

**THURSTON COUNTY FIRE DISTRICT THREE**

**BOARD OF FIRE COMMISSIONERS**

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING**

**November 17, 2022**

Commissioner Kirkbride  
Commissioner Gamble  
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 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 Hetzler  
Second: Commissioner Roberts  
Carried: Unanimous

**III. HEARING OF THE PUBLIC /MEMBERS PRESENT**

**A. Public Comment – CPR Recognition Event**

The citizen heroes of the May 2022 CPR event that took place on a golf course were recognized and honored.

**B. Lacey Firefighters Charity – Fall/Winter Charity Update**

Kelsey Benton and Gwen Morton provided an update. The first big event will be Thanksgiving baskets. Food is donated to provide a full turkey dinner for 25 families. The list of families is provided by Thurston County Public Schools.

The Santa Firehouse Event will take place on December 11th from 2:00 to 4:00. This event is for 50 families whose names are also provided by Thurston County Public Schools. Gifts are provided for approximately 150 kids. A Target registry is used to organize the gift list and shop for the kids.

#### **IV. APPROVAL OF THE CONSENT AGENDA**

A. Draft minutes of the November 3rd, 2022, Board of Fire Commissioners meeting.

B. Warrants:

- General Fund 001 (Acct #6630) EFT numbered 5115 through 5119; checks numbered 23303 through 23322, and Draft 1036, for a total amount of \$591,378.36.
- 2017B Capital Projects Fund 307 check numbered 23317 and Draft 5120 for a total amount of \$4,535.02.

C. Payroll 11A in the amount of \$1,475,638.87.

**MOTION:** To approve the consent agenda as published.

Motion: Commissioner Gamble

Second: Commissioner Kelling

Carried: Unanimous

Chief Brooks mentioned that the most costly items listed on the warrants are related to the annual hose and ladder testing. It is an annual requirement. This was done by a third party and must be done for all hoses, whether on the front line or reserve units, as well as all spare hose held in reserve in the stations. Chief Frost reported that there was not a single section of hose that failed testing. Regarding ladder testing, the national standards no longer stipulate that you must test ladders every year. They must be visually inspected unless they are damaged. However, the Survey and Rating Bureau did not adopt those national changes, so the annual testing will still be completed. This is done by the same third party that tests the hoses.

#### **V. COMMITTEE REPORTS**

A. Thurston County Medic One

Commissioner Kirkbride reported from the November 16th meeting:

- An explanation was provided of min/max, which is a process that the Department of Health requires for setting a minimum and maximum number of certain kinds of ambulances. The Department of Health asks for this to be reviewed every two years. There were recommendations made for changes, and those were adopted.
- The BLS program manager at Medic One retired, and a new person has been hired, Chris Clem, former director of Olympic Ambulance.

- There was a report on the challenges of ambulance waiting times at the hospitals. During COVID, a waiver came out from DOH for the ratio of staffing per patients. That waiver is still in place until the end of the year, even though all executive orders terminated on October 31st.
- There are also discussions underway with the hospitals about peak time staffing for the ER to be able to take the patients from the ambulances in order to free up the ambulances. There is a group at Providence St. Peter to specifically work with stroke patients, but that is coming to an end and those patients will then have to be transported to Pierce County, which then causes additional issues with ambulance availability.
- There was a financial report for the first three quarters. Medic One is below the budget, primarily because there are several unfilled positions.
- The next meeting will be on January 18th.

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

Commissioner Roberts reported from the November 9th meeting:

- Financial report: all revenue is above budget; below in expenditures; sales tax is up by 2.94% over last year.
- TCERN: the changeover is expected to be in the first quarter of 2024. There are five remaining sites left still being worked on. The Dupont JBLM location is the most problematic. The portable chargers are on backorder but the hope is that they will arrive by the first quarter of 2023.
- Staffing continues to be an issue; currently down by seven. There are also retirements coming up.
- The budget was approved for \$19.5 million.
- The radios have all been ordered and the TCERN project is paying for that. There will be a definite line in the sand where they will not buy more radios and it will become the financial responsibility of each individual agency to buy additional radios. It is recommended that if there are plans for additional staffing up, to get those numbers in soon.
- One contract with supervisors was approved; there are two more contracts outstanding. There will be a meeting in December with the hope of settling the other two contracts.
- Chief Brooks responded with a kudos to Chief Frost regarding the issue of the portable chargers and getting them reallocated to ensure that all of the frontline and regularly staffed units have adequate chargers. Anticipating completion of the entire fleet, along with the City of Olympia, before Thanksgiving. Hoping to have in place by the end of the year or early in 2023 the integration of the radios with the air packs. The air pack and the radio have to be paired and it will have to be verified each morning as part of the equipment check.

