active recruitment to replace Heather with an administrative specialist. 102 people applied for that role. 17 people were brought in for interviews, and one offer was made, which was accepted. That individual will be starting in August.
 - In the last week, there have been lateral interviews. 21 people applied. 12 were brought in for interviews, and offers were made to 6 individuals. They have all accepted and are working on their conditional elements.
- Chief Schmidt continued: Director Kirkwood has a program that he is going to present, a new technology that will be tried out to support finance and tie in with the data analysis that Chief Cerovski has been working on. Director Kirkwood reported:
 - While reviewing how the budget is presented, changes have been contemplated regarding how the budget is published on the webpage.
 - Work is underway with a group called ClearGov to update the budget documents to make it look more professional. Director Kirkwood presented an example from Central Kitsap (they use ClearGov for their budget book).
 - The intent is to provide a more professional and polished budget book which would be customizable and allow for multiple different versions to be downloaded, so a user could download it to PDF if desired, or it could be easily accessed via phone. It is ADA compliant as well.
 - ClearGov has agreed to provide a prorated rate for this year, given that it is midyear.
 - Commissioner Kirkbride inquired if there is also an avenue for the public to provide feedback when they review the budget. Director Kirkwood responded that he does not know but will follow up on the question.
 - Chief Schmidt mentioned knowing the chief at Central Kitsap, who has said that it has been a huge asset to them, particularly for the finance department. It combines some of the work that Chris DeBell puts together, and maintaining the document throughout the year will make the preparation of the annual summary smoother. Gig Harbor Fire uses the same program, but they also use Tyler, which is the program used by LFD for HR, finance, etc. There will be a meeting with Gig Harbor next week to learn more about how ClearGov and Tyler pair together.
 - Director Kirkwood also reported that ClearGov has offered a 90-day trial period.
- Chief Schmidt resumed her report, with an opportunity for Chief Cerovski to provide an update on the property purchase. Chief Cerovski reported:

- LFD3 is in the active process of the due diligence element of the purchasing process.
- LFD3 has engaged with Rice Fergus Miller to be the agent to navigate that process. There are a number of surveys required in order to ensure that the property will fit the requirements of LFD3.
- Thus far, the progress being made and the speed of the process is encouraging. It looks as though LFD3 will be well within the timeframe allocated in the contract to complete due diligence and then proceed with closing.
- There is also a lease effort underway for the warehouse. A letter of intent has been completed, signed by both the property owner, the current lessee, and LFD3, for a sublease operation between the current lessee and LFD3. The lease agreement is being crafted based on the terms that are outlined in the LOI. When this is done, there will be an opportunity to review it with the legal team and proceed with signatures. LFD3 will then be allowed to occupy.
- Work has been done with the finance team to verify that what is faced for costs on that lease are within the budget. For both this year, next year, and the year beyond, this is within the budget constraints.
- Chief Cerovski has done work with Chief Schmidt, consulting regarding the authority of the board as bestowed upon the CEO or the chief of the department. She is authorized by virtue of a resolution that was signed in 2016 that authorizes her to sign as long as she is doing things that are consistent with the authority of the budget, etc. Therefore, staff will not be coming to the body for approval of that lease. It will simply be signed by the fire chief.
- Commissioner Kirkbride asked if it is correct that the current tenant is leaving furniture and storage shelving, etc. Chief Cerovski reported that this is correct. The current lessee has two years left on the lease. LFD3 will have a lease for the balance of the two years, and then there are assurances from the owner that the new lease, beginning in year 3, will be limited to only a 3% increase consistent with the current lease.
- Chief Schmidt gave the floor to Director Kirkwood for an update on the bond:
 - The process is now complete. The money has been deposited into the account. The deposit and the proceeds were confirmed by Thurston County on Friday, June 27th.
 - The total debt is \$14.85 million at a rate of 4.85%. The total proceeds that were deposited into the district bank account amounted to \$14,001,200 – the difference being the debt issuance costs that were paid to D.A. Davidson in the amount of \$32,000 and Foster Garvey in the amount of \$29,300, and the bank's legal counsel at \$15,000, and the bank's set-up fee of \$7,500.

