



**Clark-Cowlitz Fire Rescue
Clark County Fire District 3
Board of Fire Commissioners
Special Meeting - Workshop
Station 26 – 21609 NE 72nd Ave
Battle Ground, WA 98604**

October 4, 2023

Present for CCFR:

Commissioners Stanley Chunn, Ken Ayers, Dave Town, Larry Bartel, Jade Bourke.
Chief John Nohr.

Present for Clark 3:

Commissioners Jon Couture, Rick Steele, Dean Thornberry. Chief Scott Sorenson.

Workshop called to order by Commissioner Chunn at 6:00 p.m.

Flag Salute. Introductions

CITIZEN COMMENTS

None.

DISCUSSION

Funding

Chief Nohr started with information on the new tax increment financing option that may be used by cities, counties and ports. Expecting a huge impact to fire districts in the state. Working with the WFC, WFCA and contacting state legislators to incorporate more mitigation language into the law. Chief Sorenson shared information about the multi-family structure tax exemptions that will also impact fire districts.

Chief Nohr advised that the planning commission has voted to refer the approval of fire impact fees in unincorporated Clark County to the Council.

Chief Sorenson commented on running levies at the same time to coordinate messages. They were not successful with the voters going it alone. Chief Nohr shared the success of CCFR's 6-yr permanent levy lid lift with a 106% annual inflator, which was approved by the voters in 2017 and expires this year. Preference to not drop too far from a \$1.50 per thousand levy rate. The CCFR board has started discussion on running a lid lift proposal in 2024. FD3 is considering one as well. Commissioner Chunn advised CCFR is also looking into maintenance and operations levies as a funding option as they would not be subject to TIF. Discussion on levy results and feedback. Communicating with the citizens is an ongoing challenge.

Commissioner Bartel asked about the corner of FD3 that is currently in North Country EMS. Commissioner Steele encouraged that many of the issues are regional in nature and the districts should work together. Chief Nohr concurred it is imperative to work together for the betterment of all.

Operations

Lengthy discussion on joint operations between the two districts and balanced mutual aid. Countywide push for mutual training and consistency in operations.

Future Opportunities

Chief Nohr shared that Washington cities are required to update their comprehensive plans every 10 years with a 20-year outlook. Clark County cities are supposed to update their plans in 2025. This may change urban growth boundaries. A challenge for CCFR be expansion of the City of Battle Ground west along 219th Street, which will transfer protection services to FD3. At some point, it is likely that CCFR Station 26 will be within the city limits. Looking at a map of the county, CCFR and FD3 are the most similar and likely the easiest two departments to integrate operations. Chief Sorenson pointed out that the zig zag border is unlikely to ever be fixed unless the two become one. Political lines don't necessarily best support the citizens. Commissioner Steele opined that Station 26 could turn into the new Station 151 – a jointly operated station. Where is the best location from which to respond. Look at options to best serve the public by working together.

Extensive discussion on ambulance transport in the County led by Chief Nohr and CCFR DVC Ben Peeler. The request for proposal for services is managed by the City of Vancouver. With the exception of a small section at the south end of CCFR, most of the northern county is subject to 20-minute ambulance response time. The city's consultant indicated there may be a need for a public subsidy to improve response times outside the City of Vancouver. Discussed how CCFR's ability to transport may impact FD3 and FD6. Need to review the options and work together to figure out how ambulance services may be improved. EMS District 2 has the responsibility to provide transport in the county but has taken a less active role since Vancouver took over the contract.

Chief Nohr shared information on CCFR's CARES team, which provides community paramedicine and behavior health crisis response in Clark County. Funding is now primarily through AADSWA, Carelon and at-risk patient post-discharge follow-up contracts with LegacyHealth and PeaceHealth hospitals. CCFR DVC Mike Jackson detailed program operations and opportunities.

Commissioner Steele suggested grant opportunities and joint purchases for volume discounts. Discussion on consolidation options as opposed to merger. Figuring out how to ensure efficiency to support response operations.

Discussion on where to go from here. Commissioner Bartel suggested starting with addressing ambulance transport in EMS District 2. CCFR, FD3 and FD6 are facing a big challenge. Possibility to swap personnel for mutual training and operation familiarity. Chief Nohr suggested holding another joint meeting and add the FD6 commissioners to discuss the same topics. How to work together as the EMS2 agencies. What are the joint opportunities. The chiefs will coordinate to schedule a joint meeting in November.

Shared services could include fire marshal services – inspections, plans review and cooperative investigations. Discussed logistic operations.

The boards appreciated the opportunity to meet and share ideas. Suggestion to come together semi-annually.

Workshop closed at 7:23 p.m.

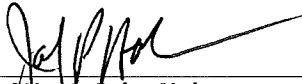
CITIZEN COMMENTS

David Greenwood of CCFR Local 3674 shared his excitement that the two agencies are looking into working together, which is best for the citizens. The two labor groups already are working together and are happy to support the districts in any way they can.

GOOD OF THE ORDER

No comments.

Meeting adjourned at 7:25 p.m.



Attest, John Nohr
District Secretary/Fire Chief