



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

August 10, 2023

Present:

Commissioners Stanley Chunn, David Town, Ken Ayers, Larry Bartel, Jade Bourke. Chief John Nohr. DVCs Ben Peeler and Eamonn Ryan. Recording Secretary Kathy Streissguth.

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 Bourke to adopt the consent agenda as presented. Second Commissioner Bartel. No discussion. Motion approved unanimously.

COMMUNICATIONS

Email from PeaceHealth home-health nurse Jenny Beeker commending Community Paramedic Chasity Boyce for exemplary care provided to a patient.

CITIZEN COMMENTS

Ridgefield resident Casey Taylor expressed his appreciation for the work the department is doing with the CARES program and other services.

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.

WFOA Region VIII – Bartel

No report.

Local BVFF

No meeting. No report.

Cowlitz Indian Tribe – Contract Liaison Bartel/Bourke

Commissioner Bourke asked if a time had been set to meet with the tribal representatives. Chief Nohr advised he has communicated with Timi Russin and is waiting to hear back from her on a time. He will reach out again.

Commissioner Updates

None.

STAFF REPORTS

Admin/Logistics – DVC Peeler

DVC Peeler provided an update on the status of the St26 remodel. Moving forward with the minor office remodel in the new CRR offices in La Center. Hoping to be move in ready in November. Captain and BC promotional testing will occur in October. There are 3 candidates for captain (Bryan Borrelli, Ryan Sutton, and Chris Edmonds) and two for BC (Josh Brooks and Don McIlmoil). Employment offers were sent to 7 candidates to start in October. The original plan was to hire six, but with BC Konkright's February retirement a seventh position was added. One of the candidates, Ryan McLaughlin, a lateral paramedic from Florida, was brought on board early to backfill the falls prevention specialist position while Maddie Pearl is out on family leave. He will be paid at the specialist rate with no benefits until he converts to fire recruit with the other new hires on October 1. Just prior to the meeting, DVC Peeler received a first draft of the data requested in June for the TIA project. Will need a closer look. Have communicated with Systems Design, the go to company in Washington for EMS and ambulance billing services. Recommending them for this service due to the complexity of attempting to do this in-house.

Community Risk Reduction/CARES – DVC Jackson

DVC Jackson on vacation, Chief Nohr touched on the highlights in the CRR/CARES report.

CHIEF'S REPORT

Chief Nohr briefly summarized the July training report – advised this is the last month he will have the Training Division. Recapped the written Chief's Report. Discussed transport options and workings of EMS transport in Clark County. Noted that the fire districts are not official members of EMS District 2. Congratulated Eamonn Ryan on his promotion to Operations Division Chief. FD6 will begin staffing St151 starting September 3. Have met with FD3 Chief Scott Sorenson to discuss future station sites, he bring up the joint meeting with the FD3 Board at their next meeting. Working with CRESA volunteer Jody Blackwood on a CERT class to be held at St21 on Wednesdays from 7-930pm. Expecting the class to be full. Invoiced Nippon Dynaware Packing in Longview \$10,974 for the ladder truck response to the woodchip fire last month. WA SAO will be conducting an audit for years 2021 and 2022 later this month. Recommending ordering two additional fire engines due to the 3 year production lead times. Though all frontline apparatus is relatively new, the primary reserve apparatus is a 2009 and the next two oldest were purchased in 2002 all with some regular mechanical issues. This will ensure a reliable fleet in the coming years. Will review the available bids and present a funding plan at the next meeting. Expecting to have enough in the reserve account to fund both. Due to supply chain issues with available motors and pending changes in emissions, may issue a PO to hold a place in the build queue. Chief Nohr recommended a lid lift proposal in 2024 for collection in 2025. Will have options to review for the next meeting or the first meeting in September. The FD3 lid lift levy failed; they are planning to rerun next August. On Monday, August 14, Chief Nohr will be participating in an Opioid/Fentanyl roundtable hosted by Senator Maria Cantwell. Law enforcement and other service providers will also be participating. Will talk about the co-responder program to

encourage support at the Federal level. Advised he will be on vacation August 18 – 24. DVC Peeler will be the acting chief.

Commissioner Bartel commented he has never been in favor of it's available, let's go for it. He would rather see what we need and the rate we need to get it. Commissioner Chunn advised there is time to review.

Advised the daily staffing has been 3 or 4 on the engines and truck. Noted that effective August 17, the tower (TO21) is now recognized as a truck company (T21) due to minimum staffing of 3. Will be recognized for mutual aid in Vancouver and FD6.

Commissioner Bartel shared being excited about improved staffing is relative. When DVC Ryan was first hired as a full-time firefighter at FD12, as the fire chief, Commissioner Bartel was excited if there was one full-time firefighter on duty every day. Chief Nohr confirmed the benefits of good staffing using a recent call as an example.

