

# Spokane County Fire Protection District 8

## MINUTES

### Board of Fire Commissioners Regular Meeting

May 12, 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 Lee Boling, Commissioner Greg Hesse, Fire Chief Tony Nielsen, Assistant Fire Chief Lonnie Rash, District Secretary Carol Trescott, and members of District. Commissioner Andy Rorie was absent.

#### **INTRODUCTIONS**

#### **APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA**

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

#### **UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

None

#### **NEW BUSINESS**

None

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

**A. COVID-19 Update:** Chief Nielsen reported that county Policy Group meetings have decreased to three days per week. The group is continuing its work on morning public information messages with Dr. Lutz and guest/s on Facebook Live, as well as public safety information and community care (meals for school children, child care, and business recovery). No new cases and no additional deaths have been reported in Spokane County in the last 24 hours; eight people remain hospitalized. District 8 command staff meetings have also condensed to Tuesday and Thursday mornings. The District has had 52 suspected COVID patients with two cases confirmed through the Health District. The Chief shared an internal document outlining a four phase plan for moving forward in reopening the District.

Chief Nielsen reported that Chief Rash has been in contact with a representative from the Washington Survey and Rating Bureau to ensure we are staying on track in maintaining our insurance class rating.

The District received face shields made locally and donated by F5 Networks. Cycrest Systems reduced their service fees 5.5% in recognition of the hardship business are experiencing at this time. The District's two chaplains are continuing to check in with each member every two weeks. See's Candies donated the entire inventory from their north side store to WSP and fire first responders; Aaron McNally picked up and distributed chocolates to the stations.

Chief Nielsen said expenditures to date total \$23,945 for supplies and \$32,335 in personnel costs. Staff will attempt to recover those costs from FEMA. The District was scheduled to collect \$3.6 million in taxes for the first half of 2020; as of May 9<sup>th</sup>, \$3,028,000 have been collected - a \$612,000 shortfall. The Chief shared a graphic published by Spokane County Treasurer, Mike Baumgartner illustrating a comparison of tax collections in 2019 and 2020; overall the county has collected 43.2% of taxes due. Chief Nielsen is monitoring revenue and expenditures closely and recognized the District may need to come up with some creative budgeting if the trend continues.

The Internal Association of Fire Chiefs (IAFC) requested that congress approve \$10 billion dollars for fire departments and fire districts that are experiencing revenue shortfalls. Chief Nielsen said some departments have already had to lay people off due to revenue shortfalls. District 8 staff will be submitting an AFG grant application for PPE this week. The IAFC is also encouraging agencies to apply for SAFER grants, however, Chief Nielsen felt that a SAFER grant may not be a good fit for the District at this time. At the request of the IAFC president, Chief Nielsen sent a letter to our state senators and representatives asking for their support in the continued funding of AFG and SAFER grants. The Chief said it is too early to know if there will be any direct funding from FEMA.

## **EXECUTIVE SESSION**

None

## **CORRESPONDENCE**

Attached

## **FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS**

- Policies and Procedures

## **ANNOUNCEMENTS**

- Commissioner Boling congratulated Chief Nielsen on the re-confer of his Chief Fire Officer professional designation.
- Chief Rash was successful in obtaining a Department of Ecology in the amount of \$5,800 for the purchase of five 4XR gas monitors and calibration gas kits.

## **PUBLIC COMMENTS**

Jason Wilkins, president of Local 3711, expressed his appreciation for the work lead by Chief Nielsen, Chief Rash and the Board on the District's COVID response. He felt District 8 was far ahead in ordering PPE and supplies and he recognized the importance of bringing the District's MSO on early in the process.

**ADJOURNMENT**

Commissioner Hesse adjourned the regular meeting at 6:15 pm.

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Gregory A. Hesse, Chair  
Fire District 8 Commissioner

ATTEST:

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Carol L. Trescott, District Secretary