Agenda for the Board of Fire Commissioners

Regular Meeting

Conducted remotely via Zoom and with in-person attendance at Station 31
(1231 Franz ST SE, Lacey, WA 98503)

Click here to join the meeting:
https://us06web.zoom.us/j/743870521
Meeting ID: 743 870 521

September 4, 2025
5:30 pm

I. CALL TO ORDER / FLAG SALUTE

II. APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA

A. Additions / Deletions

III. HEARING OF THE PUBLIC / MEMBERS PRESENT

IV. APPROVAL OF THE CONSENT AGENDA

A. Draft Minutes of August 21, 2025 Board of Fire Commissioners Meeting.
B. Warrants (AP 9A 2025):
   - General Fund 001 (Acct #6630): EFTs numbered 5636 through 5639; Checks numbered 24550 through 24558 for a total amount of $38,893.78.
   - Equipment Repair and Replacement Fund 103: EFTs numbered 5640 through 5641; Checks numbered 24559 through 24560 for a total amount of $34,321.74.
   - Capital Projects Fund 301: Check number 24561 for a total amount of $69,846.00.

V. COMMITTEE REPORTS

A. Thurston County Medic One — Commissioner Kirkbride

B. Thurston 9-1-1 Communications (TCOMM) — Commissioner Roberts

C. City / District Liaison — Commissioner Hetzler

D. Thurston County Fire Commissioners Association — Commissioner Kelling

E. Thurston Regional Planning Council — Staff

F. Community Outreach — Staff

G. Capital Facilities and Equipment Activities — Staff

VI. OLD BUSINESS

VII. NEW BUSINESS

A. Healthcare Costs for 2026
B. WFCA Conference
C. Fall Workshop Date Planning

VIII. ADMINISTRATIVE REPORT

IX. COMMISSIONER COMMENTS

X. OTHER INFORMATION

A. Correspondence

XI. HEARING OF THE PUBLIC / MEMBERS PRESENT

XII. ADJOURNMENT

THERE WILL BE NO WORKSHOP CONDUCTED THIS EVENING.

- ***Next Regular Meeting: September 18, 2025***

THURSTON COUNTY FIRE DISTRICT THREE

BOARD OF FIRE COMMISSIONERS

MINUTES OF THE MEETING

August 21st, 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 Kelling
Commissioner Roberts		
Commissioner Hetzler		
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. APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA

MOTION: To approve the agenda as published.

Motion: Commissioner Kirkbride
Second: Commissioner Gamble
Carried: Unanimous

III. HEARING OF THE PUBLIC /MEMBERS PRESENT

None.

IV. APPROVAL OF THE CONSENT AGENDA

A. Draft minutes of the August 7th, 2025, meeting of the Board of Fire Commissioners.

B. Warrants (AP 8B 2025):

- General Fund 001 (Acct #6630) EFTs numbered 5627 through 5631; checks numbered 24539 through 24545; draft numbered 1626 for a total amount of $181,259.04.
- Equipment Repair and Replacement Fund 103: EFTs numbered 5632 through 5634; checks numbered 24546 through 24547 for a total amount of $773,000.70.

- Capital Projects Fund 301: EFT numbered 5635; check numbered 24548 for a total amount of $7,042.65.

C. Payroll

- 8A-2025 in the amount of $2,074,619.97.
- 8B-2025 in the amount of $700,356.83.

MOTION: To approve the consent agenda as published.

Motion: Commissioner Roberts
Second: Commissioner Gamble
Carried: Unanimous

V. COMMITTEE REPORTS

A. Thurston County Medic One
No report; the next meeting will take place on August 28th.

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

No report; the next meeting will take place on September 3rd.

C. City/District Liaison
No report; the next meeting is scheduled for September 18th.

D. Thurston County Fire Commissioners Association
No report; Commissioner Kelling is excused from today's meeting and did not attend yesterday's picnic.

E. Thurston Regional Planning Council
No report; Chief Cerovski will have a report after the meeting next week. Commissioner Hetzler inquired if they have a director. Chief Cerovski reported that they have an interim and they have completed the hiring packet and posted it.

F. Community Outreach
Chief Schmidt shared:

- On the 12th of August, St. Martin's RA staff had fire prevention talks from Chief Roberts.
- On August 16th, the Olympia Lacey Church of God had a block party. An engine crew was able to make that event.
- Four different kids have come in for helmet fittings.
- One car seat installation has been done.

