

# Spokane County Fire Protection District 8

## MINUTES

### Board of Fire Commissioners Regular Meeting

April 14, 2020  
6:00 pm

*This meeting was conducted electronically via Zoom  
due to Governor Inslee's Stay Home, Stay Healthy order*

#### CALL TO ORDER

A regular meeting of the Board of Fire Commissioners was called to order at 6:00 pm by Chair Greg Hesse. In Attendance: Commissioner Andy Rorie, Commissioner Lee Boling, Commissioner Greg Hesse, Fire Chief Tony Nielsen, Assistant Chief Lonnie Rash, District Secretary Carol Trescott, and members of District.

#### INTRODUCTIONS

#### APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA

A Motion was made by Commissioner Boling and seconded by Commissioner Rorie: **Move to approve the Agenda as presented.** The Motion carried unanimously

#### APPROVAL OF THE CONSENT AGENDA

A Motion was made by Commissioner Boling and seconded by Commissioner Rorie: **Move to approve the Consent Agenda as written.** The Motion carried unanimously.

#### UNFINISHED BUSINESS

None

#### NEW BUSINESS

**A. Resolution 20-02, Spokane County Multi-Jurisdiction Hazard Mitigation Plan Adoption:** Chief Nielsen reported that Chief Rash and staff have been working with other county representatives to develop the Hazard Mitigation Plan required by the Disaster Mitigation Act of 2000. The plan allows the District to be eligible for FEMA funds and mitigation project grants.

A Motion was made by Commissioner Rorie and seconded by Commissioner Boling: **Move to approve Resolution 20-02, Spokane County Multi-Jurisdiction Hazard Mitigation Plan as written.** The Motion carried unanimously.

**B. Resolution 20-03, Levy Lid Lift:** Chief Nielsen summarized earlier discussions regarding the District's diminished fire levy rate which has dropped to \$1.23 in 2020. Restoring the levy to \$1.50 would generate approximately \$960,000 of additional revenue in 2021. That revenue would continue to fund the current level of services, staffing, equipment, and facilities. He presented two lid lift options for the Board to consider: 1) a single-year lid lift which would restore the levy back to \$1.50, and degrade based on the statutory limit thereafter; and, 2) a multi-year, six-year lid lift with three different formulas. The ballot filing deadline for the August election is May 8<sup>th</sup>. Chief Nielsen said he began preparations for the lid lift before the COVID coronavirus-related shutdown. Given the current

economic environment, he expressed concern on whether people will be able to pay their taxes this month. If the Board were to choose not to move forward, the Chief said plans for a 2021 bond to fund facilities, equipment, and apparatus would be pushed back. Because of prior planning, the current model is sustainable if the Board were to decide it is not the right time to ask for a lid lift. Chief Nielsen said at this time it's hard to determine what the environment will look like in August.

Chief Nielsen illustrated a seven-year budget projection with the lower levy rate for 2021. He said the budget moving forward will be tight without a lid lift and costs will continue to rise. The county treasurer has estimated April collections will be at 90%; typical collections are 97%-98%; and, 95% in a bad year. The model shows the District's levy rate will fall to \$1.21 in 2021 without a lid lift.

Discussion followed. The Board elected to not move forward with a lid lift request at this time.

A Motion was made by Commissioner Boling and seconded by Commissioner Rorie: **Move to table lid lift discussion for several months.** The Motion carried unanimously

**C. Policies/Procedures Review:** Chief Nielsen provided the Board with a batch of 12 procedures as reviewed and/or updated by the Policy and Procedures Committee in 2019.

A Motion was made by Commissioner Boling and seconded by Commissioner Rorie: **Move to forward the procedures as written to the Fire Chief to post for a 30-day review.** The Motion carried unanimously

#### **EXECUTIVE REPORT: Chief Nielsen**

**A. COVID-19 Update:** Chief Nielsen is a member of the Emergency Coordination Center Policy Group and he meets each morning via Zoom to receive plan updates. He reported that an Incident Management Team is in place at the ECC and the IMT coordinates with Greater Spokane Emergency Management, the Regional Health District, the City of Spokane, all local government fire departments and law enforcement, as well as community business leaders.

Chief Nielsen said MSO Tom Chavez was moved to day shift so that he is available to crews and is able to provide them with the latest information. Staff meets via Zoom each morning to receive division updates. A Daily Directive is sent out every afternoon; new information is highlighted in red for ease in identifying. The Directive also provides current information from Dr. Nania and the ECC. A single point of entry has been implemented at the stations, and health checks - including temperature checks - are conducted twice each shift. As of this date, crews have seen 30 suspected COVID patients with zero exposures; staffing is at 100%. The District's chaplains are also checking in with all District members to see how they are doing and offer their support. Chief Nielsen said he appreciates the great team approach.

MSO Tom Chavez reported he recognized early on that securing PPE would be a challenge. He works with groups throughout the state, county, and city to find ways to secure items such as gowns, goggles, and masks. District 8 crews have had no direct exposures because of the PPE put in place early on. Chavez monitors inventory daily and a hand count is conducted on Tuesdays and Thursdays. Full-body Tyvek suits and heavy duty eye protection have been sent to the stations. Facemasks and respirators came in early and crews have been able to respond to every call without the fear of becoming exposed.

The commissioners expressed their appreciation to staff and the front line responders for their excellent work. The Board also made the decision to cancel the District's Fire Service Day Open House planned for May 9<sup>th</sup> at Station 81.

**B. Station 85 Avista Claim:** No new report.

**C. Station 82 Backup Generator:** Chief Rash reported that with a coordinated effort between Inland Power, L&I, and Valley Electric the three phase power is now in place. The only work remaining is to get power to the pump, fill it, and do a generator start. This will be completed when work is resumed after the COVID slowdown.

**EXECUTIVE SESSION**

None

**CORRESPONDENCE**

Attached

**FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS**

- Policies and Procedures

**ANNOUNCEMENTS**

- Lee Boling expressed his appreciation to District 8 crews for the response provided they provided for a dear friend of his. He said he is proud to be a part of the agency and thanked all of the crews for their work.
- Virtual Chief Chat is Thursday, April 16<sup>th</sup>, 7:00 pm on Zoom.

**PUBLIC COMMENTS**

None

**ADJOURNMENT**

Commissioner Hesse adjourned the regular meeting at 6:32 pm.

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Gregory A. Hesse, Chair  
Fire District 8 Commissioner

ATTEST:

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Carol L. Trescott, District Secretary