



MINUTES OF THE BOARD OF FIRE COMMISSIONERS
February 9, 2023

BOARD FOR VOLUNTEER FIREFIGHTERS

The meeting of the Board for Volunteer Firefighters was called to order at 1800 hrs.

Invoices the amount of \$280.00 for Volunteer Firefighter physicals were presented for approval of the Local Board. MSP, unanimous.

Retirement paperwork for Ken Morefield was presented for approval. MSP, unanimous

The 2022 Pension Participation Certification was presented for approval and signature of the Chair of the Board and Fire Chief. MSP, unanimous.

CALL TO ORDER

Commissioner Dale Putnam Chair of Board of Fire Commissioners called the meeting to order at 1803 hours at 125 Delphi Rd NW. Commissioners Mark Thompson, Len Albert, Mark Campeau and Jason Foust, Chief Leonard Johnson, AC Chris Patti, EA Davie Kindell attended the meeting. Lieutenant Chris Welch and Captain Jeff Novak, joined via Zoom. Board Secretary Tom McBride was unable to attend as a result of a family emergency.

ADDITIONS TO AGENDA

None. The agenda was approved as presented.

PUBLIC COMMENT & VISITING SPEAKERS

None.

ACTION ITEMS

1. **Approval of Minutes:** A motion was made and seconded to approve the minutes of the regular meeting on January 12, 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 \$516,392.91;
 - b. Capital Fund 6691 \$7,568.97;

- c. EMS/Apparatus Replacement Fund 6694 \$62,412.03;
 - d. SORT Fund 6699 \$58,989.57
3. Resolution 23-586 changing the March meeting date from March 9, at 6:00 PM to March 13 at 6 PM, was unanimously approved.

OLD BUSINESS

District Accountability and Financial Audits

EA Kindell reported that she, Commissioner Albert, Commissioner Putnam, and Chief Johnson attended the Exit conference with the State Auditor in regard to the 2019-2021, Accountability and Financial Audits.

Accountability Audit Summary:

This report describes the overall results and conclusions for the areas we examined. In those selected areas, District operations complied, in all material respects, with applicable state laws, regulations, and its own policies, and provided adequate controls over the safeguarding of public resources.

Based on our risk assessment for the years ended December 31, 2021, 2020 and 2019, the areas examined were those representing the highest risk of fraud, loss, abuse, or noncompliance. We examined the following areas during this audit period:

- Accounts payable – credit cards and electronic funds transfers
- Payroll – leave balances and accruals
- Procurement – purchases and purchasing exemptions
- Open public meetings – compliance with minutes, meetings and executive session requirements
- Financial condition – reviewing for indications of financial distress

Financial Audit Summary

As described in Note 1, the District has prepared these financial statements to meet the financial reporting requirements of state law and accounting practices prescribed by the State Auditor's Budgeting, Accounting and Reporting System (BARS) Manual. Those accounting practices differ from accounting principles generally accepted in the United States of America (GAAP). The differences in these accounting practices are also described in Note 1.

In our opinion, the accompanying financial statements referred to above present fairly, in all material respects, the cash and investments of McLane Fire Department, and its changes in cash and investments, for the years ended December 31, 2021, 2020 and 2019, on the basis of accounting described in Note 1.

Full audit reports are available at <https://portal.sao.wa.gov/SAOPortal>

NEW BUSINESS

Peer Support Policy

A newly developed Peer Support policy was presented for first review. This policy is generally standardized throughout the County. Chief Johnson stated that the policy will be reviewed by the District's legal counsel. Commissioner Thompson iterated the need for confidentiality in this type of a program and the associated potential liability in regard to HIPAA disclosure. AC Patti, stated that the need for confidentiality is understood and reiterated in all Peer Support training.

Member Recognition Policy

A member recognition policy is being developed and will soon be provided to the Board for review. The basis for the policy is an Opinion written by the State Attorney General's office "Bread and Circuses" opinion. The policy will address awards and recognition programs to include meals and awards. Commissioner Thompson commented that in the development of the policy, the District should be aware of the potential to create tax liability for employees.

