THURSTON COUNTY FIRE DISTRICT THREE

BOARD OF FIRE COMMISSIONERS

MINUTES OF THE MEETING

July 2, 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 Hetzler Commissioner Kirkbride Commissioner Gamble Commissioner Roberts		Commissioner Kelling

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 Kirkbride
Second: Commissioner Gamble
Carried: Unanimous

IV. MEMBER RECOGNITION

Years of Service with LFD3: Captain Cherie Leyva – 25 years; Deputy Chief Michael Ceovski – 5 years; Executive Assistant Chris DeBell – 10 years

V. APPROVAL OF THE CONSENT AGENDA

A. Draft minutes of the June 18, 2026, Board of Fire Commissioners meeting.
B. Warrants (AP 7A 2026):

- General Fund 001 (Acct #6630); EFTs numbered 5815 through 5818; checks numbered 24947 through 24952 for a total amount of $43,779.15.
- Equipment Repair and Replacement Fund 103: Checks numbered 24953 through 24954 for a total amount of $39,579.29.

C. Payroll 6B-2026 in the amount of $804,940.58.

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

VI. COMMITTEE REPORTS

A. Thurston County Medic One
Commissioner Kirkbride reported from the June 25 meeting:

- As previously reported, there were some recent changes to the bylaws. These were officially adopted. The principal change is regarding a conflict of interest. There is no particular identification of any issues that caused this.
- Special projects applications were reviewed. There were not enough requests this year for all the funding that was available. They will reopen the opportunity.
- There were two major presentations. One was a summary of Thurston County EMS responses. The other dealt with ALS responses. Commissioner Kirkbride is able to provide copies of the presentations.
- The EMS Negotiation Committee has been appointed and will start having conversations.

B. Thurston 9-1-1 Communications (TCOMM)
Commissioner Roberts reported from the July 1st meeting:

- Regarding finances: expenditures are lower than budgeted. Tax revenue for May was up 6.43%.
- Wendy gave the last report on TCERN. The contract was completed on June 30th. This has been a nine-year project.
- The new phone system still has some small things that are being worked on.
- Staffing is going well. The new academy will start next Monday. There are seven new employees being added.
- TCOMM is utilizing a new scheduling system that can be accessed via phone.
- They are upstaffing for the 3rd and 4th of July.
- There will be no August meeting. The next meeting will take place on September 2nd.

C. City/District Liaison
No report; the next meeting will take place on July 16th.

D. LFD3/EOFD ILA Committee
No report; the next meeting will take place on July 30th.

E. Thurston County Fire Commissioners Association
No report; the next meeting will take place on July 21st.

F. Thurston Regional Planning Council
On behalf of Commissioner Kelling, Chief Cerovski reported that the next meeting will take place on July 10th. Chief Cerovski will be attending.

G. Community Outreach
Chris DeBell reported:

- Last weekend, Engine 32 visited the Nisqually Tribes Fish and Wildlife Department's Fishing Day.
- Last weekend, a group of members volunteered to support the Capital City Pride Festival at an outreach booth. The Seagrave antique participated in the parade on Sunday.
- Every week, community members continue to be assisted with car seats and bicycle helmets. A shoutout is owed to Safe Kids of Thurston County. They continue to be a great partner by supplying seats for those in need. They recently stepped up to replenish our supply of bicycle helmets.
- Everyone is ready for the Fireworks Spectacular at Rainier Vista. This will include the inflatable firehouse. This is one of the biggest events in Lacey; last year there were around 40,000 people.
- Tiffiny put together a great social media report. There continue to be excellent performance numbers in social media activity. Benchmarks are being tracked; this is a comparison of LFD's content to comparable agencies (government agencies including East Pierce Fire and Rescue, Thurston County, Pierce County Sherriff's Office, and Thurston County Emergency Management). The bar chart shows LFD3's performance on social media compared to these other agencies. The data shows that LFD3 is outperforming similar government agencies, with 18,228 Facebook followers, 111 new followers last month, and over 2,000 content interactions. Further analytics shows that content is going out to people who are not currently following LFD3; content interactions are up; conversations are up 200%.

H. Operations:
Chief Carson shared:

- There was one significant incident recently occurring on Sunday, June 21st, at Pattison Lake. Crews responded to a residential structure fire in the area. This was a large and complex event. One home was a total loss. The other one sustained significant fire damage. There were no serious injuries, either to the home occupants or the LFD3 members who responded.
- LFD3 will be participating in the July 3rd event. A reserve engine will be staffed, as well as a brush truck and two ORVs.
- There will be upstaffing on the 4th of July as well.

- There have been three retirements. A very nice ceremony was held for those members.
- Chief Cerovski has been using Dark Horse to dig up data comparing call volume this year to 2025. This year is very slightly behind 2025 with 65 fewer calls compared to last year at this time.
- Commissioner Kirkbride inquired as to the cause of the large fire. Chief Patti shared that it is believed to have been a cooking-related fire, possibly a barbecue left on the deck.

I. Logistics

Chief Patti reported:

- Now that all the big apparatus are in service and the L&I work is done, crews are getting back to work tickets and taking care of little items that have been postponed.
- Now looking into the smaller apparatus. There have been changeouts of some of the AC cars. The biggest difference is from the traditional maroon cars to the little bright red SUVs. This is all part of the Enterprise lease program. Chief Frost has been putting a lot of work into planning and orchestrating this. This year the assistant chief vehicles are being changed; next year will be the executive staff vehicles.