- The county has helped LFD3 create two new funds for the bond proceeds, as well as the debt service to be paid on the bond debt. There will be a new debt service fund in the 200 series and a new capital projects fund that will be used to monitor all the activity related to the bond proceeds for the purchase of land and other planned renovations.
- Debt service for the bond will begin this coming December. The first two payments will be in December of 2025 and June of 2026. Those will be interest-only payments. The first principle payment will be paid in December of 2026. The average annual debt service will be \$1.1 million. The last maturity date on this bond will be on December 1st, 2044.
- Chief Schmidt resumed:
 - Staff is preparing responses to questions that were received from the last meeting. Staff is still gathering documents from previous projects that the district has worked on (change orders, etc.). There is expected to be a large packet of information to share. If it is of interest to the board, documents can be provided for review and comment.
 - Alternatively, if a work session is of interest to talk about past experiences and how to move forward, that would be an option as well.
 - If there are any board members specifically interested in projects and how they have been managed, a one on one with Chief Cerovski would also be an option.
 - As a normal part of the budget update: as projects begin moving forward with the new bond money, Director Kirkwood and Chief Schmidt will be sure to report on the accomplishment of bigger projects and the allocation of funds from that bond. The board will be advised and kept up to date on how the money is being applied, and a year end review will also be provided.
 - The South Sound Recruit Academy graduation took place across the street on the 21st. There was an incredible turnout. The event was very well done.

IX. COMMISSIONER COMMENTS

Commissioner Hetzler – much appreciation for all the information presented tonight and how well it was shared.

Commissioner Gamble – reiteration of appreciation to everyone for their reports. It is exciting to see so many changes happening and how well everything is going.

Commissioner Roberts – the graduation was wonderful, as always. It is wonderful to see all of the graduates and their families. Much appreciation for everyone's hard work.

Commissioner Kelling – Chief Patti, thanks for the overview on the event planning for tomorrow. Are there any big changes this year compared to previous years?

Chief Schmidt responded: the Lacey PD hosted a tabletop exercise previous to the event, which was helpful for the LFD3 staff, especially command staff. They will be doing a briefing early tomorrow. Chief Patti arranged with Tumwater to borrow their ORV to help with mobility in the crowd. In return LFD3 will be sharing their ORV the following day. This has been one of the best years as far as members being able to come in and staff, so Chief Patti has been able to staff all of the rigs. This is the second or third year to have a whole group of probationary firefighters, who have agreed to come and do the public side of things. Chief Patti also went above and beyond with the IAP. Chris DeBell's team will be there early, and the new multimedia person, Tiffany, will be participating as well.

Commissioner Kelling resumed: sorry to have missed the South Sound Recruit Academy graduation. Thanks to Chief Cerovski for the work on the fire commissioner handbook. It is a huge body of work, and it is very difficult to generate such a comprehensive document. It will be a great document for the entire district moving forward.

A question: who maintains the jet skis?

Chief Cerovski responded: the VRF facility. Some watercraft items will be maintained via local businesses that specialize in watercraft.

Commissioner Kelling asked for the clarification if these are always deployed in pairs, rather than singles. Chief Cerovski verified that this is correct.

Commissioner Kelling asked for the parcel number or map of proposed Station 36.

Chief Schmidt responded that the parcel number and address will be provided.

Commissioner Kelling requested to be excused for the July 17th meeting. There may be a possibility of participating virtually but only if required.

Commissioner Kirkbride – the Community Dispatch was exceptionally educational and informative. Thank you very much for the hard work. ClearGov sounds like a great idea for communicating important information. The reports being given in the meetings are excellent, and this will be the next evolution forward. The entire staff is taking LFD3 forward to the next level, which is very exciting.

Chief Schmidt responded by mentioning that Chief Cerovski had his hip replaced less than two weeks ago. He took one day off and insisted on continuing to work from home. The level of effort he puts forward should be acknowledged and appreciated.

X. CORRESPONDENCE

None.

XI. HEARING OF THE PUBLIC / MEMBERS PRESENT

None.

XII. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned as of 6:28 PM.

***Next Regular Meeting: July 17, 2025– 5:30 p.m.
Available via remote meeting.***

Signed by:

Liberty Hetzler

7/18/2025

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Chair

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John M.

7/19/2025

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Vice Chair

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Melissa Gamble

7/20/2025

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Commissioner

Signed by:

Alyssa Roberts

7/19/2025

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Commissioner

Signed by:

Michael Cerowski

7/22/2025

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ATTEST: District Secretary

Commissioner