STAFF REPORTS

Finance/Administration:

The Business Operations Director position is posted on the State Fire Chiefs website, the District website, as well as Zip Recruiter. Zip Recruiter will notify qualified candidates throughout the region of the posting. Additionally, the posting was emailed to fire departments in Thurston, Lewis, Grays Harbor and Pierce counties. Selected candidates will move to the testing process. Commissioner Campeau will be the Board representative on the Oral Resume panel.

The District has seen a post Covid, increase in requests for Public Education events. In the month of February, there are three groups that are visiting the Fire Station, two preschool groups from Westside Co-Op Preschool, who are participating in "Firefighters Are Your Friends" program and a girl scout group working on an emergency preparedness merit badge.

Planning is occurring for the Districts Spring Safety Day and Egg Dash to be held, April 8 and the District's annual member recognition event, tentatively scheduled for April 22.

Operations:

AC Patti reported 174 total calls in January 2023; 76 fire-related calls and 98 EMS calls, which is a decrease of 58 over 2022. This is likely due to a storm event in 2022. There were 39 BLS transports for the month. Chief Patti reported that the overall hospital census' for the month were much lower than the 2022 average, and that there were less out of District transports. Private ambulance staffing has improved in the area.

The upfitting for the white Ram is being completed and ATV training is being scheduled.

Calls of Note:

January 21, the McLane Black Lake Firefighters responded with Tumwater Fire Department to a fire in the historical Henderson House building.

AC Patti, spoke about the Sherman Valley Ranch fire. The fire resulted with five fatalities; cause of the fire remains under investigation. AC Patti also noted that the Thurston County Peer Support Team was activated to support the responders, especially the initial arriving units from West Thurston. Thank you to Captain Sobol and all the personnel that support the response to this incident from the Fire District over the two-day period.

A propane truck with a failed valve caused the closure of an area in the Summit Lake community. Joint response with Department of Ecology, WSP and the vendor to contain the leak and remove the hazard took approximately 8 hours.

The SORT team was called to assist firefighters in the rescue of a Mountain Bike rider who had fallen into a ravine in Capitol Forest. . The patient was transported by air to Harborview Medical Center.

Fire Chief:

Chief Johnson reported that there is still one employee out on long-term LNI leave. One person has returned from short-term leave, and another is now out with a hand injury. The District is evaluating if they will be able to offer light duty to the employee with the hand injury, based on activity prescription provided by the physician.

The new career firefighter recruits hired effective February 1, 2023 have begun academy. There are six new Volunteer Firefighters in academy. Chief Johnson thanked Lt. Welch, BC Speier, EA Kindell and other instructors for their assistance with pre-academy.

The Station 95 closeout should occur next week. Owners training was completed last week and primarily focused on how to operate the HVAC system. A review of the final change order is in progress.

The pre-construction meeting scheduled for the new aid units. The delivery date is still pending, it is still unknown if chassis' have been allocated.

The new Hurst E-tools have arrived. There is a warranty issue that is being addressed. Cars are being delivered to prepare for training with the new tools.

COMMISSIONER REPORTS

Commissioner Campeau reported that the West Thurston's meeting scheduled for January 23 has been rescheduled to Monday, February 27, 2023.

GOOD OF THE ORDER

Commissioner Putnam reminded the Board that their PDC report is available for completion and is deadline driven.

EA Kindell commented that because vacancies in the Board that have been filled by appointment, three Commissioner will be on the ballot for re-election, Commissioners Albert, Foust and Thompson.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

The Board convened into Executive Session at 1900, for an estimated 15 minutes, to discuss collective bargaining, and announced they expected to reconvene at 1915, with no action taken.

ADJOURNMENT

The Board reconvened from Executive Session at 1915 and immediately adjourned the regular meeting.

BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

For Thurston County Fire District 9:


Dale Putnam, Chair

Jason Foust, Commissioner

Len Albert, Commissioner


Mark Thompson, Commissioner


Mark Campeau

Attest: Tom McBride, Board Secretary

Date