

Spokane County Fire Protection District 8

Minutes of Regular Commissioners Meeting

April 9, 2008

7:00 p.m.

CALL TO ORDER

The regular meeting of the Board of Fire Commissioners was called to order by Commissioner Hesse at 7:00 p.m. Present were: Commissioner Gregory Hesse, Commissioner Lee Boling, Commissioner Jonathan Ferraiuolo, Chief William Walkup, Deputy Chief Tony Nielsen, Deputy Chief Lonnie Rash, Administrative Assistant Carol Trescott, members of the district, and members of the public.

INTRODUCTIONS

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA

Chief Walkup asked to amend the Agenda as follows:

- Table Unfinished Business, Item A. Ambulance Interlocal Agreement
- Add Executive Report, Item D. Brush Truck Bid Award

Motion: Ferraiuolo/Boling to approve the meeting Agenda as amended. The motion carried unanimously.

APPROVAL OF CONSENT AGENDA

Motion: Ferraiuolo/Boling to approve the Consent Agenda. The motion carried unanimously.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

A. Ambulance Interlocal Agreement - Tabled

NEW BUSINESS

A. Agreement Addendum – Chief Walkup informed the board he is willing and able to extend his work agreement with the district for an additional two years. The work agreement addendum provides the board with flexibility to provide the chief with a vehicle allowance in lieu of a district vehicle. Chief Walkup presented documentation for the commissioner's review, and asked the board to take any action they deemed as appropriate.

Commissioner Ferraiuolo stated he felt Chief Walkup has done a great job in his leadership role with the district. He said he was in favor of extending the chief's contract for an additional two years.

Commissioner Boling noted matters of this nature are typically conducted in Executive Session, but because this is a change in current practice, he said it was important to have the discussion in an open meeting setting. He added the chief's current agreement is a work contract. Because the nature of the job requires the fire chief to be on-call 24/7, one of the provisions of the original contract provides for a vehicle. Commissioner Boling said the request presented to the board was to eliminate the chief's district vehicle, and in exchange, allow him to enter into a lease agreement for a vehicle to be designated as an emergency vehicle. The district's insurance carrier confirmed that a vehicle could be both leased personally by the chief and used for district business. In the proposal the chief would be allowed to use the vehicle freely without question from the public at a cost savings to the district. Commissioner Boling felt both the chief and the district would receive a benefit. He questioned whether a maintenance agreement should be required for any vehicle that the district has partial ownership in.

Chief Walkup clarified that the vehicle in question would be owned or leased solely in his name. The district would maintain physical damage coverage when he used it on official district business. The insurance coverage costs would be approximately the same as those the district is currently paying for a staff vehicle. The chief would also carry personal insurance on the vehicle. Chief Walkup said if the board chose this option, he would purchase a vehicle outright and the district would not be named in the purchase.

Commissioner Ferraiuolo asked to clarify that the district would provide the chief with a monetary allowance and the chief would provide all maintenance for the vehicle. Chief Walkup said the district would not have the responsibility for maintenance or any of the liabilities during personal use.

Commissioner Boling's concern was that although the district would not have liability for the maintenance of the vehicle, he still wanted to be assured the vehicle will always be in good working order. He asked that the vehicle maintenance records be available for review, if necessary, as is customary with any of the district-owned vehicles. He also inquired on the process for equipping a personal vehicle with lights and siren in order to be declared an emergency vehicle.

Chief Walkup said emergency equipment is allowed on a personal vehicle if application is made and signed by the district's board chair, and then submitted, inspected, and approved by the WSP. The emergency equipment is required to be carried on the vehicle at all times.

Commissioner Boling expressed his desire to move forward with the vehicle allowance option and felt it would eliminate any questions, concerns, or comments from the public.

Commissioner Hesse said he had reviewed the options submitted to the board and was in favor of an allowance in the median range. He was in agreement with Commissioner Boling with respect to a maintenance service requirement to ensure the vehicle is maintained and available to act as first-line response vehicle. He complimented the chief for bringing this cost-saving option to the district and to the board.

Discussion took place regarding the selection of a specific allowance. Commissioner Ferraiuolo suggested gathering supporting documentation from other county/state agencies in order to substantiate the figure.

Because of the type of vehicle required, Commissioner Boling's preference was to draft the chief's contract addendum to provide funding for a vehicle and not designate an exact dollar

amount. He felt in doing so the board would not need to revisit the contract in the event there were cost variations. He suggested adding an attachment to the contract which would allow changes or modifications to his contract without changing the entire contract. Chief Walkup said the addendum presented to the board provides the commissioners with the flexibility to set the rate at an amount they deemed to be appropriate.

Having reviewed the options as presented, Commissioner Hesse recommended Option Four, Dollar Cost Averaging of Expense and Operational Costs (\$635 per month), a savings of \$92 per month to the district.

