



Board of Fire Commissioners Meeting Minutes August 10, 2023

McLane Black Lake Fire Department
Board of Fire Commissioners
August 10, 2023

CALL TO ORDER

Commissioner Dale Putnam of District 9 Board of Fire Commissioners called the meeting to order at 1809 hours. Commissioners Dale Putnam, Len Albert, Mark Thompson, Mark Campeau and Jason Foust (virtual), Chief Leonard Johnson, Assistant Chief Chris Patti, Division Chief - Logistics Josh Ambrose, Business Operations Director Brett Warwick, Chris Welch, Shane Heston (virtual), and Board Secretary Tom McBride attended the regular meeting held in person and via the virtual Zoom platform using the link posted on the Fire District's website.

BOARD FOR VOLUNTEER FIREFIGHTERS

The Board for Volunteer Firefighters met prior to the Board of Commissioners meeting.

ADDITIONS TO AGENDA

None. The agenda was approved as presented.

PUBLIC COMMENT & VISITING SPEAKERS

Shane Heston from Robert M. Trask Agency Inc. presented on insurance issues for Fire District 9. Mr. Heston, the Fire District's insurance broker, addressed the issue of reinsurance and its problematic state right now with prices continuing to increase. The Fire District is in the process of renewing the current policy effective September 1, 2023. The policy renewal is \$140,674. Fire District reinsurance costs alone are up

approximately 19% due primarily to higher call volumes affecting general liability and increased property rates. In an effort to reduce costs, Mr. Heston suggests that the Fire District investigate open market rates outside of its traditional reliance on the Enduris insurance pool. Fire District 9 will then be able to compare costs and coverage, and make an informed decision based on its comprehensive insurance needs.

ACTION ITEMS:

1. *Approval of Minutes:*

A motion was made and seconded to approve the minutes of the Regular Meeting on July 13, 2023 and the Special Meeting on July 27, 2023; the motion carried.

2. *Approval of Vouchers and Payroll:*

A motion was made and seconded to approve vouchers and payroll in the amounts listed below in items a through d; the motion carried.

- a. General Fund 6690 \$630,152.96;
- b. EMS/Apparatus Replacement Fund 6694 \$1,634.01;
- c. M&O Fund 6698 \$10.92;
- d. SORT Fund 6699 \$5,051.92.

During the discussion it was requested that the meeting Agendas include more information on payments related to vendors and payroll.

3. *Approval of Resolution 23-592 M&O Funds Transfer:*

A motion was made and seconded to approve Resolution 23-592 M&O Funds Transfer in the amount of \$1,351,989.78; the motion carried.

OLD BUSINESS:

None.

NEW BUSINESS:

Commissioner Campeau reported that West Thurston Regional Fire Authority is planning for a fund transfer to be discussed in September 2023.

Chair Putnam indicated that he will be attending the next Board of Commissioners meeting virtually and requested that Vice-Chair Thompson chair the meeting in person.

STAFF REPORTS:

1. *Finance/Administration:*

In terms of financials, as expected, July has seen an increase in total expenditures compared to previous months due to the annual wildfire mobilization and Firefighter overtime. This July, the District's total expenditures came to \$630,152.96. Historically, the month of July contains the largest payroll expenditure and we expect the following months to taper as we transition into Fall. The first half of 2023 has been similar to previous years for revenue and expenditures. The average expenditure per month was \$589,000 and our total expenses amounted to 30% of our annual budget. We utilized 46% of our annual budgeted revenues in our general fund, which puts us on track for the remainder of the 2023 year.

Davie Kindell is currently the only authorized Petty Cash account signer on the Bank of America Petty Cash account. We are requesting to transfer our account from Bank of America to Keybank and have BOD Brett Warwick added as a signer of the Petty Cash account.

For fund transfers, every year we require a fund transfer in the 3rd quarter from the Maintenance and Operations (M&O) Fund to our General Fund. Currently, the General Fund is at \$427,000 which is insufficient to sustain operations through the end of 2023. We are requesting approval for a transfer of \$1,351,989.78 from the M&O Fund into the General Fund 6690 to cover operation costs.

Fire District 9 has received preliminary confirmation from the Thurston County Elections Office that the M&O Levy (Proposition 1) measure has passed in the 2023 Primary Election. Accordingly, Chief Johnson has withdrawn Proposition 1 from the General Election and we are moving forward with our funding plan toward staffing and capital improvements over the next 4 years.

BOD Warwick invited department members, commissioners, friends and family to our upcoming Pinning and Promotion Ceremony on August 16th at 6pm to celebrate Fire District 9's new recruits and EMTs, Captain Chipman's promotion, and Chief Ambrose's appointment as the new Division Chief of Logistics. Due to the weather heat advisory, the ceremony will be held at the Westwood Baptist Church.

2. Logistics:
Facilities

- ST91: A substantial amount of clean up and landscaping work has been completed, including side hill areas, the rear access road to the training center, around the county road shop, and in the area between the gravel road and training center. In addition, HVAC duct work is planned.
- ST92: The new base radio system has been installed.
- ST93: No maintenance issues.
- ST94: No maintenance issues.
- ST95: There are continuing problems with the vent blower fan for the laundry room and restrooms. Capital Heating and Cooling recommends a duct cleaning and the Fire District is securing cost estimates for cleaning duct work at both ST91 and ST95. Finally, the bay door spring was replaced due to failure.
- ST96: The Fire District is working on surplus disposal of items in the facility. After that is finished, the station will be cleared out so that it can be used for storage.

