

THURSTON COUNTY FIRE DISTRICT THREE

BOARD OF FIRE COMMISSIONERS

MINUTES OF THE MEETING

November 6th, 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 Kelling Commissioner Kirkbride Commissioner Roberts Commissioner Gamble		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 Kelling

Second: Commissioner Gamble

Carried: Unanimous

III. PROMOTIONAL PINNING AND SWEARING IN CEREMONY

Kirk Beatty: Training Captain

Lateral Firefighters: Jeremy Banks, Spencer Bourque, Jake Johnson,
Jordan Masters

IV. HEARING OF THE PUBLIC /MEMBERS PRESENT

A. Jonathan Clemens, district resident, volunteer at South Bay Fire.

Acknowledgement of Lacey Fire District 3's support for the funeral of Jeremy McLellan, former South Bay and Mason Fire volunteer and a career member at Southeast Thurston.

V. APPROVAL OF THE CONSENT AGENDA

A. Draft minutes of the October 16, 2025, meeting of the Board of Fire Commissioners.

B. Warrants (AP 11A 2025):

- General Fund 001 (Acct #6630) EFTs numbered 5669 through 5675; checks numbered 24620 through 24623 for a total amount of \$57,966.43.
- Equipment Repair & Replacement Fund 103: EFT number 5676; checks numbered 24634 through 24636 for a total amount of \$54,177.52.
- Capital Projects Fund 301: check number 24637 for a total amount of \$14,270.89.
- 307-2017B Capital Projects Fund: EFT number 5677 for a total amount of \$35,541.64.
- 309-2025 Capital Projects Fund: Draft 1659 for a total of \$8,261,600.12.

C. Payroll 10B-2025 in the amount of \$721,364.95.

Prior to approval of the consent agenda: there were a couple of questions regarding items in the warrants. Chief Schmidt provided clarification on the following:

- Construction cost estimate for about \$2700. This is for the work being done at Station 33.
- A \$32,000 amount for Training Center Due Diligence. This is regarding the Britton Parkway property.

MOTION: To approve the consent agenda as published.

Motion: Commissioner Gamble

Second: Commissioner Roberts

Carried: Unanimous

VI. COMMITTEE REPORTS

A. Thurston County Medic One

Commissioner Kirkbride reported from the most recent meeting:

- There was an announcement that the Board of County Commissioners had approved all three contracts.
- The 8th ALS unit, which is assigned to Tumwater, is about 80% operational as of early October. It will be 100% operational by the end of this year.
- There are three new rigs here now and the rest will be trickling in over the next few months.
- Southeast Thurston has been added a recipient of one of the surplus units.
- The medical program director was in attendance and gave an update as to the protocols and changes. They have looked at the changes that are coming up with Medicare and Medicaid and anticipate little impact.
- The next phase of the comprehensive plan is to develop a community needs assessment. A facilitator has been hired for that process and a committee has been formed. The first committee meeting is next Monday. Commissioner Kirkbride is on this committee. The facilitator will read the discussion with all of the stakeholders in the community, including the citizens and everybody who has a relationship with medical services.

- There was approval of an application for West Region EMS Council for another term. Commissioner Kirkbride was elected to represent Thurston EMS Council.
- The next meeting will take place on December 18th. There will be no November meeting.

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

Commissioner Gamble attended the most recent meeting, standing in for Commissioner Roberts, and reported:

- The Dupont radio site was completed at the end of October. Now they are just waiting on PSE to finish their part. That will be the completion of the TCERN project as a whole.
- The Vertex NG911 phone system is slated to go live on November 18th. Telecommunicators have already received their training.
- The last telecommunicators academy of the year is starting on November 10th. They are expecting three to five participants in that. There has been a total of 18 new hires this year, and they are no longer having a staffing shortage.
- The senior radio system tech, Landon Hansen, was recognized as the Washington State tech of the year at an annual banquet.
- Currently running 7% above budget.
- Total calls are down about 1.4%. 911 calls are down 4.8%. Nonemergent calls are up 0.8%.
- The next meeting will take place on December 3rd.

C. City/District Liaison

Chief Schmidt reported that the meeting will take place on November 20th.

