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

November 5, 2026
5:30 pm

I. CALL TO ORDER / FLAG SALUTE

II. HEARING OF THE PUBLIC / MEMBERS PRESENT

III. APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA

A. Additions / Deletions

IV. MEMBER RECOGNITION

Years of Service with LFD3: Assistant Chief Chris Frost (30 years) and Payroll Administrator Debby Archer (10 years)

V. APPROVAL OF THE CONSENT AGENDA

A. Draft Minutes of October 15, 2026 Board of Fire Commissioners Meeting.
B. Warrants (AP 11A 2026):
   - General Fund 001 (Acct #6630): EFTs numbered 5888 through 5894; Checks numbered 25108 through 25123; Drafts numbered ___ through ___for a total amount of $73,533.22.
   - Equipment Repair and Replacement Fund 103: EFTs numbered 5895 through 5898; Checks numbered 25124 for a total amount of $133,115.36.
C. Payroll 10B 2026 in the amount of $773,204.35.

VI. 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. LFD3/EOFD ILA Committee — Commissioner Hetzler

E. Thurston County Fire Commissioners Association — Commissioner Gamble

F. Thurston Regional Planning Council — Commissioner Kelling

G. Community Outreach — Staff

H. Operations — Staff

I. Logistics — Staff

J. Standards and Resilience — Staff

VII. OLD BUSINESS

A. Bond Updates

B. EOFD Merger Petition — Board Discussion and Action

C. Review of Policy — Board Discussion and Action
   1. E-204.1.D Board Governance (Appendix A)

VIII. NEW BUSINESS

A. 2027 LDF3 Budget – Public Hearing (Appendix B) — Board Discussion

IX. ADMINISTRATIVE REPORT

X. COMMISSIONER COMMENTS

XI. OTHER INFORMATION

A. Correspondence

XII. HEARING OF THE PUBLIC / MEMBERS PRESENT

XIII. EXECUTIVE SESSION

A. In accordance with RCW 42.30.110(1) (i) (iii) to discuss with legal counsel representing the agency litigation or potential litigation.

B. In accordance with RCW 42.30.110(1) (g) to review the performance of a public employee.

XIV. ADJOURNMENT

THERE WILL BE NO WORKSHOP CONDUCTED THIS EVENING.

- ***Next Regular Meeting: November 19, 2026***

THURSTON COUNTY FIRE DISTRICT THREE

BOARD OF FIRE COMMISSIONERS

MINUTES OF THE MEETING

October 15, 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 Gamble
Second: Commissioner Kirkbride
Carried: Unanimous

IV. APPROVAL OF THE CONSENT AGENDA

A. Draft minutes of the October 1, 2026, Board of Fire Commissioners meeting.
B. Warrants (AP 10B 2026):
- General Fund 001 (Acct #6630): EFTs numbered 5874 through 5879; checks numbered 25084 through 25104; drafts numbered 1871 through 1884 for a total amount of $1,520,067.41.
- Donations Fund 101: EFT numbered 5881; check numbered 25105; for a total amount of $2,1012.84.
- Equipment Repair and Replacement Fund 103: EFTs numbered 5882 through 5885; check numbered 25106 for a total amount of $32,199.28.
- Capital Projects Fund 301:EFTs numbered 5880 for a total amount of $27,120.00.

- 2025 Capital Project Fund 309: EFTs numbered 5886 through 5887; check numbered 25107 for a total amount of $22,449.65.

C. Payroll 10A-2026 in the amount of $2,164,969.70.

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 October 22nd. Both Commissioner Kirkbride, who is the usual representative, and Commissioner Gamble, who is the alternate, have conflicts, so there will be no representation from LFD3 at that meeting. Commissioner Kirkbride does have the draft agenda, which includes informational things only and no business or action.

B. Thurston 9-1-1 Communications (TCOMM)
No report; the last meeting was attended by Chief Schmidt, who gave a report at the last fire commissioners meeting.

