

THURSTON COUNTY FIRE DISTRICT THREE

BOARD OF FIRE COMMISSIONERS

MINUTES OF THE MEETING

July 6, 2023

Commissioner Kirkbride
Commissioner Hetzler
Commissioner Kelling
Commissioner Roberts

The meeting was held in person with limited attendance and is open to the public via the Zoom meeting platform. The meeting is being recorded.

I. CALL TO ORDER

Chair Roberts called the meeting to order at 5:30 PM, followed with a salute to our Nation's Flag. Commissioner Gamble was excused.

II. APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA

MOTION: To approve the agenda as published.

MOTION: To approve the agenda as amended.

Motion: Commissioner Hetzler
Second: Commissioner Kirkbride
Carried: Unanimous

III. HEARING OF THE PUBLIC /MEMBERS PRESENT

None.

IV. SWEARING IN CEREMONY FOR NEW MEMBERS

V. APPROVAL OF THE CONSENT AGENDA

A. Draft minutes of the July 15th, 2023, meeting of the Board of Fire Commissioners.

B. Draft minutes of the June 29th, 2023, special meeting of the Board of Fire Commissioners.

C. Warrants:

- General Fund 001 (Acct #6630) EFTs numbered 5213 through 5214; checks numbered 23582 through 23598 for a total amount of \$61,903,75.
- 2017B Capital Projects Fund 307 EFTs number 5215; and checks numbered 23599 through 23600 for a total amount of \$10,571.00.

D. Payroll 6B in the amount of \$564,627.82.

MOTION: To approve the consent agenda as published.

Motion: Commissioner Kelling

Second: Commissioner Hetzler

Carried: Unanimous

VI. COMMITTEE REPORTS

A. Thurston County Medic One

Commissioner Kirkbride reported from the most recent meeting:

- The meeting focused on the introduction to EMS Council members of the proposed 2024-2025 budget that the budget committee has developed and presented. Action will be required at the July 19th meeting so that it can be to the county by early August.
- There are some innovative ideas to spread out the money to use available funds without needing to return to the voters in the next several years.
- The budget includes Medic 8, buying a facility, the rig, and then staff it and determine where it goes.
- On July 7th at 1:00 there will be a Zoom meeting for questions and answers.
- In 2018 and 2019, the EMS Council put together a committee to develop a 20-year comprehensive plan. That plan was to be updated every 5 years. It was tentatively adopted in January of 2020 for taking to the stakeholders to review to get feedback for final adoption and then sent to the Board of County Commissioners. However, that did not take place due to the pandemic. Since then, the committee has reorganized with some new members. The committee will be working on updating the plan for presentation in the fall.

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

Commissioner Roberts reported from the June meeting:

- Sales tax was slightly down, but it is still 4.5% over last year.
- TCERN is still an ongoing project. Still waiting for clearance for the DuPont site.

- TCOMM is anticipated to be fully staffed for the first time in December of this year.
- About a year and a half ago, TCOMM went over to a new phone system. There was a very high volume on July 4th, and there were increased wait times, but no calls were dropped.
- New business: the generator is on its way. It was within the budget approved for \$125k. The actual cost was \$245k.
- TCOMM is initiating budget committee meetings on August 28th. Commissioner Roberts will be on the budget committee.

C. City/District Liaison

Chief Brooks reported:

- Proposed dates for July and August, and still waiting to hear back from staff.

D. Thurston County Fire Commissioners Association

Commissioner Kelling reported from the June 20th meeting:

- The program was supported by the medical service officer from North Mason RFA. He gave a talk on their initiative that they started in January of this year, Mobile Integrated Health. They got funding through an interlocal agreement with the hospital district. This is to be a three-phased mobile health response intended to reduce call volume and reduce the frequent callers. They have approval for 1 PA who is helping to coordinate the different resources based on the types of calls. They hope to add another PA and provide additional care in the future. They have seen reduced call volume by as much as 40%, with only 5 months of data thus far.
- The picnic is in August. It may take place on the standing meeting night, which would be August 15th at Lake Lawrence.

