



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

June 8, 2023

Present:

Commissioners Stanley Chunn, David Town, Ken Ayers, Larry Bartel, Jade Bourke. Chief John Nohr. DVCs Mike Jackson and Ben Peeler. BC Abe Rommel. Recording Secretary Kathy Streissguth.

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

Flag Salute.

CALL FOR LATE AGENDA ADDITIONS

Commissioner Bartel requested discussion on TIA workshop. Chief Nohr advised legal counsel is present (remotely) for the workshop. Commissioner Chunn added a property purchase update and discussion on meeting time and date.

CITY OF RIDGEFIELD TIA WORKSHOP

Ridgefield Finance Director Kirk Johnson introduced City Manager Steve Stuart and Elaine Howard of Elaine Howard Consulting, a TIA/TIF consultant.

Mr. Stuart thanked CCFR for inviting them to present available information on the proposed TIA. Thanked the district for the great relationship between the agencies and stated that the city values the partnership it has with the district. Looking forward to getting information out and answering questions. Time to move past the reliance on residential tax revenues and balance the equation with jobs and services. Must have the infrastructure to support commercial development. How to get the funds to upgrade the necessary infrastructure. The citizens approved a transportation benefit district to fund road maintenance through a sales tax increase. Need to look for additional tools allowed by the State. One of the projects identified is the Pioneer Street widening project from two to four lanes to encourage development. It's been in the works for years, but the costs have increased substantially. Appreciate the partnership and opportunity to discuss the proposed project.

Ms. Howard and her team have worked on tax increment areas in Oregon for 18 years and is familiar with them and how they work. Advised that the Washington statute is a little bit different than Oregon's in that it provides some good constraints. The new authority under RCW 39.114 approved by House Bill 1189 in 2021 allows cities, counties, and ports to establish up to two non-overlapping tax increment areas (TIAs) to fund public improvement that will enable private development. The combined initial value of all properties in a TIA must be less than \$200 million. When a TIA is established, the assessment value of properties within the boundary is frozen at the value established at that time. All taxing districts continue to receive the tax levy on this base amount. Property taxes levied on all improvements to properties in the TIA are diverted to pay for specifically identified public projects. There is no change for the property owners. The maximum duration of a TIA is 25 years. Oregon does not have a time limitation. The value of the improvements will revert to the taxing districts when the TIA expires. Mr.

Johnson advised the 25 years allows for bonding to provide funds to start the projects right away.

Reviewed the TIA – mostly undeveloped property around the major Ridgefield interchange. Mr. Johnson advised the city chose this boundary as being a job center for the county in their comprehensive plan. Development would offer high paying jobs and livable wages. Areas that are fully or mostly developed are not included. Current assessed of the proposed TIA is approximately \$90 million. Discussed the proposed project list, currently as follows with project cost:

- Widen Pioneer Street to 4 lanes (\$35 million)
- Widen Royle Road to minor arterial (3 lanes) (\$5.6 million)
- Build N 5th Street @ Pioneer Canyon Drive as an industrial/commercial collector (\$4.9 million)
- Build N 51st Avenue as an industrial/commercial collector (\$2.7 million)
- Build N 56th Avenue as an industrial/commercial collector (\$2.1 million)
- Building S 51st Avenue as a minor arterial (\$7 million)
- Build a new E/W collector south of Pioneer Street (SR 501) (\$1.9 million)
- Build a new regional stormwater facility at the I-5 junction (\$900 thousand)
- Build a new N/S connector east of I-5 (\$6.3 million)
- Build the S 10th and S 11th Street corridor and I-5 overpass (\$29.1 million)
- For a total of \$95.5 million estimate cost at year of expenditure

The I-5 overpass will help decrease congestion and improve traffic flow. Most projects are planned for fiscal year 2024/2025. The overpass would be planned for 2028.

