



Clark-Cowlitz Fire Rescue Board of Fire Commissioners Meeting Minutes 911 N 65th Avenue, Ridgefield

March 10, 2022

Present:

Commissioners Stan Chunn, Bob Johnson, Ken Ayers, Larry Bartel.
Chief John Nohr. DVCs Mike Jackson and Ben Peeler. Recording Secretary Kathy Streissguth.

Remote: Commissioner David Town

Meeting called to order by Commissioner Chunn at 4:00 p.m.

Flag Salute.

CALL FOR LATE AGENDA ADDITIONS

None.

CONSENT AGENDA

Motion by Commissioner Bartel to approve the consent agenda as amended. Second Commissioner Ayers. Commissioner Bartel questioned the vinyl wrap expense for the boat, which was replaced after it was repainted. BC Rommel advised the board will soon be relettered. Commissioner Town pointed out that \$1.3 million was included in the current payments for the ladder truck purchase approved last year. Chief Nohr confirmed that the truck has been delivered to the dealer in Springfield, Oregon for final detailing prior to delivery to CCFR. Will be at the station by the next meeting. Will take a couple months to get it in service. Chief Nohr also pointed out the expense included over \$100,000 in sales tax. No further discussion. Call for the vote. Motion passed unanimously.

COMMUNICATIONS

Parks family thank you for the response to a chimney fire in their home on Smythe Road, Ridgefield. Chief Nohr noted there were access challenges due to construction in the area. Thank you from Mrs. Von Dem Fange for medical services provided to her husband Henry, a former volunteer who recently passed. Congratulations to personnel completing their one-year probation: Captain Kenny Bjur, Firefighters Cranke, Groat and Shelton.

EMS LEVY WORKSHOP

Commissioner Chunn opened the proposed EMS Levy Workshop at 4:07 p.m. Chief Nohr presented a slide show covering the facts related to increases in call volume, response time, and staffing for the district. Commissioner Chunn opened the floor to questions from the public.

Q: How does the \$0.45 to \$0.50 levy rate compare to neighboring agencies?

Chief Nohr: Camas/Washougal, East County Fire & Rescue, Clark Fire District 6 all pay \$0.45 per thousand. North Country EMS (NCEMS – Yacolt/Amboy) pay \$0.50.

Part of Clark Fire District 3 is served by NCEMS and are not allowed to have a separate EMS levy per statute. The difference between the two rates will allow the district to staff an additional 40 hour per week rescue unit to further improve response. Should the district transport, it is not planned to direct bill district residents as they are already paying the tax.

Q: What is the cost of an ambulance?

Chief Nohr: Fully outfitted approximately \$400,000.

Q: How long to staff up should the levy pass?

Chief Nohr: Tax collections would come in 2023. Planning for a phased hiring, possibly three groups of seven due to the logistics of bringing on so many people. The hiring process is 2-3 months and the training academy is approximately three months. It is another 2-3 months of orientation before they are on shift. Personnel new to the fire service require more training than lateral hires with previous experience. Expecting it may take a year to a year and half before all personnel are in place. Planning to be ready to go should the levy pass in August with most of the work done so hiring may begin shortly after the first of the year to get the first group started.

Q: Asked about the voter requirement for the August Primary. Is it a good date?

Chief Nohr: This is a mid-term election year. Should pull a lot of voters. Does require a super-majority (60%). FD6 is renewing their EMS levy and only needs a simple majority. FD5, the rural area served by the City of Vancouver is also running a fire levy lid lift. August or November are the best times for fire district propositions.

Q: Will it be a 6-year, 10-year or permanent levy.

Chief Nohr: 6-year.

Commissioner Chunn added that the Board wanted the issue to run in an election where there would be a voter pamphlet.

Q: Can you charge for paramedic response or only for transport?

Chief Nohr: Can only charge for transport. We are not able to charge for EMS services.

Q: How will the new station be funded?

Chief Nohr: Currently working on the ability to assess fire impact fees in the unincorporated areas of Clark County. Already collecting these fees in Woodland, working on Ridgefield and La Center. The EMS levy would also free up some general fund monies to apply to the construction of a new station.

Chief Nohr shared that the EMS levy is also subject to the 1% limitation. The rate would tick down during the 6 years. It would not stay at initial levy rate.

Discussed options to supplement the private ambulance provider to reduce the transport time for CCFR citizens. Should the levy pass, will work with the provider set up a system to improve ambulance service.

Q: Would the ambulance fee be the same the private carrier? Will fees be set?

Commissioner Chunn: Yes, the board would adopt fees, but not planning to do so at this time.

Q: How much does CCFR rely on new construction?

Chief Nohr: We know new construction tax revenue is coming, but do not hire ahead of it. Make sure we have the money in the bank before obligating future money. Agreed there is a lot coming. There is a lag between development and when we actually collect the tax.

Q: Is there a greater liability for transporting?

Chief Nohr: May impact staffing with crews out of service during transport.

DVC Jackson: The insurance provider has advised the insurance cost is negligible.

Several public comments made in support of the proposal.