G. Capital Facilities and Equipment Activities
Chief Cerovski shared:

- A photo album has been prepared for Pierce Job 39647, the week four progress on the new Engine 31. These photos were shared with the commissioners.

- The contract stipulates that the engine will be paid for before it ships. When shipped, the engine will go to Tacoma, where it will have a final inspection by the mechanics there.
    - Commissioner Kirkbride inquired where the manufacturing plant is. Chief Cerovski stated that he believes it is in Iowa.
    - Commissioner Hetzler inquired about the facility in Tacoma. Chief Cerovski replied that Hughes has a regional office in Tacoma, so anything that comes from Pierce in Florida, Wisconsin, Iowa, or any of their other plants, if they are delivered to Washington State, they will go the location in Tacoma where they will get final check offs to make sure things are in good shape after the trip. Any final elements that need to be addressed will be done in Tacoma.
    - If the engines have any major issues related to warranty, they will go to Hughes in Tacoma for the work.
- With regard to the old ISU: the plan is to surplus this vehicle. It will have some minimal value, and investigations are underway for where it can go, either as a gift or as an option sale. The policy for distribution of assets will allow for that. There is one out-of-county agency that is interested. Despite its age, it still has some life in it. Part repairs can be difficult due to the age because the parts cannot always be found.
    - The other item that may have some value, between $8,000 and $13,000, are the two watercraft that were replaced earlier this year. At this time, nobody in the county is interested in them. They may go to auction for the best price.
- Regarding the EV charger grant: finally, all of the EV chargers are installed at facilities 31, 33, 34, and 35. Looking into utilizing available capital funds to put chargers at Station 32. There are a few items remaining in the final certification of those installs, but they have been tested and work well. Their use will be tracked to get an idea of electricity use for the benefit of the community employees who use EV vehicles.
    - Chief Cerovski is also working with the Department of Enterprise Services to close out the grant element. LFD3 will pay up front and then get a refund for 60% of the value of that project.
- Chief Cerovski received some reports on due diligence related to the purchase of the 17 acres of land on Britton Parkway. The first two big studies have come back. The Agricultural Resources Assessment is 60 pages. It looks favorable. The key element is a moderately low risk of cultural impact at that property.
    - Regarding the Oregon White Oak Survey and Summary that was found in the Environmental Impact of Ecology: the Oregon White Oak is a protected species of tree in this area. There are a couple of elements, but they do not appear to qualify as related to a woodland or savannah under the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife. There are mitigation strategies to protect the trees that require protection. If trees have to removed, they may need to be replaced in kind in other parts of the property.

VI. OLD BUSINESS

A. Documentary Project Overview by Bill Lange

- Bill Lange addressed the Board and shared a bit about his history as a documentary-maker.
- With the LFD3 documentary, the plan is to showcase a particular position, such as a battalion chief or a firefighter or an EMT, and then go into detail on that role. There are about 20 episodes planned.
- Available for questions; thanks for the opportunity. It is greatly appreciated, and it has been wonderful to work with everyone thus far.
- The commissioners thanked him for his hard work and expressed enthusiasm to watch all of the documentary episodes.

VII. NEW BUSINESS

A. Policy Review (Appendix A) — Staff Report & Board Action

Chief Cerovski reported:

- One of the documents in the packet is an executive summary of the district policy additions and changes. Those include the financial policies F-300.1. The second one is F-306.2, which is payroll. The third financial policy is a new policy, EFT Transactions (Electronic Funds Transfer Transactions). The last one is related to jury duty. This is also a new policy, but it is a complement to another policy that does talk about the requirements set forth for jury duty.
    - The financial policy F-300 establishes a framework for managing all tangible and intangible assets owned by the district to ensure value optimization, risk minimization, and operational support. This is all of the things related to how LFD3 deals with asset distribution: A, making sure to document things that are purchased and then having a systematic process for removing them from the asset log when appropriate; and complying with all of the things: the audit report potentially, the RCW, etc.
    - The payroll policy is an outline of how and when members are compensated, ensure that there is fairness, accuracy, and compliance with the collective bargaining agreement where applicable.
    - The one related to EFTs is about providing a secure and efficient framework for managing the electronic fund transfers, including ACH and wire transfers. These three financial policies are related to recommendations from the previous audit.
    - The administrative policy for jury duty is to provide clear procedure and support for employees summoned for jury duty. It complements the language in 511.2 which is work hours and leave.
- There are two additional things on the second page of note, addressing inventory and maintenance of assets, as well as the appropriate process for

disposal of those assets or transfer of those assets if there is any remaining value.

