

SPOKANE COUNTY FIRE PROTECTION DISTRICT NO 8
Board of Fire Commissioners Regular Meeting



MEETING MINUTES

March 14, 2023, 6:00 pm

CALL TO ORDER & INTRODUCTIONS

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

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

PUBLIC COMMENTS

None

APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA

- Add New Business, Item B, Strategic Plan
- Add Executive Report, Item G, Washington State Risk Management Group

A motion was made by Commissioner Rorie and seconded by Commissioner Hesse: Move to approve the Agenda as amended. The motion carried unanimously.

APPROVAL OF THE CONSENT AGENDA

The following warrants and electronic transfers were approved for payment:

- Warrant Numbers 114657 through 114722 totaling \$226,636.55
- Electronic Transfers 02/01/2023 – 02/28/2023 totaling \$448,102.74

A motion was made by Commissioner Hesse and seconded by Commissioner Rorie: Move to approve the Consent Agenda as presented. The motion carried unanimously.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

A. Procedure Review 1 of 3: Chief Rash presented the Board with the first group of procedures as reviewed by the Procedure Committee in 2022.

Procedure 10.04.05 Grooming Standards was discussed in length. Chief Rash said the District has the ability to determine where and what types of tattoos employees are permitted to have. Legal counsel advised the Fire District should allow a certain number of tattoos and locations and then determine if a tattoo is appropriate. The Chief asked the commissioners if members' tattoos should to be covered; if the Board's direction is yes, then no further action is needed. If the guidance is no, then the Fire Chief would need to determine if a tattoo is offensive based on a reasonable person's standard as well as the demographic of the population we serve. Chief Rash said he would development a process to evaluate tattoos.

Discussion followed. The Board determined that member tattoos are permitted except on the neck, head, and face.

Commissioner Rorie said Procedure 150.01.01, Training Introduction, states the District *will* “prepare members of the Fire District to handle any all hazard response crisis with confidence and low levels of anxiety”. He said while that is a great goal to work toward, it is an unattainable obligation.

Chief Rash will edit the Grooming Standards procedure and the Training Introduction procedure and post them, along with the other updated procedures in this group, to the membership for a 30-day review. The Chief will return to the Board and share any comments he receives before they are approved.

NEW BUSINESS

Chaplain Program: Chief Rash said at the February 8th regular meeting it was his intent to provide a District vehicle for Chaplain McNally to use in his chaplaincy work for the District. The vehicle would be outfitted with equipment to support the therapy dog program, and the chaplain would be allowed to park the vehicle at his home and use it when dispatched to a call or as required for District business.

Chief Rash recommended that Chaplain McNally be allowed to use the District vehicle at his discretion and when dispatched to a call for service, or in the course of District business. Chaplain McNally currently coordinates and conducts a weekly mail run between stations and checks in with District members. Chief Rash proposed that the vehicle be marked as a District 8 vehicle and include the appropriate safety equipment and environmental controls needed for the therapy dog program. The vehicle would not be marked or identified as a chaplain vehicle, would be housed at Station 82, and assigned per policy P10.10.09 Staff & Utility Vehicle Take Home, at the discretion of the Fire Chief.

Chief Rash asked the Board for their input on the use of the vehicle when Chaplain McNally is conducting business for Spokane Valley Fire Department or other neighboring agencies. He proposed revisions to procedure 10.05.04 Chaplaincy Program, which would combine the chaplaincy program, therapy dog program, and vehicle use procedures.

Discussion followed on a Chaplaincy Program and procedure revisions.

Commissioner Boling said both the chaplain and the vehicle could be used in auto-aid responses with neighboring agencies at the on-duty officer’s discretion. He felt the procedure should reflect the chaplain and the vehicle may be needed in out-of-district responses. Commissioner Boling also asked that the procedure include the requirement that the chaplain driver must maintain driver training.

Commissioner Rorie pointed out that the procedure specifically refers to “Chaplain McNally” by name but should define the position and not the person.

Strategic Plan: Chief Rash said he would like to begin the process of drafting an RFP for vendors who will assist in the development of a two to four year strategic plan. The Chief felt a new strategic plan will provide guidance moving forward with such projects as Station 85 renovations, maintenance at Station 81, staffing, professional development, and potential staffing changes, etc. He envisions a stakeholder strategic plan that includes input from District members, the community, and the Board. The development cost was not included in the 2023 budget, however, Chief Rash said funds are available within the professional services contingency plan. The Chief anticipates total expenses may be up to \$30,000. He would like to see the strategic plan completed in 2023 for a 2024 implementation. Final vendor selection would be made by the Board.

The commissioners felt the environment has changed and that a shorter plan makes sense; they were in favor of executing a strategic plan RFP as soon as feasible.

EXECUTIVE REPORT Chief Rash

A. Website Update: The District's website has not been updated in nearly 10 years. Chief Long provided the Board with a presentation and preview of a new website design. The goal is to launch the new site in June. Chief Rash will send the commissioners a link to access the website so that they can provide feedback.

B. Washington State Ratings Bureau: The District recently completed a rerate with the Washington Survey and Ratings Bureau and was successful in maintaining a Protection Class Rating of 4. Chief Rash said the agency was very close to achieving a Protection Class Rating of 3 and will be working hard to achieve additional credits in the coming years. The next scheduled rerate is in 2027-2028. The commissioners received a copy of WSRB's report.

C. M & O Levy: The District received 68.65% approval on the District's Maintenance & Operations Levy measure. The Chief thanked the community and all involved in supporting the levy.

D. Baltimore Road Property: Legal review is pending and meetings have been scheduled with area homeowners.

E. FF/PM Hiring: The District has extended employment offers to one fulltime paramedic, and two fulltime firefighter/EMTs. The three new members will start on April 3rd and will begin a joint recruit academy with Fire District 3, and Fire District 9 on April 6th. The District also selected a Recruit Academy instructor who will assist with the local academy. There are still three unfilled/budgeted FTE positions to fill in the near future.

F. Safer Grant: Chief Rash is preparing to submit a SAFER grant for six FTE personnel. If successful, it would get the District to where it needs to be long-term and help account for upcoming retirements, etc. The request will be for 2.4 million dollars over three years and will require no matching funds or payback.

WSRMG: At a Washington State Risk Management Group member meeting on March 1st, Nicholson & Associates notified the group that they will no longer be able to act as risk manager and agent for the VFIS line of insurance. VFIS has not informed the WSRMG of any change; group members do have insurance coverage through VFIS and members and will continue to work with Nicholson & Associates until they are formally notified by VFIS. Chief Rash said VFIS has scheduled a routine risk control review of the District to assess such items as call volume, administrative items, the driver training program, standard vehicle operating guidelines, vehicle and equipment maintenance records and procedures, and the District's driver selection process

OPERATIONS REPORT Chief WYROBEK

None

CORRESPONDENCE

Attached

ANNOUNCEMENTS

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EXECUTIVE SESSION

None

FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS

- A. BoFC Travel Reimbursement Procedure
- B. Procedure Review

ADJOURNMENT

At 6:59 pm Commissioner Boling adjourned the regular meeting.

Lee C. Boling, Chair
Fire District 8 Commissioner

ATTEST:

Carol L. Trescott, District Secretary