

Spokane County Fire Protection District 8
Minutes of Regular Commissioners Meeting
April 18, 2007
6:00 p.m.

CALL TO ORDER

The regular meeting of the Board of Fire Commissioners was called to order by Board Chair Hesse at 6:02 p.m. Present were: Commissioner Hesse, Commissioner Boling, Commissioner Ferraiuolo, Chief Walkup, Deputy Chief Blystone, Deputy Chief Nielsen, Deputy Chief Rash, Administrative Assistant Carol Trescott, members of the district and the public.

INTRODUCTIONS

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA

Motion: Ferraiuolo/Boling to approve the agenda for the meeting. The motion carried unanimously.

APPROVAL OF CONSENT AGENDA

Motion: Ferraiuolo/Boling to approve the consent agenda. The motion carried unanimously.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

None

NEW BUSINESS

A. Auto Aid Agreement with Fire District 1 - Chief Walkup presented the board with maps and explained the details of a new Automatic Aid Agreement between District 8 and Spokane Valley Fire 1. In the agreement SCFD1 will provide automatic aid for all 11F, 11W and ALS calls in the Ponderosa, Painted Hills, and Bella Vista areas. District 8 will respond to calls in response zone 4532, covered under the current agreement, and 4533, an area that District 8 has presently been responding to.

In addition, the agreement establishes a new proposal requesting District 8 respond to calls in the Morningside Estates area, 4525. This area is approximately 1 ½ miles from Station 85 and would substantially decrease response time over units responding from Valley Fire.

The agreement has been reviewed by both Brian Snure and SCFD1 and all parties are supportive of the proposal. Chief Walkup said the citizens of the District will receive an enhanced level of service at no additional cost, and the District will receive an additional engine in when needed. This agreement is mutually beneficial for both agencies.

After comment and discussion the commissioners were in favor of entering into the Auto Aid Agreement with SCFD1. Per Resolution 94-1, the Fire Chief is granted authority to enter into such agreements.

B. Military Leave – A District member has received orders for a 15-day military training and will collect district salary and benefits during that training as provided for by federal law. Subsequently s/he received orders for an additional 2-week training deployment. Because by statute and legal requirement the District is required to grant a 15-day leave only, Chief Walkup requested direction from the board prior to granting the additional paid leave. Commissioner Boling recounted the history of the District’s current policy and his desire to support its members while remaining within the law. He noted a law signed the previous day by Governor Gregoire allowing the creation of a uniformed service shared leave pool which will allow state employees to donate leave into a shared leave pool to be used specifically for colleagues in the military. Boling referenced the District’s current sick leave pool and asked the board to direct the Chief to re-address the District’s Military Leave Policy to reflect the direction of the board at the conclusion of discussions. Commissioner Hesse said he believed all were in favor of supporting the military, and that because of Chief Walkup’s research and discussion with legal, he had no issue at this time with providing the additional leave. Commissioner Ferraiuolo initiated discussion on clarification of current policy with regard to federal law and District 8’s Salary Continuation Period. Current policy states the District may continue to pay an employee their regular salary and benefits for a six-month deployment period. In return, the employee shall pay the District the salary s/he receives from the military for that six-month period. After that time, a continuation may be granted at the discretion of the board. Federal law only requires an employer to hold an employee’s job when they are called to active duty and to pay wages for a 15-day yearly training. Commissioner Boling was in favor of leaving any future military leave decisions to the board’s discretion as he felt there was a distinction between a member assigned to report for duty and one volunteering for active duty. Chief Walkup confirmed the board’s direction to update District policy in order to comply with current business practice.

EXECUTIVE REPORT

A. 60th Anniversary Update – SCFD8’s 60th Anniversary recognition will be Saturday, August 11th. A committee will be formed to gather ideas and organize the event. Current plans include a morning open house at each station followed by a barbeque and recognition activities at Station 82.