The TIA is anticipated to produce approximately \$48.075 million, which is expected to fund about half of the project costs. Other funding may come from developer fees, grants, traffic impact fees and other. Expected value for tax assessment, after full development, is over \$1 billion. Districts will receive the levy inflator of 1% on the frozen base value. Following questions, the city team will need to speak with the assessor to determine how a levy lid lift would be applied and distributed in a TIA. The Impacted County Assessors are working with the Department of Revenue to determine how to distribute funds. This is new and only two agencies in the State have implemented a TIA under the updated law. No one in the state has started collecting this revenue yet. Ms. Howard advised that but for the development, the taxing districts would not be receiving the additional tax revenue. The TIA will be using the taxes assessed on improvements to fund the infrastructure needed to bring development. The junior districts forego the tax revenue to pay for the infrastructure to encourage development. Taxing districts are not receiving much tax revenue from the properties at this time. Commissioner Bartel pointed out that yes, it's true that there isn't much revenue from the vacant properties, but there is also no need for service. As the properties are developed, they will create service needs. Chief Nohr commented that short of lightning strikes, fires don't happen where people aren't nor do EMS calls. Once the people come, so will the need for services that the fire district may not have funds to support.

DVC Jackson asked if the tax collection projections are met before the 25 year sunset, will the TIA go away and the collection stop. Mr. Johnson advised that no, the TIA will continue until the projects are fully funded. Additional revenues from the TIA will allow the other funding sources to be reallocated to other projects. Mr. Stuart will provide the various revenue/valuation projections – the most conservative was used. Mr. Stuart stated that the development projects will not occur without the public infrastructure projects outlined. To get sales tax, which is the city's primary revenue

source as a general purpose government, commercial and business development is needed. Chief Nohr advised that the fire district's primary revenue source is property taxes. Discussion on the TIA collection from the EMS levy, which CCFR anticipates continuing well into the future. Only the first 6 years was included in the projections as the levy is voter approved. The actual amount will be higher. Ms. Howard advised that the schools are exempt from the TIA. Shared information on projected positive impacts to the local economy. Financial impacts to CCFR are anticipated to be \$50,000 for both levies in 2026 increasing to \$1,232,000 in 2049, the last year of the TIA. They estimate CCFR would forego \$17.36 million in tax revenue over the 25 years, an average of \$694,000 per year. This is a conservative estimate and does not account for additional revenues from an EMS levy renewal or general levy lid lifts. Chief Nohr asked if the city is prepared to mitigate if there are significant impacts to the fire district. Mr. Stuart deferred to the council for any action on that topic.

Reviewed the project timeline. The first public hearing is scheduled for the end of June. A second public hearing will be held in the fall. Commissioner Chunn asked if the council would be willing to meet with the CCFR Board for a workshop or joint discussion. Mr. Stuart will forward the request to the council.

Question on how a permanent levy lid lift at 106% would factor into the foregone revenues. Discussion. The city team will need to ask the assessor for more information on determining how the allocation would be calculated.

Chief Nohr expressed his concern that the district won't know the exact impacts of the development until after it's built. Commissioner Bourke was concerned there is only 30 days to voice any concerns. What happens 4 years down the road if nothing is in place. Ms. Howard advised that if the district can demonstrate an increase in service demands in the TIA, it would be able to go back to the city for mitigation.

Brigid Taylor commented that all three cities in the district could have TIAs. Mr. Stuart confirmed, but the TIA may not overlap. Commissioner Town expressed his concern about the state of the district's finances should all three cities and the two ports form TIAs. It was pointed out that Clark County is also able to establish a TIA. He cannot support this idea at this time, but he doesn't have a vote. Discussion. Mr. Stuart wants it to work for everyone.

Commissioner Chunn asked how the TIA would work should CCFR change to primary funding under a fire benefit charge instead of property taxes. The Ridgefield team was not familiar with this as an option. Discussion. Further investigation is needed. Noted that the sewer system is already in place to support the new development.

The first public hearing will occur on June 29 at 5:30 at the RAAC in Ridgefield. After a 90-day review and comments are received from the State Treasurer and the City has met with the taxing districts and before the City Council considers the ordinance, a second hearing will be held in the fall. The city has a project information page on their website.

City and district staff will need to work together to determine the service needs and impacts of the new development to the fire district. Concern expressed that the areas outside the TIA will be subsidizing its service needs. Commissioner Bartel commented that the city staff seems to have a better understanding of the district's concerns and

that further discussion is needed. Mr. Stuart and Ms. Howard expressed appreciation for the opportunity to share information and talk with the district.