#### C. City/District Liaison

No report

Chief Brooks reported:

- The city made an official announcement of the interim city manager position going to Economic Development Director Rick Walk.
- Inquired of the council if there were any plans for a sendoff for the departing city manager Scott Spence.
- Former mayor Clarkson has passed and a memorial will take place for him on January 7th.
- Commissioner Kirkbride provided an update on the issue of the state buying a hotel to make into a homeless encampment. The business community is not pleased with these plans. It is to be fully fenced in and managed. The same organization manages a similar facility in Pierce County and it seems to be managed well there.
- The planned hotel already has homeless people living in it under vouchers, and in the last year, Lacey Police responded to that hotel about 450 times.
- WDOT will be purchasing and will therefore own the hotel, so it should be possible to get into an agreement with WSDOT to pay LFD3 for servicing the facility.

#### D. Thurston County Fire Commissioners Association

Commissioner Gamble reported from the November 15th meeting:

- Hillary Flowers did an excellent presentation on the Thurston County Peer Support Consortium and their services including chaplains and mental health professionals. She highlighted the importance of mental health support for members. There was great feedback from the commissioners. There were some concerns because of the number of volunteer firefighters in these areas and how this support group would be funded and whether there would be enough members to have all the different components. Nonetheless the presentation was very well received.
- Legislative Day is February 17th. Trying to rally together to have as many commissioners as possible attend that. Thurston County had a dismal representation at the conference this year; hoping to make that better in the future.

#### E. Thurston Regional Planning Council -

Commissioner Kelling reported from the most recent meeting:

- There was a call for projects for the next review. There are a number of funding sources that the county receives primarily for transportation-related projects, which are based on population density. This was the first presentation to the council for proposals. The Council has a dollar value per project category to award. That award will come sometime in the December timeframe.
- Legislative priorities: there remain five that the Council will take for action. Those five priorities remain: the I-5 Mounts Road to Tumwater Nisqually River delta corridor; the rural state highways as a main street; the regional airport discussion; broadband access across the county, and regional mobility grants.

- Regarding the regional airport: this is an agenda item for the December Council meeting. Expecting to vote on a measure that was brought up by County Commissioner Edwards to submit a letter on behalf of the Council either for or against the proposed location of that Greenfield airport in Thurston County.
- The economic cost of living index is updated quarterly and sent out. It is currently at 113.6. The historical numbers have been around 109. This means that the Olympia Lacey Tumwater region is 13.6% higher than the average of the 261 urban areas that participate in this cost of living index survey.
- The next meeting is on December 2nd.
- Commissioner Roberts asked, regarding the airport discussion, whether there was any talk about the infrastructure necessary to build an airport. Commissioner Kelling responded that the main talking point was the consensus against having the airport in this area. The director mentioned that regardless of where it is located, it is believed that there will be one in the south sound area which will have impacts on Thurston County and likely Lacey Fire regardless of where it ends up being placed. The time frame for this is 2050.

#### F. Community Outreach

Chief Brooks shared:

- The first HOA contacted declined a presentation. Staff reached out multiple times to the other HOA without any response, so it was removed from the calendar. Will be working with the staff in the New Year to have a more proactive approach of requesting an opportunity, rather than offering, to talk with the groups using the facilities.
- Preparing for Santa activities. The first activity will be the City of Lacey's Holiday Parade on December 5th. Beginning on the 6th, there will be 12 nights of Santa going out to various areas in the community.
- Will be bringing back the Santa Stops.
- Partnering with the Jubilee community for the golf cart parade on December 13th.
- For the charity events, there will be a shopping day on December 10th and then the Santa Firehouse event on December 11th.

#### G. Capital Facilities and Equipment Activities

Chief Cerovski shared:

- Regarding the VRF project: have initiated the notice to proceed. Contracts are signed with Christiansen Incorporated General Contractors. The first preconstruction conference will be on November 29th. There will then be bimonthly owner-architect-contractor meetings. Have already had first request for information.
- Regarding the AFG grant: all of the money issued to AFG was distributed. LFD3 was not in any of those allocations. There is an additional \$90 million

that has been reallocated to the project. They need to go through some elements at the congressional level and hope to initiate those additional awards before the middle of December.

- Staff is moving forward with all the other elements for the purchase of that vehicle by reserving the chassis as soon as next week.
- Making attempts to improve the audio in the meeting room.

