

THURSTON COUNTY FIRE DISTRICT THREE

BOARD OF FIRE COMMISSIONERS

MINUTES OF THE MEETING

December 4th, 2025

The meeting was conducted remotely via Zoom and with in-person attendance at Station 31.
1231 Franz St SE, Lacey, WA 98503

Present:	Present (Virtual):	Excused:
Commissioner Kelling Commissioner Kirkbride 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. OATH OF OFFICE

Commissioners Melissa Gamble and Sylvia Roberts

III. APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA

MOTION: To approve the agenda as published.

Motion: Commissioner Kelling

Second: Commissioner Gamble

Carried: Unanimous

IV. HEARING OF THE PUBLIC /MEMBERS PRESENT

None.

V. APPROVAL OF THE CONSENT AGENDA

A. Draft minutes of the November 20, 2025, meeting of the Board of Fire Commissioners.

B. Warrants (AP 12A 2025):

- General Fund 001 (Acct #6630) EFTs numbered 5687 through 5693; checks numbered 24663 through 24664 for a total amount of \$103,092.36.

- Equipment Repair and Replacement Fund 103: EFT numbered 5694 for a total amount of \$126.71.
- 2017B Capital Improvement Project Fund 307: EFT numbered 5695 for a total amount of \$1,816.75.

C. Payroll 11B-2025 in the amount of \$721,808.90.

MOTION: To approve the consent agenda as published.

Motion: Commissioner Kirkbride

Second: Commissioner Roberts

Carried: Unanimous

VI. COMMITTEE REPORTS

A. Thurston County Medic One

No report; the next meeting will take place on December 18th.

Yesterday was the scheduled meeting for the West Region EMS Council. The executive director quit last week and left. The officers of the Council were not able to get into the Zoom account to set up the meeting until after it had already started.

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

Commissioner Roberts reported from the December 3rd meeting:

- Revenue is above budget and expenditures are below budget.
- TCERN updates: the scheduled power to the Dupont station did in fact take place yesterday. There is still some site work to be completed out there, but it is almost done. The miscellaneous work is anticipated to be completed in mid-February.
- The subscriber programming update was scheduled for the first two weeks of December. It was said to have gone well.
- The phone system cutover took place, and it was the smoothest one that has ever happened. The dispatchers are very pleased with it, as it is much easier to use.
- In the past, if there was a 911 call and hangup, the dispatchers had to call the number back. With this new system, they are able to send a text back to the number instead of having to make a call.
- TCOMM is nearly staffed, for the first time in several years.
- There was brief discussion about the monthly call volumes for October. It was considerably up, which is likely due to the major storm that took place in October.
- Two contracts were approved, one for supervisors and one for tele-responders.
- There were ten policy updates, most of which were the result of legal changes or bargaining.
- The next meeting will take place on January 7th.

C. City/District Liaison

The next meeting will be on December 9th at the city.

D. Thurston County Fire Commissioners Association

No report; the next meeting is on December 16th. This meeting will be in person at the TEC classroom. Chief Schmidt will be giving the opening remarks. The focus of the meeting is officer elections, and the program includes a VRF tour provided by the senior mechanic, Adam Cummings. All of the commissioners should consider attending. It will also be a potluck.

E. Thurston Regional Planning Council

Chief Cerovski reported from the November 7th meeting:

- At the last meeting, the new director was selected, Elissa Gertler. Her first meeting will take place tomorrow morning, December 5th.

F. Community Outreach

Chief Schmidt shared:

- There have been around four car seat installations.
- Plans for the Santa Mobile are underway. The map showing the planned routes was shared. The first Santa Mobile drive took place last night. The bus is decorated as the Grinch. Photos of the bus were shared as well.

G. Capital Facilities and Equipment Activities

No report this evening.

VII. OLD BUSINESS

A. Commissioners Handbook – Final Presentation Board Review & Action

Counselor Houser presented the final draft of the handbook, pointing out the following specific paragraphs:

- One of the items pointed out in the handbook is that the guidance included within it that is required by federal or state laws and regulations may be subject to changes by those laws or regulations at any time.
- The handbook does not grant rights or privileges to members of the public or third parties. The failure of the Board of Commissioners to adhere to the information in the handbook will not result in any liability to the District, its officers, agents, or employees. This language is in the handbook to protect the board.
- The standard of the Board has always been that the board will advertise vacancies for 30 days. This is not required by statute, however; it has been a historic policy.
- The rules of order serve to establish a framework for orderly conduct of meetings.
- There is language that references how to move forward if a meeting is disrupted in some way, with guidance on relocating a meeting to a safe location with the public excluded, if necessary.

