

**THURSTON COUNTY FIRE DISTRICT THREE**

**BOARD OF FIRE COMMISSIONERS**

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING**

**July 7, 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. HEARING OF THE PUBLIC /MEMBERS PRESENT**

None.

**IV. APPROVAL OF THE CONSENT AGENDA**

A. Draft minutes of the June 16, 2022, of the Board of Fire Commissioners meeting.

B. 7A Warrants:

- General Fund 001 (Acct #6630) EFTs numbered 5078 through 5080 and checks numbered 23145 through 23155 for a total amount of \$18,106.09.
- 2017B Capital Projects Fund 307 – check number 23156 for a total amount of \$6,287.55.

C. Payroll 6B in the amount of \$522,334.75.

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

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

Motion: Commissioner Gamble

Second: Commissioner Kelling

Carried: Unanimous

Commissioner Hetzler had a question about a check for approximately \$7,000 for archiving solutions. Chief Cerovski clarified that the software is to provide accurate data collection and storage for archiving purposes as required by state law. It is an annual contract for all of the digital platforms.

**V. COMMITTEE REPORTS**

A. Thurston County Medic One

No report – the next meeting is July 20th. Commissioner Kirkbride will be absent and Commissioner Hetzler will attend instead. The major agenda item is the ALS contracts.

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

No report.

C. City/District Liaison

Commissioner Kirkbride reported from the meeting:

- The meeting took place with the deputy mayor and the city manager. The main discussion point was the city's interest in what Olympia was proposing for transport and the impact on the system and where the status is on this. The chief did an excellent job of outlining what Olympia is trying to do and why. EMS services and their role were also discussed with the deputy mayor.

D. Thurston County Fire Commissioners Association

Commissioner Gamble reported from meeting:

- Representative Peter Abbarno from the 20th District discussed recent redistricting results and the current boundaries, which now is covering the majority of South Thurston County. The majority of this discussion centered around resource equity and support for rural areas.
- There was a reminder for the WFCA meeting coming up in Spokane.
- The TCERN report was sent on June 2nd.
- EMS expects to lose 8 to 12 members for retirement in the next year. There are 9 candidates for interviews for open positions.
- BLS funding amendment is expected once county commissioners rule.
- Each district was encouraged to develop and review their continuity of operations plans.
- The current TCFCA secretary is stepping down at the end of the year.
- The next meeting will be the annual potluck picnic on August 16th.

E. Thurston Regional Planning Council -

Commissioner Kelling reported from the meeting:

- As was reported in April, the TRPC staff is undergoing some slight modifications. They are losing two key staff members, which has caused the executive director to do some reorganization. They are losing their deputy director and their planning and policy director. The council just approved the third position, so they created a planning manager position, finance and HR manager position, and a transportation manager position. The net gain of one, they have flattened the organization. There is no true deputy, and they have expanded the executive leadership team. All those positions have been approved by the council, and they will look to hire towards the end of the year.
- There was a presentation by the Nisqually Indian Tribe on improving their broadband access, not only for the tribe, but a lot of the south county areas, and they see that as a good neighbor approach. They anticipate within the next two to three years being able to make some significant inroads through their contracted agency, who appears to be working with all the associated municipalities and areas. Right now they are in the survey mode to figure out who has poor access and who has no access. They will then move on from there. This is a two- to three-year project.
- There was an update for the Thurston transportation services plan update. This is updated every four years. It is designed to ensure equity and efficiency in the transportation resources throughout the county. There is a focus right now on ensuring everybody has information on all the transportation opportunities. The south county areas were discussed in greater depth because there is more of a challenge in providing options in that area.
- The county in the past two years has benefitted from their ability to obligate contracts both at the state and federal level, but because of their ability and their efficiency to obligate contracts, they have received \$3.64 million in additional funding from federal sources over the past two years. Over the past year, they have been trying to align all the federal

and state requirements for transportation management, which they currently are, until the formal announcement on population is made. They will then have a reasonable equitable approach to calling for projects and then ruling on which projects are accepted and put in the queue, both for prioritization for access but also if additional federal dollars come down the pipe. That should be brought to council for a board decision in the September/October time frame.