C. City/District Liaison
No report; the next meeting will take place on November 19th.

D. LFD3/EOFD ILA Committee
No report; the next meeting will take place on November 4th.

E. Thurston County Fire Commissioners Association
No report; the next meeting will take place on October 20th.

F. Thurston Regional Planning Council
Commissioner Kelling reported from the most recent meeting:

- The Council approved the agreement which established the Council and the bylaws.
- There is one legislative priority for 2027: funding the continued development of a new Nisqually bridge. They are asking for about $27 million. TRPC is looking for additional advocates for this project.
- Retreat follow up was discussed.
- Later this fall, TRPC will be going through their certification process at the federal level as a Transportation Management Authority.
- The Census Bureau has proposed some rule changes for the collection of data for the 2030 Census which, if they stand as written, could have impacts on how the population is counted.
- Commissioner Kirkbride inquired about the location of the Nisqually Bridge in question. Commissioner Kelling responded that it is the bridge over Nisqually on I-5. The preliminary design is for something like a long causeway.

G. Community Outreach

Chris DeBell reported:

- On October 3rd, LFD3 supported the Lacey Children's Day Event at Huntamer Park with a booth staffed by two members. It was a highly attended event.
- On October 10th, a touring program called Courageous Kids Climbing came to the Lacey area. The group provides free adaptive rock climbing for individuals with physical or intellectual disabilities. Several SORT members came and volunteered their time, along with other county-wide SORT members. Engine 35 also stopped by to engage with the participants.
- Fire Prevention Month is underway. To date, 8 of 17 schools have been visited. Lacey Fire wristbands are being passed out to all of the kids.
- Continuing EMS standby for the North Thurston Public School football games through the end of the month.
- There have been four car seat inspections.
- There have been four Senior Safe At Home appointments.
- There was a hands-only CPR workshop internally that took place earlier this week. It was very well attended by the members who are interested in going out to the schools to teach 7th and 11th graders this year. That program has been revamped and is picking up steam with more schools participating now.
- Upcoming events include a Haunted 5K run sponsored by a local nonprofit, All Kids Win.
- Santa Mobile planning will begin in the next few weeks.
- Commissioner Roberts asked if there will be charity Thanksgiving baskets this year. Chief Schmidt responded that she will look into it.

H. Operations:

Chief Carson shared:

- Tumwater had a second alarm apartment fire today. LFD3 resources were sent to assist: a battalion unit, two engines, and the ISU unit. Chief Patti spent several hours at this fire today. There were no injuries, but 20 people were displaced.
- Training Division: will be relaunching into the Blue Card Incident Command System. This is a robust system that entails a 30-hour online course. This will be for battalion chiefs and company officers. It is a very comprehensive course with eight functions of command that they have to go through. Once everybody goes through the online portion, the next step is a certification lab. This will most likely be done in the second quarter of next year. The previous course occurred about 10 years ago, and since that time, there has been a lot of turnover. Thurston County has

adopted this incident command system, and following this system will help with continuity whenever different agencies work together.

- The South Sound Recruit Activity is in the planning phases for 2027. The training staff is working diligently to get things organized for the upcoming year. To date, there are ten recruits. That number may go up or down based on budgets.

I. Logistics

Chief Patti reported:

- Word has come in that the motor replacement for Truck 312 is close to completion. It is hoped that the rig will be back in service in the next week or two.
- The new motor for Engine 32 has arrived, and the process of replacing the motor will begin next week at the VRF.
- Chief Frost reports that as part of the Enterprise Lease Program, the surplus and auction of five staff cars has been completed. Approximately $40,000 was raised from auction and will go back into the department.
- The replacement for Battalion 34 is expected to be ordered next week. Depending on delivery, it could be four to eight months before that rig will be back on the road.
- Logistics continues to work on taking care of the remaining uniform orders before the uniform store reopens at the beginning of next year.