Commissioner Ferraiuolo was in agreement.

Motion: Boling/Hesse to accept the employment agreement as presented with the Dollar Cost Averaging of Expense and Operational Costs. The motion carried unanimously.

B. Teambuilding Workshop/Consultant – Chief Walkup reviewed past discussions with the board regarding the benefit of securing the services of a person or organization to aid staff and the board in working together more effectively to complete the tasks necessary to the operation of the district. Depending on the scope of services, Chief Walkup reported the investment to be between \$5,000 and \$13,000. Fire District 3 is currently engaged in a similar process at a cost of \$10,000 - which they feel has already begun to provide great dividends.

Commissioner Hesse said there has been change among the district's chiefs and commissioners during the past several years that have at times lead to differences of opinion. He felt a workshop of this nature was a positive issue and one that would help move the district forward. Commissioner Hesse said the positive outcomes for the district would be well received by the public and he expressed his support of the process.

Commissioner Boling shared his previous experience with similar programs and added his support to a program that would enable all parties in the agency to hear and respond to each other, and work through differences regarding important issues facing the district. He felt this was an opportunity to build and strengthen the district and recommended the board direct the chief to proceed with the development of a teambuilding workshop.

Commissioner Ferraiuolo asked for clarification as to who would attend the workshop and inquired if it was feasible to delay the process in the event additional staff members are to be added in the near future. In response, Chief Walkup said senior staff is currently in the process of identifying the needs, interests, and issues of the district. In the event the need is determined to fill a vacant position, Chief Walkup said the process would likely be 4-6 months away. Commissioner Ferraiuolo favored creating a positive healthy environment for the district. He added, getting to know one another makes people more approachable and breaks down barriers. Commissioner Ferraiuolo was in full support of a teambuilding workshop.

Further discussion took place regarding the needs of the organization. Commissioner Boling suggested the board direct the chief to contact a consultant to seek their input regarding a teambuilding workshop based on the unique dynamic of the agency.

Motion: Ferraiuolo/Boling to direct the fire chief to describe the agency and its issues, solicit proposals for a teambuilding workshop, and present those findings to the board at the next meeting. The motion carried unanimously.

Amended Motion: Boling/Ferraiuolo to authorize the fire chief to initiate a teambuilding process, research the issue, solicit proposals, and select the lowest, most responsive bidder to serve as a teambuilding consultant to the district. The motion as amended carried unanimously.

C. Rescue Pumper Bid Opening - Chief Nielsen opened the sealed bids for the rescue pumper and Chief Walkup read the following proposals:

1. Hughes Fire Equipment, Springfield, Oregon
 - a. No Bid
2. Cascade Fire & Safety, Yakima, Washington
 - a. E1 Custom Rescue Pumper \$370,524 plus applicable sales tax
 - b. E1 Demo Rescue Pumper \$281,907 plus applicable sales tax
3. H & W Emergency Vehicles, Hillsboro, Oregon
 - a. \$352,169 plus applicable sales tax
4. HME, Inc., Wyoming, Michigan
 - a. HME Ahrens Fox on an HME custom chassis \$352,047
5. General Fire Apparatus, Spokane, Washington
 - a. Central States Fire Apparatus \$347,459 plus applicable sales tax.

Chief Walkup asked the board to refer the bids to staff for further analysis and compliance with specifications.

Motion: Hesse/Ferraiuolo to refer all bids to staff for further analysis, review, and compliance with specifications, and return to the board with recommendations. The motion carried unanimously.

Amended Motion: Boling/Hesse to authorize the Fire Chief to proceed with the purchase of a rescue pumper using the lowest, most responsive bidder, and return to the board with an explanation for the selection made. The motion carried unanimously.

Commissioner Hesse called for a recess at 7:55. The meeting was called back to order at 7:58.

EXECUTIVE REPORT

A. Public Records From City of Spokane - Chief Walkup reported on results of a recent Public Records Request to the City of Spokane regarding annexation activity. The chief said the City has heightened its activity in the Moran Prairie and hired a title company to both conduct a search and get all of the final filings of covenants on the properties in the area. Chief Walkup presented the board with maps showing areas adjacent to the City of Spokane which the city believes to currently have annexation covenants for. The city's original proposal encompassed approximately 270 million dollars in assessed value. The most recent documents with the added real estate are now 670 million dollars. The impact to the district on 270 million dollars is approximately \$540,000 per year.

Commissioner Boling inquired if the area the city currently holds petitions on could be annexed without a vote. Chief Walkup confirmed the city's petition states property owners would not only not oppose annexation, but agree to support it. Any annexation attempts by the city are required to go through process. The fire district would invoke jurisdiction on a number of issues – including response times and service levels. He added the issue would probably go to hearing and the fire district could appeal any decision. Chief Walkup said the Boundary Review Board

does not have a history of deciding in favor of special purpose districts. The director of the BRB has been working with city staff during their strategy sessions.