- Commissioner Kelling provided a cost of living index report. This is a quarterly report. This is not the consumer price index but is more comprehensive. Lacey, Olympia, and Tumwater is highlighted with a current index of 113 or 13.2% above the baseline measures. In the future, the council staff will be providing some analysis when this report is produced. The last time Commissioner Kelling provided this information, the index for Lacey, Olympia, and Tumwater was at 110. Costs are going up across the board.
- Commissioner Kirkbride commented that historically, the area has been at 109 for about 20 years.

#### F. Community Outreach

Chief Brooks shared:

- It has been a busy season through the 3rd and 4th of July events. There were multiple opportunities to engage with the community. Coordinated with the city for standby with the Rainier Vista fireworks event, which was very well-attended.
- Looked into whether the Nisqually were doing a 4th of July event, and they did not appear to have anything. There were only recreational fireworks.
- Continuing to have good success with the Senior Safe At Home program with 4 to 8 appointments per month for that outreach.
- More requests for attendance at community events are anticipated throughout the summer. LFD3 will be present at the Thurston County Fair.

#### G. Capital Facilities and Equipment Activities

Chief Cerovski shared:

- Continuing to wait for approval of the plans for the VRF. Still waiting on the grant process for the ISU. Beginning the process to back out the aid unit re-chassis.

## VI. OLD BUSINESS

- A. COVID Emergency Declaration status: Chief Brooks shared that there are no significant changes in impacts. There is a low level of occasional quarantine and positive cases among both uniformed and administrative staff. Still monitoring status between boosted and non-boosted members because the CDC recommendations are slightly different. There is still a modest impact on the workforce, but in nearly every case seen right now, the actual illness associated

with positive tests is fairly mild. There have been no significant illness or hospitalizations among staff.

- B. Thurston is one of five counties where the levels rose to the threshold where public health renewed their recommendation for indoor masking but did not make it a requirement.
- C. The COVID summary on reimbursements is available as well. On July 1st, the reimbursement drops from 100% to 90%.

## **VII. NEW BUSINESS**

None.

## **VIII. ADMINISTRATIVE REPORT**

Chief Brooks reported:

- A draft pamphlet from ORCAA was provided. Chief Brooks had two separate meetings, one on behalf of the agency and one on behalf of the county fire chiefs with the new executive director of ORCAA, Dr. Jeff Johnston. The meeting was prompted by the city of Lacey's council representative, Councilwoman Vazquez, reaching out to get some information. It came up to the board at ORCAA. There was a request to reconsider the impacts of what they are terming survival fires in encampments where the fires are the only source of heat or cooking. There was a discussion about whether it is appropriate for those fires to be prohibited. They did not feel comfortable relaxing rules in one population without a global look at the rules at large. Instead of focusing on encampment fires, they are doing proactive outreach to the three incorporated cities which have unique rules throughout ORCAA's entire enforcement area. The cities have more restrictive ordinances under ORCAA than the urban growth or unincorporated areas. This is particularly focused on recreational fires, which are to be three feet or less in diameter in a protected pit with clean-burning wood. Their proposal is to consider removing that prohibition, which most city residences do not know exists. The side impact would be that the survival fires, if done within the confines of the rules, would technically not be illegal. Even with that change, many encampment fires would still remain illegal under ORCAA's rules. This was an attempt to educate on what legal burning means and looks like. No action has been taking, but they are doing proactive outreach to Olympia and Tumwater and their fire marshal offices.
- Mid-year report: Director Huff put out the finance reports as soon as everything closed. Revenue continues to exceed expense. At 50% of the year, at 62% of revenue and 45% of expense in the general fund. Chief Brooks provided an overview of the finance reports. Of note, now three months in arrears for Nisqually. There was a staff change or a change in process with the tribe. Dale will reach out to try to rebuild that relationship.
- Disability reimbursement: starting to get some control of those active members that are off on disability. That number is pretty significantly declined since its peak. There were discussions in labor management this

week about getting a better understanding of the implementation at the state level of the new presumptive mental health laws. It was previously assumed that if a member separates under a mental health disability claim, when that person reaches pension eligibility, they will be transferred off of labor and industry time loss and over to the pension system. It was then discovered that there is not a compulsion to do that, meaning that members might continue to draw their time loss benefits through L&I all the way up to age 65, which could be a significant impact to L&I rates. Chief Cerovski is looking for greater detail from L&I and this may be an area in which to seek legislative relief in the future to correct this unanticipated impact.