## **VI. OLD BUSINESS**

### **A. 2023 LFD3 Budget – Board Discussion/Proposed Adoption**

Chief Brooks shared a change to the budget. LFD3 is obligated to a fixed amount for the cost of living increase, which is at 3.5% for the term of this contract. That was also budgeted for all of the non-contract employees and members. The deputy chiefs, director positions, and the program manager position are under individual employment agreements and contracts, and those had been capped at a 3% cost of living. This creates compression issues. Dale looked at the feasibility of expanding that from 3% to 3.5%. The total net impact of those contracts is about \$7500, which is well within the capacity of the budget. Staff would like to move forward with this modification to the budget.

There are no other changes to the budget.

Commissioner Kelling had a question about whether there will be any added FTEs or positions in the coming year. Chief Brooks clarified that there will actually be a net reduction in total FTEs from the 2020 budget into the 2023 budget.

**MOTION:** To adopt the 2023 Lacey Fire District 3 budget.

Motion: Commissioner Hetzler  
Second: Commissioner Gamble  
Carried: Unanimous

## **VII. NEW BUSINESS**

### **A. Resolution Number 885-11-22 – District Tax Levy Certification**

**MOTION:** To adopt Resolution Number 885-11-12 to authorize an increase in the district's tax levy from the previous year and the accompanying authorization for the chief to sign.

Motion: Commissioner Roberts  
Second: Commissioner Kelling  
Carried: Unanimous

## **VIII. ADMINISTRATIVE REPORT**

Chief Brooks reported:

- Thanks to Director Huff and the finance team for putting together the budget in a timely manner. There are some significant changes coming to the county assessor's office, and Dale will work towards building positive relationships with the changing staff members.
- Chief Brooks will be leaving town at the end of the month and will not be present for the next meeting in person; can attend via Zoom.
- Regarding the Days Inn plan from the Department of Transportation: this is now public. Will be working to anticipate the impacts of this plan and work with the appropriate authorities. Chief Brooks was on a panel last week with the Secretary of Transportation Millar and Chief Batiste from state patrol. They indicated that the desire of the Department of Transportation is to move forward as quickly as possible because those funds are available. They reported that they are being very proactive about making sure there are wraparound services on site, which has not been experienced with previous hotel situations. This is supposed to entail of a management company on site to help connect people with social services, counseling, etc. as well as monitoring for inappropriate behaviors and actions. DOT is also modifying the hotel to make it more suitable for long-term living situations.
- Commissioner Kirkbride reported that alcohol and drugs will not be allowed in the common areas of the hotel facility but will be allowed in the individual rooms.
- Commissioner Kirkbride asked if there is an agreement with WSDOT for the Hawks Prairie facility. Chief Brooks responded that this is not in place yet, but the finance staff has been working diligently on this. While this will be a large facility with a significant capacity, it has a skeleton on-site crew. Chief Brooks recently got a new point of contact for the facility and will be reaching out.
- Chief Brooks reported that a second round of interviews was conducted in the past week with the deputy chiefs and HR. Excited about the potential of some new candidates. Looking ahead to the upcoming academy, there will be the four previously hired paramedics, as well as possibly up to six additional candidates from the current hiring pool.

## **IX. COMMISSIONER COMMENTS**

Commissioner Roberts – thanks for the wonderful presentations this evening. There is a possibility of missing the second meeting in December but will attempt to attend via Zoom.

Commissioner Gamble – thanks for the presentations. Looking forward to all of the upcoming events.

Commissioner Kelling – thanks for Mr. Webb for providing the history books. Would like a copy of the brief that AC Flowers gave.

Commissioner Hetzler – will not be present at several meetings in the next year, including December 1st.

Commissioner Roberts – thanks to Dale and his crew for all the hard work and for the great presentations. Thurston County has good numbers for surviving a cardiac arrest. A key part of this is the care provided by LFD3, Medic One, and Providence St. Peter. Citizen CPR is the foundation of that success.

**X. CORRESPONDENCE**

None.

**XI. HEARING OF THE PUBLIC / MEMBERS PRESENT**

None.

**XII. REQUEST FOR EXECUTIVE SESSION**

A. In accordance with RCW 42.30.110(1)(d) & (g) to discuss publicly bid contracts and to review the performance of a public employee.

**XIII. ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting adjourned as of 7:07 PM.

***Next Regular Meeting: December 1st, 2022 – 5:30 p.m.  
Available via remote meeting.***

Chair

Commissioner

*Sylvia Roberts*

12/2/2022

Commissioner

DocuSigned by:

*Liberty Hetzler*

12/2/2022

Vice Chair

DocuSigned by:

*Rick Kelling*

12/4/2022

Commissioner

DocuSigned by:

*Steve Brooks*

12/2/2022

ATTEST: District Secretary