No further discussion. Workshop closed 5:07 p.m.

Clark County Fire Risk Management Group

No meeting. No report.

Fairgrounds Fire Facility Board

Commissioner Johnson recapped the March 9 meeting. CCSO presentation on improving security in the lobby. CCSO will cover the cost. Approved to move forward with the project pending final review of proposal. Received a proposal for a privately funded training building. Referred to the County. The next joint meeting with FD6 will be held on March 29. The operational plan will be discussed at that time. The chiefs are reviewing the interlocal agreements for necessary updates. Chief Nohr advised DVC Peeler is coordinating the WSRB tender test for the FD6 response agreement.

Finance Committee

No meeting. No report.

Local BVFF

No meeting. No report.

WFCA Region VIII

Commissioner Bartel advised the proposed changes to LEOFF 1 and LEOFF 2 benefits has been approved by both houses and forwarded to the governor. Still predicting a number of retirements statewide. Will create a competitive hiring environment.

Commissioner Updates

None.

STAFF REPORTS

Chief Nohr advised written staff reports will be distributed later. Brief verbal reports to follow.

Operations/Training/Logistics – Peeler

DVC Peeler advised the Captain's test is complete. Promotional list posted and will be certified shortly. There are three excellent candidates. Onboarded a new combat volunteer, Courtney Kampe. Also working to onboard a new support volunteer. Summarized year to date stats. Advised the Ops Chiefs and Logistics are working on plans to get the station ready for June 1 staffing.

Community Risk Reduction/CARES – Jackson

DVC Jackson introduced new Community Risk Reduction Specialist Maddie Pearl who will be coordinating the Falls Program. The position is partially funded by AAADSW. Covid Care has slowed down, but other referrals are continuing to come in. Working on a micro-grant for fall prevention equipment. Congratulated DFM Josh Taylor who achieved a fire investigation technician certification through the National Fire Academy. Working to get caught up on plans review. Close to having completed inspection of all businesses in the district. Summarized new development activity.

District Secretary/Chief

Chief Nohr advised the Cowlitz Tribe dedication ceremony will be held at ilani on Friday, March 18 at 10:00 a.m. followed by a CCFR push-in ceremony at Station 23 in La Center. Two new firefighters will start on March 21: Riley Phillips, a former fire cadet and volunteer and Brett Adams, a former school teacher. Their fire academy starts March 28. Continuing work with the County Fire Chiefs on impact fees. Pointed out increased development in the southwest area of the district will impact call volume.

POLICY REVIEW

Chief Nohr recommended two new policies and modification of two others. Policy 901 DOSH Inspections – allowing access of Occupational Safety and Health per statute. Policy 902 DOSH Notification of Injury or Death. Both meet mandatory requirements and provide procedural guidance to personnel. Policy 1027 Personal Appearance. Was previously adopted by the Board. Amended to include soul patches upon employee request. Policy 1013 Conduct and Behavior was also previously adopted by the Board. Added procedure for members to self-disclose criminal charges. Discussion. Will verify whether shall or should be used in the policy. Should seems optional, shall appears to be a requirement. DVC Peeler stated the format is boilerplate and will contact Lexipol to determine what is the logic between choosing one or the other. Confirmed that disciplinary action is only applicable through failure to notify the Chief or his designee. Does the policy address discipline for arrest or conviction? Chief Nohr confirmed that is covered in this policy.

LATE EDITIONS TO THE AGENDA

None.

CITIZEN COMMENTS

None.


OLD BUSINESS

None.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

None.

No further discussion. Meeting adjourned at 5:37 p.m.



Attest, John Nohr
Fire Chief/District Secretary



**CLARK-COWLITZ FIRE RESCUE
CONSENT AGENDA
March 10, 2022**

1. Minutes
 - February 24
2. Pre-paid Invoices
 - \$ 293,146.18 (February Payroll Benefits)
 - i. Check Nos. 22088 – 22097 dated February 28
 - \$ 148.79 (Replace Lost Check No. 100271)
 - i. EFT 397 dated March 4
3. Current Invoices
 - \$ 4,171.27 (FFFB Fund 6254)
 - i. Check Nos. 100344 – 100345 dated March 10
 - ii. ACH 410 dated March 14
 - \$ 1,411,096.05 (CCFR General Fund 6228)
 - i. Check Nos 100346 – 100380 dated March 10
 - ii. EFT 411 dated March 10
 - iii. ACH 447 – 449 dated March 14
 - iv. EFT 450 dated Mar14
4. Voided/Destroyed Claims Warrants
 - 100271
5. February Use Tax
 - \$ 1,176.68 (CCFR) due March 25
6. Payroll
 - February 1 – 28 paid February 28
 - i. \$ 627,188.55 Gross
 - ii. \$ 417,74.85 ACH net
 - iii. \$ 0.00 Payroll VOIDED
 - iv. \$ 78,091.48 941 Tax Deposit paid February 28



Commissioner Stanley Chunn – Chair



Commissioner James R Johnson – Vice Chair



Commissioner Larry Bartel



Commissioner Ken Ayers

Commissioner David Town