



## Board of Fire Commissioners Meeting Minutes October 19, 2023

McLane Black Lake Fire Department  
Board of Fire Commissioners  
October 19, 2023

### **CALL TO ORDER**

Commissioner Dale Putnam of District 9 Board of Fire Commissioners called the meeting to order at 1800 hours. Commissioners Dale Putnam, Len Albert, Mark Thompson, Mark Campeau and Jason Foust, Chief Leonard Johnson, AC Chris Patti, Division Chief - Logistics Josh Ambrose, BOD Brett Warwick, Chris Welch, 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**

The agenda was modified to (1) remove the Approval of Minutes for the September 14, 2023 Board for Volunteer Firefighters, and (2) add under New Business the subject of Notice and Access to Meetings. The agenda was approved as amended.

**PUBLIC COMMENT & VISITING SPEAKERS**

None.

**ACTION ITEMS:**

**1. *Approval of Minutes:***

A motion was made and seconded to approve the (1) minutes of the September 14, 2023 Board of Commissioners' Meeting, (2) minutes of the October 5, 2023 Special Board of Commissioners' Meeting and (3) minutes of the October 12, 2023 Continuance of October Monthly Commissioners' Meeting; 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 c; the motion carried.

- a. General Fund 6690 \$197,489.00;
- b. EMS/Apparatus Replacement Fund 6694 \$17,116.62;
- c. SORT Fund 6699 \$2,789.09.

**OLD BUSINESS:**

None.

**NEW BUSINESS:**

**1. *FY24 Budget Planning Presentation:***

Chief Johnson presented to the Board a preliminary outlook of the Fire District's 2024 budget. The Chief provided a detailed briefing on the upcoming FY24 budget and forecasting. Discussion was held following the presentation. .

**2. *Notice and Access to Meetings:***

Commissioner Thompson voiced concern regarding ease of access to Board Meetings via Zoom. Chief Johnson added that the Fire District will also provide more visible notice of the Zoom link meeting access point on its website. Discussion was held.

**STAFF REPORTS:**

**1. *Finance/Administration:***

BOD Warwick reported first on budget matters. The 2024 Budget Planning Presentation was completed for this evening's meeting.

The Fire District received preliminary real property values from the Thurston County Assessor's Office at the beginning of October. The Fire District has seen an estimated 3.595% increase from last year with just over \$19 million in new construction. This change will limit the Fire District's budget growth to 101% for FY24. Staff have submitted all the capital and recurring requests for project funding for FY24. There was a total of 156 requests received and, of those, 88 are new requests for funding. The review of those requests has begun for preparation and inclusion into the proposed final budget.

Preparations have started for the fall/winter newsletter to the Fire District. If there are areas of interest for personnel to contribute – please send those to BOD Warwick via email at [bwarwick@mclanefire.org](mailto:bwarwick@mclanefire.org).

The Fall Open House was a success with over 350 people coming through the station on Saturday, October 7. Attendees were able to participate in many events, such as the fire escape house, fire safety at home review and digital fire extinguisher trainer, while they enjoyed popcorn and apple cider. In addition, there was a new raffle for all attendees to participate in. Over 90 pumpkins were given away to attendees throughout the day. Thank you to all our dedicated personnel who volunteered their time to assist, the duty crews that cleaned and assisted throughout the day, the many volunteers who offered their time to benefit the community, and to our Admin Assistant, Michelle Meeds, who helped organize and execute this successful event.

The traditional Santa Sleigh Run will begin the final week of November. Messaging and preparations will begin in early November to reach our community.

## **2. *Logistics:***

Division Chief - Logistics Ambrose offered the following report.

A volunteer meeting is scheduled for the evening of November 8, 2023. Four new members have completed the first month of Recruit Class 23-2 and are progressing well. The Fire District also has one member in the Thurston County EMT Class and one member in the Centralia Community College EMT Program. Development of an updated on-boarding process is being prepared.

Following are a few highlights of on-going/completed apparatus maintenance and repairs:

- E95 is out of service for a check engine light/diagnostic issue with the DEF system. Continued repairs are now in progress, i.e., awaiting software update with a vendor in Portland, OR. The manufacturer has also engaged to help with a fix.
- Aid 91 is out of service with an oil problem.
- The new command vehicle for Division Chief - Logistics Ambrose will arrive soon.
- The new Utility F350 is scheduled for pickup on 10/20/23.

For facilities, following are a few highlights of completed or ongoing facility issues, repairs, maintenance, and inspection items:

- At ST93, Northwest Water Management discovered that the source meter readings were high. After investigation it was determined that the conduit and wiring were damaged for the float circuit that fills the storage tank for the sprinkler system and hydrant. The system is offline pending repair. In addition, at ST93 network upgrades have been completed. Pacific Office Automated along with their contractor installed a new network switch, firewall and wireless access points for the station to restore internet and network access.
- At ST91 and ST95 there have been issues with the internet and monitoring is ongoing to determine the cause and fix.