D. Thurston County Fire Commissioners Association

Commissioner Kelling reported from the October 21st meeting:

- Kyle Bustad, the Thurston County emergency manager, was the program speaker. He shared that there is a duty officer and a backup officer on call 24/7. There was a highlight on Thurston County Alerts and the fact that you do not have to live in the county to sign up for the alerts.
- The focus for 2026 is evacuation planning. They completed their comprehensive emergency management plan (CEMP) earlier this year.
- Commissioner Fournier talked about the county's efforts to pass a balanced budget. From the previous brief, they had reduced their funding delta significantly.
- Officer position nominations for leadership for the association are open. Nominations will take place at the next meeting on the 18th, with installation/swearing in at the December meeting.
- Lacey Fire offered to host the in-person meeting at the TEC on December 16th. The association leadership did approve that. There will be a tour of the new VRF. The meeting will be a potluck.

E. Thurston Regional Planning Council

Chief Cerovski reported:

- TRPC has completed a host of projects related to their Title VI work, as well as working on their legislative priorities.
- Tomorrow there will be an executive session for three interviews for the position of executive director. Upon completion, voting members will vote on the selection of the executive director.
- Commissioner Kelling inquired about when the new executive director will start. Chief Cerovski reported that a start date will be determined when the offer is extended, accepted, and negotiated.

F. Community Outreach

Chief Schmidt shared:

- The last week of October was very busy with the completion of a great deal of public education, as well as Halloween. There were three different visits to elementary schools for Trunk or Treats. There was a visit for the All Kids Win Halloween 5k.
- Accolades to Chief Patti, who was invited to North Thurston Public Schools. He spoke at the bus driver training about what to expect if involved in an incident. He presented a wonderful PowerPoint.
- There were two Station 31 walk-in tours.
- Bicycle helmet fittings continue to take place.
- There are two upcoming Senior Safe At Home visits scheduled.
- There have been almost 10 requests for smoke alarm assistance.
- There was a recent phone call from the neighbor of a patient who was present when crews came out and responded. She wanted to call and express her appreciation.
- The high school football season has wrapped up.

G. Capital Facilities and Equipment Activities

Chief Cerovski shared:

- The paperwork has been completed for the purchase of the Britton Parkway property. All of the filings were done yesterday.
- The two aid units landed in Lacey last Friday and are beginning the process of the final steps to be ready to go in service. Aid 33 will be going in service within the next 30 days. Aid 31 will be staffed when extra staffing is available on shift.
- One of the last few things to be done for the exterior of Station 31 is a tree mitigation project. Leaves have been coming down at different times in the parking lot, which has made it difficult to keep everything looking sharp. Some of the trees need to be limbed as well.

Chief Patti shared:

- On October 20th, attended the final inspection of the new Engine 31, along with AC Chris Frost, Lt. David Perz, and Chief Fire Mechanic Adam Cummings.
- This is a very rigorous and lengthy inspection.

- Chief Patti showed numerous photos of the fire truck.

VII. OLD BUSINESS

A. No items.

VIII. NEW BUSINESS

- A. 2026 LFD3 Budget – Public Hearing Board Discussion
 (Appendix A)
 Commissioner Kirkbride opened the public hearing for comments from the public or from members.
 No comments were received and the public hearing was closed.
 The opportunity was given for the commissioners to provide comments or questions. None were received.
 Action will be taken at the next meeting.

IX. ADMINISTRATIVE REPORT

Chief Schmidt reported:

- As mentioned by Chief Cerovski, the purchase of the Britton Parkway property has been completed. Final numbers on the property: \$8,511,000. Staff was correct in that closing costs were the seller's cost, and the district only incurred about \$11,000 of buyer's charges.
- There were questions from the commissioners about whether there is an audit update. The audit process is currently still underway. In discussion with members of finance today, it is anticipated that the process will be completed in the next week or two. Additional time will be required after that for the report to be created. There may be a report at the next meeting, although it is more likely to be available at a December meeting.
- There was a question as to whether there are any WSRB updates. A report was received in March of 2024 indicating a level of 3 for the whole district, which was a good improvement. With the creation of CR&R and the work of that group, along with other changes in the district, it might be possible to go back to WSRB sooner. Typically, the WSRB ratings happen every 7 to 10 years. At this point, it may be best to wait about a year before going back to WSRB to request that they review the improvements that have been made.
- Regarding efforts with the city: staff was able to meet with Terry McDaniel and Vanessa Dolbee from the city. They came out and Chief Roberts was able to present about the work that he has been doing with regard to business inspections. They were very happy with the fee schedules that Chief Roberts created. The plan going forward is that in 2026, Chief Roberts' team is going to work with the city and begin going out to the businesses offering inspection and education opportunities so that they can learn what that looks like and the value of having these inspections done. The city liked this approach. There is no plan to apply fees until 2027. This gives time for understanding the need and helping people understand what the process looks like, as well as giving time to

work with different insurance purveyors so that they can understand what this looks like in the community with the hope of there being insurance benefits for the business community. There was an invitation for staff to come back in January and do an update for the city council.