Commissioner Chunn closed the workshop at 5:30 p.m. 5-minute recess. Meeting resumed at 5:37 p.m.

CONSENT AGENDA

Motion by Commissioner Bartel to approved the consent agenda as presented. Second Commissioner Town. Will discuss the Station 26 by door repair under the Administrative Services report. Discussed the irrigation bills for Station 151. No further discussion. Motion passed unanimously.

COMMUNICATIONS

Thank you email forwarded by Captain Josh Brooks from Camas High School student Haley Shaw for the crew's assistance with her senior project. Thank you letter from Chief Sammy Brown at Cowlitz Fire District 5 assistance on an incident from the CCFR Tech Rescue Team. La Center newsletter. Advised June 15 at 11:00 a.m. and July 13 at 10:30 a.m. there will be wildfire informational presentations from the Red Cross.

CITIZEN COMMENTS

None.

STANDING COMMITTEES

Clark County Fire Risk Management Group

No meeting. No report.

Fairgrounds Fire Facility Board

No meeting. No report.

Finance Committee

No meeting. No report.

WFCA Region VIII – Bartel

No report.

Local BVFF

No meeting. No report.

Commissioner Updates

Commissioner Town advised he attended the cadet graduation ceremony.

CHIEF'S REPORTS

Brief Administrative Services review by DVC Peeler. Advised the Station 26 door repair was due to a catastrophic failure of one of the doors. Station 26 remodel was awarded to C&J Construction. Project expected to start after July 4. Roll out of the Operative IQ software for inventory and equipment maintenance management. FF Paramedic hiring process is in progress. Anticipating hiring 6. 27 are moving on to the assessment phase, which will determine how many will move forward to chief interview.

DVC Jackson provided a CRR and CARES update. DFM Mike Lackey started this month. Several outreach programs noted. SWACH is looking at expanding funding opportunities for a county-wide program. Various collaboration ideas are under discussion.

Chief Nohr advised he received verbal notice from BC Max Konkright that he will be retiring in February 2024. FD6 Chief Kristan Maurer, FD3 Chief Scott Sorenson, and Chief Nohr met with the County attorney assigned to the EMS District 2 transport contract to ensure the participating fire districts have a seat at the table when Vancouver goes out for an RFQ. Want to ensure the fire districts are represented. The new ambulance should arrive sometime in July. Burn ban will be implemented at midnight tonight. Informational flyers will be updated. Thank you from FD6 for the assistance on a large fire this week. Discussed coverage while Chief Nohr is on vacation. Woodland Planter's Day is June 15 – 18. Discussed the morning's fatality fire in the unincorporated area north of Vancouver Lake.

LATE EDITIONS TO THE AGENDA

Staffing update on Station 151. Chief Nohr advised the FD6 Board voted to start staffing the station in September. Will distribute a press release when both agencies are operating out of the station. Changing to a closet unit dispatch for E151. Will continue to monitor for any issues. The staffing update plan has been relayed to Washington Survey & Rating.

Discussed the Ridgefield TIA. Commissioner Bartel was pleased to have had the city present their information and allow CCFR to share its concerns. May have an executive session with legal counsel to discuss the legal ramifications of the TIA. Legal counsel was able to listen in on the presentation until he had to log off at 5:30 p.m. Consensus to hold a meeting with counsel sooner rather than later. Chief Nohr will see if he can schedule a virtual meeting with legal counsel next week. If Mr. Snure is available, Chief Nohr will ensure he has a signal at the scheduled time and remote in for the meeting.

Property purchase update. DVC Jackson was tasked some months ago to determine who we could speak to discuss the option of purchasing 1-2 acres of the property adjoining Station 21. Received a letter from the owner representative on June 8, indicating they are willing to discuss, but are requesting confidentiality. Discussion. Motion by Commissioner Bourke to authorize the Chief to conduct due diligence on property values and initiate negotiations regarding a possible property purchase immediately adjacent to Station 21. Second Commissioner Ayers. Will hold an executive session and/or further discussion when further information is available. No further discussion. Motion passed unanimously.