J. Standards and Resilience

Chief Cerovski reported:

- Community Risk Reduction: the first invoices for the inspection program have gone out, as of last Friday. Billing started from the beginning of October, and 19 invoices were sent out. Payment has already been received for 3 of them.
- Safety & Compliance: LifeScan physicals began this past Tuesday. There are 153 physicals scheduled over the next six weeks for the members of the department. There is a good level of engagement from non-represented members who are participating in the physicals.
- Personnel participated in the Great Shake-Out today. It was a great way to roll out simple processes for being prepared for an earthquake. These kinds of trainings will continue for administrative staff and the workforce.
- Capital Projects: the Project Review Committee received the 19-page submittal for a GCCM process. There will be a hearing sometime in December. They validate that the application is complete and thorough and that they can access it electronically for the PRC to do review before the board meeting. Turner & Townsend Heery have done a fantastic job putting all of that work together.
- Other notable work for Capital Projects: the scanning has been done for Station 31 and Station 33. That allows for recreation of electronic drawings that can be edited. Completing the cost estimation process for the Station 31 remodel, as well as Station 33. Preparing for property acquisition analysis and due diligence for a potential PSA for Station 32.

- The New Market Skills Center Advisory Board had the first meeting for the 2026-2027 school year (Chief Cerovski is on the advisory board). That program went through some changes at New Market. It used to be known as FITE and is now known at GRIT. That program is under new leadership with Charles Jones, a local community member and firefighter at East Olympia. When the program transitioned to GRIT, there was some equipment that was not transferred to New Market, and they are looking for some donations. Chief Cerovski is working with Chief Patti and the Logistics team to determine whether there are surplus resources that can be donated. They have 48 students signed up this year and a waiting list of 56 students.

VI. OLD BUSINESS

A. Bond Updates

Chief Schmidt reported:

- About two and a half weeks out from Election Day. The last video was finished this week. Doing a social media livestream later this week to answer questions is being considered.
- Chief Schmidt had a speaking opportunity last giving a State of the District presentation with the Chamber at the Lacey Community Center. There were many good questions asked.
- Chief Schmidt also went out to Affinity, a senior living complex of 170 units, and located across the street from LFD3's Britton Parkway property. Due to the proximity of the properties, they reached out to LFD3 and asked for a presentation. They filled their theater room with attendees who asked wonderful questions.

B. Healthcare Updates Board Discussion & Action

Chief Schmidt reported:

- Preempted by the healthcare rates this year with the current plan, the Washington Fire Commissioners Plan, which has an 18.5% increase, the Healthcare Committee has been looking into the IAFF Health & Wellness Trust.
- Staff's recommendation is still for the Board to consider a possible switch. Although there won't be actual savings, the annual rate increases are much more predictable with IAFF, and their five-year average is under 5% historically.
- Chief Schmidt spoke today with Union President Greene to confirm whether there were any big concerns from membership. He shared that they feel comfortable with the Board making the decision to transition to IAFF as the future healthcare plan.
- If the Board does decide to move forward, staff and the union will take some time to figure out the most appropriate plan and determine any big impacts.
- IAFF has given assurance that if the switch is made, they will be able to do open enrollment in November. It would be in the best

interests of staff and the union for the switch to happen sooner rather than later.

- Commissioner Gamble inquired about the retiree feedback. Chief Schmidt shared that there are concerns about the rates, and the union leadership has shared that it will be important to look at the different plans to determine which options will be the most suitable.
- President Greene thanked the chief for the opportunity to discuss this and work through these decisions together.

MOTION: The Board of Fire Commissioners of Thurston County Fire Protection District #3 authorizes the transition from the District's current Washington Fire Commissioners Association healthcare plan to the IAFF Health and Wellness Trust Plan, effective January 1st, 2027, and authorize the fire chief and staff to take the necessary actions to implement the transition.
Motion: Commissioner Gamble
Second: Commissioner Kirkbride
Carried: Unanimous

VII. NEW BUSINESS

A. Policy Review — Staff Presentation & Possible Board Action

1. E-203 Fee Schedule – Recommended Changes
    - Chief Cerovski presented the document with a proposed new title, Fire Protection Service Agreements.
    - This document is intended to establish a mechanism for compensation associated with the District's provision of regular fire protection and emergency services to individuals, entities, and properties outside of the District's boundaries. It was originally established as part of relationships with the Tribe.
    - The main change at this time is the title. There may be additional changes made in the future.