Apparatus

- Ongoing routine repairs and maintenance continue to be completed.
- E952 had an out-of-service issue due to an AC compressor fire related to the seizing of bearings.
- E95 was involved in a collision with a deer while responding to a mutual aid response in Bucoda. The apparatus received minor damage to the officer's side of the front bumper. It has been repaired and is running well.
- The new ambulances are still on track for 2 to be received in early December 2023 and the third in early March 2024.
- A command vehicle preliminary order has been placed for a new Ford F-150 for the Logistics Division Chief position. The order was placed through the Washington State purchasing system and is anticipated on the 2024 allotment. The vehicle is expected to be received in early 2024. The purchase will be reflected in the 2024 capital budget.

Volunteers

- The Fire District has 5 new volunteer candidates progressing forward to preparation for recruit academy this fall. The Fire District continues to work with the SPS oversight committee on evaluating the recruit class status for this fall. Presently, there are only 10 recruits enrolled in the Fall 23-2 Academy. This is well below the need for enrollment levels. Consideration of an alternative pathway for new volunteer training is being considered.

3. Operations:

AC Patti reported that operations activity for the month of July 2023 were average for this time of year. There were 225 calls for the month of July 2023, composed of 103 fire and 122 EMS. 2023 calls to date (1427) are ahead of 2022 calls through July (1330). BLS transports in July 2023 were at 51 and 347 for 2023 to date. The BLS number remains down from 2022.

There may be upcoming challenges with ambulance resources. Olympic Ambulance will dedicate 3 of its 10 units to Lacey fire. Staffing problems are also limiting the capacity as it is difficult to run all 10 units. In addition, 1 unit is already dedicated to Tumwater. That will leave less coverage of ambulance services by Olympic for Fire District 9.

Major incidents since the last report have included assignment on July 5, 2023 of the Wildland Strike Team to a brush fire in Grays Harbor after a structure fire spread to the wildland and a stack yard. On July 12, 2023, a 4-car and motorcycle accident occurred on SR101 at Delphi Road with multiple vehicles and the fatality of a motorcycle rider. On July 16, 2023, a structure fire occurred at St. James Ct. NE where crews knocked down the fire to limit spread and damage. Finally, on July 19, 2023, a SORT response with a high angle rescue was dispatched to Grays Harbor County to assist with the rescue of an injured female 200 feet down an embankment.

The Radar Base Station work continues. 2 stations are complete and the system is working very well. Challenges in some stations are occurring related to placement of the 2 large antennas required for the new system.

4. Chief's Report:

The Fire District has successfully passed Proposition 1 asking voters to approve the replacement of the expiring Maintenance & Operations Levy. As of August 4, 2023, the measure was passing by 70.21%. The Fire District will be releasing a Thank You to voters for their support and turnout during the August Primary. The Chief extended a big Thank You to all of Fire District 9's personnel that worked diligently to support the measure by sharing information about the levy. The measure received the highest level of support throughout the county of all fire agency measures. Sharing accurate and timely information was essential to that at all levels – the commitment to supporting the agency is deeply appreciated and recognized.

There are no new injuries or illnesses to report since the last report. One employee returned to work from a work related injury on July 11. One employee continues long-term LNI Time Loss leave and the Fire District is working with the employee on plan. One employee is on light duty for work related to a shoulder injury with a light duty assignment in progress while the employee continues physical therapy.

For some additional station updates, the ST95 construction work is on schedule to be formally completed. There will be a pre-construction meeting for the ST91 roof project to discuss adding a new roof to the nearby training center and account for insurance coverage proceeds for a portion of the ST95 roof replacement due to past storm damage.

The Fire District will be conducting a Pinning and Promotion Ceremony on August 16th at 6pm to celebrate our new recruits and EMTs, Captain Chipman's promotion, and welcome Chief Ambrose as Division Chief of Logistics. Due to the weather heat advisory, the ceremony will be held at the Westwood Baptist Church in the Family Event Center.

The budgeting process for next year will begin soon. Following passage of the M&O levy, the Fire District will also soon begin planning for the next few years of capital projects.

After ST91's roof is completed, attention will turn to the water line and parking lot work at ST95. ST95 will soon need installation of a new fire alarm system panel and sensors that will cost approximately \$150,000. ST93 is in good shape, ST92 and ST94 need a plan for maintenance work, and ST96 needs some roof work.

COMMISSIONER REPORTS

Commissioner Campeau reported that West Thurston Fire is looking for a meeting date in September 2023.

Chair Putnam talked about the fire prevention week schedule.

GOOD OF THE ORDER

None.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

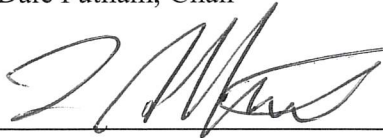
None.

ADJOURNMENT

A motion was made and seconded to adjourn the Board meeting; the motion carried. The Board adjourned at 1915.

BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
For Thurston County Fire District 9:

Dale Putnam, Chair

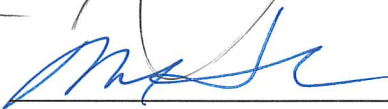


Len Albert, Commissioner

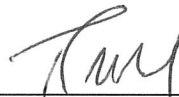


Mark Campeau, Commissioner

Jason Foust, Commissioner



Mark Thompson, Commissioner



Tom McBride, Board Secretary

Date