- A new addition to executive sessions is to consider national security measures. The handbook has guidance on when to go into an executive session, which can include to consider national security and to consider data or security breaches such as cyberattacks or ransomware.
- Chief Cerovski referenced the three-minute limit for public comment and asked for opinions on whether this should be three minutes or five minutes. The commissioners agreed on the three-minute limit. Chief Cerovski mentioned the need for a timer so that a speaker has the ability to see how much time is available for them to speak.
- On page 41, there is a calendar of events, intended to provide guidance to scheduled events. There was a request to move the chief's review to October before the budget season begins in November. Clarification is needed on whether this references beginning the chief's review or completing it. Commissioner Hetzler reported a preference to have the chief's review finalized before the budget season begins in November.
- Chief Cerovski also mentioned that February is typically when a state of the district presentation will be given by the fire chief.
- Counselor Houser raised a question about the fact that there are two open comment sections in meetings, resulting in a total of six minutes available to individuals to comment if they speak during both comment sections. Counselor Houser mentioned that there is a requirement to call for public comment before taking action, so the option for public comment should take place before the agenda is approved or before any changes are made. It is not required to be repeated at the end of meeting. It was agreed after discussion to move the hearing of the public up to an earlier point in the meeting, before the approval of the agenda, leave the second time for hearing of the public, and keep the three-minute limit.
- It was agreed that the next two weeks will be available for further review of the document to ensure that there are no grammatical errors, but the content has been agreed upon. In two weeks, the handbook will be adopted.

VIII. NEW BUSINESS

No items.

IX. ADMINISTRATIVE REPORT

Chief Schmidt reported:

- Chief Cerovski has an update regarding capital facilities and equipment.
 - There is a 20-year elevator which has had some issues this year. The service contractor came in to fix it, and it worked well for two weeks and then broke again. Replacement of the necessary part is about \$27,000. The reason for the expense is because the part has to be custom fabricated because of the age of the elevator. A deposit must be paid for it to be built, with the balance to be paid

sometime after the first of the year when the installation has been completed. There will also be an assessment of the system to determine when it is no longer feasible to continue repairing the existing elevator vs. when to replace it with a new one. A replacement elevator could be nearly a quarter of a million dollars.

- Commissioner Roberts inquired if there will be a warranty on the new part. Chief Cerovski said that he is confident there will be a warranty on the part and the work when it is completed. There are also permits that have to be pulled, as well as oversight by Washington Labor and Industries.
- The changes in January dates were posted on the website and on the front door.
- Thurston County Fire Commissioners dues have been paid.
- Regarding the 988 suicide prevention stickers: next Monday, December 8, there will be a meeting with the Department of Veteran's Affairs.
- The Thurston County Medic One contract final draft was received today. That will be sent out to the commissioners and should be on the agenda for the next meeting.
- East Olympia currently operates with South Thurston and they have been sharing a fire chief, as well as other resources, for some time. Their fire chief, Andrew Schaffran, just notified East Olympia and the county at large that he is going to be taking a job in Idaho. He will be leaving in January. When he steps away, East Olympia will be down a fire chief, an operations chief, a mechanic, and their main administrative support. They had a special meeting today and it is expected that they will be reaching out to LFD3 to ask for support via an ILA with some administrative support.

X. COMMISSIONER COMMENTS

Commissioner Kelling – thanks to Counselor Houser for all of the work on the commissioner handbook. Will not be present for the December 18th meeting.

Commissioner Roberts – thanks for all of the hard work that has been done on the commissioner handbook. Thank you to Skip for being present to swear in the commissioners.

Commissioner Gamble – thanks to Counselor Houser for the swearing in this evening and to Chief Cerovski for all of the hard work on the handbook.

Commissioner Kirkbride – thank you to Counselor Houser for all of the help and hard work.

Commissioner Hetzler – thanks to Counselor Houser for being present this evening. Thanks to Chief Cerovski for the huge amount of work that has been put into the document.

XI. CORRESPONDENCE

None.

XII. HEARING OF THE PUBLIC / MEMBERS PRESENT

A comment was made from district resident Jonathan Clemens about the East Olympia Fire District, which has had difficulty with levies in the past. Appreciation to the district for being willing to consider their offers and outreach appropriately. The challenge would be if there is going to be a long-term commitment and if that will be financially neutral or even beneficial to District 3.

Chief Cerovski made a comment to thank the commissioners for being sworn in again to these positions. Not enough appreciation is given for the sacrifices the commissioners make for the district and their leadership. Thank you for the service.

XIII. EXECUTIVE SESSION

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

The executive session was scheduled to take 10 minutes beginning at 6:30.

The executive session took an additional 5 minutes, ending at 6:45. The floor was opened to accept Chief Schmidt's evaluation.

MOTION: To accept the fire chief evaluation report for Fire Chief Jennifer Schmidt as written.

Motion: Commissioner Kelling

Second: Commissioner Roberts

Carried: Unanimous

XIV. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned as of 6:46 PM.

***Next Regular Meeting: December 18th, 2025– 5:30 p.m.
Available via remote meeting.***

Liberty Hetzler

Liberty Hetzler (12/19/2025 20:08:42 PST)

Chair



Vice Chair

Melissa Gamble

Melissa Gamble (12/22/2025 11:20:51 PST)

Commissioner

Commissioner



ATTEST: District Secretary

Commissioner

12 04 2025 BoFC Meeting Minutes Final

Final Audit Report

2025-12-22

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