E. Thurston Regional Planning Council –

Commissioner Roberts reported from the June 2nd meeting:

- Four main topics: allocation of federal carbon reduction program, transit safety performance, mobility update, and Martin Way corridor study update, all of which there was no action on. There were presentations on each of these topics.
- There was a discussion about potential College Street improvements and a potential roundabout on Martin Way that would have an offway for intercity transit to get out of the middle of the roundabout. There will be more information coming this month.

- The rural transit safety performance measures is a standard thing where they have targets that they allocate every year. They discussed bringing them back at the next meeting for action.
- Rural mobility: the primary discussion was 26th Avenue and Sleater Kinney and some sidewalk work potentially that might help with the ability to get around better.
- Regarding the Martin Way corridor study update: the plan is likely to take 20 to 25 years to complete. The goal is to figure out a way to make sure it is sidewalk friendly on both sides from Pacific all the way to Mavin. That would include more opportunities to cross Martin Way. Some of the places that need sidewalks are currently still wetlands.

F. Community Outreach

Chief Brooks shared:

- The most recent event was the 3rd of July fireworks event. There were between 10,000 and 20,000 people present. The whole event went very well with good coordination amongst agencies.
- Coming up on July 8th is the barbecue festival in Huntamer Park. There will be a dedicated crew there along with a rotation of duty crews during the day.
- The Thurston County Fair is coming up at the end of July.

G. Capital Facilities and Equipment Activities

Chief Brooks shared:

- Appropriate notice has been given for the change in subcontractors. Chief Cerovski and Chief Frost met with the general contractor yesterday, and things are progressing. They are still doing work on the underground.
- Braun Northwest, who is doing the re-chassis of the aid unit at Station 34, notified that this is now in production. It could be ready at the end of the year.

VII. OLD BUSINESS

A. Levy Lid Restoration

Ballots are set to be issued. The mailer is required to be sent to all addresses and can be informational only. The final draft of the mailer was approved and Chief Brooks has signed off on the final postage for that. Since the last ballot measure, there have been some subtle changes in the boundaries based on the city's annexation, particularly off Rainier Road. There was a reclarification to make sure the boundaries were correct on the North End where an error had been found two elections ago under the bond measure.

Chief Brooks will be presenting at Gateway Rotary on the 19th to provide an overall state of the fire services. Chief Brooks is hoping to be joined by representatives from Olympia and/or Tumwater to discuss their next steps since the Regional Fire Authority vote.

VIII. NEW BUSINESS

None.

IX. ADMINISTRATIVE REPORT

Chief Schmidt reported:

- Highlighting what the norm is as compared to holidays, Chief Schmidt shared a chart showing typical call volume from June 22nd through June 28th. There were a total of 343 calls for the week, or about 49 calls per day. 75% of those are rescue or EMS, which is fairly typical. 3% of those are fire calls.
- The holiday report starts on July 1st through July 5th. Data is pulled from midnight to midnight. There was a drop in EMS call volume to 69%, but fire calls increased to 9%. There is a 6% increase in call volume for fires. That is a very big impact to the community and the fire district.
- One big event on the 4th of July was a fire out in Gwinwood. It was a historical building. Crews arrived at 1:30p.m. and did not clear until 5:30p.m. There were eight units at one point on that scene.
- The building is likely to be a total loss due to the damage.
- Chief Brooks shared that there several members who are deployed right now to the fire in Skamania County.

X. COMMISSIONER COMMENTS

Commissioner Kirkbride – the latest newsletter from the State Fire Marshall's office included a document about the fire season this year. It is not encouraging for the entire State of Washington. Given the low fire season last year, fuel has built up over the last year. The forecast is for possibly one of the worst fire seasons thus far. Commissioner Kirkbride also asked if there is an Aid 31 responding.

Chief Schmidt responded: the goal was to have Aid 34 staffed by September. Aid 34 is staffed out of Station 34. The battalion chief predicted that there would be the ability to staff Aid 31. The logistics team had to jump through hoops to get the rig ready to run because it wasn't outfitted as a first line rig. It was able to be staffed just in time for the holiday. The goal is to continue to do that when needed. The battalion chiefs chose to staff the brush rig at times instead of the aid unit, knowing that they would have quick deployment for some of the wildland fires.