- There should be information back from legal counsel on the handbook soon. Councilor Houser should be present at the first December meeting to advise on the recommended changes. There will be a preparatory document made available before the meeting so that the commissioners have time to review it.
- Chief Schmidt shared that there was a recent invitation to meet with Ben Miller Todd, who oversees Medic One as well as emergency management for the county. He has been very open in different meetings sharing some of the financial struggles that the county has and ways that they can find some efficiencies. There was a warning provided that emergency management is going to have a bit of a hit for their ability to fund their staff. Ben Miller Todd also mentioned that he is in talks with the cities of Tumwater and Olympia because they are concerned about whether or not they can fund the staff of emergency management and have someone in there that can help coordinate for different fire districts but also for the cities. He explained that it seems like both cities are going to try to work it into their budget and perhaps use the 0.5 person per city to fully fund one position to help with the emergency management programming and oversight for the county.
 - This information was not shared out of an expectation for LFD3 to participate. There is already somebody in this type of management role at the City of Lacey. Rather, he was sharing that in early 2026, he will be codifying or creating an ILA between the cities and emergency management but also wanted to bring it to LFD3 as one of the bigger agencies in the county, having areas that are covered by the county, and that LFD3 might have concerns about bigger events such as wildfires, earthquakes, etc.
 - His ask was to consider whether there is an opportunity for an ILA with the county, not necessarily to get the same thing that is already available from the city, but to find areas of focus that need attention and to help fund an FTE.
 - There will be an audit with the plans for 2026. Wildland fire evacuation routes are an area of concern for the district. This entire conversation is worth having and will be a topic of ongoing discussion.
 - Commissioner Kirkbride mentioned the specific concern of Mt. Rainier being an active volcano and the possibility of a lahar and its impacts on the county and surrounding areas.
- Chief Schmidt resumed sharing and mentioned that the first annual Santa Mobile planning meeting has now taken place. The theme this year, which will guide the decorating of the bus, is the grinch who stole Christmas.
- There will be eight different evening events over a three-week period.

- Taylor and Chris have enlisted the business analyst for help, and all of the sign-ups will be done online, which will streamline the process.

Chief Patti shared:

- The wildland mobilization season has wrapped up for Washington State and the central region.
- Between the REMS team going out and the wildland mobilization, LFD3 was mobilized nine times. There was a brush truck that was down for about a month and a half waiting for parts; otherwise, there would have been even more opportunities.
- Although the Washington State wildland season has come to a close, this is typically the EMAC season with California's wildfires. Each of those requests will be evaluated on a case-by-case basis.
- On October 25th, there was a big windstorm. There was a county-wide volunteer ECC activation for the county with a HIRL requested (a High Incident Response Load). This is a plan with TCOMM that, as storms or other incidents arise that require a high response load when TCOMM is inundated with calls, there is a four-step process in the county.
 - Notification to all the county fire agencies about the anticipated event.
 - Voluntary activation of the emergency communication centers. Each fire department has their own ECC to take that call load from TCOMM to handle the non-priority calls such as wires down, trees down, etc.
 - Mandatory request for all county agencies to stand up their ECCs.
 - If TCOMM has a catastrophic failure and lose radios and phones, they put the fire departments on fire watch. People will then be directed to call the fire station for 911 calls.
- The October 25th event was a level two (voluntary activation of ECC). Chief Cerovski and Chief Patti came in and activated the ECC and handled about 11 calls over the course of about two hours. At that point, the call volume significantly tapered off.
- There were two stations that lost power: Station 33 and Station 32. They were all back online within 12 to 24 hours. The generators at Station 33 ran perfectly, but there was a generator failure at Station 32. There is already an active plan to replace that generator. There is currently a temporary portable one in place.
- On October 26th, there was a commercial structure fire in an apartment complex on Clearbrook Drive. A very observant citizen noticed some black smoke coming out of a little eave on the apartment. When crews arrived, nobody was home. The crews forced entry and found that there was a fire in the back wall behind the fireplace.
- Commissioner Kirkbride inquired about how the ECC system is activated. Chief Patti reported that EMS calls need to have a dispatch connection because of ambulances, medic units, etc. There is normal dispatching of structure fires, which go out regardless of the fire department's operation at the time. For Priority II EMS calls, dispatch will call on the ECC and

