

**THURSTON COUNTY FIRE DISTRICT THREE**

**BOARD OF FIRE COMMISSIONERS**

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING**

**April 21, 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.

Commissioner Roberts was excused.

**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:** To approve the agenda as amended.

Motion: Commissioner Kelling

Second: Commissioner Hetzler

Carried: Unanimous

**III. PROMOTIONAL CEREMONIES**

- A. Assistant Chief Chris Frost
- B. Assistant Chief Karen Weiss
- C. Lieutenant Paramedic Bill Collins

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

None.

## V. APPROVAL OF THE CONSENT AGENDA

- A. Draft minutes of the April 7th, 2022, Board of Fire Commissioners meeting.
- B. Draft minutes of the April 7, 2022, Board of Volunteer Firefighters meeting.
- C. Warrants:
  - General Fund 001 (Acct #6630) EFTs numbered 5064 through 5065 and checks numbers 23056 through 23064 and Bank Draft 934 for a total amount of \$147,740.90.
  - Equipment, Repair and Replacement Fund 103 EFT number 5014 in the amount of \$5,133.76.
  - Capital Projects Fund 301 check number 23065 in the amount of \$7,638.31
  - 2017B Capital Projects Fund 307 EFT number 5021 and checks numbered 23066 through 23067 in the amount of \$25,836.60.
- D. Payroll 04A in the amount of \$1,579,481.66
- E. Payroll 4B in the amount of \$510,656.58.

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

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

Motion: Commissioner Hetzler.  
Second: Commissioner Kelling.  
Carried: Unanimous

## VI. COMMITTEE REPORTS

### A. Thurston County Medic One

Commissioner Kirkbride reported from the April 20 meeting:

- It was a hybrid meeting, both in person and on Zoom.
- The staff report said that there are 10 paramedics on the list. That was completed on March 23, 24, and 25th. For the first time, there have been some applicants.
- Old business: they adopted and sent as a recommendation under the Board of County Commissioners a bylaw change, which historically for the chair and vice-chair have been one-year terms. This will now change to two-year terms.
- Staff reported on the 90-day no-divert trial that the hospitals came up with. Now one month into that process. They have looked at March response times, and it is 10 seconds. The delays to get into the hospital are essentially about

the same. At this time of the year, so far, there have not been any significant issues yet.

- Looked at the budget summary for 2021. It came in at 96.7% of the budgeted amount. They were able to hire some positions that were in the 2020 budget. The cost of the election was almost double what was budgeted. It was budgeted at \$120,000, and it was \$230,000.
- Appointed Ben Miller-Todd, who is the acting director, as Kurt Hardin's alternative to West Region.

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

No report.

C. City/District Liaison

Commissioner Kirkbride reported from the April 19 meeting:

- The focus of the meeting was follow up as to what came up in commissioner comments at the last meeting, the fire behind the offices of Shur-Kleen, and about the response of law enforcement and fire to those kinds of circumstances. The city manager was charged with doing some research into the law as to what can happen and whether law enforcement and fire responds. The longstanding concern is having open fires in forested environments. The mayor and the deputy mayor agreed with the concern. They are going to do some research and will hopefully have something more definitive to share at the next meeting.

D. Thurston County Fire Commissioners Association

Commissioner Gamble reported from the April 20 meeting:

- Sheriff John Snaza came and gave an update on the sheriff's department and some general information about staffing and what they are responding to. Washington is the lowest staff law enforcement per capita in the country, and Thurston County is the lowest staffed sheriff's office in Washington State. As far as calls, they are pursuing high-risk offenders, but only if they are high risk against other individuals. This does include DUIs legally, but as an office, they are not pursuing suspected DUI cases because pursuit does increase the risk of danger to other individuals. They also do not have adequate staffing.
- They are now able to intervene at mental health calls if other individuals are at risk.
- They are standing up a mobile crisis unit that will have both a counselor and a therapist. They are working on hiring for that.
- They are having body cameras installed currently. That was funded by \$1.2 million from the Rescue Plan.
- They are also the first to receive the new radios. Those are supposed to be installed in six vehicles per day but are currently being installed in about six vehicles per week.

- They are losing five deputies to other agencies, on top of the six deputies that they are already short. This is due to pay.
- Thurston County is currently tied for the #2 spot for fentanyl overdoses, just behind Yakima.

E. Thurston Regional Planning Council -

No report – the next meeting is May 6th.

F. Community Outreach

Chief Brooks shared:

- Now that facilities have reopened, requests continue to come in, and there has been more foot traffic into the stations. Meeting rooms are opening up and can be reserved by the public. The outreach coordinator is fielding more and more request for events.
- Checking on the feasibility of reestablishing monthly car seat check stations. Staffing has been an issue, with car seat techs having been lost during the pandemic. There are occasionally volunteers who help out.
- There continues to be active participation in the Senior Safe At Home program.

G. Capital Facilities and Equipment Activities

Chief Cerovski shared:

- Engine 35, which was damaged a few months ago, should be going to the shop in the beginning of June for repairs.
- Continuing to do work on the warranty items for Station 34 including the siding for the outside of the building, landscaping, and some plumbing work that is part of the warranty checklist items.
- Submitted plans for the vehicle repair facility expansion. That is in the permitting process with the City of Lacey and should be completed in the next three to four weeks.