### **3. Operations:**

AC Patti reported that operations activity for the month of September 2023 was up from last year (177). There were 219 calls for the month of September 2023, composed of 107 fire and 112 EMS. 2023 calls to date (1893) are ahead of 2022 calls through September (1718). Calls for 2023 are projected to be up between 250 and 350 over 2022 numbers. BLS transports in September 2023 were at 55 and 489 for 2023 to date. The BLS number remains slightly down from 2022.

Base Station radio upgrades for all stations is a project still in progress. Station 93 has been completed and Station 95 is scheduled to be completed in October. Coordination of necessary roof penetrations is ongoing with a consultant as needed.

Staff will be visiting the factory on November 20 for inspection of two of the new ambulances on order. All customer supplied equipment has been delivered to Braun NW. After delivery of the units, it will take some time to put the vehicles in service due to the need for transfer of equipment from the old to new units.

The ESO fire records management system implementation process continues with some challenges.

A substitute teacher at LP Brown Elementary School suffered a cardiac arrest while instructing the 3rd grade music class. Students alerted school staff who started CPR before fire personnel arrived. Reports indicate that the patient is recovering and was discharged. Students, staff, and FD crews were recognized for their efforts during a small ceremony at the school the following week.

Chair Putnam asked about the status of delay/wait times at Providence Hospital. AC Patti explained that if aid cars are waiting, St. Pete's is supposed to offload and allow ambulances to return to the field. This process seems to be working relatively well.

Commissioner Albert asked if Covid calls are contributing to the increase in wait times at St. Pete's. AC Patti indicated that Covid has contributed to the number of calls, but not to a significant degree. The Covid and flu vaccines appear to be helping in that the symptoms are not typically as bad as what we've seen previously. Commissioner Albert followed up with the same question related to Capital Medical Center. AC Patti explained that the impacts at Capital are modest. Capital is normally faster and not as likely to experience wait times, but it is also not designated as a trauma facility.

A general discussion about ambulance services in Thurston County occurred. There have been significant changes in Thurston County's ambulance coverage, e.g., Falck departed Washington State, Olympic is attempting to fill the gap, and Metro West is expected to expand considerably. Commissioner Campeau asked about Tumwater ambulance coverage and AC Patti explained that all ambulances in the Thurston County area cover for each other based on availability.

There are expected to be further ambulance service changes in the area with AMR potentially contracting with Lacey. These ambulance service contracts are critical to maintaining adequate ambulance coverage in the South Sound. Chief Johnson noted that EMS program problems could become more visible, e.g., an AMR exclusive contract with Lacey will hurt other districts in the area because there won't be enough ambulance capacity.

**4. Chief's Report:**

The Chief referred to and commented on his FY2024 Budget Planning Presentation for a budget update.

The Chief indicated that there are no new injuries or illnesses to report since the last report. The following is a list of current work related or leave impacts due to injury/illness.

- One employee continues long-term LNI Time Loss leave. Final determination has been made on the claim. The Fire District is working with LNI and employees on transition.
- One employee is on light duty for work related to a shoulder injury. Light duty assignment continues and the employee is scheduled for surgery. The Fire District is monitoring progress.
- One employee has reopened an existing claim for a work-related hand injury. The Fire District is awaiting restrictions and evaluation.
- One employee is on Paid Family Medical Leave for a qualifying event.

The Fire District continues to maintain two temporary full-time personnel to provide additional staff. An MOU has been signed with the Local to extend these positions until January 1, 2024.

#### **COMMISSIONER REPORTS**

Commissioner Campeau reported that West Thurston Fire meets on November 28.

Chair Putnam reported that the Thurston County Emergency Manager recently discussed the importance of emergency communications with an emphasis on the need for planning and training.

#### **GOOD OF THE ORDER**

None.

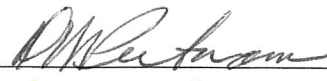
#### **EXECUTIVE SESSION**

The Board convened into Executive Session at 1942, for an estimated 10 minutes, to discuss collective bargaining. The Board will reconvene at 1952 and immediately adjourn. No action is anticipated.

#### **ADJOURNMENT**

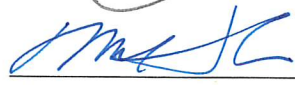
A motion was made and seconded to adjourn the Board meeting; the motion carried. The Board adjourned at 1952.

**BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**  
For Thurston County Fire District 9:

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Dale Putnam, Chair

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Jason Foust, Commissioner

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Len Albert, Commissioner

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Mark Thompson, Commissioner

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Mark Campeau, Commissioner

\_\_\_\_\_  
Tom McBride, Board Secretary

11/9/2023  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Date