- Commissioner Kirkbride inquired whether these policies are modifications to existing policies or if they are new policies with the existing (previous) policies still in place. Chief Cerovski responded that there already exists, currently, F-300. If these adoptable changes are approved, then the new policy 300.1 supersedes 300. 300 will be archived and no longer in play.
- Financial Policy 306.2 is payroll, and the key elements related to that are pay structure (monthly pay on the 10th, midmonth draw on the 25th), repayment requirements if necessary for underpayments or overpayments, pay increases and how those take place based on anniversary dates, performance, and job requirements; longevity pay, the scales, 2% to 10% and based on years of service, and also the time that those things take effect in the period of employment. It also addresses the tech pay that requires certification and ongoing education, and what happens if someone lapses in their certification and how that is handled so that is transparent and equitable for everyone; what happens if there is a separation from the district for any reason – how the final paycheck will include the items that are written into the contract or in the policy, as well as what things have to be returned to the district.
- Financial Policy 320, EFT transactions. This is important to address because of potential fraud and the level of risk present for phishing and compromised banking information. The scope covers payroll, tax deposits, vendor payments, and intergovernmental receipts. It also addresses optimization and oversight, that EFTs must be approved by the finance director or designee, and only the financial department may initiate an EFT. Security measures include dual authorizations for wire transfers, vendor verification protocols, and restricted system access. Documentation requirements include detailed records maintained for each transaction, including the audit trail and reconciliation procedures. Payroll direct deposits, requiring signature authorizing bank verification from employees.
    - Director Kirkwood mentioned that a process has been developed within the system for members to be able to edit and update their own banking information for direct deposits in the system. Previously, they would have submitted a form to the payroll person to complete that banking information change on behalf of the members. There is risk inherent to that, so in order to mitigate that risk, the responsibility has been given back to the members to be able to do that on their own. This is a brand new policy and was recommended by the audit. The state auditor has been keenly focused on this area because of the amount of fraud that has occurred with regard to ACH and EFT transactions over the past ten years, so this policy has been developed to help protect the district from any type of fraud as much as possible.
- A-112 is a new policy related to jury duty. The key elements are notification and documentation. The policy also covers leave and

compensation, excusal requests, return to work, and benefits continuation. Commissioner Kirkbride inquired about the use of the word "immediately" to describe when employees must provide notification of a jury summons. The commissioners further commented that a specific time frame would be more helpful and less vague. Chief Cerovski suggested changing the language to specific that notification must be given within one week. The commissioners expressed agreement with this plan.
- The other document in the packet is a comparison document that compares versions for both asset management as well as payroll and shows the key differences, as well as commonalities, between the old policy and the new policy.

MOTION: <u>That Policy F-300.1, F-306.2, F-320, and A-112 be accepted and presented for adoption as district policy, with the change in the language about the timing of jury summons notification.</u>

Motion: Commissioner Roberts
Second: Commissioner Kirkbride
Carried: Unanimous

B. Ready Rebound Overview Staff Report

Chief Schmidt reported:

- There was an invitation from one of the vendors to meet with a representative and review the work that they do. This seemed like a good opportunity to also make the board aware of this organization and the service they provide to the members.
- Ready Rebound has been established for quite some time; LFD3 started working with them in 2019. It is a service that connects medical providers within a service area. Many agencies, like Lacey Fire, struggle when experiencing either on-the-job or off-the-job injuries to get a diagnosis and then go through return to work processes.
- Ready Rebound acts as advocates for agencies and specifically for the members of agencies. They connect through partnerships with different providers.
- LFD3 has a contract with Ready Rebound for about $40,000. This covers 170 members (all of the administrative workers, all responders, the Board of Commissioners, all volunteers, and every single family member). Ready Rebound advocates for the abovementioned individuals to promptly get the care that they need so that public service workers can return to work quickly.
- In 2025 YTD, there have been 9 Ready Rebound cases. They estimate 350 wait days have been saved (this refers to time spent waiting for imaging, treatment, and/or surgery).
- Return on investment: for every dollar spent with Ready Rebound, LFD3 is getting $3.60 back in return.
- Commissioner Kirkbride inquired about how the various communications fall in line with HIPAA guidelines. Chief Schmidt responded that most

communication is between the advocate and the patient. The agency may receive only the relevant and necessary information about return to work in the case of an L&I claim.