relay the call and ask who will be sent. As LFD3 manages resources internally, they will relay who to send to the call. For low priority calls like power lines down, they will send the call to the LFD3 screen in the ECC. On the LFD3 side, a button is pushed to show that the call has been seen, and then dispatch closes out the call and LFD3 handles it internally.

X. COMMISSIONER COMMENTS

Commissioner Gamble – community outreach sounds busy. It is great to hear how involved LFD3 is in the community. Are there any updates on anticipated donations? Chief Schmidt responded that there has been no communication from the charity yet, but word is usually received in November. Commissioner Gamble asked if the December calendar can include the Thurston County Fire Commissioner meeting on December 16th. Congratulations again to the laterals and the training captain.

Commissioner Roberts – agreement with everything stated by Commissioner Gamble. The new rig looks amazing. It will be so exciting to see it out and about.

Commissioner Kelling – a few notes from the WFCFA Annual Conference: attended the Snure seminar; there are really no legal updates of note. Excellent motivational keynote speaker. Two out of the three seminars attended were very informative. One of them was titled Buildings, Bonds, and Ballots and was about planning out capital facility requirements and planning out the financing of those requirements and getting the public financing means actually passed. Copies of the slides can be made available to the other commissioners if desired. Heard from Chief Brooks at the Fire Chiefs Association. An email should have been received from the WFCFA regarding signatures for the fallen firefighter memorial license plate. 3500 signatures are needed for that, and it is very easy to fill out online. The physical fallen firefighter memorial was approved. They are working with architects for the final design. DNR is providing project management. They are looking at sometime in the summer of 2028 on the capital campus. With regard to legislative priorities: TIF is the number one legislative priority but they are not advancing anything that would have budget implications or require funding or resources. Lakewood was the most recent city who passed the TIF in 2024. If you Google Lakewood TIF, the whole document is there. The legislative ask would be to make sure that the negative impacts or potential negative impacts on fire service districts with taxing authority is minimized. Other things that are in the works legislatively: wildfire mitigation; specifically the impacts of insurance ratings and to get more transparency for owners; the Office of the Insurance Commissioner and Office of Public Lands are working on risk mapping. There were also conversations about Lifescan reimbursement and the expansion of telehealth for mental health counseling. Also, they are looking to hire a new healthcare manager as part of the permanent staff. They are looking at potentially having somebody new on board as early as January of next year. Officer elections were conducted for the WFCFA.

Chief Schmidt circled back with information about the charity. The school district, which is who the firefighters charity partners with, covered all of the needs for the families. However, the local members are trying to figure out another way to give back. When this is determined the information will be shared.

Commissioner Kirkbride – the promotional event tonight was outstanding. Chief Schmidt and the senior management team are doing amazing work. Thank you for all of the hard work.

XI. CORRESPONDENCE

None.

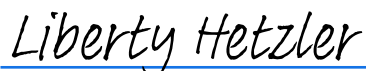
XII. HEARING OF THE PUBLIC / MEMBERS PRESENT

None.

XIII. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned as of 6:52 PM.

***Next Regular Meeting: November 20, 2025– 5:30 p.m.
Available via remote meeting.***



Liberty Hetzler (11/21/2025 09:06:47 PST)

Chair



Melissa Gamble (11/24/2025 12:37:01 PST)

Commissioner

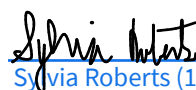


Richard Kelling (11/21/2025 12:27:36 PST)

Commissioner



Vice Chair



Sylvia Roberts (11/21/2025 18:46:16 PST)

Commissioner



ATTEST: District Secretary

November 6, 2025 BoFC Meeting Minutes Final

Final Audit Report

2025-12-02

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2025-11-24 - 12:36:59 PM PST



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2025-11-24 - 6:51:08 PM PST



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