

# Spokane County Fire Protection District 8 Board of Fire Commissioners Special Meeting



## MINUTES

April 26, 2022, 6:00 pm

### CALL TO ORDER

A special meeting of the Board of Fire Commissioners was held at Station 82 and on Zoom. Chair Lee Boling called the special meeting to order at 6:00 pm. In Attendance: Commissioner Andy Rorie, Commissioner Lee Boling, Commissioner Greg Hesse, Fire Chief Lonnie Rash, Assistant Chief Chris Wyrobek, District Secretary Carol Trescott, legal counsel, Beth Kennar, and members of the District.

### PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

### INTRODUCTIONS

### UNFINISHED BUSINESS

**A. Policy Review - Family Medical Leave; Washington Paid Family Medical Leave:**  
As requested, Chief Rash provided the commissioners with additional documentation outlining the provisions of Family Medical Leave (FML), and Paid Family Medical Leave (PFML). He supplied a detailed matrix showing the differences in the two benefit plans and offered a draft revision to the District's Family Leave Policy, a new draft Washington Paid Family and Medical Leave policy, and a revised draft Paid Leave procedure for the Board to consider for adoption.

Beth Kennar, the District's labor and employment legal counsel, further detailed the distinctions between FML and PFML. She outlined the changes needed in current policy in order to bring the District into compliance with changes in law. The decision the Board needs to determine is what the District's sick leave policy should be in relation to bonding when no medical condition exists for the mother or the child.

Chief Rash said current policy allows two consecutive shifts (48 hours) to be taken for the purpose of bonding. He asked the Board what additional information they need in order to make a decision.

The commissioners asked what comparable agencies are allowing, and if the Local had provided any suggestions relative to the use of sick leave for bonding.

Beth Kennar stated there is no legal reason to allow more or less leave to be taken for the purpose of bonding. The adoption of PFML now provides for a partial wage replacement (up to \$4,000 per month) for bonding. She said there has also been a legislative push for the importance of bonding and that there is more of a recognition of the healthy child initiative to support it. Ms. Kennar said there has been legislative action on both sides of the issue but that it is purely an employer policy decision.

Local 3711 president, Blaine Holman, said their group has not looked at contract comparables but they have been looking at area agencies, the majority of whom he said appear to allow the use of sick leave for bonding.

Chief Rash said there have been three members of the District who have applied for PFML since it went into effect. He noted when a member is off work due to a qualifying event, staff has encouraged the member to consider using at least 45 hours of their accrued leave per pay period to maintain their retirement credits and employee contribution to their healthcare. In the past, District members have been allowed to use two shifts of sick leave for bonding; if the member wanted additional time off it was taken as annual leave.

Beth Kennar clarified that the draft FML and PFML policies now before the Board are to ensure the District is in compliance with law. She noted it appears the commissioners would like additional research to be completed on the Paid Leave procedure since it is up to the Board to decide how much paid sick leave employees can use for the purposes of bonding.

A Motion was made by Commissioner Rorie and seconded by Commissioner Hesse: **Move to approve P10.07.01 Family Medical Leave.** The Motion carried unanimously.

A Motion was made by Commissioner Rorie and seconded by Commissioner Hesse: **Move to approve P10.07.XX Washington Paid Family and Medical Leave.** The Motion carried unanimously.

Chief Rash said, by procedure the Board can approve the policies and they are then to be posted for a 30-day comment period; Chief Rash will return to the Board for final action on the two policies at the conclusion of the 30-day posting period. He will also query local agencies and labor contract comparable to see what they offer in paid leave for bonding.

## **EXECUTIVE SESSION**

At 6:25 pm, Commissioner Boling called for a 20 minute Executive Session until 6:45 pm, per:

- RCW 42.30.140(4)(b) that portion of a meeting during which the governing body is planning or adopting the strategy or position to be taken by the governing body during the course of any collective bargaining, professional negotiations, or grievance or mediation proceeding or reviewing the proposal made in the negotiations or proceeding while in progress.
- RCW 42.30.110(1)(g) to evaluate the qualifications of an applicant for public employment or to review the performance of a public employee,

Chief Rash, Carol Trescott, and Beth Kennar joined the commissioners in Executive Session; Chief WYROBEK joined after he returned from an 820 response.

At 6:45 pm, Carol Trescott announced Executive Session would be extended for an additional ten minutes, until 6:55 pm.

At 6:55 pm, Carol Trescott announced Executive Session would be extended for an additional ten minutes, until 7:05 pm.

At 7:05 pm Commissioner Boling called the special meeting back in session. No decisions were made in Executive Session.

**ADJOURNMENT**

At 7:06 pm Commissioner Boling adjourned the special meeting.

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Lee C. Boling, Chair  
Fire District 8 Commissioner

ATTEST:

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Carol L. Trescott, District Secretary