- The information about Ready Rebound is already available to members, but the goal is to make it more widely known for the members as well as their families.
- The slideshow shared by Chief Schmidt will be made available to the commissioners as well.

VIII. ADMINISTRATIVE REPORT

A. District Monthly Financial Report

- General Fund 001: net excess of $10,347,238.05 (a budget balance of 26%).
- Donation Fund 101: net excess of $16,248.
- Reserve Fund 102: net excess of $1,022.203.
- Equipment Repair and Replacement Fund 103: net excess of $1,952,312.
- General Fund Summary: net excess of $13,338,000 (about 31% of total expenditure appropriation for the year).
- Bond Fund 201: net excess of $62,462.
- Bond 2017 Fund 202: net excess of $505,839.
- 2025 Bond Fund 203: no activity yet in this fund. The first interest payments will be in December with principal payments starting next year.
- Capital Projects Fund 301: net excess of $598,165.
- Capital Projects CFEP Funds 307: net excess of $222,583.
- 2025 Capital Projects Fund 309: notable expenditures are the land purchase, Station 31 renovations, and Station 33 renovations. The net excess in this fund is $14,018,220.
- Graphs and visuals were shown further visualizing the financial information shared.
- Commissioner Hetzler inquired when Director Kirkwood begins working on next year's budgets. He responded that it has been ongoing for the past couple of months and is in the process of working on the finalization of division budgets. The preliminary budget proposal should be presented to the commissioners in October. The final budget approval needs to take place at the second board meeting in November.
- Commissioner Hetzler further inquired what medical costs look like for next year. Director Kirkwood responded that no rates have been available yet but should be available in the beginning of September. Another missing piece is the assessed value, which should also come in the beginning of September.
- Chief Schmidt mentioned that Director Kirkwood has taken on a special project and has been working for well over a year with individuals, meeting with them monthly, in order to have a much less

condensed version of budget planning. He has been putting in a great deal of time and effort all year long so that the members are not trying to figure it out on the fly but are learning about the budget planning process throughout the year. This has been extremely valuable for the agency.

B. Chief Schmidt reported:
   - Regarding the organizational audit: the latest development in this process was the creation of four committees consisting of six to eight people each. Staff has sat down with them for about three hours each time and worked on very specific areas of interest, such as communication and culture or accountability and processes. The plan going forward after the fourth committee meets is that the entire administrative group is going to gather at one of the future administrative meetings to talk about the problems to be tackled and how to solve them, as well as a timeline. The plan of action will then be presented to the commissioners.
   - Commissioner Kelling has brought forward an initiative from the Washington State Department of Veterans Affairs. They have created a program where individuals or agencies can purchase purple decals for the bottom of license plates. These decals share the 988 Lifeline suicide prevention hotline. For $18, individuals can purchase these decals. Commissioner Kelling has found that the City of Lacey has adopted this for all of their staff and organizational vehicles. Commissioner Kelling brought this forward as a suggestion for the district to consider for adoption. This cause could be supported by LFD3 for less than $800. No board action is required, but it is being brought forward to the commissioners to ask if they are supportive of Director Kirkwood building this into the 2026 budget.
     - The commissioners unanimously agreed to support this program.
   - A resident guest mentioned at the last commissioner's meeting a concern with L&I. Since L&I adopted first responder mental health, they have found a large uptake in L&I costs. As they have been looking at the costs, they have decided to look at four ways to cut costs for firefighters specifically. One area of cost cutting is residential treatment situations. This includes organizations such as Deer Hollow in Utah. L&I data says that inpatient treatment is not necessarily better than outpatient treatment. Another area they are considering cutting is restricting the duration of outpatient treatment to no longer than six months. In addition, if there is an L&I case where a responder is exposed to something traumatic, their treatment sessions would be limited to two or three sessions with a counselor. The final idea is regarding posttraumatic stress disorder and not being able to be diagnosed unless the responder has ten years on the job or more. Support Services is looking into the specifics of these potential changes. Staff disagrees with all of these potential changes and is encouraging all of the members, as well as the commissioners, to send

emails delineating why these changes are troubling. The deadline to send in a comment is September 12.