ANNUAL REPORT UPDATE

Chief Nohr planned to talk more about the TIA data at today's meeting, but the delay in receiving the information has pushed it out again. The report was difficult to create due to the need to break out all the various entities within the district such as the cities, the Cowlitz Tribe Reservation and runs into neighboring agencies. Once the report is finalized, a historical record will be compiled.

RIDGEFIELD TAX INCREMENT AREA (TIA)

Legal counsel is on vacation and will respond to questions posed when he returns. Want to know how we should use the annual report to show impact. Do we have to wait years, or may we show impact based on history? What is the authority of the State Treasurer and must the Treasurer give approval? It doesn't specify that they have to. Can the State Treasurer direct an agency to change components of the plan? Trying to find out why the Treasurer is looking at TIA proposals and what is their authority? Expecting have a reply mid-next week. Met with District 18 Representative Ed Orcutt to discuss TIAs. He disagreed with the City of Ridgefield staff comments made at the workshop that should TIA collections exceed expectations, the city would shift funds from the other sources listed in the plan to other projects and continue assessments in the TIA for the full 25 years or until the debt was paid in full. Representative Orcutt advised that that was not the intent of the law and will send the District's report to staff for review. Chief Nohr stated there is a need to put teeth into what mitigation means. Will ask FD6 Chief Maurer to connect with 49th District Representative Sharon Wylie. Heard from her staff and provided optional meeting dates to 20th District Representative Stephanie McClintock; waiting to hear back. Will reach out again to 18th District Representative Greg Cheney, who has not responded to the request to meet. Will also reach out to 20th District Representative Peter Abbarno. Trying to get to as many legislators as possible. Noted that Cheney and McClintock are new and did not vote on this law. Abbarno and Orcutt voted against it. Commissioner Bartel commented that the bill was pushed through in the last couple days of the session that year and it sounds like there wasn't a lot of review to really see what the bill was about. Seemed to be slipped in as a good bill that really won't hurt anybody. It also ran under the radar at the State Chiefs and State Fire Commissioners. Hopefully a revision of some kind can be made now that there is more of a spotlight of the impacts and we're getting people to look closer. Trying to catch up with Senator Ann Rivers to meet with her as well. Still trying to get a meeting time scheduled. Chief Nohr will be attending the City of Ridgefield meeting tonight to bring the request as a public record.

LATE EDITIONS TO THE AGENDA

None.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

None.

OLD BUSINESS

Confirmed the removal of the "new station location site" sign on the Hillhurst Road property. The use of that parcel for a future station location site is not feasible. Continuing to research options for siting a new St24 with the property owner at S 31st Street and Hillhurst Road. The City of Ridgefield has expressed interest in purchasing the Hillhurst Road property. Advised we may still need to staff St151 even after the new station is built due to extensive development in its response area.

Chief Nohr had communicated with the property broker for both the cities of La Center and Ridgefield. He has a desire to broker property for the district. May be a good idea to ensure someone is looking out for the best interests of the district as we do not do a lot of property deals.

Commissioner Bartel advised the weeds in the planter strip along the Hillhurst Road property will need to be addressed as he is no longer able to take care of it. Chief Nohr will discuss with the Admin DVC and Logistics personnel.

Discussed upstaffing in Woodland during the Lewis River bridge maintenance project on I-5. Chief Nohr advised the City of Woodland is reviewing options to expand the amount of available commercial property for development by annexing some or all of the bottoms south and west of the city. Concern was expressed over a large residential development proposed to go in the area, which is mainly unhydranted.

CITIZEN COMMENTS

Citizen Casey Taylor thanked the Chief and the Board for its approach to the EMS District 2 situation. Asked DVC Peeler why information cannot just be pulled from the incident reporting (IR) system, who replied that the best information comes directly from the dispatch data file. CRESA uses First Watch, which is relied on by most of the agencies in the County to develop response time and other reports as the process of creating them is a complex task. The City of Vancouver is the only agency with a dedicated data analyst. Mr. Taylor congratulated DVC Ryan on his promotion. Thanked everyone for their efforts on the TIA issue.

DVC Peeler followed up that the IR system captures much of the necessary data, but some of the information needed is not automatically downloaded and subject to human judgement, such as mutual aid given or received or whether a call is inside city limits. To ensure accurate data, the reports are created with specific parameters to eliminate the human error issue. Monthly reports are compiled from three sources, First Watch, the ESO incident reporting system, and ad hoc information. It will be good to have accurate data for the TIA. Countywide, it has been agreed to utilize the CAD data for most reporting to ensure consistency. Once finalized, the report will be auto-generated monthly.

Commissioner Chunn requested more of a breakdown on the "other" calls on the website. What might be included in "other"? DVC Peeler advised the request should be

referred to DVC Jackson and his team as it's the PIO group that generates the information posted to the website and social media web pages. He believes a captain pulls the data from the IR system using one of the ESO report options.

No further discussion. Meeting adjourned at 5:14 p.m.

Attest, John Nohr
District Secretary/Fire Chief