Discussed the establishment of meeting times. RCWs require the meeting times and dates must be adopted by resolution and published. Discussed why this particular day and time was selected. Chief Nohr provided a calendar with all the neighboring community meetings shown. CCFR meets on the second and fourth Thursday at 4:00 p.m. The City of Ridgefield Council also meets on the second and fourth Thursdays. The City of La Center meets the second and fourth Wednesday at 7:00 p.m. The City of Woodland holds their meetings the second and fourth Monday at 7:00 p.m. There are occasionally joint meetings with the neighboring fire districts. FD3 meets the second and fourth Monday and FD6 meets the first and third Tuesday. The Fairgrounds Fire Facility Board meeting is held the second Wednesday of the odd numbered months at 4:00 p.m. The second and fourth Tuesdays are open. Historically, both FD11 and FD12 held their meetings later in the evening, but Commissioner Bartel, the former FD12 fire chief for many years, advised they were rarely attended by the public. Chamber and other meetings are also held in the evenings. Meeting at 4:00 p.m. minimizes impact to staff and reduces or eliminates the cost of overtime. Commissioner Bourke expressed his

opinion that the only benefit of moving the meetings to a later time appears to be the possibility of increased public participation where the historical chance of that has been low. The impact to employees is much higher, so he feels it would be better to leave things as is. Commissioner Town appreciated the opportunity to discuss the issue. Commissioner Chunn pointed out that the district holds open houses and other informational meetings at times to encourage public participation.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

None.

CITIZEN COMMENTS

None.

OLD BUSINESS

None.

No further discussion. Meeting adjourned at 6:31 p.m.

Attest, John Nohr
District Secretary/Fire Chief



CLARK-COWLITZ FIRE RESCUE CONSENT AGENDA June 8, 2023

1. Minutes

- May 25 Board Meeting
- May 31 Joint Board Meeting w/ Clark 6

2. Prepaid Invoices

- \$ 413,999.51 (CCFR General Fund 6228 May Payroll Tax & Benefits)
 - i. Chk Nos. 22316 – 22326 dated June 7
- \$ 30,881.97 (US Bank VISA Statement Ending May 8 paid May 15)
 - i. \$ 28,266.77 EFT 1213 (CCFR Fund 6228)
 - ii. \$ 2,615.20 EFT 990 (FFFB Fund 6254)

3. Invoices

- \$ 200,847.66 (CCFR General Fund 6228)
 - i. \$ 239.20 EFT 1226 – 1227 paid May 31
 - ii. \$ 166,100.63 Chk Nos. 101346 – 101401 dated June 8
 - iii. \$ 26,232.46 ACH 1289 – 1297 paid June 8
 - iv. \$ 8,275.37 EFT 1298 paid June 8
- \$ 5,771.50 (FFFB Fund 6254)
 - i. \$ 1,891.00 Chk Nos. 101343 – 101344 dated June 8
 - ii. \$ 2,951.88 ACH 1230 paid June 8
- \$ 9,521.00 (Capital Fund 6224)
 - i. ACH 1231 paid June 8

4. Payroll

- May 1 – 31 paid June 8
 - i. \$ 952,061.33 Gross Payroll
 - ii. \$ 649,810.51 ACH (net)
 - iii. \$ 116,909.09 Tax Deposit paid June 8

5. May Use Tax paid June 8

- CCFR \$ 2,405.11
- FFFB \$ 0.00

6. Approved Commissioner Stipends

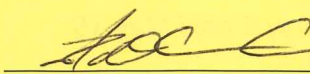
May 2023 paid June 8						
Name	Regular Meeting	Committee Meeting	Assn Meeting	Educ	Other	Total
Ayers	3		1			4
Bartel	3		1			4
Bourke	3		1			4
Chunn	3	1	1			5
Town	3	1			1	5



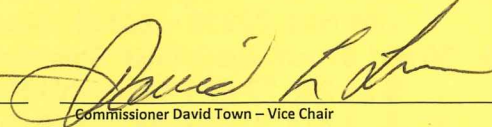
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7. Voided/Destroyed Claims Warrants


- None




Commissioner Stanley Chunn – Chair



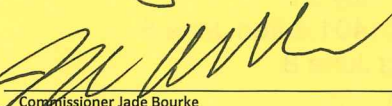
Commissioner David Town – Vice Chair



Commissioner Larry Bartel



Commissioner Ken Ayers



Commissioner Jade Bourke