B. Legislative Update – Chief Walkup reported that 5498 was approved by both houses and should be signed and acted into law by the governor before July 21. In addition, legislation passed, and the governor has said she would sign, a law allowing homeowners and property owners back onto their property during wildland fires to protect personal property, prevent fire, or retrieve personal belongings. The Chief said this legislation would pose challenges to fire districts and require a close examination of how they operate. Commissioner Hesse said that rather than districts responding in an individual manner, he felt the state boards should contact Snure’s office to seek direction on an approach to the new law. Chief Walkup said a study session is attached to the bill, but that in the interim, local police and sheriff departments are required to develop and implement model policies. The State Fire Chiefs are requesting a representative be a part of any study group.

C. Assistance to Firefighters Grant – Chief Walkup said the district is out to bid on thermal imaging cameras and fire shelters that will be purchased with monies received from a federal government grant.

D. Facility Project Status - Chief Walkup reported on the status of several projects currently in process at district facilities. These projects will be completed using the District’s vendor list and small works roster and will not require the formal bid process. Included work is: interior/exterior

painting of Station 84 at a cost of approximately \$15,000; roof replacement at Station 84, with a low bid of \$12,915, plus tax; and an upgrade of the plymovent systems at Stations 82 and 84, with a quote from the sole-source supplier of \$ 11,946.

E. Surplus Wards – Per previous board direction and in accordance with state law, staff research has determined the fair market value of the surplus Wards to be \$3,500 - \$6,500 each. Discussions with District 11 have settled on the value of the equipment at \$5,000 a piece. It is believed Chief Seehorn will submit a formal offer to District 8 for the apparatus.

CORRESPONDENCE – 1) A news article from the Valley Voice regarding the upcoming Levy Lid Lift in May. 2) Spokane Public Schools April newsletter with a picture of District 8's Pete Flatt reading to students at Adams Elementary during their Family Reading Night. The commissioners expressed their appreciation and thanks to district members who volunteer their personal time to participate in community events.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

Chuck Vyverberg inquired about the District's monthly payments for phone and internet services and offered his assistance in an attempt to reduce costs and increase service efficiency for the District. Commissioner Ferraiuolo, as a former member of the Citizen's Advisory Committee, shared history on the selection of the District's current internet service provider. Per previous inquiry, XO Communications was chosen for their ability to provide a faster connection, increased speed, and a 40% savings over the District's previous provider. Each station now has the ability to input its own data into Firehouse which adds to the efficiency of the system. Ferraiuolo said the District has one year left of a three-year contract with XO. In addition, it was recently discovered that the District's previous connections with Qwest had not been terminated as requested at the time of the conversion, and therefore, the District was due a refund from Qwest of approximately \$10,000. Because the upgraded service is not available to Station 85, Qwest is still the provider for that area. Previous services had been incorrectly rolled over and bundled as services charges for Station 85. The recent findings will reduce the District's monthly billing by approximately \$400. Just as this recent inquiry has proved valuable, Commissioner Ferraiuolo agreed with Mr. Vyverberg on the need to monitor internet services and fees. He encouraged Mr. Vyverberg to use his expertise to further help streamline the District's internet services.

Commissioner Ferraiuolo updated the board on his work on a budgeting and capital replacement program. He recently spent time at each station and with members to better his understanding of apparatus and the needs of the District. In addition, Ferraiuolo has met with SCFD1, Snohomish 1, and attended a seminar on capital budgeting. He will be working with the Chief and staff to present to the board options and ideas on capital replacement budgeting and its integration into the District's budget.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

The commissioners broke for Executive Session at 6:45 pm to review matters of personnel regarding negotiations with Local 3711. No action is expected to be taken at the conclusion of Executive Session.

The meeting was called back to order at 7:11 pm.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

The next meeting is scheduled for May 16, 2007, 6:00 pm at Station 82.

ADJOURNMENT

With no further business, Commissioner Hesse adjourned the meeting at 7:12 pm.

Gregory A. Hesse, Chair
Fire District 8 Commissioner

ATTEST:

William A. Walkup
District Secretary