- Financial good news: Claire Fujita, the business analyst, has recommended to staff switching from DocuSign to Adobe Sign, which is several thousands of dollars cheaper every year. She is going to send out a video explaining the use of Adobe Sign, which works in a way very similar to DocuSign.
- Every year, an annual physical is offered to the members through Lifescan. The state chiefs have been working for some time with First Choice trustee plans suggesting that it makes sense for insurance providers to pay for these physicals. It sounds like LFD3's insurance provider is going to try to partner with Lifescan. If the partnership does happen, it may save over $100,000 a year.

C. Chief Patti reported about correspondence from local chiefs regarding brushfires:

- In the last four days, there was a very high volume of calls in the county.
- On Monday, there was a 28-acre brushfire in Rochester. There was also a two-alarm brushfire in Tumwater. Support was given to both of these fires.
- On Tuesday, there was a SORT call for paratroopers stuck in trees at JBLM. There were originally seven individuals stuck in trees, but by the time of response, there were only two still stuck. The crews had to go 300 yards into the brush to the first tree and another 400 yards to the second tree. Crews did a great job of getting back there and getting up the trees safely.
- On Wednesday, there was a 26-acre fire near Rainier threatening multiple structures. Only one outbuilding was lost in that fire, although it had been anticipated that multiple houses would be lost. LFD3 sent a couple of engines, a brush truck, tender, and multiple battalions down to this fire. This fire drained all of the county resources. Region mobilization plans were utilized. There were strike teams from Pierce County and Grays Harbor. Lacey was still protected because the resource manager kept rigs back in order to handle an additional seven calls while this fire was going on.
- On Thursday, there was a 5-acre fire near Bald Hills in the timber. A couple of crews were sent out to assist.
- The rain over the last weekend was not particularly helpful, and as the week has warmed up, there have been additional brushfires.
- There was an operations chiefs meeting today. A representative from Emergency Management came in for the meeting as well. There were questions asked about evacuation and how to manage that. Emergency Management provided all the necessary tools for evacuation: who to call for all the operations chiefs, how to streamline the process, etc.
- Commissioner Roberts inquired about safety precautions for preventing brushfires and mentioned an example of a tree that had been trimmed with the dead branches laying very close to yards and houses. Chief Schmidt responded that one of the ideas is to utilize the new social media specialist

to make recommendations to citizens of Lacey and Thurston County. There have also been conversations between Chief Patti and Chief Schmidt about specific messaging for citizens about what it looks like to evacuate. Commissioner Kirkbride also mentioned concern about the frequency of burn ban violations.

- Commissioner Kirkbride inquired if any LFD3 resources are currently in Eastern Washington. Chief Patti responded in the negative and that a brush truck has been down for maintenance, although it is now back in service.
- Chief Patti also shared that the new radio system has been working really well during this busy season and has been very helpful. The dispatchers have also been doing a fantastic job.

IX. COMMISSIONER COMMENTS

Commissioner Roberts – thanks to Bill Lange for showcasing the agency. Thanks to Chief Cerovski for the fascinating slideshow of the rig being put together. Thanks as well for the board policy work and the presentation.

Commissioner Gamble – thanks to Bill Lange for his work. Commissioner Gamble shared that, along with Commissioner Roberts, has been working on revamping the fire chief evaluation process to streamline it and make it more concise and easier to use. They also reached out to Steve Brooks for input. A sample draft has been created, which will be passed out to the commissioners for them to look at. The goal is to have it finalized by the end of the year.

Commissioner Kirkbride – thank you to Bill Lange for the wonderful work. Director Kirkwood's reports are always excellent. Thanks to Chief Schmidt for the outstanding job of leading and for the vision for the agency, particular with regard to the organizational audit and the resulting action plans.

Commissioner Hetzler – excited to see the chief evaluation. Planning to gather all of the last markups for the commissioner's handbook and working on that with Chief Cerovski. If the commissioners have any further comments on the handbook, please send those in. If a workshop is needed this fall, dates should be discussed at the next meeting.

X. CORRESPONDENCE

None.

XI. HEARING OF THE PUBLIC / MEMBERS PRESENT

None.

XII. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned as of 7:12 PM.

Next Regular Meeting: September 4th, 2025– 5:30 p.m.
Available via remote meeting.

Chair	Vice Chair
Commissioner	Commissioner
Commissioner	ATTEST: District Secretary