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

March 27, 2025

Present:
Commissioners Stanley Chunn, David Town, Larry Bartel, Jade Bourke, Ken Ayers. Chief John Nohr. ACs 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
AC Peeler requested discussion on surplus of apparatus Shop23.

Introduced firefighter new hires who started the academy on March 17. Introduced Commissioner Mike Kaiser, Cowlitz Fire District 6.

CONSENT AGENDA
Motion by Commissioner Town to approve the Consent Agenda as presented. Second by Commissioner Bartel. Commissioner Bourke advised of a correction in the minutes – the next EMS District 2 meeting is on April 14, not March 14. Discussion on architectural fees, equipment rentals, and EMS expenditures and revenues related to ambulance transport. Motion amended by Commissioner Town and seconded by Commissioner Bartel to approve the minutes as corrected. Motion passed unanimously.

COMMUNICATIONS
Thank you note addressed to DFM Josh Taylor regarding a fire alarm demonstration provided for a special needs student.

CITIZEN COMMENTS
Commissioner Kaiser (Cowlitz FD6) shared that the new ambulance revenues will help cash flow.

STANDING COMMITTEES

Clark County Fire Risk Management Group
No report.

Fairgrounds Fire Facility Board
No report.

Finance Committee – Town/Bourke
Meeting scheduled for April 10 at 2:30 p.m. to review the first quarter.

WFCA Region VIII – Bartel
Commissioner Bartel advised the County Treasurer fee proposal is buried in finance and unlikely move forward. The City of Bellevue is asking that the tax increment area value limit be increased from $200 million to $500 million. WFCA opposes this proposal.

Local BVFF – Chunn/Ayers
Met earlier in the day to review and approve the 2024 volunteer pension certification.

Cowlitz Indian Tribe – Contract Liaison Bartel/Bourke
Commissioner Bartel advised the team met with CIT Foundation Manager Timi Russin and CIT Chairman Bill Iyall. A good meeting. They asked to meet more regularly – on a quarterly basis. Discussed the potential development on the east side of the freeway. Advised they are still in planning. Discussed their long-term plan for a public safety complex on the reservation property.

EMS District 2 – Bourke
Next meeting on April 14.

Port of Ridgefield
Commissioner Bartel recapped information presented at the March 26 Port meeting. Canceled the April 14 meeting.

Port of Woodland
Commissioner Town advised the next meeting will be on April 3. An open public forum on the proposed TIF is at their April 17 meeting. State funds that they rely heavily on for their projects has dried up.

Commissioner Updates
Commissioner Bartel spoke with Commissioner Pietz from Cowlitz FD1 who expressed interest in participating in funding a public relations position. Commissioner Town mentioned the CCFR fire cadets were fundraising for their NY/DC trip at Rosauers on Saturday.

CHIEF'S REPORT
Chief Nohr advised there was an employee resignation over the weekend. He has made an offer of employee to a lateral FFPM on the list. The Medix ambulances will be in Portland next week to receive finish work by the vendor. Will take delivery soon after to further prep the rigs for service. The Cowlitz Indian Tribal liaisons will attend the tribal blessing ceremony for the ambulances. The first quarter staff reports will be presented at the second meeting in April. Discussed Station 29 design options. The cadet award event will be held on Friday, May 30, 6:00 p.m. at View Ridge Middle School in Ridgefield. Sending a letter of support for the widening of NW 31st Avenue south of the CIT Reservation. Scheduling an executive session with legal counsel on April 10 regarding legal action updates. Following Commissioner Bartel's question, Chief Nohr advised there is no action on impact fees in the cities of Ridgefield and La Center. The CityGate Standard of Cover project is still in process. Due to a family issue, the FD6 employee who was gathering data for CityGate was not able to provide them with the CCFR data. AC Peeler has since sent them 4 ½ years of CCFR data. Once the report is complete the incident tracking program will be procured and implemented.