2. E-204 Selection of Board Chair and Vice Chair – Recommended Changes (Appendix A)
    - This policy change is the result of conversations that took place during the Fire Commissioners Workshop in September.
    - This policy would refer back to the Commissioners Handbook as establishing the guidance by which the commissioners operate.
    - Commissioner Kelling expressed the desire to have time to review the document before taking any action.

B. EOFD Merger Petition Discussion
Staff Presentation & Possible Board Action
Chief Schmidt reported:
    - As things progress with East Olympia, knowing that they are very likely going to be petitioning this Board for a merger very soon, it is

important to figure out how best to represent both agencies in moving forward.

- Staff have reached out to legal counselor Brian Snure, who has significant experience in fire agency mergers and acquisitions, to get advice from him on next steps. He felt very comfortable that he could represent both agencies through a joint contract. He wanted to ensure that there were conversations with both boards. No action needs to be taken, but the Chair should be allowed to sign a joint contract between the two agencies to work with him to work through a potential merger.
- East Olympia's Board of Fire Commissioners had a special meeting yesterday, during which this same concept was presented by staff, and they agreed that they would like to proceed with entering a joint contract. They gave permission for one of their board members to sign. At that meeting, they also voted to petition Lacey Fire for a merger. At this point, a petition means that they are asking LFD3 to allow them to merge into Lacey Fire. If the LFD3 Board decides to accept that petition, that would give them the opportunity to begin a ballot process.
- Commissioner Kirkbride made the comment that there is no one better to handle this than Brian Snure. It would be helpful to know an estimate of what it will cost to do this as far as attorney fees.
- Commissioner Kelling expressed the desire for more information on the process of merging and the impacts to Fire District 3 and the LFD3 citizens before moving forward.
- Commissioner Hetzler indicated that she has shared all the relevant information from previous ILA committee meetings. Commissioner Kelling asked her to resend the information to review. Commissioner Hetzler encouraged specific questions based on available information so that any gaps in information can be specifically addressed.
- Commissioner Kirkbride suggested that conditional action be taken this evening to indicate overall support for the idea of a merger without official action.
- Chief Schmidt reported that EOFD will be understanding if the LFD3 commissioners are not ready to move forward yet, and no particular action needs to be taken this evening.
- Commissioner Roberts inquired about the timing of EOFD putting this on the ballot in April and when they need to finalize their decision. Chief Schmidt responded that it would need to be at the beginning of February. If it does not go on the ballot until next fall, then the merger would not take place until January of 2029.
- Commissioner Gamble asked about what leadership structure would look like when merging two districts, if there will be two separate chiefs, boards, etc., or if these will fully merge. Chief Schmidt responded that these are some of the questions that the committee has been working through. Lacey Fire is leading East Olympia currently, and the only position that would need to be brought in is one administrative member.

- There was discussion of watching the presentation that Steve Brooks gave at East Olympia about the merger.

VIII. ADMINISTRATIVE REPORT

A. Monthly Budget Review & 2027 Budget Preview

Chief Kirkwood reported:

- General Fund 001: net excess of $4.6 million.
- Donation Fund 101: net excess of $19,000.
- Reserve Fund 102: net excess of $1.1 million.
- Equipment Repair and Replacement Fund 103: net excess of $79,000.
- General Fund Summary: net excess of $5.8 million.
- Bond Fund 201: net excess of $80,000.
- Bond 2017 Fund 202: net excess of $566,000.
- 2025 Bond Fund 203: net excess of $820,000.
- Capital Projects Fund 301: net excess of $900,000.
- 2025 Capital Projects Fund 309: net excess of $5.8 million.
- A number of charts and graphs were shown.