- The first draft of the annual report is nearly completed. It will be available for advanced review before the next meeting and will be on the agenda as a new business item. Chief Cerovski is working to provide more in-depth details about the data and the sources of the data used to create the report.
- Regarding the new hire process: two lateral hire paramedics were brought on and started last month. Next Monday, there will be two new entry-level paramedics who will be at Bates Technical Academy starting in September. There are two additional spots reserved. Medic One just renewed their eligibility list again and added an additional four paramedic candidates who were not previously interviewed. There are interviews scheduled tomorrow morning for those four.
- After trying for over a year to find permanent staffing to assist human resources, there is a new candidate who will be starting soon. Will plan to do a new member introduction at the next meeting for the HR staff member and the two lateral paramedics and the two new hire paramedics.

Chief Schmidt reported:

- On the 2nd, there was a cardiac arrest at Long Lake with an individual on a jet ski who fell off. Two boaters were able to get him out of the water and initiate CPR. A new hire was on the lake on a jet ski himself and called 911 and assisted with CPR. Crews responded to the boat launch. Unfortunately, he did not survive, but the family sent a very nice letter of thanks for all the efforts made for him.
- At Rainer Vista, there were a couple of rigs staged for presentation to the community. The ORV was also there to navigate the crowds in case something happened. A shooting took place later in the evening. Staff was still on site at the time and was able to jump in and help. There was a good connection with Lacey PD with a briefing and shared incident action plans.
- During the summer months, many battalion chiefs are on vacation. This weekend was almost entirely staffed by lieutenants and they managed very well. As an agency, the succession planning and training for the out of class members was exceptional.

## **IX. COMMISSIONER COMMENTS**

Commissioner Gamble – thanks to Dale for easy-to-follow displays and graphs on the budgeting. Kudos to all the members for working hard over the holiday weekend and the unfortunate incidents that happened.

Commissioner Kelling – was able to get CPR recertified. Regarding all the calls that came in on July 4th, there is an opportunity to get out fliers on when to call 911 by using HOA channels. Will be participating via Zoom at the next meeting. There was an article about the state DOT clearing out some of the camps along the interstates. Has this already started happening?

Chief Brooks responded that this has begun. Last week, the right lanes of I-5 south were closed. They were bringing debris down onto the freeway. This is mainly in the areas between Sleater Kinney and Pacific. It was mentioned in the city district meeting that there was hope of getting preemptive or proactive notification of when those are happening.

Commissioner Kirkbride clarified that the governor had made an announcement allocating \$50 million for Snohomish, King, Pierce, Thurston, and Kitsap Counties to clean the DOT rights-of-way.

Commissioner Hetzler – no comments.

Commissioner Kirkbride – appreciation to Dale for the work on the finance reports. It was quiet in the city due to the prohibition on fireworks, but there were many fireworks at Long Lake. Will not be attending the EMS Council meeting or the next board meeting due to vacation, returning August 1st.

#### **X. CORRESPONDENCE**

- None.

#### **XI. HEARING OF THE PUBLIC / MEMBERS PRESENT**

- None.

#### **XII. REQUEST FOR EXECUTIVE SESSION**

- A. In accordance with RCW 42.30.110 (1)(d) to discuss contract negotiations and RCW 42.30.110(1)(f) regarding complaints or charges brought against a public employee.

#### **XIII. ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting adjourned as of 6:24 PM.

*Next Regular Meeting: July 21, 2022 – 5:30 p.m.  
Available via remote meeting.*

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Chair

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Vice Chair

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Commissioner

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Commissioner

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Commissioner

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ATTEST: District Secretary