TAX INCREMENT AREAS – UPDATE

Commissioner Town advised the Port of Woodland public briefing is tonight. Commissioners Bartel and Town attended the March 24 public briefing. Cowlitz FD1 Chief Dehning testified to the negative financial impacts to his department; they might not receive sufficient funding to provide service to the area as it develops. Recommendation to anyone that can attend tonight's meeting to provide testimony on the impacts to fire districts. Testimony must be in writing. They will accept testimony at their April 17 meeting when the Board is there. Noted the Cowlitz County Board of Commissioners unanimously oppose the Port of Woodland TIA proposal. Advised the Port Commissioners are willing to meet with CCFR Board members one on one, but appear to be avoiding a public meeting. Shared that Cowlitz FD1 legal counsel advised against this – CCFR retains the same legal counsel. Following discussion, the CCFR Board confirmed they still desire to meet Board to Board in a public meeting and not on an individual basis. Discussion on whether this offer to meet individually or staff to staff meets the criteria to "meet with impacted agencies" per the law. Chief Nohr will discuss with legal counsel.

Chief Nohr recapped the March 24 public forum held on tax increment financing and its impact on the fire district. The event was well attended both in person and online. Reflector and Columbian reporters were in attendance. Discussed the Bellevue proposal and the need to modify impact to fire districts and regional fire authorities.

Chief Nohr reported he and Finance Manager Kathy Streissguth met with personnel from the County Treasurer's and Assessor's offices. They reported a possible misallocation of new construction revenues which is expected to result in more funds being diverted to the tax increment areas for 2025. Somewhere between $29,000 and $43,000 between the General and EMS Levy funds. Discussion on base values and change of use or rezoning. Streissguth shared that the County is currently being audited by the WA Department of Revenue and CCFR properties are part of the information under review. All the counties are trying to figure out how to correctly implement the distributions to meet the DOR guidelines.

Commissioner Bartel commented that fire districts have always planned forward. Mitigation only looks back. The fire service does not wait for something to happen – we plan for it. Waiting for something bad to happen before we can mitigate is not good planning.

POLICY 1013 CONDUCT AND BEHAVIOR

Policy presented for review at the March 13 meeting. Motion by Commissioner Bourke to adopt Conduct and Behavior Policy 1013 as presented. Second Commissioner Town. No discussion. Motion passed unanimously.

LATE EDITIONS TO THE AGENDA

AC Peeler shared a staff report with a recommendation to place Shop23, a 2007 International/Horton ambulance into surplus for distribution. The vehicle has outlived its usefulness, expensive to maintain, and there is no plan to return the unit to service. A resolution for surplus will be prepared for the April 10 meeting.

Chief Nohr is attending tonight's City of Ridgefield council meeting to present the CCFR 2024 annual report.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

None.

CITIZEN COMMENTS

Commissioner Kaiser asked for the original number for the tax increment financing bill adopted in 2021. Chief Nohr advised it was HB1189.

No further discussion. Meeting adjourned at 4:57 p.m.

Attest, John Nohr
District Secretary/Fire Chief

Clark-Cowlitz
FIRE RESCUE

CLARK-COWLITZ FIRE RESCUE
CONSENT AGENDA
March 27, 2025

1. Minutes
   - Board Meeting – March 13
2. Prepaid Invoices
   - None
3. Current Invoices
   - $ 5,251.35 (FFFB Fund 6254)
     i. $ 3,656.03 Chk Nos. 102863 – 102864 dated March 27
     ii. $ 1,595.32 ACH No.692 to be paid March 28
   - $ 1,719.74 (Capital Fund 6224)
     i. ACH No. 689 to be paid March 28
   - $ 143,003.77 (CCFR Fund 6228)
     i. $ 115,228.18 Chk Nos. 102865 – 102890 dated March 27
     ii. $ 27,775.59 ACH Nos. 719 – 727 to be paid March 28
4. Fund Transfers
   - $ 25,000.00 Gen Fund 6228 to FFFB Fund 6254 (Q1-25 Operations)
   - $ 315,000.00 EMS Levy Fund 6226 to Gen Fund 6228
5. Payroll
   - March Life & Disability Benefits
     i. $ 8,510.08 EFT 688 paid March 25
6. CCFR Fund 6228 Voided/Destroyed Claims Warrants
   - None
7. FFFB Fund 6254 Voided/Destroyed Claims Warrants
   - None

Commissioner Stanley Chunn – Chair

Commissioner David Town – Vice Chair

Commissioner Larry Bartel

Commissioner Ken Ayers

Commissioner Jade Bourke