Chief Kirkwood transitioned to the 2027 Budget Preview:

- Preliminary 2027 assessed valuation: $22,853,862,942.
- Year over year change: +$35,492,139 (up 0.16%).
- The District's assessed valuation has grown substantially but growth slowed sharply.
- 2027 budget scenarios: bond passes vs. does not pass. The pending bond measure affects whether $1,145,000 of 2025 non-voted debt service is paid from the General Fund in 2027. The 2027 General Fund capacity difference is $1,145,000. This is the difference between the two scenarios before considering any other bond-related costs, proceeds, restrictions, or budget adjustments.
- 2027 proposed General Fund budget if the bond measure passes:
  - Total revenues: $53,861,400.
  - Total expenditures: $44,564,100.
  - Revenue less expenditures: $9,297,300.
- 2027 proposed General Fund budget if the bond measure fails:
  - Total revenues: $53,861,400.
  - Total expenditures: $44,884,400.
  - Revenue less expenditures: $8,977,000.
- 2027 General Fund: 20% minimum difference target (bond measure passes):
  - Projected difference: $9,297,300.
  - 20% minimum target: 9,305,000.
  - Amount above target: $7,700.
- 2027 General Fund 20% minimum target difference (bond measure fails):
  - Projected difference: $8,977,000.

    - 20% minimum target: $8,876,900.
    - Amount above target: $100.
- If the bond measure fails, the District plans to reduce the General Fund transfers with the vehicle replacement fund ($700,000) and the reserve transfer ($30,000) for a combined reduction in transfers of $730,000.
- 2027 budget guidance: division discretionary costs (applies to both scenarios, bond measures passes or fails). Each division must limit increases in discretionary spending costs for the 2027 budget to no more than 5%.
- The 2027 budget if the bond measure passes was presented.

B. Chief Schmidt reported:
- In the HR division, Heather Patti put on the benefits fair last night hosted at the TEC from 4:00 to 7:00 p.m. There was a wonderful turnout from the current vendors.
- The District will be encouraging members to wear their pink shirts from the 24th through the 30th. There are also pins available to wear, and these were handed out to the commissioners.

IX. COMMISSIONER COMMENTS

Commissioner Kelling – thanks for the opportunity to attend virtually. Thanks to the Chief for the note on the Lacey City Council resolution supporting Proposition 1. Appreciate the community engagement reports. It is great when staff can go out and engage with the community and answer their questions. Support for the New Market Skills Program is great. They are an asset that the community should continue to support.

Commissioner Roberts – thank you to everyone for the thorough presentations, especially the budget presentations. Will not be present at the November 19th meeting.

Commissioner Gamble – a lot of great information and presentations this evening. Very appreciative of the work with New Market.

Commissioner Kirkbride – it is amazing how much people do in this community. It is incredible to see how much LFD3 is doing.

Commissioner Hetzler – no comments.

X. OTHER INFORMATION

A. Correspondence
None.

XI. HEARING OF THE PUBLIC / MEMBERS PRESENT

None.

XII. EXECUTIVE SESSION

A. In accordance with RCW 42.30.110(1)(i)(iii) to discuss with legal counsel representation the agency litigation or potential litigation.

A two-minute break was taken before the executive session began at 7:05. The executive session was scheduled to take ten minutes and end at 7:15.

The executive session concluded at 7:15.

MOTION: To authorize the fire chief and staff to initiate litigation against Jones and Roberts Company to the extent necessary to ensure correction of the Station 34 siding issues and related to compensation to the District.
Motion: Commissioner Kirkbride
Second: Commissioner Gamble
Carried: Unanimous

XIII. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned as of 7:16 PM.

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

Chair	Vice Chair
Commissioner	Commissioner
Commissioner	ATTEST: District Secretary