Chief Brooks commented that there is an emphasis on getting two-person companies out to target the growing emergency medical response. Those same crews can move over during fire season to staff brush rigs. Historically, there has been reliance on cross-staffing, which means pulling people off the engines and ladder trucks to staff those. Having the brush rig staffed on the 4th of July made a big difference in stopping a fire before it got into heavier timber.

Commissioner Hetzler – will be gone for the August 17th meeting. The swearing in ceremony was very special.

Commissioner Kelling – attended the June 5th County Emergency Management executive seminar. They briefed wildfire preparedness and echoed the same outlooks that Commissioner Kirkbride shared about. The fuel model in Western Washington is changing with the easterly winds. It makes a different type of environment that is becoming more and more like Northern California and Southern Oregon. There was a statistic shared regarding the Wildland Urban Interface. They mentioned that about a third of the population, to include the structures here in Thurston County, are in that designated area, which puts them at a higher fire risk automatically. The TRPC puts together different hazard maps that are not available for the public but are available to organizations within the county. Those have been shared with the chief. They are being used by the Hazard Mitigation Planning Council for updating their hazard mitigation plan.

Commissioner Kelling had the opportunity to travel in Mason and Pierce Counties and was surprised to see the number of fire district levy measures that are also occurring. Those counties also have levy measures on their ballots.

The Days Inn is now open for business; hopefully, that will take care of itself.

Commissioner Roberts – wonderful to swear in the new employees. A shout out to the human resources department for their recruitment. They have done a great job. Has there been any impact yet from the Days Inn?

Chief Brooks responded that there have been conversations with the Lacey PD. Chief Schmidt reported that it is a staged opening with a smaller group of residents coming in the first week. There have been no impacts as a fire district as of yet, and law enforcement reported the same.

XI. CORRESPONDENCE

- A citizen reached out regarding questions about the fireworks laws. Because LFD3 serves both the City of Lacey and the unincorporated areas, there can be some confusion about what is allowed and where. A concerned citizen reports not understanding what the rules are and was also planning to reach out to the county commissioners about her concern about the disparity of the rules of the county that apply to the unincorporated areas versus the city.

XII. HEARING OF THE PUBLIC / MEMBERS PRESENT

- None.

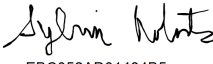
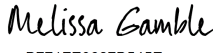
Chief Schmidt had an additional comment regarding the pilot program for deliberate dispatch and how it is utilized as a county. The operations chiefs presented to the county chiefs last week and asked to continue to stay in the pilot mode. Crews arrive on scene, determine need, confirm need for transport, and then call in private ambulance partners. This helps to reduce no-load volumes. Lacey Fire was working directly with Olympic Ambulance as the call volume is quite disparate from some of the partner agencies. Olympic Ambulance is also working with Tumwater. There are currently only three agencies in the county that utilize Olympic Ambulance solely for their transports: Lacey, Tumwater, and South Bay. Olympic Ambulance is

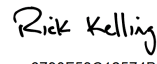
trying to work with Lacey directly to make sure that the needs are met. As an agency, LFD also presented to the county chiefs that Olympic Ambulance was going to provide the additional units that they procured over the last several months (three full additional units). They have designated them for Lacey Fire. They initiated that on the 1st of July. Their goal is to be ready for Lacey Fire when called and to help decrease on-scene time. Getting really good feedback so far; the battalion chiefs are very happy. There have been reports back from some of the officers saying that it has been very good and they have been building relationships with the Olympic Ambulance crews. The support of Olympic Ambulance for Lacey Fire also supports the entire county.

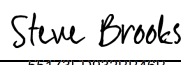
XIII. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned as of 6:38 PM.

***Next Regular Meeting: July 20, 2023 – 5:30 p.m.
Available via remote meeting.***

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 ATTEST: District Secretary