## **VII. OLD BUSINESS**

A. COVID Emergency Declaration Status: Staff report

- Continuing to have very low impact to staff and personnel. There has been an unfortunate resurgence of other illnesses, but very low workforce impact that is directly related to COVID.
- Monitoring for next steps and when emergency declarations will be rescinded at the state level, which would trigger action to the board to follow suit at the agency level.

## VIII. NEW BUSINESS

A. Support Services Presentation: Director Gorman and Program Manager Richardson. Chief Brook shared that the addition of the support services team has been one of the single greatest enhancements or changes to the service delivery model.

- The goal is to know and connect with first responders and know what their baselines are.
- Internal services include informal debriefs, counseling, mediation, team building, medical or emotional leave, training, peer support, chaplains. Chaplain call-outs have gone up substantially.
- External services include:
  - Serving 8 long-term care facilities and working to reduce their numbers of nonemergency calls. There will be a county-wide training, together with other agencies, that will be mandatory for the head staff of the long-term care facilities to participate in. Ongoing education with these facilities have helped to reduce the numbers of nonemergency calls.
  - Individual homes for people who need additional support and help in their homes. Ongoing support and education can be provided to these people. Working on a referral list that can be given to people who need additional support to stay safely in their homes. In just 43 homes, there have been 681 calls in a one-year period. 11 of these have either gone to long-term care facilities or have been able to be provided with in-home care. Other services include aftermath clean-up, home biohazard or hoarding clean-up referrals, and APS or CPS reports.
  - DCR (Designated Crisis Responder)/MOT (Mobile Outreach Team)/SCOUT (Sheriff's Community Outreach Unit)/LEAD (Law Enforcement Assistive Diversion) – these are all additional city or county resources. Referrals can be sent to these resources when needed.
  - DOA, CPR, death and trauma related calls – for these types of calls, support can be provided for the family members as well as to the first responders.
  - Resource list – provided to family members in homes and something that will be ultimately available for first responders to give out as well when needed.
  - Fire calls – providing support and assistance when homes are affected by fires.
  - PubEd – providing education and resources and educating family members on how to ensure that their family members get the support and help they need from the hospitals.

## IX. ADMINISTRATIVE REPORT

Chief Brooks reported:

- There was a meeting with Nisqually Chairman Frank regarding a tribal council resolution declaring a public health emergency related to

homelessness and opioid addiction. Working on partnering together and combining resources to work on these issues.

- There was an article published about members who have requested a religious exemption in the fire service. Chief Schmidt was interviewed for the article, which compared and contrasted the way different agencies have handled this issue.
- There had been a discussion about having the required Public Records Act training, but this will be postponed because of Commissioner Roberts' absence.
- Chief Brooks will be in Oregon next week for the symposium with the Western Fire Chiefs and will be doing a talk about family support and support services.
- Regarding the paramedic hiring list, the eligible candidates have been interviewed, including four lateral hiring candidates. Offers have been made to two lateral candidates and two new hire candidates with the hope of bringing them on this summer.
- Director Huff is away this week at a Washington Finance Officers Association meeting. He provided his usual detailed budget reports and balance sheet for the first quarter. With 25% of the year done, LFD #3 is at 28% revenue and 22% expense in the general fund. Procurement is moving more toward electronic payment. In 2021, \$26,000 was earned back in rebates due to utilization of these cards. At times, running up against the monthly limit, so it may come up at a future meeting to adjust the policy to allow carrying a higher balance on these cards.
- Applied for a firefighter grant; still waiting to hear about the grant award. Running into challenges about being able to go out and do site visits for evaluation of rig types, but that process is going to be taken over by Chris DeBell and Assistant Chief Frost as well as engaging the ISU volunteers and helping participate in the specifications of that vehicle. Should start seeing activity with site visits to different locations for different vehicles in probably mid-summer.

## **X. COMMISSIONER COMMENTS**

Commissioner Hetzler – thank you for the presentation. Appreciated the ceremony.

Commissioner Kelling – regarding the timing on Engine 35 repairs, is that because of parts, or waiting until the recruit academy is done training? Chief Cerovski clarified that it is for both reasons.

Commissioner Gamble – thank you for the Support Services presentation. Congratulations on the promotions.

Commissioner Kirkbride – everyone has been provided with a summary of the Public Meetings Act changes that happened this legislative session, just for an overview. These changes will be the focus of the training when it takes place.

**XI. CORRESPONDENCE**

- None.

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

- None.

**XIII. REQUEST FOR EXECUTIVE SESSION**

- A. Convened at approximately 6:58 p.m. for up to 20 minutes in Accordance with RCW 42.30.110(1)(i) to discuss potential litigation with legal counsel. Returned to Regular Meeting at 7:18 p.m. with no action taken.

**XIV. ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting adjourned as of 7:18 PM.

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

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 Chair  
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 Melissa Gamble  
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 Commissioner  
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 Sylvia Roberts  
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 Commissioner

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 Liberty Hetzler  
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 Vice Chair  
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 Rick Kelling  
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 Commissioner  
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 Steve Brooks  
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 ATTEST: District Secretary