D. Human Resources Update on Eligibility List – Deputy Chief Rash presented an update on the HR selection process and the status of the district’s eligibility list. He reported the recent completion of two concurrent tests, one for Medic/ALS Provider, and one for Firefighter. The district received 105 applications for the positions. Eighteen of those were applicants for the Medic positions. After screening through HR, 8 were eligible to continue in the process. Seven applicants completed the written exam, 6 advanced on to the physical ability test, and 2 will be asked to participate in panel interviews.

Chief Rash reported the district’s posting for Firefighter drew 90 applicants. After screening through HR, 78 of those were eligible to take the written test. The top 33 scores advanced to the physical ability test and will move forward to interviews. Panel interviews are scheduled for the first week in May. Eligibility lists will then be created for the positions of Paramedic and Firefighter. Chief Rash said the district’s current eligibility list is due to expire in June.

Chief Walkup pointed out that two paramedic applicants were able to advance through all portions of the district’s most stringent requirements. He added, staff will review 7 candidates who were not as tenured but may potentially be invited to participate in the testing process. The chief said the district may also conduct selective recruiting.

E. Station 82 Update – Chief Walkup informed the board that because of the proposed changes in roof design, the district is required to meet new wind load and seismic requirements. Although some portions of the building were not damaged, the sheetrock will still need to be removed in order to add additional studs and bracing. Seismic anchors will be drilled into the floor. Because the building is classified as critical infrastructure, it must meet 1 ½ times the requirement of any other standard building. The chief said the additional requirements will increase roof costs from \$200,000/\$240,000 to approximately \$276,258. Some of the walls in the office area will have to be demolished and staff will need to be displaced. These additional code requirements are in place now but were not in place at the time the structure was built.

Commissioner Hesse asked if bond monies could be used for the additional expenses relating to the roof. Chief Walkup consulted with the district’s bond counsel who advised that “in general” the district was able to do so. The chief said the original resolution adopted by the board provides that flexibility, but counsel advised it would be in the district’s best interest to pass another resolution clarifying what was to be done and why. Chief Walkup pointed out if the board chose to go one step further it could hold a public hearing on the issue so that the public would have an opportunity to comment. Chief Walkup stated the caveat to this is the term “generally”. He is currently researching an issue regarding the bond proceeds. Because the bonds are yield restrictive, if they exceed yield for a single day, the interest earned on all the bonds may be taxable. The chief said he has sent interest information to the bond counsel and they will determine which administrative fees can be deducted from the yield and what the legal requirements are.

Chief Walkup noted the truss design is ready either way and the contractor is waiting for authorization to proceed so that the building can be rebuilt.

All three commissioners expressed their desire to reconstruct the building correctly so it will be available to serve the community for years to come.

Chuck Vyverberg asked if any of the costs in discussion were covered by insurance. Commissioner Hesse replied these roof related costs are in excess of what is covered by insurance monies and are to cover the expense of a new roof design. He said the district had constant problems and numerous leaks with the old roof design.

Commissioner Boling commented that rebuilding the structure correctly will determine how long the station will continue to serve the needs of the fire district.

Commissioner Ferraiuolo felt it is the board's responsibility to correct a long existing problem that was not built correctly in the first place.

D. Brush Truck Bid Award – Chief Walkup announced that General Fire Apparatus, Spokane, WA, submitted the lowest, most responsive bid in reply to the district's RFP for two brush trucks and were \$8,000 below that the next closest bidder. Delivery time has been confirmed to be 150 – 180 days. The chief has executed the agreement and the chassis for the brush trucks have been ordered. The units should be available by the end of September.

CORRESPONDENCE

- 1) Legal counsel regarding matters of personnel
- 2) Correspondence relating to Station 82 reconstruction
- 3) Notice of meeting from the Glenrose Community Association
- 4) Thank you from Reg Hulbert
- 5) Spokesman Review letter to the editor

PUBLIC COMMENTS

None

ANNOUNCEMENTS

- The next meeting of the Board of Fire Commissioners will be May 13, 2008, 6:00 at Station 82
- Spokane County Fire Commissioners Association meeting is scheduled for May 8, 2008, 7:00 pm Fire Memoirs Museum, District 3
- May 31, 2008, WFCFA Conference in Chelan, Washington

EXECUTIVE SESSION

ADJOURNMENT

With no further business, Commissioner Hesse adjourned the meeting at 8:35 pm.

Gregory A. Hesse, Chair
Fire District 8 Commissioner

ATTEST:

William A. Walkup
District Secretary