J. Standards and Resilience

Chief Cerovski reported:

- The SSRA 2026 Academy is complete. Those staff members are now on shift.
- Working now on structured skill academies including truck academies, pump academies, and training for incumbents. Work is also underway on development of a training steering committee to help with collaboration with the operational members.
- Community Risk Reduction: the draft submittal of comments is completed for the draft county road standard. The focus is on the intentional effort of adopting Appendix D as part of their road standard; this will help LFD3 with making sure that there is good access and egress compatibility for apparatus.
- RSVP information has already been sent out for stakeholders for the July 15th Insurance Symposium. Questions and discussion elements have been established for panel members.
- Continuing work on educating the community on the inspection program and how the invoicing and billing will begin in Q4.
- A successful investigation training program was put on about a month ago. This will hopefully be repeated in 2027.
- Safety and compliance: working on an after-action review program to collaborate with Operations to better provide data analysis on incidents in order to recognize areas for improvement.
- The first meeting with Turner Townsend Heery took place for the request for qualifications process moving into a contract agreement for them to play the role of Owners Representative.

VII. OLD BUSINESS

A. Bond Updates

Chief Schmidt reported:

- For community outreach, the video series launched last week. There has been a normal amount of traffic so far. The second one is planned to launch within the next few days.
- Chief Schmidt has been engaged one on one with one of the city council members who was asking for more information about the bond. Those discussions have gone very well. Another council member has reached out and asked for time for further discussions.
- The resolution has been signed. Staff has that ready, as well as the ballot title and explanatory statement. There has already been an ask for For and Against statements. There are two submittals already for For statements. Everything needs to be submitted by August 4th.
- Regarding the Community Advisory Committee – that group will be getting back together in August.
- The Communications team has been getting ready for the mailers.
- For visibility in the community, there has been consideration of placing signage at the property in Britton Parkway.

B. Merger Discussion Updates

Chief Schmidt reported:

- When first starting the merger conversations, there was one large group including leadership, labor leaders, elected officials, and administrative members. That first meeting went very well. These have been broken down into smaller committees including the labor groups getting together with administrative leadership. There have also been labor efforts without leadership there. Another group that has formed is the administrative committee.
- The large group will get back together in mid to late August. This is delayed from the original timeline, but it will give more time for preparation.

VIII. NEW BUSINESS

None.

IX. ADMINISTRATIVE REPORT

Chief Schmidt reported:

- The Healthcare Committee met again this week. This committee brings together groups from the labor reps as well as from the HR team, Finance, and a couple of chief officer positions. Last fall, there was a rate increase of 15% for the WFCA program. At that time, there were discussions about what that increase would look like and whether or not there would be a need to look at the labor group. The commissioners recommended

that as an agency and a district, that cost be absorbed for the year. The goal of the committee is to look into what other healthcare options might be out there. At the recent meeting, a WFCA representative was invited. She gave a fantastic presentation walking through the rates and providing information and education about the program overall. She also spoke about the telehealth option. The entire program is overseen by a board comprised of fire commissioners from all over the state. The program rate history was shared, and Chief Schmidt presented it to the commissioners. The entire PowerPoint will be forwarded to the commissioners. The speaker also mentioned that the board is comprised of commissioners from all over the state, and they have one vacancy. There is a plan for another group to come in and speak to the committee in late August or early September.

- As mentioned at the last meeting, there was a lawsuit about the manufacturing companies. Chief Schmidt has reached out to the firm that is doing the class action lawsuit, and there has been a struggle connecting with them. LFD3's law firm reached out with the same information to make sure everyone was aware of this lawsuit. The current goal is to determine whether it is more appropriate to move forward working with LFD3's current law firm versus going directly to the firm managing this as a national level.

X. COMMISSIONER COMMENTS

Commissioner Roberts – as always, the reports are very helpful and much appreciated. The telehealth option available through WFCA is very helpful. The golf tournament was wonderful; very well put together. Hoping for a very quiet 4th of July.

Commissioner Gamble – congratulations to all the members who were recognized this evening. The longevity of members says a lot about the environment of this organization. Happy 4th of July.

Commissioner Kirkbride – thank you and congratulations to those who have spent a lot of time with this organization; it is very much appreciated. Hoping that everybody enjoys the celebration on the 4th of July.

Commissioner Hetzler – the retirement ceremonies were very special. All three of those people gave a year notice, which must have been helpful to everyone in planning how to move forward. Chief Schmidt confirmed that it was indeed very helpful and made the transitions easier.

XI. OTHER INFORMATION

A. Correspondence
Chief Schmidt reported:

- A very nice thank you card was received from T-COMM in response to Lacey Fire sending a card and a bunch of succulents for Public Safety Telecommuters Week in April.

- There was a communication from a visitor from New York State. She wrote a letter detailing the help she received from Firefighters Weaver and Wagner when she passed out from the heat during a soccer game. She also sent a donation of $1,000 for the Donation Fund.

XII. HEARING OF THE PUBLIC / MEMBERS PRESENT

None.

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 began at 6:27 and was planned for 20 minutes.

The executive session concluded at 7:02 after a ten-minute extension and an additional five-minute extension. No action was taken.

XIV. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned as of 7:30 PM.

Next Regular Meeting: July 16, 2026 – 5:30 p.m.
Available via remote meeting.

Liberty Hetzler (07/30/2026 15:23:07 PDT)
Chair

Vice Chair

Melissa Gamble (07/24/2026 12:49:32 PDT)
Commissioner

Commissioner

Richard Kelling (07/24/2026 19:32:24 PDT)
Commissioner

ATTEST: District Secretary

07 02 26 BoFC Meeting Minutes Final

Final Audit Report 2026-07-30

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2026-07-24 - 12:49:30 PM PDT

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